

Standing Rules of the Ministers Council ABCUSA

As proposed July 2014 and to become effective January 2015;
composed of current procedures plus recommended changes
that conform to the proposed 2015 By Laws

Adoption and Revision

- A standing rule is a rule that relates to the details of the administration of a society and which can be adopted or changed the same way as any other act of the deliberative assembly to which the rule applies.
- Standing rules can be suspended by a majority vote for the duration of the session, but not for longer.

National Dues (see Article VI, Membership)

- Shall be collected annually.
- Shall cover the calendar year.
- Every effort will be made to submit national dues by April 30th of the year covered. Dues received May-October will be counted as dues for current year.
- The dues of members of the Board of Governors, Local Chapter Representatives, Presidents, and Treasurers must be current at the time of election/appointment and through the duration of their term in office.

National Membership Categories (Article VI, Section 1)

- Among those individuals eligible under Article VI, Section 1 of the By Laws are ordained individuals, commissioned individuals, lay professionals, and students in seminary.
- Honorary Life membership will not be granted for the 2015 membership year or after. Life Memberships granted through April 30, 2014 shall retain their Life membership status.

Dues Structure

References to categories (seminarian, retired, missionary, etc.) will be removed. Instead, dues will be based on the member's income, following the chart below. Income levels will not be verified; members will pay appropriate amount based on the honor system.

Annual income of:	should pay dues of:
> \$55,000	\$100
\$25,000-\$55,000	\$ 50
\$10,000-\$24,999	\$ 25
<\$10,000	\$ 10

- The Board of Governors and Local Chapter Representatives shall review the effectiveness and fiscal viability of the current dues schedule each annual meeting.

Local Chapters (see Article V – Local Chapters)

- A local Ministers Council Chapter is a related organization of this body, which exists within an American Baptist Region, in a portion of an American Baptist Region, or in an area that covers more than one American Baptist Region.

- Local Chapter activities and expenses are covered by national non-profit status only if national dues are paid for its members.
- National members are expected to also join and pay dues to a Local Chapter, unless there are obstacles preventing their participation in Local Chapters.
- When Local Chapters based on geography overlap Local Chapters based on affinity or other associational status, members are expected to pay national dues only once.
- Local Chapters with members who qualify for more than one Local Chapter are encouraged to discuss ways of cooperating in activities and may consider reduced Local Chapter Dues for those members willing to take on dual Local Chapter memberships.

Local Chapter Responsibilities

- Organize and select at least a President, Treasurer, and Local Chapter Representative.
- Provide regular workshops, retreats, or other forms of engagement for its members in order to increase professional effectiveness, encourage personal/spiritual wholeness, and make collegial connections.
- Set and collect local dues.
- Collect and remit national dues, including names and addresses of members.
- Provide annual reports, including names and contact information of officers.
- Send their Local Chapter Representative, or a substitute, to Annual Meeting and hold him/her accountable for participation in the business meeting and on the Ministries Team.
- It is recommended that the Local Chapter use part of its local dues to support attendance at the Annual Meeting, paying the expenses of its Representative(s) and/or underwriting attendance by a larger number of members.

Terms of Local Chapter Representatives (see Article IX – Local Chapter Representatives and the Ministries Team)

- In selecting its Representative(s), Local Chapters shall consider both sharing the opportunity to serve on the Ministries Team and the need for continuity. A single four-year appointment is recommended.
- A Local Chapter Officer may also serve as that Chapter's Representative.
- National Ministers Council functions on a calendar year, and requests that Local Chapter Representatives for each year be named by January 1st.

Costs

- National dues cover the operational costs of the Ministers Council, underwrite the Annual Meeting program, and contribute to the fund for stipends for nationally elected officers, board and council members.
- From 2015 – 2018, the portion of the Local Chapter Representative's expenses for attending the Annual Meeting Business Session will be reduced by 10% a year. In 2015, national will cover 40%; in 2016, 30%; in 2017, 20%; in 2018, 10%. In 2019, there will be no automatic payment by national.
- Additional Local Chapter Representatives may be seated when the [grand-fathered] non-dues-paying Life Membership numbers are included in the total membership count, provided that the Local Chapter funds 100% of the expenses of each additional Local Chapter Representative, from 2015 and afterwards.

- Local Chapter dues underwrite local programming and may cover or contribute to the costs for their Local Chapter Representative(s) to attend Annual Meetings.
- Local Chapter Representative(s) will cover any of their own expenses not covered by the Chapter. They are encouraged to seek church continuing education and/or conference support.
- Individual Members attend Annual Meetings at their own expense, but receive a discounted rate for members.
- Nationally elected Officers and Member Representatives to the Board of Governors and any at-large members of the Ministries Team will contribute as able to their own travel and expenses, but will be eligible for stipends from national MC.
- Local Chapters may request discounts for their dues or stipends for their Representative if in financial straits.
- Members of the Development Council will contribute their own travel and expenses, but should this prove a hardship, members may request stipends from national MC.
- The Board of Governors and Local Chapter Representatives shall review the effectiveness and fiscal viability of the current cost sharing schedule each annual meeting.

Guidelines for a Stipend Fund

By Senate 2015, the Governing Board should recommend a structure for distributing stipends, including limits on available amounts, how to assess need, and who will determine awards.

Annual Meeting (see Article X)

- The Annual Meeting is open to all ministerial leaders, whether or not they are members of Ministers Council. Ministers Council Members receive a registration discount.
- All dues paying members of the Ministers Council who are not members of the Governing Board and/or Local Chapter Representatives may have voice, but not vote, at the business session of the Annual Meeting.
- On Mission Summit (odd-numbered) years, the Annual Meeting will be held at the same location, at or near the same time, as the Summit. On even numbered years, the Annual Meeting will be held at Green Lake or move among geographic regions.
- The Annual Meeting shall include a business session for Local Chapter Representatives and the Board of Governors, and additional opportunities for education, inspiration, and discussion of items of concern to ministerial leaders. Recommended activities include prayer teams, a Sabbath period, fellowship gatherings, and table conversations.

Other Meetings

- The Board of Governors shall convene before and/or after Annual Meeting and at least one other time each calendar year, and electronically monthly or as needed.
- The Ministries Team shall organize at Annual Meeting, conduct bi-monthly electronic meetings re membership, communication and programming, and shall meet electronically as needed on other topics.
- The Development Council shall meet twice a year and electronically as needed, and may invite the Budget Officer or President to be in attendance at any given meeting.
- The Personnel Committee shall meet at least **semi-annually**, and may do so electronically.

- The Nominating Committee shall convene at Annual Meeting and meet electronically between meetings as needed.

Nominating Procedures

- The Governing Board (in reference to members and Chairperson of the Development Council) and the Nominating Committee (in reference to all other elected positions) will announce to members at least 2 months in advance the positions that are open and the date that each group plans to meet and discuss candidates for open positions.
- Members may suggest themselves or others to be considered for any given position. National Ministers Council will provide a means for suggesting candidates on the website.
- Suggestions submitted through the web site at least four days before the announced meeting dates must be considered by the Governing Board or Nominating Committee.

Appendix: Job Description for Executive Director, Officers, and Local Chapter Representatives

Journals and Publications

- National Ministers Council may publish a journal or journals related to its mission.
- The Board of Governors shall oversee such publications, including appointing the editor(s), and determining the funding, subscription rate and eligibility to receive the journal(s).
- The editor(s) and contributors shall provide services and material free-of-charge, unless the Board of Governors identifies special cause for compensation and source for payment.
- If the Board requests that the editor(s) or specific contributor(s) attend any given meeting or gathering, the Board will designate the amount of compensation to be offered and its source before making the request.

Attached Appendix: Working Guidelines for the Ministries Team 2015

Working Guidelines for the Ministries Team, Committees and Task Forces (see Article IX – Local Chapter Representatives and the Ministries Team)

- The Local Chapter Representatives shall convene regularly as the Ministries Team. They will hold an organizing meeting each year at the Annual Meeting.
- The Ministries Team will meet bi-monthly by electronic means and use email or other technology to work on ongoing projects. The Executive Director will participate in at least one of these calls each quarter.
- Each Local Chapter Representative will provide reports from and to his/her Local Chapter at least quarterly.
- The Ministries Team will provide written recommendations for Annual Meeting emphases and speakers to the Annual Meeting Committee.
- The Ministries Team will select appropriate means of communicating ideas, successful programs, and best practices to members of the Ministers Council directly and/or to Local Chapter officers. For example, they might (a) identify and send to Local Chapter Officers the 10 best Local Chapter activities each year; and (b) contribute 10 new or updated resources or best practices (recommended speakers, valuable articles, useful links, etc.) for posting on the website each year.
- The Ministries Team will discuss Together In Ministry efforts and resources (funds and in-kind donations), identify needs, and seek means of using in-kind donations and encouraging collegial connections.
- The Ministries Team will discuss programming possibilities at the local and national levels. It is suggested that they identify 2-4 key emphases each year, in consultation with their Local Chapters, national staff and the Governing Board. The Coordinator of the Ministries Team will communicate progress on the emphases on a regular basis.

From the efforts above, the need for committees and task forces will emerge.

- The Coordinator of the Ministries Team (in consultation with the Governing Board) may appoint committees and task forces as needed to fulfill the roles and act on the recommendations of the Ministries Team.
- The Ministries Team will recommend members for each suggested committee or task force and assist the Coordinator in recruiting members.
- A majority of members of each committee and task force must be members of the Ministers Council. Remaining members may be drawn from any valuable source, ministerial or lay, American Baptist or other.
- Committees and task forces shall serve only as long as the specific program or event assigned to them requires.
- Active members of the committees and task forces shall serve at least one year, but may serve as long as the committee/task force continues, even if his/her status (for example, as a Local Chapter Representative) changes.
- The Governing Board upon recommendation of the Ministries Team Coordinator or other Ministries Team members may remove inactive or ineffective members of committees and task forces.