



STEPS IN FILLING A PLACEMENT VACANCY IN A 0.4 ↓ CHAPLAINCY PLACEMENT PC-PRO-003

Placements Committee

Purpose

To outline the steps in filling a vacant chaplaincy placement of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod.

Scope

The process applies chaplaincy placements 0.4 FTE to be filled by the call of the Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod.

Process

1. The 'Placement' (the context in which the placement exists) is advised that a placement is to be vacated. This is usually done by the departing ministry agent advising of acceptance of another Call or an intention to retire. At the time of accepting another call, the ministry agent will negotiate a period of notice with the Chaplaincy Commission. It is normally required to give three months' notice of intention to vacate a placement.
2. The 'Placement' decides whether or not to fill the vacancy.
3. As soon as the decision is made to fill the vacancy, the 'Placement' notifies the Secretary of the Placements Committee. The Secretary will include a notification in Uniting News of the existence of the vacancy. Eligible ministry agents wishing to express an interest in the vacancy will be directed to the appropriate person within the 'Placement'.
4. A Position Description is prepared. The Position Description template approved by the Synod is to be used.
5. The Position Description is approved by the Chaplaincy Commission and is forwarded to the Placements Committee (Reg 2.6.6 (b)). After the Position Description is approved as being recognised as a placement, the Secretary publishes the Position Description to the Placements Committee database.
6. A Joint Nominating Committee (JNC) is established and should include representatives of the Presbytery, the agency in which the placement is situated and at least one serving chaplain (Reg 2.6.7 (b)).
7. The JNC decides whether to utilise the decentralised process.
Note, unless a JNC chooses to utilise this process, they will automatically utilise the centralised process.

Note: An introduction to the responsibilities and processes of the JNC will be included as part of all initial chaplaincy JNC meetings.



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8. Decentralised process

8.1 The Chair of the JNC advises the Secretary of the Placements Committee that the JNC will use the decentralised process.

8.2 At this stage or at any point in the decentralised placements process, the JNC may seek approval from the Secretary of the Placements Committee to advertise the vacancy. The application to advertise will be dealt with according to the process for Advertising Placements (PC-PRO-11).

8.3 The Secretary of the Placements will provide password access to the Ministerial profile database.

8.4 At any stage after receiving access to the database, the JNC may request a conversation with up to three potential matches.

8.5 Acting on the delegated power of the Placements Committee, the Secretary of the Placements Committee will give approval to conversations being initiated with the potential matches, provided that for each ministry agent:

9.5.1 The Minister is not currently involved in conversations with another placement;

9.5.2 The Minister is at least in 3rd year of their first placement, or the 5th year of any subsequent placement;

9.5.3 The JNC is not currently involved in conversations with other ministry agent;

9.5.3 The ministry agent has not served in that placement at any time, nor have they had significant participation in that ministry context during the past ten years. Where these criteria are not satisfied, the Secretary will refer the request to a meeting of the Placements Committee for discernment about recommending a name.

8.6 Where the ministry agent has provided a recent profile, the Secretary will notify the ministry agent that their name has been forwarded to the JNC.

8.7 Where the ministry agent does not have a recent profile, the Secretary will arrange for the ministry agent to complete one. When received this will be forwarded to the JNC.

8.8 A Minister available for placement (reg 2.6.2 (b)) may request access, through the Secretary of the Placements Committee, to the database of congregations and non-congregational placements seeking a minister. After accessing the database the minister may request to have a discernment conversation with up to two JNCs (2.6.6 (g)(iv)).

8.9 Acting on the delegated power of the Placements Committee, the Secretary of the Placements Committee will give approval to conversations being initiated with the potential matches, provided that for each minister:

9.9.1 The Minister is not currently involved in conversations with another placement;

9.9.2 The JNC is not currently involved in conversations with other ministry agents;



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9.9.3 The Minister is at least in 3rd year of their first placement, or the 5th year of any subsequent placement;

9.9.4 The Minister has not served in a placement in that placement at any time, nor have they had significant participation in that ministry context during the past ten years. Where these criteria are not satisfied, the Secretary will refer the request to a meeting of the Placements Committee for discernment about recommending a name.

8.10 If the Secretary of the Placements Committee receives requests from more than three Ministers to enter into discernment conversations with a JNC, and all Ministers are eligible, the Secretary will forward all expressions of interest to the Chair of the JNC with a request that they develop a short list of no more than three names to engage in conversation. If these conversations do not result in a call, the JNC may engage in discernment conversations with other Ministers who were not shortlisted.

8.11 At each meeting of the Placements Committee, the Secretary will provide a report regarding those JNCs and ministry agents who are in conversation through the use of the decentralised process.

8.12 The Chair of the JNC will call a meeting of the JNC. Copies of profiles of the proposed ministry agent(s) should be circulated to all members of JNC but not copied further. Electronic files must be deleted at the conclusion of the call process and hard copies must be collected by the JNC Chair and shredded.

8.13 Prior to the first meeting of the JNC with the ministry agent, the ministry agent and JNC will exchange written statements that outline how each discerns the connecting points between the profiles and position descriptions.

8.14 The process continues at step 10 below.

9. Centralised process

9.1 If a JNC chooses not to proceed with the decentralised process, the centralised process will apply.

9.2 The Placements Committee will consider the Position Description and the list of ministry agents available for placement. The Committee may recommend up to three ministry agents with whom the JNC will enter into a discernment conversation (reg 2.6.6 (g)). In considering names, the Placements Committee will consider any names recommended by a JNC or Appointing Body, but will not be obliged to act on that recommendation.

9.3 No ministry agent will be invited to converse with more than two JNCs at the one time (reg 2.6.6 (g)(iv)).

9.4 Within 48 hours of a meeting of the Placements Committee the Secretary will write to the ministry agent and chair of the JNC advising them of the discernment of the Placements Committee. Letters from the Placements Secretary will convey the reasons for the proposed names and will include copies of the relevant profiles/positions descriptions.



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- 9.5 The Chair of the JNC will call a meeting of the JNC. Copies of profiles of the proposed ministry agent(s) will be circulated to all members of JNC but not copied further. Electronic files must be deleted at the conclusion of the call process and hard copies must be collected by the JNC Chair and shredded.
- 9.6 The process continues from step 10.
10. The church expects that, unless there are exceptional reasons that make the match inappropriate, a proposed conversation between the ministry agent and placement (initiated through either centralised or decentralised process) will take place. In making their discernment, a JNC may have conversations with each recommended ministry agent before making a decision on any; similarly if the ministry agent is proposed for more than one placement he/she may have conversation with both JNCs before making a decision on either.
11. At any time a ministry agent or JNC may decline to proceed with a conversation and must advise the Placements Committee in writing of the reason for doing so. A decision about whether to proceed to Call/Appointment shall be made within two months.
12. When conversations lead to discernment that a Call/Appointment is appropriate, the JNC and the ministry agent will negotiate any points of concern, and also the date the new placement/appointment will become effective.
13. With the agreement of the ministry agent, the chair of the JNC notifies the appropriate person within the 'Placement' of the decision of the JNC and seeks approval for a call/appointment to be issued (Regulation 2.6.6 (m)). Following approval, the Secretary of the Placements Committee and the Chaplaincy Commission are to be notified.
14. If the vacancy has been determined by the Placements Committee to be a Priority Placement, or the person to be called is an exit student, the Call is issued by the Placements Committee. In such circumstances the resolution of the 'Placement' should be "to request the Placements Committee to issue a Call to NN".
15. Within three days of the decision to issue a Call/Appointment, a letter of Call/Appointment is prepared by the 'Placement'. This letter is to be signed by a person nominated by the 'Placement' and the Secretary of the Placements Committee. The Secretary is responsible for forwarding the letter of call/appointment to the ministry agent. Templates for Letters of Call/Appointment and Terms of Placement/Appointment are available from the Secretary of Placements Committee. These are updated annually.
16. The letter of call/appointment is to include the commencement date (reg 2.6.6 (n)). It is usual that the commencement date will be no earlier than three months. There is no maximum period in which the call needs to be taken up. In considering a commencement date in excess of six months from the letter of call, consideration should be given to the needs of the ministry agent, the placement they are leaving and the placement that is issuing the call.



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Note: It is possible to reduce the normal notice period of three months but this is to be negotiated by the 'Placement' with the appointee and their current Presbytery or placement.

17. The ministry agent responds in writing to the 'Placement' and Secretary of the Placements Committee, within fourteen days accepting the agreed Terms of Placement.
18. If at some later time, the commencement date needs to be altered, this should be mutually agreed between the ministry agent and the 'Placement'. After the alteration has been agreed, the Secretary of the Placements Committee is to be notified.
19. The 'Placement', in consultation with the ministry agent, sets the date of the Induction or Commissioning Service. In the case of a lay appointment, the date of the Commissioning Service is negotiated once notification of satisfactory completion of core competencies has been received.
20. The ministry agent takes up responsibilities in the new placement/appointment by the 15th day of the month (or the 21st day of the month if an inter-synod move. (NB placements normally date from the first day of a month, but removal leave may be granted (Reg 2.7.2 (c)).

References & Related Documents

Uniting Church in Australia Regulations 2.6.1 – 2.8.3

Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod by laws Q3.7

Membership, roles and responsibilities Synod advisory committee on ministerial placements
PC_PRO_001

Process for Advertising Approved Vacancies PC_PRO_011

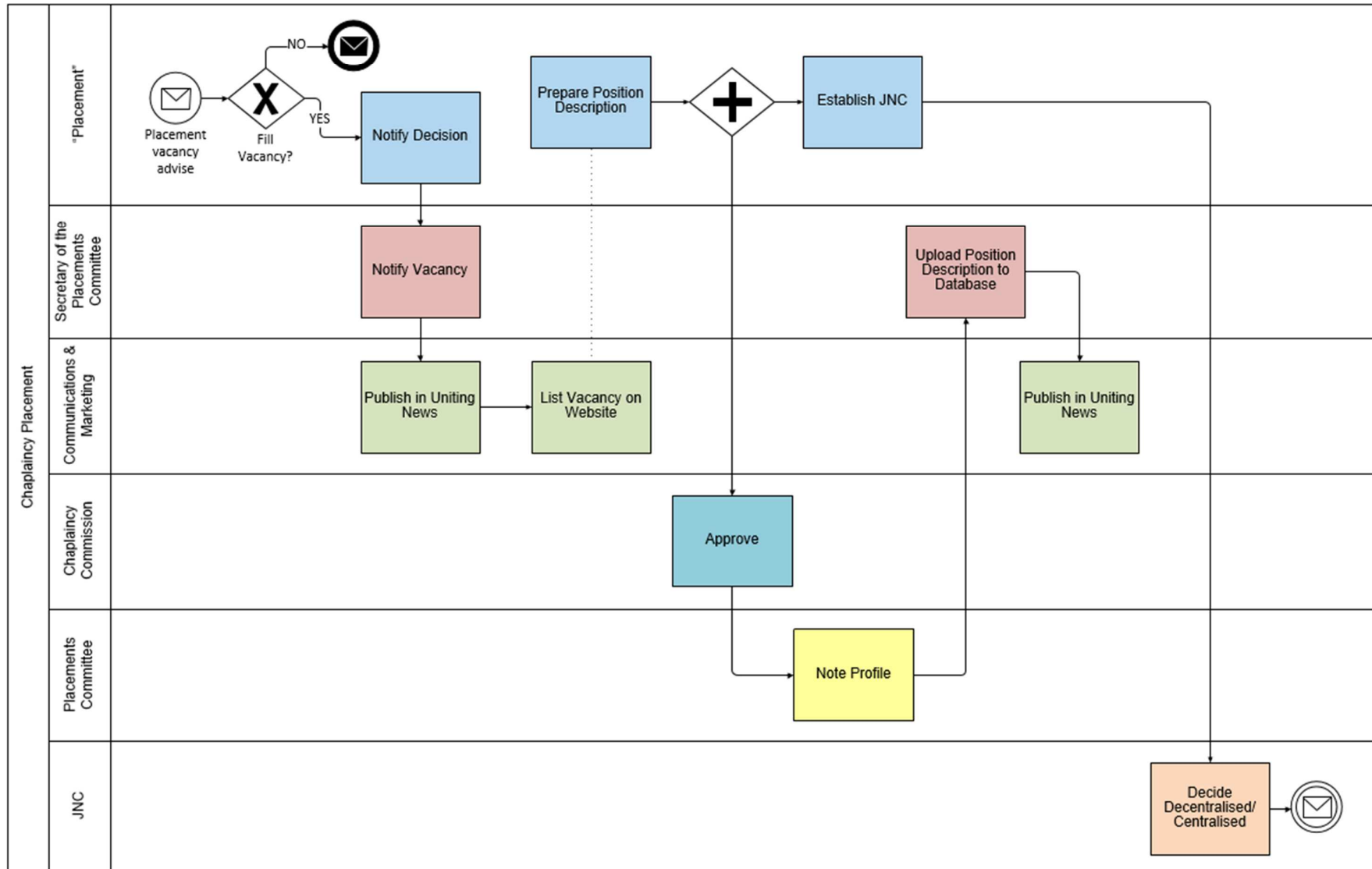
Position Description Template

Ministry Leader Profile template

Letter of Call and Terms of Placements template

Revisions & Reviews

| # | Date | Reason | Author / Reviewer | Approved |
|---|-------------|--|--|-----------------------------|
| 1 | 22 Dec 2017 | Process altered to include optional dual track process | K Seto, Executive Officer, Chaplaincy Commission | Associate General Secretary |
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At any stage in the decentralised placements process, the JNC may seek approval from the Secretary of the Placements Committee to advertise the vacancy. The application to advertise will be dealt with according to the process for Advertising Placements

