

CONTINUING EDUCATION

There are a wide variety of options for continuing education. This policy covers the most commonly requested. For options not covered under this policy, consult Conference Administration. Requests for continuing education are to be approved in advance as follows:

1. All requests are to be submitted to Vice President for Administration.
2. If the request is not covered by this statement of policy, it will need to have the approval of the Potomac Conference Administrative Committee.

A. Continuing Education:

The Potomac Conference provides full time exempt ministerial employees and office staff with a "Continuing Education Bank" that will start accruing on a monthly basis at the beginning of employment. The balance in the employee's bank will be indicated on the payroll stub. This bank may be used for any type of approved continuing education event the employee chooses, and can be accessed on a year-by-year basis or accumulated over a period of time for use on events such as an overseas sabbatical.

Guidelines:

1. Forty dollars (\$40) will be placed into the employee's bank each month. (Lower amounts may be determined by ADCOM for certain categories of employees.)
2. Funds may be used beyond those accumulated as long as they can be recovered by year-end.
3. If the employee leaves the conference, any "borrowed" funds must be repaid.
4. Once an employee has determined to leave the conference, the bank cannot be accessed.
5. Accumulated funds will not be paid out upon termination.
6. The funds in the bank are to cover 100% of the costs of the event, including all per diems and travel expense.
7. The conference encourages participation by a local church to provide matching funds for more expensive events.
8. Prior approval will need to be obtained from ADCOM for all events the employee may wish to attend. Events that require more than 1 week away from work should be requested at least 2 months in advance.
9. A report form must be completed for all events. This form, along with receipts for tuition, travel, food and lodging must be submitted before funds will be released.
10. For overseas or higher-cost events, an employee may request an advance from his/her bank which will be treated as any other payroll advance until such a time as receipts are submitted for reimbursement.
11. This policy does not apply to required events.

CONTINUING EDUCATION, Cont'd

B. Masters in Pastoral Ministry

The Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry degree program offers professional training to pastors who are 35 years old or older. Andrews University Seminary provides the major part of this training at off-campus centers in North America. In our union, classes are conveniently offered at Washington Adventist University (WAU), 7600 Flower Avenue, Takoma Park, MD. This degree is not a substitute for the MDiv degree, it is basic training for Adventist ministry. To earn a Masters in Pastoral Ministry degree requires 48 credit hours. This takes most pastors about two years to complete.

Please let the Vice President of Administration know that you are interested in this educational program and he will take your name to ADCOM for approval. Then pastors may apply directly through Andrews University. There is no limit regarding how many pastors can be in this program at any given time.

Potomac Conference pays a flat rate each year towards tuition to Andrews University. The rest of the costs are the responsibility of the pastor. Specific costs to the pastor are for books, travel, housing and food. Accrued Continuing Education funds may be applied toward these expenses.

Pastors in this program must fill-out the conference travel form letting administration know when you are out of your districts. This education time is not counted against your 18 days of ministry outside of the conference each year.

C. Doctor of Ministry

Prerequisites:

1. Completed six years of service following the M.Div degree (or B.A. in Religion if pastor did not attend seminary) before ADCOM will consider approval for officially entering advanced degree program. Classes can be taken toward the D.Min degree (up to 18 hours) before formally entering the program.
2. Show high levels of professional skill in the following areas:
 - a. Administration
 - b. Promotion of total church program
 - c. Preaching
 - d. Soul winning
 - e. Pastoral Leadership
3. The candidate must maintain a high level of pastoral competency and leadership through the duration of the academic program to remain in the program. This will include full attendance at called workers meetings and camp meetings.
4. Funding for advanced degrees will be limited to 15 employees.
5. The Vice President for Administration must be notified in writing at least 6 months prior to candidate entering an advanced degree program.
6. The local church board must vote approval for candidate to enter advanced degree program. A copy of the church board voted action must accompany the advanced degree application.

CONTINUING EDUCATION, Cont'd

Financial Provisions:

- a. **Tuition and Registration Fees**
 - 40% Potomac Conference
 - 40% Columbia Union (according to policy)
 - 20% Employee - the employee may use their continuing education bank to pay their portion
- b. **Room, board, travel, and books** - It is the responsibility of the employee to care for these expenses. The continuing education bank may be used to cover these expenses. Reimbursement will be made by receipts.
- c. **Amortization** - The Potomac Conference (40%) portion will be amortized over a period of four years following the issuance of the degree. If the pastor leaves employment during the first two years, Potomac Conference will be due 100% reimbursement, 50% reimbursement between the third and fourth years, and 25% reimbursement during the fourth year. The reimbursement will be the responsibility of the employee unless written acknowledgement of reimbursement is received from the calling organization.

**Advanced Degree Application Form
Potomac Conference of Seventh-day Adventists**

1. Date _____
2. Name _____
3. Church/District Name _____
4. Years in present church or district _____
5. Years of service since completing your MDIV or BA in Religion _____
6. What seminary/university are you planning to attend? _____
7. When do you plan on starting the program? _____
8. What will be your study focus? _____
9. When do you plan on finishing this program? _____

Reminder:

- A. Being in an advanced degree program does not excuse you from attending camp meeting or workers meetings.
- B. Funding for advanced degrees will be limited to 15 employees.
- C. Candidates must maintain a high level of pastoral competency and leadership through the duration of the academic program to remain in the program.
- D. This application must be submitted six months prior to the start of your program. Please send it to the Vice President of Administration.
- E. Please attach a copy of your local church board minutes stating their approval of your advanced degree.

Signature

Date