



STEPS IN FILLING A PLACEMENT VACANCY IN A 0.5 ↑ CHAPLAINCY PLACEMENT

PC-PRO-004

Placements Committee

Purpose

To outline the steps in filling a vacant chaplaincy placement to be filled by the call of the Queensland Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia.

Scope

The process applies to the filling of approved chaplaincy placements .5 FTE and greater of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod.

Definitions

In this document unless otherwise indicated:

Minister refers to the ordained ministries of Minister of the Word (MOW) and Deacon (MOD)

Ministry Agent refers to the collective MOW, MOD or MOP (those who have been accepted through the Pastor Candidate Committee)

Process

1. The Chaplaincy Commission is advised that a placement is to be vacated. This is usually done by the departing chaplain advising the Chaplaincy Commission of acceptance of another Call or an intention to retire. Ministers are normally required to give three months' notice of intention to vacate a placement.
2. The Chaplaincy Commission decides whether or not to fill the vacancy. This decision will recommend:
 - a. if the placement should be filled, and if so:
 - b. which specified ministry may best suit the ministry and mission emphases and responsibilities of the placement, i.e. Minister of the Word, Deacon, Pastor
 - c. if the placement is to be full time or a fractional time component. (Regulation 2.6.6 (a))
3. As soon as the decision is made to fill the vacancy, the Chaplaincy Commission 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 Executive Officer, Chaplaincy Commission.



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4. A Position Description is prepared by the “Placement” in collaboration with the Chaplaincy Commission. 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 and includes notification in Uniting News.
6. The Chaplaincy Commission establishes a Joint Nominating Committee (JNC) 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)). 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.

7. Decentralised process

- 7.1 The Chair of the JNC advises the Secretary of the Placements Committee that the JNC will use the decentralised process.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 The Secretary of the Placements Committee will provide password access to the Ministerial profile database.
- 7.4 At any stage after receiving access to the database, the JNC may request a conversation with up to three potential matches.
- 7.5 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:
 - 7.5.1 The ministry agent is not currently involved in conversations with another placement;
 - 7.5.2 The Minister is at least in 3rd year of their first placement, or the 5th year of any subsequent placement;
 - 7.5.3 The JNC is not currently involved in conversations with other ministry agents;
 - 7.5.4 The ministry agent has not served in that placement previously, nor have they had significant participation in that placement during the past ten years.
- 7.6 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.



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- 7.7 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.
 - 7.8 A Minister available for placement (reg 2.6.2 (b)) may request access, through the Secretary of the Placements Committee, to the database of vacant placements. After accessing the database the Minister may request to have a discernment conversation with up to two JNCs (2.6.6 (g)(iv)).
 - 7.9 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:
 - 7.9.1 The Minister is not currently involved in conversations with another placement;
 - 7.9.2 The JNC is not currently involved in conversations with other ministry agents;
 - 7.9.3 The Minister is at least in 3rd year of their first placement, or the 5th year of any subsequent placement;
 - 7.9.4 The ministry agent has not served in that placement at any time, nor have they had significant participation in that placement during the past ten years.
 - 7.10 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 and the Executive Officer (if not the chair) 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.
 - 7.11 The church expects that, unless there are exceptional reasons that make the match inappropriate, a proposed conversation between ministry agent and placement will take place.
 - 7.12 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.
 - 7.13 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.
 - 7.14 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.
 - 7.15 The process continues at step 9 below.
8. Centralised process
- 8.1 If a JNC chooses not to proceed with the decentralised process, the centralised process will apply.
 - 8.2 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



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- 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.
- 8.3 No ministry agent will be invited to converse with more than two JNCs at the one time (reg 2.6.6 (g)(iv)).
 - 8.4 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.
 - 8.5 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.
 - 8.6 The process continues from step 9.
9. 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.
 10. 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.
 11. 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.
 12. With the agreement of the ministry agent, the chair of the JNC notifies the Chaplaincy Commission, through the Executive Officer, of the decision of the JNC. The Executive Officer seeks the approval of the Chaplaincy Commission, through its Chaplains Oversight Committee, to recommend that a call/appointment be issued. (2.6.6 (m)).
 13. 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 Chaplains Oversight Committee should be “to request the Placements Committee to issue a Call to NN”.
 14. Within three days of the decision to issue a Call/Appointment, a letter of Call/Appointment is prepared by the Chaplaincy Commission together with the relevant agency/body. This letter is to be signed by a person nominated by the “Placement” and the Chaplaincy Commission 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.



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15. 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.

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

16. The ministry agent responds in writing to the "Placement", Chaplaincy Commission and Secretary Placements Committee, within fourteen days accepting the agreed Terms of Placement/Appointment.
17. If at some later time, the commencement date needs to be altered, this should be mutually agreed between the ministry agent, "Placement" and Chaplaincy Commission. After the alteration has been agreed, the Secretary of the Placements Committee is to be notified.
18. The Chaplaincy Commission, in consultation with the ministry agent and the "Placement", 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.
19. 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 Regulations 2.6.1 – 2.8.3

Uniting Church Queensland Synod by laws Q3.7

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

Position Description Template PC_PRO_011

Ministry Leader Profile template

Process for Advertising Approved Vacancies

Letter of Call and Terms of Placements template



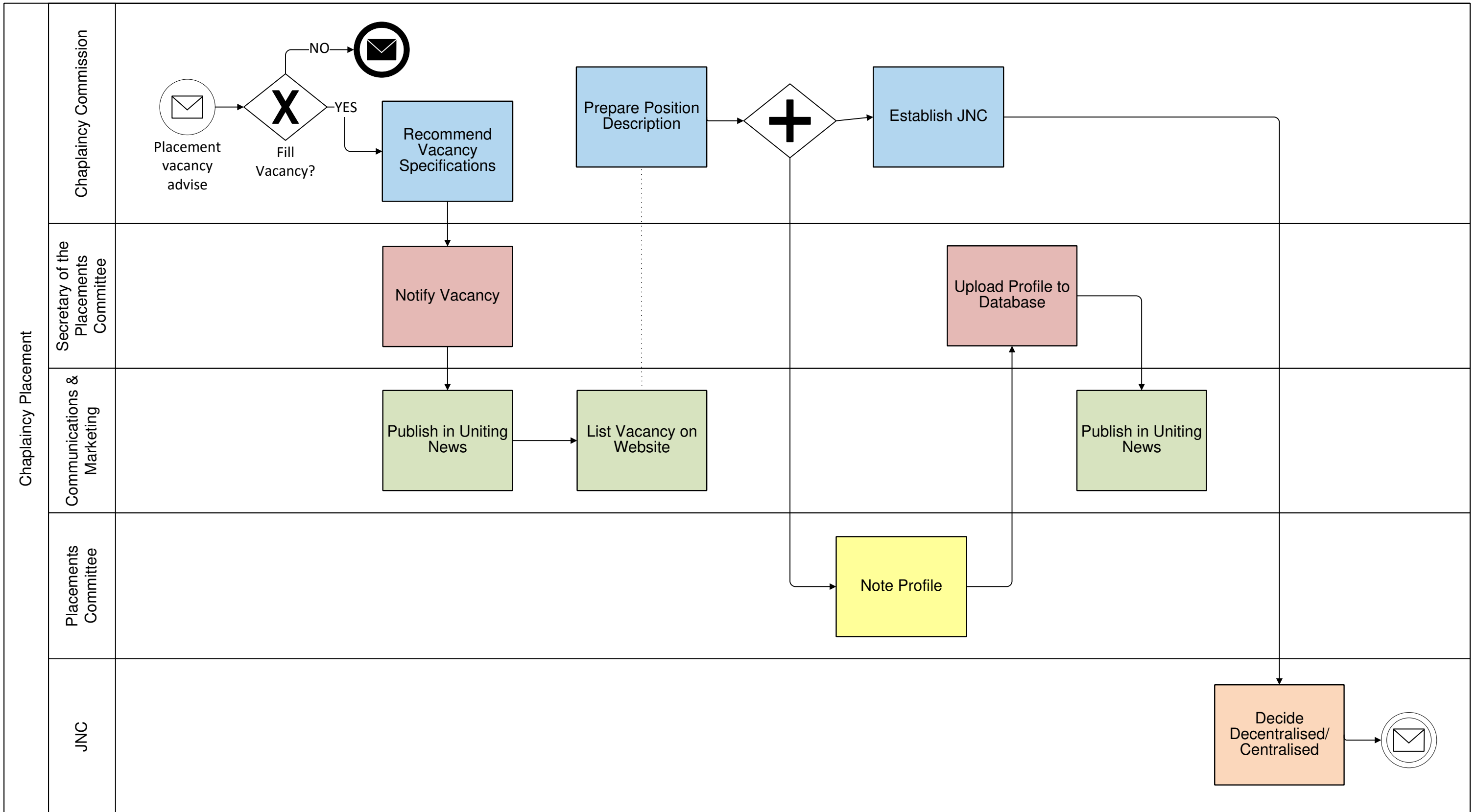
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Revisions & Reviews

#	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





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

