

Covenant Church Dismissal Procedures

There are four scenarios in which someone would be dismissed from Covenant's membership roll. (Outlined below)

The goal of dismissal is not primarily to remove names from the membership roll but to shepherd members effectively into a new church.

When a member moves away, their shepherd should remain in contact until they are established in a new church body or until one year has passed, whichever occurs first. The shepherd should also proactively communicate with their team leader and with the church staff about membership changes.

Scenario 1: A member begins attending another PCA or NAPARC (North American Presbyterian and Reformed Churches) church, either in the area or after relocating. This is communicated to Covenant, and their membership is formally transferred.

Process for a shepherded member:

1. The member informs their shepherd of the change.
2. The shepherd explains that the member should have their new church reach out to Covenant and request a transfer of membership.
3. The church office receives the request and provides the transfer of membership letter to the new church.

Process for a non-shepherded member:

1. The member has their new church reach out to Covenant and request a transfer of membership.
 2. The church office receives the request and provides the transfer of membership letter to the new church.
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Scenario 2: A member begins attending a non-PCA or non- NAPARC church, either in the area or after relocating. This is communicated to Covenant, and they are removed from Covenant's membership roll.

Process for a shepherded member:

1. The member informs their shepherd of the change.

2. The shepherd informs their team leader and the church office. The team leader reaches out to the member directly to verify the change and confirm that the member is connected to a new church body.
3. The member is dismissed from membership at Covenant and receives a letter notifying them of the dismissal.

Process for a non-shepherded member:

1. The member informs the church office of the change.
2. The church office informs the Shepherding Committee's Discipline Team. An elder from the Discipline Team reaches out to the member directly to verify the change and confirm that the member is connected to a new church body.
3. The member is dismissed from membership at Covenant and receives a letter notifying them of the dismissal.

Scenario 3: Someone moves away but does not communicate through their shepherd or any other channel. After a period of one year and at least two contact attempts, they are removed from Covenant's membership roll.

Process for a shepherded member:

1. The shepherd informs their team leader that the member has not been in contact for 90 days.
2. The team leader reaches out to the member directly via phone. This is logged as contact attempt 1. If the contact is successful, the member then follows the steps outlined in Scenario 1 or Scenario 2.
3. If the member does not respond to the team leader, the team leader refers the member to the Shepherding Committee's Discipline Team. The Discipline Team will attempt to establish contact via letter and email. This is logged as contact attempt 2. If the contact is successful, the member then follows the steps outlined in Scenario 1 or Scenario 2.
4. If the member does not respond to either contact attempt, the member is dismissed one year after their last recorded activity and receives a letter notifying them of the dismissal.

Process for a non-shepherded member:

1. When the church office becomes aware that a non-shepherded member has not been active at Covenant for 180 days, the member will be referred to the Shepherding Committee's Connect Team.

2. The Connect Team will reach out via phone or email and attempt to establish contact. This is logged as contact attempt 1. If the contact is successful, the member then follows the steps outlined in Scenario 1 or Scenario 2.
 3. If the Connect Team is unable to establish contact with the member, the member will be referred to the Shepherding Committee's Discipline Team. The Discipline Team will attempt to establish contact via letter and email. This is logged as contact attempt 2. If the contact is successful, the member then follows the steps outlined in Scenario 1 or Scenario 2
 4. If the member does not respond to either of the Shepherding Committee's contact attempts, the member is dismissed one year after their last recorded activity and receives a letter notifying them of the dismissal.
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Scenario 4: Someone begins attending another local church or stops attending church entirely but does not communicate through their shepherd or any other channel. After a period of one year and at least two contact attempts, they are removed from Covenant's membership roll.

Process for a shepherded member:

1. The shepherd informs their team leader that the member has not been in contact or seen at Covenant for 90 days.
2. The team leader reaches out to the member directly via phone. This is logged as contact attempt 1. If the contact is successful, the member then follows the steps outlined in Scenario 1 or Scenario 2.
3. If the member does not respond to the team leader, the team leader refers the member to the Shepherding Committee's Discipline Team. The Discipline Team will attempt to establish contact via letter and email. This is logged as contact attempt 2. If the contact is successful, the member then follows the steps outlined in Scenario 1 or Scenario 2.
4. If the member does not respond to the Shepherding Committee's contact attempt, the member is dismissed one year after their last recorded activity and receives a letter notifying them of the dismissal.

Process for a non-shepherded member:

1. When the church office becomes aware that a non-shepherded member has not been active at Covenant for at least 180 days, the member will be referred to the Shepherding Committee's Connect Team.

2. The Connect Team will reach out via phone or email and attempt to establish contact. This is logged as contact attempt 1. If the contact is successful, the member then follows the steps outlined in Scenario 1 or Scenario 2.
3. If the Connect Team is unable to establish contact with the member, the member will be referred to the Shepherding Committee's Discipline Team. The Discipline Team will attempt to establish contact via letter and email. This is logged as contact attempt 2. If the attempt is successful, the member then follows the steps outlined in Scenario 1 or Scenario 2
4. If the member does not respond to the Shepherding Committee's contact attempt, the member is dismissed one year after their last recorded activity and receives a letter notifying them of the dismissal.

If a member returns to Covenant more than 90 days after being dismissed, they must complete another elder interview before their membership can be reinstated.