



REGISTRATION AND ORDINATION GUIDELINES

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IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MINISTERS TO FAMILIARISE THEMSELVES WITH THESE REGISTRATION GUIDELINES. IT IS A CONDITION OF REGISTRATION THAT MINISTERS ABIDE BY THESE GUIDELINES AND AS AMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME.

These Interim Guidelines have been adjusted in accordance with the decisions made by assembly on 22.05.2009



1. INTRODUCTION

Queensland Baptists, both through local churches and through Queensland Baptists Services Group, seek to be guided by the Holy Spirit to recognise those whom God has called and given to the churches to serve as ministers. The evidence of their calling is seen in:

- The candidate's own sense of call to ministry,
- The attestation of those who know them well, particularly their home church, that their lives conform to New Testament requirements for leadership, suitability for ministry and affirmation of call,
- In their diligence both in initial and ongoing equipping themselves for the ministry needed by the churches, and,
- The call to a specific ministry role

Those seeking Registration must be involved in:

- The exercising of leadership
- The regular ministry of God's Word
- Pastoral care of and/or responsibility for a specific group of people
- Ongoing ministry, full-time or part-time (0.6 minimum), honorary or salaried

Ministerial Services will consider applications from candidates who do not meet the above requirements where exceptional circumstances (eg Bi-vocational Ministry, Church Planting etc) can be substantiated.

Queensland Baptists has agreed that formal public recognition of ministers is subject to candidates fulfilling certain requirements appropriate to the ministry for which they are to be recognised, and that Ministerial Services shall examine the candidates' credentials.

Queensland Baptists, both through local churches and through Ministerial Services, also seek to be guided by the Holy Spirit in discharging the responsibility of maintaining the registration or de-registering those who are no longer to be recognised as ministers of Jesus Christ and the Word of God in our Baptist churches. It is therefore also necessary to carefully set down in these guidelines the requirements and processes to be followed.

These guidelines should be useful:

- to candidates for the ministry, setting out what the churches expect from them and what credentials they must present to member churches;
- to churches indicating what they should look for in those whose candidacy they support;
- to Ministerial Services as they evaluate the evidence presented to them; and
- to Registered Ministers of Queensland Baptists setting out the grounds for Registration.



2. DEFINITION OF TERMS

2.1 REGISTRATION

Registration involves the certification of people as suitable for ministry within Queensland Baptists and its structures. It gives recognition to their having met certain requirements and that they possess appropriate qualifications and credentials for such ministry. Ministers may be either "Registered Ordained" or "Registered".

2.2 ORDINATION

Ordination is both the spiritual act of recognition that God has called a person to, and gifted and prepared a person for, vocational pastoral ministry (centring on the ministry of the Word, the care of people, and equipping for service), and also the commitment to this calling and responsibility by the ordinand. (Adopted Assembly 22.05.2009)

2.3 MINISTER

In the broadest sense, all Christians are ministers. A narrower sense would limit the word "minister" to those set aside to a pastoral role. The position is complicated by the use of the word "pastor" as a personal title and also as a description of a function.

In common usage, "pastor" and "minister" have been regarded as practically synonymous.

In this document, "minister" is used to describe church leaders who have been recognised by the denomination after prescribed study and practical experience.

2.4 MENTOR

A mentor is a loyal friend and adviser who willingly invests their life in another through an accountability relationship by sharing, reflecting and generally assisting the other to reach their full potential in Christ Jesus.

3. MINISTERIAL SERVICES

3.1 Ministerial Services Exists to:

- a) Establish Guidelines and Procedures for
 - Registration
 - Maintaining registration
 - De-registration
 - Ordination
- b) Implement the Ordination and Registration Guidelines
- c) Deal with any disciplinary matters concerning ministers

3.2 Ministerial Services will establish working groups to assist the Services in its functioning. This will include, but will not be limited to,

- Interviewing Group
- Ethical Issues Response Group
- Equipping Partners for Ministry Group
- Ministers Registration Group

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Adopted by the Board of Queensland Baptists 25.06.2009



3.3 Members of Ministerial Services are appointed by the Board of Queensland Baptists.

4. REGISTRATION OF MINISTERS

The process of Registration will be as follows:

4.1 Registration

4.1.1 Purpose: The purpose of registration of Queensland Baptists Ministers is to ensure a system of peer accountability and to encourage personal development. It will also ensure that ministers are kept updated with current trends and requirements for effective ministry.

4.1.2 Terms of Registration

Initial registration will be granted by Ministerial Services and will be valid for up to three years depending on:

- a) the production of a yearly report outlining progress on conditions of registration;
- b) the satisfactory meeting of the conditions of registration (as decided by Ministerial Services); and
- c) a continuing call to ministry as a minister in a local church, to a denominational ministry position or to a ministry position approved by Ministerial Services

4.1.3 The Requirements for Registration are:

- a) A demonstrated call to ministry within a particular context
- b) A mentor
- c) A Personal Ministry Development Plan

4.1.4 Qualities Required in a Registered Minister

Ministerial Services will register suitable candidates as Ministers within Queensland Baptists. Ministerial Services will ensure each candidate seeking Registration is a suitable person to be registered with Queensland Baptists. Desired qualities include, but are not limited to:

QUALITY	EXAMPLES
Sense of Call	Evidence of the call of God on their life for ministry Affirmation by their home church for suitability for ministry
Marriage & Family	If married or contemplating marriage, a spouse or fiancé/e who is supportive of the application for Registration Maturity in marriage and family life
Personal Faith Development & Expression	Believer's baptism by immersion Evidence of personal spiritual growth
Church Leadership & Ministry Implementation	Leadership skills and abilities A desire to see the extension of the Kingdom of God
Baptist Culture: Doctrine, Vision & Policy	Doctrinal beliefs and vision consistent with those of Queensland Baptists Been a member of a Baptist Church for a minimum of two years
Personality and Character	Christian, godly character suitable for pastoral ministry Relates well with people, is personable
Minister: Gifting & Skills	Proven ministry experience over a period of time in or through their local church
Minister's Spouse: Gifting & Skills	Awareness of gifting skills and how they may be used in ministry



4.1.5 Power to Reject or Defer Registration

Where any of these qualities detailed in 4.1.4 are absent, Ministerial Services may reject or defer registration and request that any deficiency must be addressed.

4.1.6 Assessment of Suitability for Registration

Ministerial Services will ensure that candidates undertake a proper and thorough process of assessment. Assessment of suitability will include but will not be limited to the following:

- a) the completion of application forms;
- b) evidence of a current Positive Notice Blue Card;
- c) a confidential interview examining significant factors that could impact future ministry;
- d) references from the local church, minister, and other pertinent people (as decided by Ministerial Services);
- e) a psychologist's report;
- f) a medical report;
- g) an interview process (as decided by Ministerial Services);
- h) a decision by Ministerial Services (with appropriate conditions); and
- i) the acceptance of registration by commitment to the conditions of registration.

4.1.7 Entitlements of Registration

A Registered Minister will be eligible:

- a) to apply for a marriage celebrant's licence if not already held
- b) to apply for support from Queensland Baptist Services Group (e.g. Long Service Leave fund, Baplink loans, Removal Fund, Scholarship Fund, pastoral resources)
- c) for recognition by the local church, denomination and community as a Registered Baptist minister
- d) to officially use the title of "Pastor"
- e) for membership of the Queensland Baptists Assembly

4.1.8 Prior to Registration being formally granted all candidates are required to sign the Code of Ethics and a Statement of Undertaking.

4.2 Re-registration

The Ministerial Registration Group will process re-registration applications, review reports and make a recommendation to Ministerial Services for the re-registration of a minister. Re-registration will be valid for up to four years depending on:

- a) the production of a brief, mid-registration report outlining progress on conditions of registration
- b) the satisfactory meeting of the conditions of registration

4.3 Ministerial Registration Group

A Ministerial Registration Group will be established in the following manner:

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- 4.3.1** The Ministerial Registration Group will be a sub-committee of Ministerial Services who will oversee its appointment and functioning.
- 4.3.2** The Ministerial Registration Group will consist of a minimum of three and maximum of five Registered Ministers and will be elected by the Registered Ministers of Queensland Baptists. Ministerial Services will call for nominations from the Ministers and the Group will be elected by postal ballot.
- 4.3.3** Guidelines for its functioning will be approved by Ministerial Services.
- 4.4** Mentors
- 4.4.1** A mentor is a person who shares God-given resources with the Minister, giving input into the minister's life. A mentor would normally be someone with experience in pastoral ministry with whom one could discuss life and ministry.
- 4.4.2** A suitable mentor may be a more experienced minister, a retired minister, or in exceptional cases, a peer in ministry (i.e. a co-mentoring relationship).
- 4.4.3** For registration purposes, it would normally be expected that there be intentional interaction with the mentor at least six times per year.
- 4.4.4** The minister may choose a mentor, but must seek approval from Ministerial Services when initially registered, or from the Ministerial Registration Group in cases of re-registration.
- 4.5** Personal Ministry Development Plan
- 4.5.1** All Registered Ministers must have a current Personal Ministry Development Plan to which they are adhering and should follow these Guidelines:
- 4.5.2** The Plan must be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely and designed to be of benefit to the Minister in the ministry setting.
- 4.5.3** The Plan may include areas of formal or informal study, attendance at seminars or conferences, private and personal study or a combination of these.
- 4.5.4** The Plan needs to be agreed upon by:
- a) The Minister
 - b) The Minister's Mentor
 - c) A representative from the church or ministry setting, and
 - d) A representative from Ministerial Services (in the case of Registration) or the Ministerial Registration Group (in the case of re-registration)
- 4.5.5** All four persons will sign off on the Personal Ministry Development Plan with a copy held by each party.

5. ORDINATION OF MINISTERS

5.1 General Requirements

All Registered Ministers are encouraged to work towards ordination. The requirements for ordination are as follows:

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5.1.1 Candidates for ordination must:

- a) Complete a course of study approved by Ministerial Services at Malyon College, or an equivalent course of study, and
- b) Minister for a period, immediately prior to ordination, of continuous and satisfactory registered pastoral service, as determined by the Ministerial Services. Normally such pastoral service is to be three (3) years.
- c) Show satisfactory character and spiritual development as decided by Ministerial Services, the church or organisation to whom the minister is accountable, and the minister's mentor
- d) Have the support of their church.

5.1.2 Those who have satisfied the requirements for ordination as Baptist Ministers, as determined by the Ministerial Services, and have requested that they be set apart to the ongoing work of the ministry will be recommended for ordination by Queensland Baptists. At the time of ordination, a minister must be functioning as:

- a) Senior or solo pastor
- b) Pastoral team member
- c) A Queensland Baptists pastoral ministry role accountable to Queensland Baptists
- d) A missionary/para-church worker whose primary accountability is to the local Queensland Baptists Church or to Queensland Baptists or to a Baptist agency.

5.2 Study Requirements

5.2.1 The study requirements for ordination will be determined by Ministerial Services.

5.2.2 Applicants for ordination should note carefully that it is a requirement for their spouse to complete the Equipping Partners for Ministry course prior to ordination.

5.3 Special Case Exceptions

Notwithstanding any of the above, Ministerial Services may, at its discretion, and without precedent, consider the ordination of persons who present special characteristics that do not fully comply with the above conditions. For example, pastors over 50 may apply for ordination if they have 10 years experience as a registered pastor and have completed the Malyon Pastoral Award or its equivalent as decided by Ministerial Services.

5.4 Women and Ordination

Queensland Baptists has decided that women will not be accepted as candidates for ordination. (Assembly 22.05.2009)

5.5 Applications for Ordination

The act of ordination in most cases will be the combined responsibility of the local Baptist church to whom the candidate is accountable and Ministerial Services. Application for ordination will be made to both Ministerial Service and the local church to whom the applicant is accountable. The ordination ceremony will normally be held in the local church.

Applications for Ordination must be submitted to Ministerial Services no later than six (6) calendar months prior to the expected date of ordination.

5.6 Queensland Baptists will normally cease to recognise the ordination of a person who is not engaged in vocational ministry (as recognised by Ministerial Services) for more than two years, with the exception of pastors who retire from ministry and do not enter another vocation. Recognition of ordination may be re-instated by Ministerial Services when vocational ministry is re-entered.



6. MINISTERS ENGAGED IN OTHER MINISTRIES

6.1 Registered Minister on Special Service

A Registered Minister may be listed as a Registered Minister on Special Service under the following conditions:

- 6.1.1 The minister has served as a Registered Ordained Minister in a Queensland Baptists Church or any other local Baptist Church affiliated with a member State Union of the Baptist Union of Australia for five (5) years or has been a Registered Minister within a Queensland Baptists Church for a minimum of seven (7) years.
- 6.1.2 The minister continues to serve in a church organisation, mission organisation or para-church group deemed suitable by the Ministerial Services.
- 6.1.3 The nature of the minister's service is clearly ministry i.e. the exercising of leadership, the regular ministry of God's Word and pastoral care of and/or responsibility for a specific group of people.
- 6.1.4 The minister provides Ministerial Services with a letter of recommendation from the leadership of the Baptist Church of which the minister is a member, indicating the minister's demonstrated commitment to the ministry of the church, and the leadership's support of the minister in the minister's employment.
- 6.1.5 The above criteria need to be satisfied for each registration period.

6.2 Special Circumstances

In special circumstances, the Ministerial Services may grant limited Special Service registration to a minister not fulfilling the above criteria. Re-registration may be sought but the Ministerial Services will determine the process and criteria for re-registration for each situation individually.

7. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

7.1 General

- 7.1.1 Ministers who have been registered for a minimum of five (5) years may be granted Leave of Absence for a maximum of two (2) years. Longer Leave of Absence will be granted only in the most exceptional circumstances as determined by Ministerial Services on a case by case basis.
- 7.1.2 If, by the conclusion of this time, the minister has not re-entered pastoral ministry, the minister's registration automatically lapses.
- 7.1.3 Re-registration may be sought but the Ministerial Services will determine the process and criteria for re-registration on a case by case basis.

7.2 Grounds for Application of Leave of Absence

7.2.1 Leave of Absence may be considered in the following circumstances:

- a) Protracted ill health.
- b) Difficult personal circumstances e.g. marital or family crisis.
- c) "Time out" to address personal issues relating to ministry functioning e.g. effectiveness, suitability, stress, burnout, or responding to conflict.
- d) Desire to experience a different occupation for a period.
- e) Engage in a course of study.
- f) Special case as determined by Ministerial Services.

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7.2.2 An applicant is required to provide grounds for any application for Leave of Absence specifying which of the above listed categories are relevant (It could be more than one.)

8. CODE OF ETHICS

8.1 Ministerial Services will ensure a Code of Ethics for Ministers is maintained.

8.2 All Registered Ministers are required to adhere to the Code of Ethics as amended from time to time and so signify by signing the document.

8.3 Breaches of the Code of Ethics will be referred to the Ethical Issues Response Group who, upon investigation, will forward recommendations to Ministerial Services to consider an appropriate response.

8.4 Ministerial Services will ensure that guidelines for the operation of the Ethical Issues Response Group are maintained and adhered to.

8.5 If a Minister is placed under discipline, the following will apply:

- a) Ministers' names are not published in the Handbook but their names remain on the official list.
- b) Voting and speaking rights, as members of the Assembly, are withdrawn.
- c) Marriage Celebrants' Licences are withdrawn.
- d) Long Service Leave entitlements will not accrue during the period of discipline.

9. DE-REGISTRATION

9.1 Grounds for De-registration

A process for de-registration will be initiated if a Registered Minister:

- a) Commences pastoral service with another denomination or church not affiliated with Queensland Baptists.
- b) Becomes a member of another denomination or church not affiliated with Queensland Baptists.
- c) Has not had her/his registration transferred to another body within twelve (12) months of leaving Queensland.
- d) Has not maintained membership with a church affiliated with Queensland Baptists except where age or infirmity prevents such membership being maintained.
- e) Has not served as a Baptist Minister for two (2) years.
- f) Has been on Leave of Absence for two (2) years or more unless Ministerial Services has approved further Leave of Absence.
- g) Has ceased to adhere to the central doctrines of Queensland Baptists.
- h) Has been found guilty by Ministerial Services of serious moral or ethical misconduct.
- i) Gives Ministerial Services cause to de-register.

9.2 Process for De-registration

9.2.1 Automatic De-registration. In cases covered by clauses (a) to (f) above, the person will be advised in writing the reason/s that Ministerial Services is initiating the process of de-registration. A representative of Ministerial Services may make personal contact with the person involved.

9.2.2 Investigative cases. In cases covered by clauses (g) to (i) above, the Ethical Issues Response Group will be asked to investigate the situation and bring a report to Ministerial Services.



10. RE-ENTRY

10.1 A Minister who has been de-registered may apply for re-entry as a Registered Minister once the grounds for De-registration have been addressed and the requirements for re-entry have been satisfied. Re-entry may occur following a period of Special Service, Leave of Absence, Discipline or De-registration. Ministerial Services will determine the process and requirements for re-entry.

10.2 Process

10.2.1 Three (3) months before the conclusion of a period of Special Service or Leave of Absence a minister should advise Ministerial Services of his/her intention either to: -

- a) Seek re-entry, or
- b) Apply for an extension, or
- c) Resign any Registration held.

In the event of no letter being supplied as above, option (c) shall be deemed to pertain.

10.2.2 A minister returning from discipline or from a period of de-registration will be required to submit to the re-entry process.

10.2.3 In all cases of re-entry, Ministerial Services will determine the process and the criteria for each individual situation.

11. GENERAL GUIDELINES

11.1 Divorce. Neither divorce (with or without remarriage) nor marriage to a divorced person will be treated as an automatic bar to Registration, but as a serious matter demanding especially careful consideration, particularly with reference to evidence of the applicant's commitment over a period of time to the Biblical pattern of marriage. No decision concerning one applicant will be taken as a precedent when considering another.

11.2 Long Service Leave. Only Registered Ministers are eligible to participate in the Queensland Baptists Long Service Leave Scheme.

11.3 Marriage Celebrant's Licence. Only Registered Ministers will be recommended to the State Government for recognition as Marriage Celebrants. Ministerial Services may require training before an application for a Licence is made. Ongoing training may be required to maintain a Celebrant's Licence. Retired ordained Ministers may retain their marriage celebrant's licence without being registered.

11.4 Suspension. Where there is reasonable cause to believe that the conduct of a Minister is contrary to that expected of a Queensland Baptists Registered Minister, and the circumstances require it, the General Superintendent, or in his absence either the President or the Chairman of Ministerial Services, is empowered to suspend the registration of a Minister until the next meeting of Ministerial Services who will then determine the way forward.

11.5 Registered Ministers should be total abstainers from the use of alcohol.

11.6 Registered Ministers must totally abstain from the use of non-prescribed addictive drugs.

11.7 Ministerial Services will approve a course for Registered Ministers' spouses as a support to them in their role and ministry.

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- 11.8** Retired Ministers. Registered Ministers who have reached retirement age may apply to Ministerial Service to be listed as a Retired Minister. Retired Ministers will not be required to fulfil the requirements for Registration but will be permitted to keep their Marriage Celebrant's Licence.

12. APPEAL PROCESS

The Constitution and Bylaws of Queensland Baptists outlines the appeals process and also applies to all appeals against decisions made by Ministerial Services. It is reproduced below for information.

"Appeals

- 12.8 A Student Minister, Minister or Pastoral Assistant may appeal against a decision of Ministerial Services which affects them.
- 12.9 The appeal is to be made to the Secretary in writing.
- 12.10 When an appeal is received by the Secretary the Board must set up a Ministerial Grievance Committee consisting of at least three (3) persons who are not members of the Board, members of Ministerial Services or members of the Ethical Issues Response Group.
- 12.11 A Ministerial Grievance Committee may dismiss the appeal and uphold the decision under appeal, substitute its own decision or remit the matter to Ministerial Services for re-consideration in accordance with the directions of the Ministerial Grievance Committee. There shall be no further right of appeal.
- 12.12 The Board may also set up a Ministerial Grievance Committee to review any decision of Ministerial Services without an appeal having been instituted."

13. SPECIAL CASE EXEMPTIONS

- 13.1** Ministerial Services, at its discretion and in exceptional circumstances, may request approval from the Board of Queensland Baptists to vary requirements from any of the above Guidelines.