

Steps to Planting a Church in the Rocky Mountain District

Regardless to which of the five church-planting methods used, the following steps **MUST BE FOLLOWED** by the church planter. As each step is completed, write the date in the blank to the left of the step number. This will help prevent the church planting process from being delayed due to an incomplete step. *The ICP, Section, District, or Parent church must take the initiative to begin the approval process.*

_____ **Step 1:** Read through the Church Planting Manual to insure you understand everything involved!

_____ **Step 2:** It is the responsibility of the church planter to contact the Sectional Presbyter of the section in which the church will be started. The purpose of this contact is to set up the two essential meetings that are defined in steps three through five. In many cases it will work well to combine these meetings to minimize the travel required for the participants.

_____ **Step 3:** When the geographical location of the proposed plant is within the ministry scope of an existing church, it is the responsibility of the planter to initiate a meeting that includes the Presbyter, the District Church Planting Director and the pastor of the existing church. The purpose of this meeting is to define the kind of relationship that will exist between the existing church and the new church plant. Issues to be discussed should include but not necessarily be limited to the following categories:

1. How should the church planter manage individuals who “migrate” into the new church plant from the existing church?
2. How should the church planter manage unsolicited interaction with members of the existing church? (For example- bumping into them at the grocery store or receiving a call from an existing church member expressing interest in joining the new church, etc.)
3. Suggest that any help the existing church can provide is welcome.

The church planter should enter into this discussion with the expectation that the existing church will give no access whatsoever to any of its resources. This will posture the church planter to be thankful for any assistance received from the existing church. On the other hand, the existing church should be encouraged to manifest a “Kingdom heart” toward the plant and keep in mind the scriptural admonition to be generous (Luke 6:38).

It is especially important for these guidelines to be followed when a staff pastor is leaving or being sent out by an existing church to plant a church within its ministry scope. It is essential that a staff pastor honor the desire of the senior pastor in every detail. It is vital that the planter go the extra mile to make sure that good communication takes place on every step of the planting journey.

_____ **Step 4:** Once the date of the initial interview is set, the church planter must submit a copy of the Application to Establish a New Church form on pages 10-11 to the Sectional Presbyter and the Director of the Church Planting Multiplication Team. If an ICP comes from within the Rocky Mountain District, a letter of recommendation must come from the ICP’s home pastor and Sectional Presbyter. If an ICP comes from another District, letters of recommendation from a home pastor, Sectional Presbyter and District Superintendent must be sent to the Sectional Presbyter in whose section the new church is planned.

_____ **Step 5:** The church planter and spouse, if married, must appear for an interview with the members of the Sectional Committee. Approval must be given by the SECTIONAL PRESBYTER and SECTIONAL COMMITTEE. The Sectional Presbyter will notify the Director of Church Planting and Development of the approval by submitting the signed Sectional Committee Report Form on page 13 to the Church Planting and Development office. **Please bring the form on page 13 to the interview with the Sectional Committee.** This procedure for sectional approval must be followed, even if the Parent Church method is used. If approval by the section is NOT given, the right of appeal to the Church Planting Multiplication Team will be respected.

_____ **Step 6:** Complete and return the Backgrounds Investigation Consent form on page 12 to the District Office.

_____ **Step 7:** Upon approval by the Sectional Committee, the prospective church planter and spouse will undergo a Behavioral Assessment Interview (unless waived by the Church Planting Multiplication Team). This interview will be conducted by trained assessors and all fees will be paid from the CPCT church planting funds. You will be contacted by the CPMT to set up the time and place for this interview.

_____ **Step 8:** Upon completion of the Behavioral Assessment Interview, the prospective planter and spouse, if married, will be interviewed by the Church Planting Multiplication Team to review the results of the Assessment. Following this interview, the members of the CPMT will determine whether it is appropriate to approve or deny the church plant application. The church planter will be promptly notified of their decision. The CPMT will notify the Presbytery of their recommendation by submitting the NEW CHURCH APPLICATION REPORT at the next meeting of the Presbytery. If the planting project is approved, the CPMT will also assign a Coach for the planter and approve a working advisory board (see Guidelines, pages 37-38) for the new church. If approval by the Church Planting Multiplication Team is NOT given, the right of appeal to the District Presbytery will be respected.

_____ **Step 9:** After approval by the Section and the Church Planting Multiplication Team, final approval for the planting of the new church must be given by the District Presbytery. The decision of the District Presbytery will be final. You will have two years (24 months) from the date of approval by the Presbytery to begin holding public worship services. Otherwise, it will be necessary to begin the approval process again. The CPMT and/or the Presbytery may grant exemptions to this policy to accommodate special circumstances.

_____ **Step 10:** Pastoral Agreement Form (page 16). Once Presbytery approval is received, the church planter must complete the PASTORAL AGREEMENT FORM (page 16). By action of the Presbytery, all pastors of District Churches shall have an annual review with the District Presbytery. Read the BYLAWS AND AGREEMENT FOR NEWLY PLANTED CHURCHES (pages 14-15) and sign the AGREEMENT FOR ACCEPTING PASTORATE OF NEWLY PLANTED CHURCH and forward a copy of the signed Agreement to the Church Planting and Development office.

_____ **Step 11:** The church planter must promptly send the ROCKY MOUNTAIN DISTRICT AFFILIATED CHURCH INFORMATION Form (pages 17-19) to the Church Planting Office. Complete as much of the form as you can at this time and call the District Office if you have any questions.

_____ **Step 12:** Upon final approval of the Presbytery, the planter must complete the paperwork required by the State as soon as possible. This paperwork is one of those unfortunate necessities of life. The District staff is prepared to help you through this process. Call us if you have any questions. Here's how it works.

If you are planting a church in Colorado: Completed samples of all the required forms are in this manual beginning on page 17. The forms must be completed in the following order.

- _____ 1) Articles of Incorporation and Dissolution Clause– Nonprofit Corporation. (\$50 online fee or \$125 paper fee.) Church Planters are required to add the Dissolution Clause provided by the Rocky Mountain District to the Articles of Incorporation. For the Dissolution Clause (sample is on page 23) download and complete the form from the District website at www.rmhc.org. Go to the church planting home page then under the Church Planting tab then click on the "Forms" line. Fill out the form and save it to your computer.

Using the sample articles on page 20-22 as a guide, complete the Articles of Incorporation online at www.sos.state.co.us. Under the Business Center tab click on the "File a Business Document: Creating a new record." Fill out the forms for a new non profit corporation. You must attach the Dissolution Clause document to the Articles of Incorporation before submitting the document to the State. If you do not feel comfortable with this procedure mail the completed forms along with a check for \$50 (make the check payable to ROCKY MOUNTAIN DISTRICT COUNCIL) to the attention of "Secretary Treasurer's Office" and mail to the District Office.

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- 2) Application for Employer Identification Number (EIN)– Form SS-4. Using the sample form SS-4 on page 26 as a guide, complete the SS-4 form (page 25) and mail to INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE, ATTN: EIN Operation, Philadelphia, PA 19255. You may download this form from the District website located at www.rmhc.org . When you receive your EIN number, you should contact the District Office immediately and give us the number. Once we receive your EIN, we will forward the application to General Council. Once we receive word from them, then we will send you your 501C-3 packet.
 - 3) When you receive the 501C-3 packet from the District Office -Fill out the form DR 0715 (the application for state sales tax exemption), make 2 copies of the form and the letters from the District verifying your 501C-3 status. Follow the instructions in the packet. Within 1-2 weeks after you have completed the forms and sent them to the state, you will receive a Tax Certificate from the state. **Upon receiving this certificate, send a copy of the tax certificate to the District Office.**

If you are planting a church in Utah:

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- 1) Articles of Incorporation and Dissolution Clause– Nonprofit Corporation. (\$50 filing fee.) Using the sample articles on pages 30-33 as a guide, complete the form on pages 27-29 or download and complete the form from the District website at www.rmhc.org . Mail the completed form along with a check for \$50 (make check payable to ROCKY MOUNTAIN DISTRICT COUNCIL) attention to the “Secretary Treasurer’s Office” and mail to the District Office. You must also fill out the Dissolution Clause on page 24. The sample is on page 23.
 - 2) Application for Employer Identification Number (EIN)– Form SS-4. Using the sample form SS-4 on page 26 as a guide, complete the SS-4 form (page 25) and mail to INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE, ATTN: ENTITY CONTROL, MAIL STOP 6271, P.O. Box 9941, OGDEN, UT 84201. You may download this form from the District website located at www.rmhc.org . When you receive your EIN number, you should contact the District Office immediately and give us the number. Once we receive your EIN, we will forward the application to General Council. Once we receive word from them, then we will send you your 501C-3 packet.
 - 3) When you receive the 501C-3 packet from the District Office - Fill out the form TC-160 (the application for state sales tax exemption), make 2 copies of the form and the letters from the District verifying your 501C-3 status. Follow the instructions in the packet. Within 1-2 weeks after you have completed the forms and sent them to the state, you will receive a Tax Certificate from the state. **Upon receiving this certificate, send a copy of the tax certificate to the District Office.**

Step 13: After you have your Articles of Incorporation and EIN, you should open a church checking account. Without the completion of these procedures, by law, a checking or savings account cannot be opened by any FDIC bank. The signature card for the checking account should include the signature of either the District Superintendent or the District Secretary-Treasurer. This does not mean their signature must appear on each check, but only that their signature appear on the signature card at the bank. When you have opened the church checking account, you are then eligible to receive contributions and District support. When you begin receiving contributions, you must begin sending in the MONTHLY CHURCH REPORT form, page 33-34.

Step 14: Once the church checking account is opened and the church has been recognized by the General Council, it is possible for the church planter to receive personal income through the church plant. Whenever the planter and/or staff begin to receive personal income through the church plant, it is the responsibility of the planter to contact Brotherhood Insurance at 719.867.4528 to set up your Workman’s Compensation Account. **Do not skip this step!** It is required by law! However, if you are a Nationally Appointed U.S. Missionary and receive your paycheck from the General Council, you may disregard this step since your Workman’s Comp is provided through the General Council.

Step 15: Within the first month of receiving approval from the Presbytery, the church planter must contact his or her assigned coach and set up the first coaching appointment. Each church planter is expected to meet with their coach face-to-face at least once each month.

Step 16: Every approved church planter must attend a Church Planting *BootCamp* before beginning public meetings. The church planter must consult with the Director of Church Planting and Development to make arrangements for attending *BootCamp*. Each Church Plant project will receive up to \$350 from Multiplication Team funds to assist with *BootCamp* Expenses.

Step 17: Liability and property insurance is an absolute necessity for new church plants! The Presbytery has mandated that all new church plants must receive their liability and property insurance through Brotherhood Mutual Insurance. Your cost for property/liability insurance will be \$100 per month or less. It is the responsibility of the church planter to activate property and liability insurance coverage with Brotherhood Mutual Insurance at 719.244.9816 prior to a). your first meeting where children and/or youth meet separately from the adults (even if the meeting is held in a home), or b). your first public meeting in a rented, leased or donated facility (even if youth and/or children are meeting in the same room). Health insurance is not required and no group policy currently exists for A/G church planters. However, church planters are encouraged to research options for health insurance and obtain health insurance coverage if finances are available.

Step 18: You must have a music copyright license in place if you are planning to use any type of projection or printed music materials for worship. The District uses Christian Copyright Licensing International. For more information on this company, call (800) 234-2446 or you may view their web site at <http://www.ccli.com>. Their web site includes an online application.

Step 19: Children's and Youth Risk Management Policy. Your church must adopt, implement, and abide by a risk management policy to protect children and youth in your church and to protect your church from lawsuits concerning negligence with children's and youth workers. The District has put together a comprehensive policy which is available from the Secretary Treasurer Office. Please see page 35 for a summary of this policy.

Step 20: Church Government. Within 8 weeks following approval by the Presbytery, you should hold your first Advisory Board meeting. At least 48 hours prior to the start of the meeting, members of your Official Board (the Official Board consists of the Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer, Director of Church Planting and Development, Presbyter, and the Committeemen of your section) should be informed by e-mail or phone call of the date and time of this meeting. Minutes of all advisory board meetings must be forwarded via e-mail or fax to the members of your Official Board. A sample agenda for board meetings is included on page 36. For guidelines regarding the makeup of the Advisory Board, see pages 37-38 of this manual.

In the first meeting of the Advisory Board, the following agenda items must be considered:

- a. Adoption of Risk Management Policy and Procedures.
- b. Determine the salary package for the pastor. See forms on pages 39-40.
- c. Prepare financial report for the District Office (see form on pages 33-34). This report must be sent to the Church Planting Office each month. If you have software that generates a comprehensive report, then you may submit that in lieu of the form on pages 34.
- d. Adopt the BYLAWS AGREEMENT FOR NEWLY PLANTED CHURCHES (page 14-15) required by the District.
- e. Approve new church start-up budget worksheet on pages 41-42.

Step 21: Following your first advisory board meeting, forward a copy of the following forms to the Church Planting and Development office:

- a. New Church Guidelines for Pastoral Support (page 39)
- b. Housing Expense Allowance (page 40)
- c. New Church Start-Up Budget Worksheet (pages 41-42)

_____ **Step 22:** CPMT Capital Funds. Church planting capital funds may be available to qualified churches for capital investments to include property, lands, buildings, and procurement costs. For an application, contact Church Planting and Development.

_____ **Step 23:** Once the new church is recognized by the General Council, application may be made for assistance through BGMC, STL, and Rocky Mountain District Church Planting Funds. Applications for these funds may be found beginning on page 53.