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## Introduction

Congratulations! You have discerned the candidate you believe God is calling to serve your church and you are now ready to make them an offer and negotiate the terms of call. PNCs are welcome to ask COM or the Executive Presbyter to consult or help facilitate these negotiations. This can be helpful to both the church and the prospective pastor to meet their mutual goals.

## Tips for Negotiating Terms of Call

The Terms of Call are a three-way contract and covenant relationship between the pastor, the congregation, and the presbytery. For temporary relationships, the three-way contract and covenant is between the pastor, the session, and the presbytery.

1. **Form a Negotiating Team** -The PNC will want to identify 2-3 members to negotiate terms of call with the candidate and bring back their agreement to the whole committee. This is often the chair and one (or two) other PNC members.
2. **Determine an Equitable and Realistic Salary Range** – Consult with the Session to determine a fair salary range that considers education, experience, expectations of the role, and cost-of-living.
3. **Terms of Call** – Key items that should be included in the terms are: start date, salary/housing, benefits, vacation and study leave, sabbatical, and any other provisions as sought by PNC or the pastor candidate. The Terms of Call forms and related policies are available from COM and on the Northwest Coast Presbytery website.
4. **Allow Time for Discernment** – When presenting the first offer to the candidate, allow them a few days to pray over the offer, ask questions, converse with family and trusted advisors, and discern if all is in order. Ask the candidate to get back to you with their acceptance or a modified offer within a period of time that is mutually agreeable. The candidate will need to identify what portion of their salary should be designated as housing allowance—this is necessary for IRS reporting purposes.
5. **Seek COM Approval** – Once the terms are agreed upon, COM must review and approve the terms as well. Send the COM Chair or Executive Presbyter the terms, and they will let you know if all is in order. After that, the presbytery will send out the final terms via DocuSign so that all can sign digitally, and each party will retain a copy.
6. **Congregational Meeting** – When you have the congregational meeting to vote on the pastor candidate, the terms of call must be available for the congregation to review. It is wise to share those in advance of the meeting. While the terms can potentially be altered on the floor of the congregational meeting, we encourage congregations to honor the faithful negotiations that took place prior. If the terms are altered on the floor, it may be wise to give the candidate a recess to consider any changes and see if they are still agreeable. This would be a very rare situation.