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 applications for new church affiliations, concerns about existing church affiliations, and messenger eligibility for the MBC Annual Meeting.

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 & 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, ensuring their faith, practice, and polity are compatible with *The Baptist Faith & Message* (current edition), including reserving the office and function of pastor exclusively for biblically qualified men, and that they demonstrate a commitment to single alignment and cooperative missions. 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. A church not contributing to the Cooperative Program in the previous year will be considered "challenged" and subject to 8c below.
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.
d. Holds a faith, practice, or polity that is compatible with *The Baptist Faith & Message* (current edition), including reserving the office and function of pastor exclusively for biblically qualified men.

8. Upon a challenge from a credentialed Messenger or upon receipt or discovery of any information that, if true, indicates a Messenger or church is disqualified or not in cooperation with the MBC the Committee shall:
    a. Investigate the qualifications of any person so challenged as disqualified to serve as Messenger at the Annual Meeting.
    b. Investigate the qualifications of a church so challenged as disqualified to continue affiliation with the MBC.
    c. Recommend whether the Messengers should grant a one-year grace period to a challenged church, from one Annual Meeting to the next, to permit time for continued examination and discussion with the Credentials Committee, during which time the church shall retain full rights as affiliated members, while receiving additional resources and support to encourage renewed MBC participation and cooperation. At the next Annual Meeting, the Committee will report on corrective measures by the church, if any, and the Messengers may vote on the original challenge to affiliation.
    d. Recommend that the Messengers at the Annual Meeting decline to seat, or remove as Messenger, any person(s) challenged as disqualified by reason of personal grounds or by reason of the incompatible beliefs or actions of the church sending such Messenger(s).
    e. Recommend that the Messengers at the Annual Meeting decline or discontinue a church's affiliation upon the Committee's determination that the church is not in cooperation with the MBC, as provided in the MBC Constitution and Bylaws.
    f. All challenges and/or information related to the potential disqualification of a Messenger or church shall be (1) made in-person by a credentialed Messenger at the MBC Annual Meeting during an appropriate business session, or (2) submitted to the Credentials Committee via the "MBC

Credentials Committee Inquiry" form. The "MBC Credentials Committee Inquiry" form shall be available on the MBC website, as well as upon request via email from the MBC executive office. All submissions will be communicated to both the Credentials Committee chairman and the MBC executive office.

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.