

A Guideline for the Transfer of Ministerial Standing:
Sharing Files of Authorized Ministers between Authorizing Bodies
in the United Church of Christ

Adopted by the Department for Church and Authorized Ministers of the Central Southeast Ohio Association on November 20, 2013

We are guided by the text from Ephesians 4:15 as we engage in our ministries as members of authorizing bodies in the United Church of Christ: ***“Speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.”*** Truthfulness and honest the sharing of appropriate, factual information with the appropriate people at the appropriate time is essential for the health and well-being of the whole church. The transfer of ministerial standing is a time when such truthfulness is exceedingly important.

When a minister wishes to have her/his authorization for ministry transferred to a new Association, that minister should request to meet with the new Association’s Committee on Ministry (COM). The purpose of this time with the COM is to get acquainted, to learn of resources that are available through the COM, to share mutual expectations of what this person’s ministry may be in the Association, and to make a formal request for transfer of ministerial standing. This request will include the execution of a signed Release of Information Form, which authorizes the Association where his/her standing is currently held to share copies of this minister’s files with the new Association. The transfer will not be accepted/granted until such sharing of information has occurred.

If it concurs with the minister that a transfer of standing is appropriate, the COM then contacts the COM where the person currently has standing and requests that a letter of transfer be sent. As part of that request, the COM of the new Association shares the Release of Information Form that authorizes copies of all pertinent documents in the former Association’s file be transferred with the standing of this minister. The former Association is to maintain the original files in perpetuity.

It is suggested that an Association Committee on Ministry (COM) formally adopt a policy statement, stating that it will copy and share documents of its authorized minister’s file with another Association COM at the time of transfer of ministerial authorization, whether or not it has received a signed Release of Information Form. This policy should apply to all authorized ministers whose standing is being transferred from that Association.

When a transfer is processed by the former Association COM, it sends a letter to the authorized minister to inform her/him that the letter of transfer, along with copies of the COM’s files, has been forwarded to the new COM.

A transfer is considered complete when the receiving Association returns the appropriate document to the former Association, thus concluding this process. Both Associations are responsible for updating their records with the national database (i.e., UCC Research/ Yearbook Office) at the end of the process.

Steps in the Process:

A Transfer of Ministerial Standing for Active & Retired Ministers in the United Church of Christ

1. Minister desiring a transfer of standing requests a meeting with the new (receiving) Association.
2. Minister is interviewed, provides contact information for persons in her/his current Association, and signs appropriate Authorization to Release Information Form.
3. Receiving Association COM communicates with current Association COM, seeking necessary transfer information including copies of all ministerial files maintained by the current Association. (Current Association continues to hold all original files in perpetuity.)
4. Receiving Association COM receives and reviews documents from the former COM, and determines whether or not to grant the request and receive the minister's standing. The results of a formal vote are recorded in the official minutes of the COM.
5. Receiving Association COM communicates its action with the minister and sending Association COM to complete the transfer process.
6. Both Associations communicate with the United Church of Christ's national database (i.e., the Research / Yearbook Office) to update their records.