

STAGE V: INTERVIEWS AND CANDIDATE CLEARANCE

Check List

1. After selecting a group of PIFs for an initial contact, a phone or Skype-like interview should be scheduled. At this stage a Skype- like interview is highly recommended.
 - a. These interviews will identify the candidates with whom the PNC/DPNC would like to continue the process.
 - b. The names are given to the COM liaison so that the presbytery leader can complete an executive reference check.
2. After you are notified that a person is cleared for a face-to-face interview, you may schedule the visit.
 - a. Some visits are at the person's current employment. Please check with that person about restrictions you should follow in order to be sensitive to their current employment situation.
 - b. When you are ready for an on-site visit your COM liaison will help you set up all the components.
3. On-site interviews are done with confidentiality.
 - a. Your spouses, children, and any others should not meet the person.
 - b. Show them the building at a time you are sure it will be vacant.
 - c. Arrange a visit to the manse, if you have one. Ask the occupants to leave while you are there.
 - d. Candidates for a position in churches with more than one pastor should have an opportunity to meet with the currently serving pastor or associate pastor (and other key program staff members if appropriate). Such a meeting should not be one-on-one but in a larger group. Ordinarily, it should occur before the neutral pulpit experience with the candidate.
4. Conduct the interview in depth with prepared questions and questions specific to the person. Make sure it is in a comfortable and confidential setting; no family wandering through the living room; a quiet space at the church at a non-use time; a professional office belonging to a member of the committee during non-business hours.
5. Neutral pulpits are also done with confidentiality.
 - a. Have your COM liaison help you arrange one at a convenient, but not nearby congregation so you will not be recognized.
 - b. Ask the pastor not to say which congregation is considering the person preaching. "Our pulpit is being filled today by a person being considered by one of our sibling congregations in the Presbytery of Genesee Valley." The church newsletter and other publications should simply indicate that there will be a guest preacher for the day (name and other information is not necessary). That Sunday's worship bulletin can publish the name of the preacher but other biographical information should be avoided in print.
 - c. Only identify yourself to parishioners as "I'm one of the folks from your sibling church listening to the preacher."
 - d. Ignore the free feedback of the congregation you are visiting. Their opinions are not necessary for you to decide if this might be the person to pastor your own congregation.
6. Arrange with the COM liaison for the COM clearance interview. Make sure the person is available for and can get to the location for the interview. (See *Examination Process*.)

7. You are responsible for all the costs of this visit.
 - a. You arrange the transportation. Buy airline or train tickets; state the reimbursement for mileage; reserve the rental car yourselves.
 - b. You arrange for lodging accommodations and pay the bill. Do not lodge the person with a committee member; the person needs privacy.
 - c. Allow free time during the visit, so the person may be prepared for interviews, preaching, etc. Many persons may want to drive around the area alone to get a feel for it.
 - d. Decide ahead of time if you are inviting the spouse on an initial on-site interview and let all persons know of these arrangements.
8. Make all visits at your convenience and schedule. Do not schedule a visit because someone is passing through and wants to meet you, even before you have completed the steps of the process to this point.