

## **D 25 Local Mission Model**

### **Operating Policy**

**D 25 05 Mission/Field**—The following Mission/Field Model Operating Policy shall be followed as closely as possible by all missions/fields. Those sections of the model operating policy that appear in bold print are essential to the unity of the Church worldwide and shall be included in the operating policy for each mission/field. Other sections of the model operating policy may be modified as set out in Article XIV, provided they continue to be in full harmony with the provisions of this model. Any other modifications needed to meet specific conditions in a mission/field shall be submitted to the respective division executive committee for consideration. Where specific cases require modification to material in bold print, final approval for such modifications to any material in bold print must be studied and approved by the General Conference Administrative Committee after receiving a recommendation from the division executive committee and the Office of General Counsel. Amendments to the Mission/Field Model Operating Policy shall be made by action of the Executive Committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists at any Annual Council of that committee.

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### **Operating Policy of the \_\_\_\_\_ Mission/Field of Seventh-day Adventists**

#### **Article I—Name**

This organization shall be known as the \_\_\_\_\_ Mission/Field of Seventh-day Adventists, hereinafter referred to as the mission/field.

#### **Article II—Purpose**

The purpose of this mission/field is to call all people within its territory to become disciples of Jesus Christ, to proclaim the everlasting gospel embraced by the three angels' messages (Revelation 14:6-12), and to prepare them for Christ's soon return.

#### **Article III—Relationships**

The \_\_\_\_\_ Mission/Field is a member unit of the \_\_\_\_\_ Union and is located in the territory of the \_\_\_\_\_ Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The purposes, policies, and procedures of this mission/field shall be in harmony with the working policies, actions, and procedures enacted by the Executive Committee of the \_\_\_\_\_ Division and the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. This mission/field shall pursue the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in harmony with the Fundamental Beliefs, programs, and initiatives adopted and approved by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in its quinquennial

sessions.

## **Article IV—Geographic Territory**

The territory of this mission/field shall consist of \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Article V—Membership/Constituency**

The membership/constituency of this mission/field shall consist of such churches as have been or shall be properly organized in any part of the territory served by the mission/field and accepted by vote of the delegates assembled at any mission/field constituency session.

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## **Article VI—Principal Office**

The principal office for the transaction of the business of the \_\_\_\_\_ Mission/Field is fixed and located at \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. The executive committee of the \_\_\_\_\_ Union may change the location of the principal office.

## **Article VII—Membership/Constituency Meetings**

**Sec. 1. Regular Meetings:** This mission/field shall hold regular quinquennial constituency meetings at such time and place as the mission/field executive committee in counsel with the officers of the union mission/union conference shall designate. In the event that the executive committee fails to call a regular constituency meeting within the quinquennial period, the \_\_\_\_\_ Union Executive Committee may give notice for such a meeting and designate the time and place. Notice of the time and place of the meeting of the delegates representing the members shall be given by:

- a. A notice printed in the official publication of the mission/field at least four weeks before the date of the session, or
- b. A method approved by the \_\_\_\_\_ Mission/Field Executive Committee, provided all member units receive notice with sufficient time to select delegates, or
- c. A method approved by the \_\_\_\_\_ Union Executive Committee, in the event of inaction or failure to call a constituency meeting by the \_\_\_\_\_ Mission/Field Executive Committee.

**Sec. 2. Special Meeting: a.** The executive committee shall call a special constituency meeting when:

- 1) It is voted by the executive committee, or
- 2) It is voted by the delegates at any constituency meeting, or
- 3) It is requested by \_\_\_\_\_ percent of the churches through their church boards, or
- 4) It is voted by the \_\_\_\_\_ Union Executive Committee or the Division Conference Executive Committee.

The date for such a meeting in response to paragraphs 3) and 4)

above shall not be more than 90 days from the date when the actions described in paragraphs 3) and 4) above are communicated to the officers/executive committee of the union.

**b. In the absence of a timely response by the executive committee to paragraphs 2) through 4) in Sec. 2. a. above, the GC Working Policy 2018-2019 Model Constitutions / 231**

**\_\_\_\_\_ Union Executive Committee or the Division Executive Committee may call a special constituency meeting of the mission/field and designate the time and place for such a meeting.**

**c. The agenda for special constituency meetings shall be included in the notice of the meeting.**

**d. The time and place of special constituency meetings shall be given in the same manner as for regularly scheduled constituency meetings.**

**Sec. 3. Chair and Secretary for Constituency Meetings: The president of this mission/field shall serve as chair and the secretary of this mission/field shall serve as secretary for constituency meetings of this mission/field. The president may designate other individuals to assist in chair duties from time to time. In the event that the president's office is vacant or that the president is unavailable to serve as chair, the ranking union officer present shall serve as chair for the meeting.**

**In a similar manner, arrangements may be made for a secretary *pro tem* if the secretary's office is vacant or the secretary is unavailable to serve at the constituency meeting.**

**Sec. 4. Regular Meeting Business: The business of the regular constituency meeting will include the election/appointment of personnel for various positions (see Sec. 10. below), the receipt of reports from the president, secretary, treasurer/chief financial officer (report based on audited statements), departmental directors, and the auditor. In addition, the constituency meeting shall review/create plans for moving the mission/field toward conference status. It shall also endorse/approve/develop plans for the conduct of the work as are desirable and in harmony with the policies of the \_\_\_\_\_ Division.**

**Sec. 5. Quorum: At least \_\_\_\_\_ percent of the delegates authorized hereinafter under Sec. 1. and 2. of Article VI must be present at the opening of any regular or special constituency meeting to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Once the meeting is declared open, the delegates remaining shall constitute a quorum.**

**Sec. 6. Proxy Voting: All delegates must be present in person at any constituency meeting in order to be eligible to vote. There shall be no voting by proxy.**

**Sec. 7. Voting Rights of the Delegates: Each delegate appointed to**

act on behalf of the members of this mission/field shall be entitled to one vote on each question to be decided by the body. The voting rights of the **232 / Model Constitutions GC Working Policy 2018-2019** individual delegates representing the members as hereinafter provided shall be limited to the particular constituency meeting of the mission/field in which they have been designated to represent a local church, institution, the Union, the Division, or the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

**Sec. 8. Voting: The voting on matters of business shall normally be by *viva voce*. The chair may call for the vote by other means, including a secret ballot, when it is deemed advisable or is requested by the membership.**

**Sec. 9. Parliamentary Authority:** The parliamentary authority for constituency meetings pertaining to all rules and procedures not covered by its bylaws shall be based on those published in the *General Conference Rules of Order*, and any adaptation or supplement approved by the division executive committee, unless otherwise determined by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the constituency meeting.

**Sec. 10. Elections/Appointments and Term of Office: a. Elections:** **The president, secretary, and treasurer/chief financial officer of this mission/field shall be elected by the union constituency/executive committee rather than by the session of this mission/field. The election of departmental directors, associate departmental directors, associate secretaries, or associate treasurers for this mission/field, is normally done during the constituency session. If personnel for available positions are not all elected during the session, their appointment shall be referred to the executive committee. The constituency meeting shall also elect the members (other than ex officio) of the mission/field executive committee and, where required by the governance documents of mission/field institutions, the chief administrator(s) and board members of such entities.**

**b. Term of Office: Persons elected at the constituency meeting and those appointed by the executive committee normally serve until the next regular constituency meeting. However, their period of service may be shorter due to resignation, voluntary retirement, retirement in situation where a mandatory retirement age policy is in effect, or removal from office, for cause, by the executive committee or a special constituency meeting.**

The phrase “for cause” when used in connection with removal from an elected or appointed position, or from employment, shall include but not be limited to 1) incompetence; 2) persistent failure to cooperate with duly constituted authority in substantive matters and with relevant employment  
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and denominational policies; 3) actions which may be the subject of discipline under the *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*; 4) failure to maintain regular standing as a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church; 5) theft or embezzlement; or 6) conviction of or guilty plea for a crime.

## **Article VIII—Representation**

**Sec. 1. Regular Delegates: Regular delegates to a mission/field session shall be such delegates as shall be duly accredited by the organized churches of the mission/field, on the basis of one for each local organized church, and one additional for each \_\_\_\_\_ members or major fraction thereof. Such delegates shall be chosen by action of the business meeting of each respective local church and include males and females.**

**Sec. 2. Delegates at large: Delegates at large to a mission/field session shall be:**

**a. The members of the executive committee of this mission/field**

**b. Members of the General Conference, the \_\_\_\_\_ Division and the \_\_\_\_\_ Union Mission/Conference Committees who may be present at any session of this mission/field. The number of such delegates shall not exceed ten percent of the total number of delegates otherwise provided for**

**c. All ordained and licensed ministers, and those holding missionary credentials from the \_\_\_\_\_ Union or the mission/field**

**d. Such other persons as may be recommended by the executive committee, and accepted by the delegates in session.**

**Sec. 3. All delegates appointed to represent the members of this mission/field at any constituency meeting shall be members in regular standing of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.**

## **Article IX—Constituency Meeting Committees**

*(Note: Division executive committees may authorize a process whereby the session organizing and nominating committees may be selected and empowered to perform their tasks in advance of the session.*

*The process to select such committees for a session shall involve constituency representation rather than being accomplished by the executive committee alone. Unless a division executive committee has*  
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*approved other arrangements as described above, the following provisions shall apply for the appointment and functioning of session committees.)*

**Prior to each constituency meeting of this mission/field, the executive committee shall provide for such temporary committees as may be necessary to conduct the preliminary work for the session.**

**Committees that facilitate the business of the session include:**

**Sec. 1. Organizing Committee:** a. An organizing committee shall be constituted as follows: Each church represented at the constituency meeting shall choose, or empower its delegation to choose, one member plus one additional member for each \_\_\_\_\_ members or a major fraction thereof. In addition, the at-large delegates to the constituency meeting shall select \_\_\_\_\_ persons from the at-large delegate group to serve on the organizing committee.

b. Members of the organizing committee shall be chosen at or prior to the constituency meeting.

c. If the organizing committee is to meet prior to the constituency meeting, the time and place of the meeting shall be given in the official notice of the meeting.

**d. The chair of the organizing committee shall be the president of the Union or his designee.**

**e. The organizing committee shall nominate and the constituency shall elect:**

1) A nominating committee.

2) Other committees as may be necessary.

**Sec. 2. Nominating Committee: The nominating committee shall consist of \_\_\_\_\_ members, including the president of the \_\_\_\_\_ Union, or his designee, who shall serve as chair.**

**a. Those chosen as members of the Nominating Committee must be duly appointed delegates in attendance at the constituency meeting.**

**b. Persons holding elective office, as outlined in Article V, Sec. 10. in the current term shall not be eligible to serve on the Nominating Committee.**

**c. The Nominating Committee shall limit its nominations to those positions for which persons are to be elected at the constituency meeting and for which budgetary provisions have been made.**

**d. The Nominating Committee shall also nominate members, other than ex officio members, for the mission/field executive committee and for the boards of mission/field institutions whose**

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**bylaws indicate that board members for the entity are elected at a mission/field constituency meeting.**

**Article X—Executive Committee**

**Sec. 1. The mission/field executive committee, of which the president shall be the chair and the secretary/secretary-treasurer shall be the secretary, shall consist of from five to fifteen members, as determined by the union conference/union mission executive committee. The mission/field president, secretary, and treasurer/chief**

**financial officer shall be ex officio members of the executive committee. The officers of the \_\_\_\_\_ Union Mission/Union Conference, the \_\_\_\_\_ Division, and the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists are members ex officio of the mission/field executive committee; however, their membership shall be in addition to the number detailed above. Any such officers exercising their voting rights at any one meeting shall not make up more than ten percent of the committee membership present.**

**Sec. 2. Delegated Authority: The executive committee of this mission/field is delegated the authority to act on behalf of the constituents between constituency meetings, including the authority to remove, for cause (see definition of “for cause” in Article VII, Sec. 10 above), persons who have been elected at a mission/field constituency meeting including: directors of departments/services; chief administrators of institutions; and board/committee members whose election or appointment is a result of a constituency meeting or executive committee meeting action; and to fill, for the remaining portion of the term, any vacancies thus created.**

**Sec. 3. Administrative Authority: The executive committee shall have full administrative authority:**

**a. To fill for the current term any vacancies that may occur by death, resignation, or otherwise, in its boards, committees, departments, or in offices which have been filled by mission/field constituency meeting election.**

**b. To appoint committees, such as an administrative committee, with their terms of reference.**

**c. To employ such personnel as may be necessary to execute its work effectively.**

**d. To grant and withdraw credentials and licenses. The withdrawal of credentials shall require the consent of two-thirds (2/3) of those voting at an executive committee meeting where a majority of members is present.**

**Sec. 4. Meetings of the mission/field executive committee may be called at any time or place by the president, or should he be absent from the field, such meetings may be called by the secretary upon the written request of any three members of the mission/field executive committee.**

**Sec. 5. Attendance at Meetings: Where allowed by local law, executive committee members may participate in meetings by means of an electronic conference or similar communications by which all persons participating can hear each other at the same time, and participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at such a meeting.**

**Sec. 6. Notice of Meetings:** Notice as to time and place, and any other requirements under these bylaws, shall be provided to all members in a reasonable manner at least 48 hours prior to the meeting if the meeting is to take place by electronic conference or similar communications, or at least 96 hours if the meeting is to take place in person.

**Sec. 7. Quorum:** Unless otherwise required in the Operating Policy, \_\_\_\_\_ members, including the president, of the executive committee, shall constitute a quorum.

## **Article XI—Officers and Their Duties**

**Sec. 1. Executive Officers:** The executive officers of this mission/field shall be a president, a secretary, and a treasurer/chief financial officer. The secretary and treasurer/chief financial officer may be one individual known as the secretary-treasurer. It is the duty of these officers, in consultation with one another, to carry forward the work according to plans, policies, and programs voted by the constituency and/or the mission/field executive committee. These plans, policies, and programs shall be in harmony with the Fundamental Beliefs and actions adopted and approved by the General Conference of Seventhday Adventists in its quinquennial sessions.

The executive officers of this mission/field shall be appointed by the union at the time of its sessions, or by the union executive committee between union sessions. The executive officers shall be members of the local mission/field executive committee. Vacancies in such offices shall be filled by action of the union executive committee.

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**a. President:** The president, who shall be an ordained minister of experience, is the first officer and shall report to the executive committee in consultation with the secretary and the treasurer/chief financial officer. He shall act as chair of constituency meetings and of the executive committee and serve in the general interests of the mission/field as the constituency and the mission/field executive committee shall determine. In his leadership he shall adhere to the policies of the \_\_\_\_\_ Union, the \_\_\_\_\_ Division and of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, work in harmony with the union executive committee, and in close counsel with the union officers. When a local mission/field president is to be absent from the field for prolonged periods of time, the mission/field executive committee shall be authorized, in counsel with the union officers, to appoint an individual to act as chair during such absence.

**b. Secretary:** The secretary, associated with the president as an executive officer, shall serve under the direction of the executive committee and shall act as vice-chair of the executive committee. The



secretary shall report to the executive committee after consultation with the president. It shall be the duty of the secretary to keep the minutes of the constituency sessions and of the executive committee and to furnish copies of such to all members of the executive committee and to the officers of the \_\_\_\_\_ Union Mission/Union Conference. The secretary shall also be responsible for providing information as may be requested by the president or the union and local mission committees, and shall perform such other duties as pertain to the office.

**c. Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer:** The treasurer/chief financial officer, associated with the president as an executive officer, shall serve under the direction of the executive committee. The treasurer/chief financial officer shall report to the executive committee after consultation with the president. The treasurer/chief financial officer shall be responsible for providing financial leadership to the organization which will include, but shall not be limited to, receiving, safeguarding, and disbursing all funds in harmony with the actions of the executive committee, for remitting all required funds to the union/division/General Conference in harmony with the \_\_\_\_\_ Division policy, and for providing financial information to the president and to the executive committee. The treasurer/chief financial officer shall also be responsible for furnishing copies of the financial statements to the \_\_\_\_\_ Union officers.

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**Sec. 2. Other Officers:** Other individuals may serve as officers of the mission/field, such as associate secretary and associate treasurer.

## **Article XII—Directors of Departments/Associations/Services**

**Sec. 1. Advisory Role:** The directors of departments/associations/services of this mission/field shall work under the direction of the executive committee and the president and shall serve in an advisory relationship to the field.

**Sec. 2. Departments/Services Structure:** Mission/Field departments, associations, and services shall be organized in harmony with the department, association, service structure of the General Conference, but shall not necessarily duplicate the departments, associations, and services of the \_\_\_\_\_ Union or the Division.

## **Article XIII—Finance**

**Sec. 1. Tithes and Offerings:** The church funds managed by this mission/field shall be:

**a. Such portion of tithe as it shall be assigned by policy and as received from all churches and isolated members in the mission/field**

b. Appropriations from the \_\_\_\_\_ Union Mission/Union Conference or the \_\_\_\_\_ Division

c. Special donations.

**Sec. 2. Policies:** The portion of tithe which is reserved for this mission/field, as specified by policy, and all other funds shall be used in harmony with the policies of the \_\_\_\_\_ Division of the General Conference; and in the case of donations, their use shall be in harmony with the specifications of donors and in compliance with government regulations. Tithe is shared with the union and division on fixed percentages as set by the division executive committee and with the General Conference on fixed percentages as set by the Annual Council of the General Conference Executive Committee. This mission/field shall pass on monthly to the \_\_\_\_\_ Union Mission/Union Conference the specified tithe percentage, all mission/field offerings, and such other funds as may be called for by the policies of the union and division organizations.

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**Sec. 3. Bank Accounts:** The funds of this mission/field shall be safeguarded in harmony with the financial policies of the \_\_\_\_\_ Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Moneys shall be deposited in the name of the \_\_\_\_\_ Mission/Field of Seventh-day Adventists in regular or special accounts in such banks or savings institutions as the mission/field executive committee shall designate, and shall be withdrawn only by persons authorized by resolution of the mission/field executive committee.

**Sec. 4. Financial Statements:** The \_\_\_\_\_ Mission/Field shall regularly prepare statements of income and fund balances and shall be responsible for the filing of copies of the annual financial statement with the \_\_\_\_\_ Union, and the Division and, to the extent required by law, with any branch of local or national government.

## **Article XIV—Budget, Employee Compensation Review, and Financial Audit**

**Sec. 1. Budget:** The \_\_\_\_\_ Mission/Field shall prepare an annual budget in harmony with the policies of the \_\_\_\_\_ Division of the General Conference of Seventh day Adventists.

**Sec. 2. Employee Compensation and Expense Review:** The executive committee shall appoint an employee compensation and expense review committee, including a union officer or one or more representatives appointed by the union executive committee. The tasks of this committee are outlined in *General Conference Working Policy*.

**Sec. 3. Independent Audit:** A financial audit of this mission/field shall be conducted at least annually by an auditor chosen in harmony

with General Conference *Working Policy*; and the records of this mission/field or any of its subsidiaries, agencies, or institutions shall at all times be open to said auditor.

### **Article XV—Dissolution and Disposition of Assets**

This mission/field may be dissolved only by action of the union executive committee.

In the event of the dissolution of this mission/field and unless otherwise required by local law, all assets remaining after all claims have been satisfied shall be transferred to a legal entity authorized by the \_\_\_\_\_ Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

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### **Article XVI—Indemnification**

**Sec. 1.** To the extent permitted by law, this mission/field shall indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, because he/she is or was a member of the mission/field executive committee or an officer, employee, or agent of the mission/field against expenses (including legal fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him/her in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding if he/she acted in good faith and in a manner he/she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interest of the mission/field, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his/her conduct was unlawful.

**Sec. 2.** This right of indemnification shall be in addition to, and not exclusive of, all other rights to which such member of the executive committee, officer or department director may be entitled.

*(Note: This right of indemnification may be expanded or contracted as allowed under local law and as adopted by the constituents.)*

### **Article XVII—Amendments**

At any annual meeting of the \_\_\_\_\_ Union Mission/Union Conference Executive Committee, this operating policy may be amended by a majority vote, provided that such amendments shall not be inconsistent with the Constitution of the General Conference and the working policy of the \_\_\_\_\_ Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and with the spirit of the Mission/Field Model Operating Policy. However, those portions of this operating policy which are essential to the unity of the Church worldwide and are designated in bold print shall only be amended or revised from time to time by the \_\_\_\_\_ Union Mission/Union Conference Executive Committee in order to comply with changes to

**the Mission/Field Model Operating Policy as voted by the General Conference Executive Committee in its annual meetings.**