

## **CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE RULES AND PROCEDURES**

1. The Credentials Committee is made up of six (6) individuals. Members serve terms of three (3) years and are nominated by the Nominating Committee and submitted for vote on the final day of the Annual Meeting. Two (2) are nominated and elected each year.
2. Members elected to fill an unexpired term serve the remainder of the unexpired term.
3. The Credentials Committee is a standing committee of the Missouri Baptist Convention (MBC).
4. The Committee has the right and responsibility to review and make recommendations regarding affiliation of churches with the MBC or enrollment concerning the credentials of Messengers. This includes churches that are petitioning the MBC for affiliation and affiliated churches or Messengers challenged on the basis of faith, polity, origin, character, doctrine, or practice.
5. The Committee is guided by such rules and procedures as the MBC may adopt from time to time. In addition, the Messengers may give direction and guidance to the Committee by its resolutions and votes while in session. The duly elected Credentials Committee is the interpreter of each qualification.
6. To be eligible for affiliation, a church must complete the following steps:
  - a. Any Baptist church desiring affiliation with MBC completes an affiliation application, affirming the *Baptist Faith and Message* (current edition), or a doctrinal statement that is compatible with it. The church must also make an initial contribution to the Cooperative Program through the MBC.
  - b. The application form and contribution must be received at the MBC office during the fiscal year prior to the Annual Meeting to which the church sends Messengers for the first time.
  - c. All churches submitting an affiliation application form are examined by the Credentials Committee as to their qualifications. If the Credentials Committee recommends affiliation status, and if the MBC approves by majority vote, the churches are welcomed to affiliation and the Committee issues credentials to their Messengers.
7. To remain an affiliated church, singly aligned with MBC, the church must meet the following qualifications:
  - a. Has contributed to the work of the MBC through the Cooperative Program on at least an annual basis, and
  - b. Has not contributed to the work of any other national convention of churches or

organization that acts as a national convention, and has not sent representative(s) or Messenger(s) to such a convention (Any organization that independently sends and ordains ministers to the United States military services is considered a national convention), and

- c. Has not contributed financially to the work of any other state convention or organization that acts as a state convention in Missouri.

8. The Committee investigates the qualifications of a church to continue affiliation with the MBC or the qualifications of any person to serve as Messenger at the Annual Meeting upon a challenge from a credentialed Messenger or upon receipt or discovery of any information that, if true, causes the Committee to believe that the Messenger or church is disqualified, on personal grounds, or by reason of the character or attitude of the church.

9. Where the Committee is required to give notice to Messenger(s), a church, or others regarding the Committee's recommendation, such notice may be given orally or in writing, including telephonic or electronic, by the means deemed most appropriate by the Committee chair or his designee.

10. If a church has not given to the MBC through the Cooperative Program for the appropriate annual giving period mentioned in this document, there shall be no provision for any messenger, outside of the membership of said church, to submit a contribution to the Cooperative Program on their behalf during the MBC Annual Meeting.

11. Nothing herein is construed to prohibit affiliation with the MBC by those Baptist churches with racial, ethnic, cultural, or organizational relations, so long as no part of those relations is contrary to the MBC Charter, Constitution, Bylaws, Business and Financial Plan, or Statement of Faith.