



Monday, June 7, 2021

Proposals to Pacific Mountain Regional Council

Please submit by: June 10th, 2021

Proposals to Pacific Mountain Regional Council

We recognize that individual members, Communities of Faith, Covenantal Ministries, Regional Committees/Councils/Groups, and Regional Council Members may want The Pacific Mountain Regional Council or Executive to take action on a specific issue or concern. You might have something to share for education, or desire a conversation about a specific topic. You might want to have some education and conversation about a topic leading towards taking action. A “proposal” is the formal request for any of these.

The Manual (2021), Section F, describes in detail how a proposal may be submitted. The template below also provides a way for creating a proposal. Proposals can be submitted before the Regional Council meeting, to be circulated in the Regional meeting resource, or a proposal can be submitted to the chairperson of the Business Committee before the scheduled close of submission of new business during our Regional Meeting. See the agenda for the specific close of business time. Any proposals received after the deadline will be forwarded directly to the PMRC Executive.

Who Can Make a Proposal?

- **Proposals by Member(s) of a Community of Faith** (F.1.2.1). Any Full-member of The United Church of Canada through their local Community of Faith Governing Body. The governing body has several options to choose from when evaluating a proposal. (See section F.1.2.1 and F.1.3.1)
- **Proposals by Others** (See section F.1.2.2)
 - A proposal may also be started by:
 - a member of the Regional Council; (F.1.3.3)
 - a committee or other church body of the Council; (F.1.3.4) or
 - the Regional Council. (F.1.3.2)

How do I/we craft a proposal?

We are asking you to submit your proposal in a very focused way.

- **Name the solution your proposing up front.** This way we can read the rest of the proposal with the solution in mind.
- **Name the type of proposal:**
 - Education – the major intention is to educate the Regional Council about something important.
 - Conversation – the major intention is for the Regional Council to discuss a question or concern.
 - Decision – the desire is that a decision will be made to take action. You must have a clear outcome or solution as part of a decision proposal including financial implications.

- **Why is this issue important?** Provide the background needed to consider the proposal in two (2) pages or less. What's the issue or challenge or gap being identified? Why is that the case? What ENDS Policy supports the proposal? Is there a need for a revised or new ENDS Policy?
- **What might the cost be?** Estimate the potential cost. Everything we do has a cost. It might be time from staff and volunteers. It might be budgetary. Being mindful of the cost is an important part of every proposal.
- **Is there a required format for a proposal?** Yes, to help people engage the topic as easy as possible all proposals must use the found below.

Things to keep in mind:

The Policy Committee of the Executive will be available at the General Meeting to help ensure your proposal is clear and focused enough to achieve the good conversations the meeting wants to have.

In order to make the best use of the meeting's time, The Policy Committee may also group together Proposals that deal with the same issue or topic, have the same purpose, or desired outcome. The Committee may generate an Omnibus Proposal that address the matter raised.

Proposals from individual community of faith members or governance groups must follow the steps in F.3.1.1 and include a copy of the motion to transmit with the proposal.

Name of person submitting this proposal	Keith Simmonds
Email	keithsimmonds@duncanunited.org
Phone Number	(236) 594-8200
Proposal Name	A Task Group on Pension Equity for United Church Pension Plan Members
Source	member of the region
Community of Faith	Duncan United Church
Type of Proposal	For Decision (I want The Region to make a decision or take an action)

Proposal: What's the solution to the issue/challenge/gap identified?

Proposal

That the
 United Church of Canada – General Council - instruct the General Council
 Executive to commission a Task Group to explore and make recommendations
 leading towards an equitable distribution of benefits (pension amount) amongst
 United Church of Canada Pension Plan members. Recommendations to come to the
 next General Council Meeting (at minimum) for implementation and action.

Background: What information do you think people need to have in order to understand the issue and how your proposal addresses it. Is there support or a gap in existing ENDS Policies? Please limit information to 1000 words.

Background

Background:

As a former Conference President, serving minister and member of the Pacific Mountain Region's Pastoral Relations Committee I have seen rates of pay and pensionable earnings calculations for ministry personnel and lay employees vary widely depending on job position, geographic location and a Pastoral Charge's ability to pay. Leaving aside the salary grid basing pay (and thus pension) on years of service, I am aware that:

Ministry Personnel serving in isolated, Indigenous, rural pastoral charges and/or charges that supply a manse are paid at different rates (usually smaller) than their urban counterparts for similar and often highly demanding service.

- o A minimum \$20,000.00 a year difference exists between Cost of Living category 1 and Cost of Living category 6 pay for ministry personnel, resulting in a smaller pension for the Cost of Living category 1 minister.

- o A minister living in a manse has pensionable credits based on their base salary plus 40% (placing them in an area equivalent to a Cost of Living category 4 minister, about \$10,000 a year less than colleagues living beside them in a Cost of Living category 6 location, or more than colleagues living in adjacent, Cost of Living category 1 to Cost of Living category 3 communities).

Folk serving in innovative and non-traditional ministries are sometimes not able to participate in the pension plan (paying both employer and employee shares takes too large a part of their income).

- Some ministry personnel (often women) work part time for most of their careers, providing good, faithful and capable service, with little to any pension to sustain them in retirement.

General Council (thus Regional) staff are not allowed to pay into the pension plan at a rate equivalent to their earnings (some earnings don't count).

Many employees are paid much less than ministry personnel (for full time equivalent work) and are, therefore, required to exist on much smaller pensions than those already considered less than adequate (based on the advice of the Pension Board) for ministry personnel.

These are a few of the circumstances giving rise to a varied and disparate pension amount for ministry personnel serving in similar capacities across the church. The greatest cause being the shift from determining pensionable earnings at annual salary plus 40% to annual salary plus Cost of Living allocation (formerly housing allowance) based on geographic location. The pension disparity is neither equitable, nor just and I know our church can and will find ways to bring redress to the situation.

This Proposal

Meets the Mission Statement of Pacific Mountain Region on all points as healthy communities of faith and ministries depend on effective leadership, in part from Ministry Personnel and faithful public witness must be seen in the activities of the church, as well as heard in the voices of its prophetic witness.

The mission of the Pacific Mountain Regional Council Executive is:

- healthy communities of faith and ministries

- effective leadership
- faithful public witness

This Proposal meets the Ends Policies of Pacific Mountain Region in:

B. Leadership

To effectively meet the demands of a changing church and world, the Region has leaders, both ministry personnel and lay, who are supported, connected, and engaged.

Estimated Cost: If this is a proposal for decision, what is your best estimate implementing this proposal might cost financial or in time and effort?

Estimated Cost

Costs appropriate to a Task Group under current circumstances. Much of its work could be done remotely, with a minimum of staff support time. The Proposal calls upon the church to do some research, find out what other organizations are doing and to come back to the next general council meeting with recommendations on restructuring our pension plan to ensure that it provides an equitable amount of pension income for plan members.

Confirmation

I am ready to submit this proposal

Pease submit by: June 10, 2021