

## Disaffiliation FAQ

### QUESTIONS WE ARE HEARING

#### ***What if my church is considering disaffiliation from the UMC?***

The Peninsula-Delaware Conference Board of Trustees have set [requirements and procedures](#) for disaffiliation in accordance with ¶2553.

Congregations need to complete the discernment process and meet all requirements before Dec. 31, 2023.

A congregation that disaffiliates may affiliate with another stream of Methodism, with another denomination, or with no denomination at all.

#### ***Does the Annual Conference have to approve the Trustees' disaffiliation policy***

The 2019 special session of the General Conference, which adopted Par. 2553, gave the Conference Board of Trustees the responsibility to define the terms of disaffiliation, in consultation with the cabinet, the annual conference treasurer, the annual conference benefits officer, the director of connectional ministries, and the annual conference chancellor, and included minimal requirements that were mandated. Judicial Council has upheld the Trustees' right to add any additional requirements it deemed appropriate. No vote of the annual conference is required.

#### ***Why did the trustees not share the updated requirements sooner?***

As was shared in a recent statement: "The Trustees were advised to publish the revised policy prior to the Annual Conference Session, including a grandfathering clause that would apply to churches that had already held at least one duly called charge conference to officially discuss disaffiliation prior to Annual Conference. That advice was not heeded. We apologize for and deeply regret failing to heed that request and understand that it has created some confusion and, for some, a loss of trust. Under the leadership of Charles Emery, the new Trustee chair, we commit to sharing information in a timely manner."

#### ***Why are the trustees not postponing the implementation of new requirements?***

The board has a fiduciary responsibility to protect the assets of The United Methodist Church.

#### ***Will churches that submitted a letter of intention voted on by the Council, to disaffiliate prior to July 1 2022, be grandfathered into the former policy?***

Congregations have been free to discern disaffiliation since 2020. Several have exercised their ability to do so, including those who completed the process prior to two annual conferences and were approved for disaffiliation during those sessions.

Churches that had already held a duly called church conference with the District Superintendent prior to July 1 were "grandfathered" into the former requirements.

#### ***What is required of the congregational vote to disaffiliate?***

The choice by a local church to disaffiliate with The UMC under Par 2553 shall be made in sufficient time for the process for exiting the denomination to be complete prior to December 31, 2023. The provisions of ¶ 2553 expire on December 31, 2023 and shall not be used after that date.

The decision to disaffiliate from The UMC must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the professing members of the local church present at the church conference.

***Does the Annual Conference have to approve a Congregation's disaffiliation?***

In order for a congregation to disaffiliate, the Annual Conference must approve the disaffiliation by a simple majority vote.

***When does the Annual Conference vote on a congregation's disaffiliation?***

The Annual Conference will vote at its June 2023 session. The Annual Conference must approve the disaffiliation for the congregation to disaffiliate.

***May the required payments be paid over several years?***

The financial payments may be made in installments, but must be fully paid by December 31, 2023, for a congregation to disaffiliate.

***What if there are land and/or building deed restrictions on the property?***

All deed restrictions must be followed by the disaffiliating congregation prior to disaffiliation.

***Various questions related to calculating assets, defining property, etc.***

Many of these questions are addressed in the policy documents. The Conference Board of Trustees will work with churches to apply the policy in a fair, equitable and consistent manner.

***When does a disaffiliating congregation officially end its relationship with The UMC and Pen-Del?***

When all requirements of disaffiliation are completed and the church makes all required financial payments. This must occur no later than December 31, 2023, for the congregation to disaffiliate.

***Does my congregation have to vote in order to remain in The UMC?***

No vote is needed for a local congregation to remain part of the UMC.

***Can the Peninsula-Delaware Conference choose to leave the UMC?***

Judicial Council Decision 1444 declared annual conferences may not leave the UMC as a body.

For additional questions, please contact your District Superintendent.