

PERIOD OF DISCERNMENT IN ZONES

PROCESS FOR ZONES in the Sydney Central Coast Presbytery



These process notes are for the use of anyone in Sydney Central Coast Presbytery who needs to attend to any part of the POD process. They may be shared around freely. They will need to be updated as process and good practice develop. Please send suggestions to revpez@gmail.com for updating. For consistency, the Applicant or Candidate for a POD is here called simply (though unofficially) 'the POD PERSON.'

<p>POD PERSON</p> <p>FIRST CONTACT: MINISTER/ADVISER</p>	<p>May make an approach either through their minister or a trusted leader, or they may have been approached by their church, Presbytery leader or another person to consider a POD.</p> <p>Whoever the POD PERSON talks with first should connect them with the appropriate ADVISER, or seek guidance to do so from the Zone or Presbytery Minister about who that may be. The applicant's MINISTER would usually be their ADVISER: if they have no minister, Presbytery Minister or Zone could work out the best person.</p>	<p>Connect POD PERSON with MINISTER or other suitable ADVISER</p>
<p>MINISTER/ADVISER: (not the same person as the Mentor)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is normally the Minister or a key elder/leader in the applicant's congregation, hub or ministry centre; or a ministry leader from a nearby congregation • May be a Presbytery person who is willing and able to give the Applicant some guidance and oversight, including connecting them with the appropriate Zone • The MINISTER/ADVISER will have or will develop a <i>pastoral relationship</i> with the APPLICANT and will take some responsibility for ensuring the POD is not forgotten during the year, but moves to a satisfactory conclusion. 	<p>MINISTER/ADVISER has some pastoral responsibility for the POD PERSON</p>
<p>MINISTER/ADVISER:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brush up on the POD information on UME website, SCCP or VICTAS website • Talk with the POD PERSON and clarify with them why they wish to do a POD and what they think they want to learn or discern • Assist them to acquire the Handbook and fill out the Application Form. • If you are not able to support them, point them to a suitable MINISTER/ADVISER for the process. If that is not clear or is giving POD PERSON the runaround, YOU are the right person. If you are their Minister, you are almost certainly the right person. 	<p>Other links will come as resources are updated</p> <p>If in doubt, consult the Presbytery Minister.</p>
<p>POD PERSON</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes their part of the POD Application Form • Returns it to their MINISTER/ADVISER • Takes responsibility for their progress in line with the Handbook 	
<p>MINISTER/ADVISER</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs and sends the application with any notes to the Zone Coordinator. (Usually the Zone where POD PERSON worships; maybe where they live or work; some practical discernment may be needed) 	
<p>ZONE COORDINATOR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirms with the MINISTER and POD PERSON that the application has been received; notes the date • Checks with MINISTER/ADVISER for anything the Zone might need to be aware of (some pastoral discernment may follow at congregation or zone level) 	<p>Please keep records!!</p>
<p>ZONE PANEL</p> <p>Suitable mix: lay/ordained, male/female, cultural, experience and insight</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zone Coordinator consults within the Zone to form a PANEL of 3-5 people, including the MINISTER/ADVISER, who will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ identify one or more suitable Mentors (see Handbook and resources) ○ consult with them and the POD PERSON to determine a MENTOR and broker a productive mentoring relationship ○ be prepared to meet at the end of the process to review and discern with the POD PERSON 	<p>Must happen promptly as the POD time begins with appointment of a mentor.</p>

MENTOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets with the applicant and formalises the Learning Goals Returns the completed application to the Zone Coordinator and proceeds to work with the POD PERSON according to the Handbook. 	
ZONE COORDINATOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Files the Application with the Zone and sends a copy to PRC Admin Assistant Checks that MINISTER/ADVISER and MENTOR have set at least three progress follow-up dates through the coming year May arrange other fun POD activities (eg. BBQ) as Zone creatively imagines, or suggest congregational experience visits or other connections as needed. 	
POD PERSON, MENTOR, MINISTER/ADVISER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take responsibility together for working through the process, according to the Handbook. It is principally the responsibility of the POD PERSON to ensure their own progress. However, life can be complicated, and pastoral assistance is always helpful. POD PERSON should ensure they check in with their MINISTER/ADVISER on their progress throughout the year. 	<i>Main responsibility lies with the POD PERSON</i>
CONCLUSION OF THE POD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> POD PERSON shares their Portfolio with the MENTOR, according to the Handbook Mentor reports to the MINISTER/ADVISER and Zone Coordinator Zone Coordinator convenes the Zone Panel to discuss discernment 	
ZONE DISCERNMENT PANEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zone Panel meets with the Candidate to review their POD discernment, learnings, experience, portfolio and discuss the potential next steps The discernment panel is not an examination or ministry test but a positive, constructive appraisal and reflection with the Candidate on their POD 'journey'. 	
OUTCOMES: 1. GENERAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the POD PERSON discerns a call to a general form of ministry or discipleship they are to be encouraged, guided and enabled through opportunities for service, training, education or suitable creative formation in their congregation, workplace, Zone, etc. 	
2. DISCERNING A CALL TO SPECIFIED MINISTRY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the POD PERSON expresses a sense of call to a Specified Ministry (MOW, Deacon, Lay Preacher or ministry of Pastor), this will need to be explored and clarified by the Zone Discernment Panel. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the Panel agree with their discernment? Do they appear suitable for that ministry, now or perhaps in future? How should we advise, guide, or facilitate further discernment? 	
CLOSURE OF THE POD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel will sign off on the completed POD with a concise report on their mutual discernment and copy to the POD PERSON, Zone Coordinator and PRC Admin Assistant Zone may congratulate and recognise the person in their local context. 	<i>No formal liturgy exists: make it up</i>
FOLLOWING UP ON CALL TO SPECIFIED MINISTRY: ZONE COORDINATOR AND PANEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for the ministry of Lay Preacher is made through UME: check the UME website Call to Ministry of Pastor is position-specific: check with PRC/Presbytery Minister Ordered ministries are initially discerned by the individual, through the POD, with the confidential joint discernment of their Minister and Church Council. If a person discerns a call, the Zone should refer them (with any pertinent observations) to their local church, NOT directly to the Ministry Committee. The Panel will write a brief, honest and fair report for the person's Church Council. This report will be shared with the Ministry Committee if an application is supported by the CC, and will be included if the application proceeds to the Synod Selection Panel. 	<i>Zone has a role, but discernment is principally with the local church and minister.</i>