



AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF THE SOUTH
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The Ordination Paper Trail in the American Baptist Churches of the South (ABCOTS)

1. When an ABCOTS congregation is ready to ordain a member and it wants that ordination to be recognized by the American Baptist Churches, the pastor (or the pastor's designee) should be in touch with the appropriate ordination coordinator. This may be the president of the area or regional Ministers Council or a person selected by the cluster, area or regional Ministers Council to coordinate ordination procedures. The ordination coordinator will provide a set of materials, i.e., the **candidate** packet, which spells out the documentation to be submitted.
2. When the pastor has approved the requested documents in the completed candidate packet, two copies of the packet should be prepared – one should be sent to the Regional Office in Baltimore and the original should be sent to the ordination coordinator. It is important to send a copy to the Regional office, in case the original is mislaid or lost. This copy is kept in the Regional office until it is replaced by the recognition packet. The ordination coordinator works with the local church to insure that the submitted documents meet the standards set, and based upon this conclusion, presents the candidate packet to the ordination council.
3. When the candidate has been approved by the ordination council, the ordination coordinator:
 - A. insures that proper signatures are affixed to the ordination certificate, and makes two copies.
 - B. gives the original ordination certificate to the pastor and sends a copy to the Regional office.
 - C. adds the second copy to the ordination packet, which then becomes the **recognition** packet,
 - D. makes and delivers a copy of the recognition packet to the Regional Ministers' Council President at least one month before the next Ministers' Council Regional Conference. This will enable the Region President to schedule recognition of that ordination at the Regional Conference.
4. The ordination coordinator presents the original recognition packet to the Regional Ministers Council Executive Committee for review.
5. The Regional Ministers Council Executive Committee votes to approve or reject presentation of the ordination to the Council for recognition. Acceptance is accompanied by stipulating Professional Leadership Status (7, 6 or 3). Rejection should be accompanied by explanation.
6. All recognition packets that have been approved by the Regional Ministers Council Executive Committee, along with the ordinand, are presented to the Regional Conference for recognition. At that time the newly recognized ordinand is expected to:
 - A. Sign the Ministers Council Code of Ethics, if the ordinand has not done so earlier;
 - B. Pay their membership dues in the Ministers Council;
 - C. Complete the ABC Professional Leadership Change Form for the Professional Registry.The Code of Ethics form and the Professional Leadership Change Form are then added to the recognition packet and placed in the custody of the Region President (or designee)
7. The completed recognition packet is forwarded to the Regional Office by registered mail.
8. The Regional Office keeps the recognition packet in its files and enters the appropriate information about the person in the Professional Registry.

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