

Standing Rules
PRESBYTERY OF NEW JERSEY
Presbyterian Church in America

PREFACE

1. The *Presbytery of New Jersey of the Presbyterian Church in America, Inc.*, also known as and hereinafter referred to as the *New Jersey Presbytery* (or simply, the *Presbytery*), shall be governed by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America. The Constitution is defined in the Preface to the *Book of Church Order* of the Presbyterian Church in America, Article III.
2. The sole functions of the Church, as a kingdom and government distinct from the civil commonwealth, are to proclaim, to administer, and to enforce the law of Christ revealed in the Scriptures. (BCO 3-3)
3. The New Jersey Presbytery consists of all the teaching elders and churches of the Presbyterian Church in America within its bounds as they have been accepted by the Presbytery.
4. Qualifications for and rights and limitations of membership in the New Jersey Presbytery shall be as defined in the *Book of Church Order* of the Presbyterian Church in America.
5. Should the Presbytery be dissolved and cease to exist, all assets shall be divided among its member churches. The formula to calculate the distribution of assets shall be proportional in accordance with each church's communicant membership. Should no member churches exist, the assets will revert to the Presbyterian Church in America, Inc. No assets shall be distributed under this provision to individuals.

ARTICLE I — MEETINGS

A. Stated Meetings

Four stated meetings shall be held each year to convene at 9:00 AM on the third Saturday of March, May, September and November.

B. Adjourned Meetings

Adjourned meetings may be held as determined necessary by Presbytery for continuing the business of stated meetings.

C. Called Meetings

Called meetings may be held as determined necessary, but are not encouraged. All requests for called meetings shall be made in writing to the stated clerk in accordance with the provisions of BCO 13-10.

D. Quorum

The quorum for meetings of Presbytery shall be in accordance with BCO 13-4.

E. Place of Meeting

1. The place of each stated and adjourned meeting shall be determined at the previous stated meeting or adjourned meeting, upon invitation from a church or institution. If no invitation is received, the moderator and stated clerk shall be responsible for arranging a place of meeting.
2. The place of each called meeting shall be determined by the moderator and stated clerk.

3. Lunch will normally be docketed from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm.

F. Docket

1. A proposed docket for each meeting of Presbytery shall be prepared and distributed in accord with standing rule Article II.C.2.c.
2. Requests for special speakers or presentations from outside Presbytery shall be referred to the appropriate permanent committee and approved by that committee before being admitted to the docket.
3. The docket for each meeting shall be adopted by a majority vote of the Presbytery and may be amended at any time during the meeting by a majority vote of Presbytery.
4. The docket for each stated meeting shall include an Order set for 11:45 a.m. which shall provide a period of fifteen minutes for prayer by and for the members, and fifteen minutes for members of Presbytery to share some of the things God is doing through their ministries.

G. Worship

1. The meetings of presbytery shall provide adequate time for the members to corporately engage in worship, prayer, study of the Word of God, and fellowship.
2. The stated meetings of presbytery shall be opened with a worship service, including a sermon to be arranged by the moderator in conjunction with the host church/institution. The worship hour will normally begin at 9:00 am and end at 9:45 am. When a second sermon is needed by the Examinations Committee, it may be docketed immediately after lunch.
3. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be administered at the September stated meeting as part of the opening worship, by the retiring moderator and/or persons delegated by the retiring moderator or stated clerk.

H. Attendance

1. Every teaching elder who is a member of Presbytery is expected to attend, and every session of Presbytery is expected to be represented at the meeting of Presbytery by a ruling elder in accordance with BCO 13-1 and 13-2. Members of Presbytery are expected to arrive on time at meetings of Presbytery and to attend all parts of the meetings unless specifically excused by Presbytery.
2. When providentially hindered from attending a meeting of Presbytery, members are expected to report the reason for non-attendance to Presbytery, and request to be excused by Presbytery. The following reasons shall automatically qualify for an excuse: death in family; personal illness; major crisis within the family or congregation requiring the pastor's or ruling elder's immediate attention; vacation; General Assembly committee meetings; and military duties. Any other excuse will require Presbytery's approval after a recommendation by the Membership and Assistance Committee.
3. Teaching elders who are honorably retired, declared infirm, or permitted to labor outside the bounds of Presbytery, such as foreign missionaries, are exempt from attendance requirements. Such individuals shall be expected to submit brief written reports to Presbytery at each November meeting.

4. Churches without sessions: Should a previously organized church find itself without a Session, per BCO 12-1, it shall notify Presbytery of such development. Upon receiving notification, the Presbytery shall proceed to establish a temporary system of government for the church in one of the ways described in BCO 5-3.

I. Adjournment Time

The docketed time for adjournment shall ordinarily be 3:00 p.m. The Presbytery may extend its time of meeting as long as it chooses, providing it has a quorum.

J. Meeting by Teleconference or Videoconference

Called meetings of Presbytery, and Presbytery commissions or committees may conduct meetings by teleconference or videoconference with the following restrictions and provisions.

1. The meeting shall not include the business of: (a) the gathering of evidence; (b) deliberation of guilt or innocence; (c) deliberation of a censure; or (d) an examination for ordination or licensure.
2. The technology of the conference shall ensure that all persons participating be able to hear each other or to see and hear each other (if videoconference) simultaneously in order to preserve the deliberative nature of the meeting.
3. The meeting shall be conducted by a meeting moderator. This will normally be the moderator of Presbytery, if a meeting of the Presbytery, or the chairman or convener if a commission or committee.
4. Participants in such a meeting shall seek the floor by announcing his name (and church, if requested by the meeting moderator). The meeting moderator shall recognize the speaker by name. Participants shall take care to avoid unnecessary noises or distractions and speaking out of turn.

ARTICLE II — OFFICERS

A. Moderator

1. A moderator shall be elected by Presbytery at the May meeting, to begin his term in September. He shall serve for one year and may not succeed himself.
2. The duties of the moderator shall be in accord with BCO 10-3.
3. The office of moderator shall alternate between teaching and ruling elders.
4. In emergencies, the moderator shall fill vacancies on commissions of Presbytery and committees of commissioners to the General Assembly.

B. Vice-moderator

The retiring Moderator shall serve as Vice – Moderator. In his absence, the most recently elected Moderator shall serve.

C. Stated Clerk

1. A stated clerk shall be elected by Presbytery upon nomination from the floor, for a term of three years, and shall be eligible to be elected to consecutive terms. Election shall normally be held at the September stated meeting.

2. The duties of the stated clerk shall be in accord with BCO 14-4, 13-9, and 13-10, and defined as follows:
 - a. He shall maintain a roll of teaching elders, churches, clerks of sessions, licentiates, candidates, chairmen of boards of deacons, and church treasurers.
 - b. He shall receive all official communications to Presbytery and shall present those communications to Presbytery and refer them to the appropriate committee.
 - c. Clerk's Report -
 - The report of the Presbytery Clerk shall be in written form, mailed with the agenda for Presbytery.
 - The clerk responds to questions on the written report through the Moderator.
 - The clerk shall recommend the approval of the minutes.
 - d. He shall supervise the recording of the minutes of the Presbytery meetings, shall reproduce and distribute the minutes normally, within two weeks following each stated meeting, and shall preserve an official permanent copy of the minutes.
 - e. He shall promptly communicate special orders of Presbytery, shall sign and issue the official orders of Presbytery (not otherwise provided for), and shall notify in writing persons elected to committees, commissions, and offices of Presbytery.
 - f. He shall advise the Moderator by keeping him informed of matters requiring his attention, making facilities of the stated clerk's office available to him, and rendering any service requested by him in connection with the operation of Presbytery.
 - g. He shall appoint temporary clerks for particular meetings of Presbytery as needed, and they shall serve under his direction.
 - h. He shall receive and process the annual statistical reports to the stated clerk of the General Assembly and shall prepare a summary of the reports to be presented to the Presbytery at the May stated meeting.
 - i. He shall prepare a proposed annual budget for the clerk's office to be submitted to the administration committee.
 - j. He shall serve as the Secretary of the Corporation.

D. Recording Clerk

1. A recording clerk shall be elected by Presbytery, upon nominations from the floor, for a term of one year, and shall be eligible to be elected to consecutive terms. Election shall normally be held at the September stated meeting.
2. The duties of the recording clerk shall be to take a full written record of the minutes of Presbytery and in general to assist the Stated Clerk in his duties during the meetings of Presbytery.

E. Treasurer

1. A treasurer shall be elected by Presbytery, upon nominations from the floor, for a term of three years, and shall be eligible to be elected to consecutive terms. Elections shall normally be held at the September stated meeting.
2. The duties of the treasurer shall be as follows:
 - a. He shall receive, record and acknowledge all funds contributed to Presbytery and shall disburse the funds of Presbytery as directed by Presbytery.
 - b. He shall give an accounting of the funds of Presbytery at each stated meeting.
 - c. He shall submit the books of Presbytery funds to Presbytery for auditing at the end of each fiscal year.
 - d. He shall serve as Treasurer of the Corporation.

F. Parliamentarian

1. A parliamentarian shall be elected by Presbytery, upon nomination from the floor, for a term of one year, and shall be eligible to be elected to consecutive terms. Election shall normally be held at the September stated meeting.
2. The duty of the parliamentarian shall be to advise the Moderator and the Stated Clerk in matters pertaining to parliamentary order relating to the business of Presbytery.

G. Executive Committee

1. The membership of the Executive Committee shall consist of:
 - a. All permanent committee chairmen
 - b. Officers of the Presbytery
Moderator Stated Clerk
Recording Clerk Treasurer
 - c. One member of Presbytery-at-large
2. The Chairman of the Executive Committee shall be the Moderator or Moderator-elect of Presbytery.
3. The Executive Committee shall act approximately two weeks before each stated meeting.
4. Functions
 - a. The committee shall function as a nominating committee.
 - b. The committee shall propose the budget.
 - c. The committee shall consider written reports from committees.
 - d. The committee shall propose the docket from each stated meeting.
 - e. The clerk shall mail, eight days before Presbytery, a packet including Presbytery docket, Committee reports, and Treasurer's report.
5. Administrative Committee
 - a. The members of the Administrative Committee shall be elected from among the members of the Executive Committee, and/or the Presbytery at large, in accordance with Article IV, Section A.

ARTICLE III — TRUSTEES

- A. The Board of Trustees shall consist of the members of the Executive Committee.
- B. The Trustees shall receive and hold for the use of Presbytery, all real and personal property, grants, endowments, and such other funds acquired, devised, purchased, or donated, not otherwise disposed of.
- C. The Moderator or Moderator-elect shall serve as the President of the Corporation.

ARTICLE IV — COMMITTEES

A. Permanent Committees

1. The Permanent Committees of Presbytery are: Administrative, Discipleship Ministries (NJ-CDM), Ministerial, New Jersey Mission to the World (NJ-MTW), New Jersey Mission to North America (NJ-MNA) and New Jersey Reformed University Fellowship (NJ-RUF).

Each Permanent Committee shall consist of at least four members.

2. The Ministerial Committee has the authority to act as a commission of Presbytery in dissolving pastoral relationships in cases where the pastor and congregation formally concur or where no congregations are concerned, and to dismiss ministers to other presbyteries. The committee shall inform the stated clerk of this action and the clerk may then accomplish the appropriate letters. The quorum for such commission functions shall always be at least two ruling and two teaching elders. (BCO 15-2)
3. The membership of each Permanent Committee shall ordinarily be composed of an equal number of teaching elders and ruling elders. Ordinarily, they shall be divided into yearly classes of equal number.
4. Elections shall normally be held at the September stated meeting.
5. The common duties of the Permanent Committees shall be as follows:
 - a. Each committee shall meet as needed to fulfill its appointed responsibilities, and the quorum shall be at least one-half of the elected members, including both teaching elder and ruling elder representation.
 - b. Each committee shall elect a chairman and other officers as needed from its membership.
 - c. Each committee shall report to Presbytery at least once a year and otherwise as needed.
 - d. Each committee shall prepare a proposed annual budget for the operation of the committee, to be submitted to the Executive Committee.
 - e. Each committee shall maintain a statement of purpose and responsibility approved by the Presbytery and appended to the Standing Rules. Changes in such statements require Presbytery approval.

B. Standing Committees

1. The Standing Committees of Presbytery shall be as follows: Thanks, Auditing, and Others as needed.
2. The Moderator, at each Presbytery meeting, shall appoint Standing Committees together with their chairmen, as needed.
3. The Moderator shall annually appoint, at the September meeting, a Coordinator for Presbytery Women's Ministry. She shall function under NJ-CDM and be a liaison with PCA CDM.

C. Ad-Interim Committees

1. An ad-interim committee may be established by Presbytery as needed for particular functions not assigned to one of the Permanent or Standing Committees. The purpose, size, and duration of ad-interim committees shall be determined by Presbytery.
2. Members of the ad-interim committees shall be elected by Presbytery upon nomination, or appointed by the moderator, as directed by the Presbytery.

ARTICLE V — FINANCES

- A. Funds for the operation of Presbytery shall be supplied by contributions from the churches of Presbytery, individuals, and other sources.
- B. Presbytery funds shall be distributed by the Treasurer in accord with the approved annual Presbytery budget for the expenses of operating the Stated Clerk's office, committees, and commissions.

ARTICLE VI — SESSIONAL RECORDS

- A. Each Session of Presbytery shall annually submit its records to Presbytery for inspection in accord with BCO 12-7.

- B. The Administrative Committee shall have the responsibility of reviewing minutes submitted by sessions, making recommendations on approval of minutes and on exceptions, and bringing to the attention of Presbytery any matters requiring their attention.

ARTICLE VII — GENERAL POLICIES

A. Rules of order

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern Presbytery in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the BCO and the Standing Rules.

B. Standing Rules Amendments

Proposed amendments to the Standing Rules of Presbytery shall be presented in writing at a stated meeting. Such proposed amendments shall be voted on at the next stated meeting of Presbytery and shall require a two-thirds majority of those enrolled at that meeting.

C. Motions

Except as exempted by the Recording Clerk, debatable motions from the floor shall be submitted in writing.

ADOPTED JUNE 6, 1982

AMENDED 09/18/82	AMENDED 03/19/83	AMENDED 09/17/83	AMENDED 03/15/86
AMENDED 05/09/87	AMENDED 11/18/89	AMENDED 05/19/90	AMENDED 09/28/91
AMENDED 11/20/93	AMENDED 03/02/96	AMENDED 09/19/98	AMENDED 09/18/04
AMENDED 11/15/08	AMENDED 05/17/09	AMENDED 09/19/09	AMENDED 11/20/10
AMENDED 11/15/14	AMENDED 5/20/17	AMENDED 11/16/19	AMENDED 5/20/2023