



**The United Church
of Canada
General Council**

GC45 HF04 Vocational Review and Discipline Accountability Policy for Summer 2025

True Document Date: June 28, 2025

Origin: Rev. Dr. Barbara Fullerton

1. What is the issue? Why is it important?

While there is a great deal of accountability for ministry personnel within the denomination, there is little accountability for the vocational office overseeing the review and discipline process.

We believe God/Jesus/Holy Spirit is calling us to:

- Ensure that ministry personnel are treated equitably, competently, justly and with compassion
- Ensure that the Office of Vocation and review and disciple processes are transparent and accountable to the broader church.
- Ensure review and disciple decisions are subject to analysis and assessment by the broader church as well as by past and current ministry personnel.
- The call to ministry is a sacred covenant with God that needs to be respected and cherished. Those who are called to this covenant will be treated with respect and justice.
- We are a justice seeking church, and justice requires fairness and impartiality

2. What is happening now?

There is a wide divergence in review of clergy resulting from a complaint, and discipline practices in the Regions, and even between various subjects of review and discipline, within individual regions. This may be due to divergence in the competence of Vocations Ministers and reviewing disciplining bodies. The current method and practise of this justice issue causes distrust between General Council, the Regions and the Communities of Faith who are in relationship with ministry personnel.

3. What is the recommendation?

The Horseshoe Falls Regional Council proposes that the General Council will:

- Establish a discipline process oversight body that includes non-staff representatives from each region, with a mandate to conduct regular assessments of the Office of Vocation and its review/discipline actions and activities.
- There will be SMART (Standardized Metrics that are Achievable and Realistic in an appropriately Timely manner) requirements for review/disciplinary action.
- Establish a central repository of official review and disciplinary documents accessible for analysis and assessment by the person being reviewed and their advocate/companion and for church historians, in compliance with the concurrent research rules of The United Church of Canada.
- Upon completion of a review and/or disciplinary process, the subject of the review and the subject's advocate will be invited to conduct a confidential review of all documents produced by the review and disciplinary process and structures, and to give feedback on how the process of the Office of Vocation was carried out.
- The advocate of any subject of review and discipline will be given access to all meetings associated with the review that the subject of review attends, and access to disciplinary actions, when the subject of the review and discipline wishes.

4. How does this proposal help us live into our church's commitments on equity?

Many current and former Ministry Personnel who have been subjects of discipline in the church have given input in the drafting of this proposal. They have identified feeling unduly reviewed and disciplined on the basis of age, gender identity, education, disability, ethnicity, culture and race. Current and former Ministry Personnel who identify with each of these

communities have given input to the development of this proposal. Creating a more transparent and equitable review and discipline process benefits all ministry personnel and the communities they serve.

For the body transmitting this proposal to the General Council:

Please select the appropriate option and provide the key discussion points for items being forwarded to the General Council:

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree without forwarding to the General Council
- ☐ Disagree and forwarding to the General Council

If you have questions regarding this proposal, please send them to: GCinfo@united-church.ca

Document Type: [Proposal](#)

General Council: [GC45](#)

Originating Body: [Horseshoe Falls Regional Council](#)