

Part 1

APPLICATION FOR AN EXTENSION OF PLACEMENT

beyond the tenth year

The **Church Council (or other authorised body) of the ABC Congregation** advises the Pastoral Relations Committee of Sydney Central Coast Presbytery that the Minister and Congregation wish to apply for an extension of the placement beyond the tenth year, and requests PRC to appoint a Liaison Person to enable the application to proceed smoothly and in good time.

We have read the Presbytery's Policy on Extensions and have completed the Vital Ministry (ViM) and Life and Witness (LWC) consultations as required.

Minister	name:	
Placement commenced	date:	
Last Vital Ministry	date:	
Profile submitted to PRC	date:	
Is this a first or subsequent extension of placement?	number:	
Church Council Chair	name:	
Church Council Secretary	name:	
Congregational LWC report	date:	
Congregational Profile	date:	(attached)
Is this extension sought mainly for compassionate reasons for the Minister? (see Policy)	Y N	Please contact the Presbytery Minister as a matter of urgency.

Discussion between the Minister and placement leadership

Please describe briefly the nature of confidential conversations between the Church Council or delegated leaders, and the Minister, leading up to this request.

How did the Minister and leaders consult together? Were you in considerable agreement? Were there 'grey areas' that PRC can help sort through? How was the Minister's family considered? How have key members of the Congregation been consulted to gauge their views?

PROCESS FOR DETERMINING AN EXTENSION

Once the Minister and Church Council or selected leaders are in agreement about seeking an extension, and the required consultations have been completed, the following steps must be taken.

1. The first page of this Application must be completed and sent to the PRC Secretary.
2. The PRC, on behalf of the Chair of Presbytery, will appoint a Liaison Person to the Congregation, who will carry the authority of the Presbytery Chairperson's deputy [REG]. This could be the Presbytery Minister or another ministry leader, usually a member of PRC and hopefully already known to the Congregation. The Liaison Person will try to ensure the process proceeds in a timely manner between the Congregation and the PRC.
3. The PRC will notify the Placements Committee (ACOMP) and seek its advice on the proposed extension.
4. The Liaison Person will guide the Church Council in completing the following part of the Application to meet the expectations of the PRC and Presbytery.

Notes to remember and share with the Congregation

Church Council: Please obtain, read and make available to the Congregation the Presbytery Policy on Extensions. The background and processes there are explained fully, and may help those who can't see what all the fuss is about.

Because the Ministry belongs to the whole church, Regulation 2.6.8 outlines very specific discernment requirements: an extension depends upon the agreement of three parties (Congregation, Minister and Presbytery); representing two Councils of the church and at least the advice and acknowledgement of a third through the Synod Placements Committee. In other words, conciliar wisdom applies to this matter. Consensus is not required, but a high level of agreement (two thirds) is required, taking into account the interests of the Synod and Presbytery as well as of the Congregation and individual Minister.

For this reason the PRC needs to take a rather more rigorous approach than our usual consensus model. Information sharing, decision making and voting needs to be transparently communicated and recorded at each level. Stricter guidelines will apply to identifying members entitled to vote. Because a level of personal sharing may be needed and objections may be felt personally by ministers or others, non-voting participants will be excluded from deliberations.

For the sake of mutual accountability of all parties, the Liaison Person will be expected to be present at the deliberative meetings of the Congregation and if necessary the Church Council; votes will be cast by written ballot according to the Regulations and will be returned by the Liaison Person to the PRC for scrutiny before being destroyed.

Application Rationale

The following pages flesh out the Congregation's and Minister's reasons for seeking an Extension. These will provide the information needed for the Church Council, Congregation, PRC and Presbytery to make their decisions. The clearer and more specific the information, the better persuaded people will be.

On the basis of this information, voting may be held by the Church Council and Congregation (usually in that order) with the assistance of the Liaison Person.

Part 2

APPLICATION FOR AN EXTENSION OF PLACEMENT

ABC Congregation
and Minister REV X

beyond the tenth year

Minister	name:
Placement commenced	date:
Last Vital Ministry	date:
Profile submitted to PRC	date:
Is this a first or subsequent extension of placement?	number:
Church Council Chair	name:
Church Council Secretary	name:
Congregational LWC report	date:

REASONS GIVEN FOR SEEKING AN EXTENSION

What are the main reasons the Church Council holds for seeking an extension of this Minister, and how long a period do you feel this needs (from 1 to 5 years)?

You may need to say why this Minister, and not another minister, is essential for the Congregation. List as many reasons as you think are important.

Proposed extension duration:

1. Reasons...
- 2.
- 3.

What findings from the Minister's Eighth Year Vital Ministry consultation support an extension beyond ten years in this placement? *Be specific.*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

What findings from the Congregation's recent LWC or Mission Study support this Minister continuing in ministry here? *The Congregation's mission and strategy should match the Minister's gifts as reported in both consultations.*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Does the LWC report show any areas in which the Congregation is NOT fully compliant with all requirements of the Presbytery, including Zone engagement, financial accountability, risk and safety compliance and stewardship support for the wider church? *Not necessarily a deal-breaker but may need work*

Does the ViM report identify any areas in which the Minister has not engaged with or fulfilled the requirements of a minister, as agreed by the SCCP?

What consultation has taken place with neighbouring placements in the Zone as to the suitability of the extension for the mission of the Zone, including:

1. The Minister's collegiate relationships within the Zone:
2. The Congregation's contribution to Zone ministry and mission:

What clear, missional objectives and expectations does the congregational mission plan include for the Minister and Congregation during the period of extension? How do these align with the [Vision, Mission and Values](#) of the Sydney Central Coast Presbytery, as agreed together by the whole Presbytery?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

The Presbytery Extension Policy acknowledges that a congregation receives a great advantage by continuing with a known ministry agent, and expects that a Congregation and Minister in an extension will accept and share this benefit within the Presbytery, including offering significant ministry to the church beyond the Congregation. Through your conversations with your Minister, in what areas do you suggest the Congregation and Minister might contribute more to the Presbytery and wider church?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Is there any Presbytery comment or guidance for the Congregation?

(Include PRC, LWC, Zone or other Presbytery bodies; ACOMP advice; other pertinent information.)

PROCESSES FOR DISCERNMENT AND VOTING ON THIS ISSUE

1. The Liaison Person and Church Council Secretary (or delegate) will ensure that the above pages are complete, consistent and coherent.
2. The full application will be forwarded to PRC and comments made and returned prior to its presentation to the local meetings.
3. Meetings of the Church Council and Congregation will be called according to the Regulations to consider the question of an extension.
 - a. The Liaison Person and Secretary will ensure that the above Reasons (**Part 2** above) are distributed to congregational members in good time before the meetings are held.
 - b. The Secretary will ensure that the Membership Rolls are up to date and that people who have not been formally recognised as members of the Congregation, are given the opportunity to be entered onto the rolls. (Note: this may take some time, so sort this out very early!)
 - c. The Liaison Person must attend the Church Council and Congregational meetings on behalf of the PRC and Presbytery. If requested to do so by the Chair of Presbytery, the Liaison Person will chair the Extension deliberations of either or both meetings.
4. At properly called and constituted meetings of the Church Council and Congregation, members will be given ballots with which to express their vote. The Ballot template will be provided by the PRC. Non-members will be excluded from that part of the meeting which deals with the deliberations on the extension, and from the voting. The Liaison Person considering the advice of the Secretary, will determine whether an individual may remain in the meeting. The meeting should appoint returning officers to distribute and count the members present and the votes returned. The Liaison Person acts as scrutineer.

EXTENSION PROPOSAL 1: Church Council	EXTENSION PROPOSAL 2: Congregation
<p>The Secretary of the Church Council Proposes: that the Church Council of ABC Congregation approve the extension of MINISTER NNN from [final date of placement] for [1-5] years, concluding on [proposed new date].</p> <p>Please indicate your response:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">YES NO</p>	<p>The Church Council Proposes: that the ABC Congregation approve the extension of MINISTER NNN from [final date of placement] for [1-5] years, concluding on [proposed new date].</p> <p>Please indicate your response:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">YES NO</p>

5. In an atmosphere of prayer and open discernment, the Proposal will be put to the meeting with reference to the Reasons for seeking an extension. It is appropriate for the Secretary or the Liaison Person to do this, or to appoint another suitable person.
 - a. The Minister may be the first to speak, for a few minutes, about their continued sense of call and will then retire from the meeting until the votes have been counted and declared by the Liaison Person and Chairperson. Questions should not be put to the Minister at this time; as the representative of the PRC, the Liaison Person may answer or record any such questions for consultation with the Minister afterwards.

- b. After the Minister retires, further deliberations follow according to normal meeting procedure. At the Chairperson's discretion, the proposal will be put and ballots cast.
- c. NOTE: The Regulation explicitly requires "a two-thirds majority by secret ballot of those present in each of the meetings of the Church Council, the Congregation and the Presbytery" (2.6.8.a.ii). Only a YES vote can count towards an affirmation, as an abstention does not indicate *approval* of the proposal. Members should be reminded of this before the ballot, and anyone wishing to abstain should excuse themselves from the meeting before the proposal is put for voting, or their abstention will *de facto* count against the proposal.
- d. Votes will be counted by the returning officers and checked by the Liaison Person, before the result is given to the Chairperson. The Chairperson should not announce the tally, but only declare the vote to have achieved (or not achieved) the required 2/3 majority, or to have been unanimous (100% in favour. Note, this is not technically a 'Consensus' as the consensus process is not being followed). The number of votes for and against will be recorded by the LP and reported confidentially to the PRC.
- e. The Minister shall be informed of the outcome in a pastorally sensitive way, and as soon as possible after the ballot is declared.
- f. Sometimes significant decisions may become overly contentious or conflicted. In the case that it is not possible to conduct the meeting in a mutually respectful manner it is the Liaison Person who carries the authority of the Presbytery Chairperson to determine a way forward. The most appropriate way may be to instruct the local Chairperson to declare the meeting closed without a resolution of the proposal (i.e. without taking a vote), and seek consultation between the parties and the PRC. The Church Council and Congregation should bear in mind that if the PRC is not persuaded that discernment has taken place within the ethos of the Uniting Church and in the spirit of the Manual for Meetings, they will not approve the application and will advise the Presbytery accordingly. Likewise, if these processes are not followed strictly, the application will be sent back to the Congregation, as it would be unfair to other congregations who have accepted full accountability and followed the guidelines completely.