

CONGREGATIONAL ASSISTANCE
CHURCH PLANTING ARIZONA SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
Requirements, Guidelines, and Procedures

Name of ASBC/NAMB fund: **Congregational Assistance**

- Funds come from the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts and are combined with funds from the North American Mission Board.
- The purpose of the Congregational Assistance fund is to help provide financial assistance to cooperating Southern Baptist churches and Associations, so that they may help establish new Southern Baptist congregations.
- “A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous (self-directed) local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.”
- Churches who affiliate with the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention are formed by believers who voluntarily associate together by covenant relationship.
- This covenant relationship is articulated and affirmed through such documents as a Statement of Faith that provides a Biblical and Spiritual foundation; Bylaws that define the organizational structure and governance guidelines; Articles of Incorporation that satisfy the Arizona statutes dealing with non-profit corporations; and a Covenant that defines the relational character of the church body. **“THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE” (2000) and “THE CONSTITUTION GUIDE” (NAMB)**
- Requests for financial assistance come from a cooperating Southern Baptist Church or Association, the Sponsor.

GUIDELINES FOR THE SPONSORING CHURCH:

- Helps in developing prayer support for the new church.
- Leads in developing and implementing a strategic plan to make disciples.
- Leads in developing and implementing a strategic plan of growth and budget projections for the new congregation.
- Leads in the selection, supervision, mentoring and accountability of the church planter/pastor until the new congregation incorporates and constitutes.
- Provides a process, as needed and until the new congregation is constituted and incorporated, for facilitating: membership, discipline, ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, accounting, insurance, and other legal requirements, such as incorporating; obtaining a checking account; keeping an employment eligibility form up to date; obtaining employee tax and employment records; keeping contribution records; obtaining copyright licensing; obtaining insurance coverage; obtaining worker’s compensation for all staff and employees; obtaining a post office box; acquiring a bulk rate permit; developing a responsible screening process for those working with preschoolers, children, and youth; developing sound guidelines for handling finances; developing a ministry budget; securing property tax exemption; and developing a process for handling contracts.
- Guides the new congregation to establish a Southern Baptist church as defined by a balance of: SBC doctrinal teachings and beliefs as expressed in the current “Baptist Faith & Message” and NAMB’s “Ecclesiological Guidelines to Inform Southern Baptist Church Planters”. If “Baptist” is not used in the name of the new church, there would be a stated affiliation with the SBC in all the founding documents of the church [constitution and bylaws, articles of incorporation, etc.].
- Guides the new congregation to participate in Acts 1:8 Kingdom Missions through the Cooperative Program and local Association with a minimum of 10% of undesignated receipts being given, as well as extending missions involvement through associational, state, national and international missions offerings.
- Guides the new congregation to incorporate and constitute at an appropriate time.

GUIDELINES FOR THE CHURCH PLANTER AND NEW CONGREGATION:

- Cooperates with the Sponsor to develop prayer support.
- Cooperates with the Sponsor to develop and implement a strategic plan to make disciples, which would also include growth and budget projections for the new congregation.
- Cooperates with the Sponsor in the selection, supervision, mentoring and accountability of the church planter/pastor.
- Implements all the functions of a New Testament church (i.e., worship, evangelism, missions, ministry, discipleship, fellowship, etc.) while being Biblically based.

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- Participates in the training, networking, and coaching/mentoring made available to it by the Sponsor, Baptist Association, and/or Arizona Southern Baptist Convention.
- Establishes a Southern Baptist church as defined by a balance of: SBC doctrinal teachings and beliefs as expressed in the current Baptist Faith & Message. If “Baptist” is not used in the name of the new church, there would be a stated affiliation with the SBC in all the founding documents of the church [constitution and bylaws, articles of incorporation, etc.].
- Participates in Acts 1:8 Kingdom Missions through the Cooperative Program and local Association with a minimum of 10% of undesignated receipts being given, as well as extending missions involvement through associational, state, national and international missions offerings.
- Incorporates an intentional plan to multiply/reproduce annually by starting new Bible study units, ministries and church plants.
- Submits a monthly report and financial report to the Sponsor, the Association, and the ASBC.
- Participates in personal and event evangelism training provided by the association and/or ASBC.
- Submits the Annual Church Profile (ACP) at the appropriate time.
- Demonstrates non-participation for the Pastor or his family in the receiving, counting, depositing, or disbursing of church funds.
- As church planter/pastor, leads the new congregation toward achieving the projections (goals) set forth in the *Budget Projections Worksheet*; leads the congregation to have a weekly outreach strategy; sets an evangelistic example by personally making a goal of at least six (6) evangelistic, cultivative visits per week as a full-time pastor and three (3) as a part-time pastor; initiates ongoing small group Bible studies and training; leads in a program of stewardship development and church budget promotion; and establishes a relationship with a mentor for personal growth.
- Commits to remain a cooperating Southern Baptist Church, and if for any reason the church ceases to do so or ceases to exist, it would transfer any ownership in land, buildings, and assets to the local Southern Baptist Association.

GUIDELINES FOR THE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION:

- When requested, assist in the beginning and development of the new church by providing resources in the areas of prayer support, strategy development, enlistment, assessment, training, and financial support in accordance with the Baptist Association’s Policies.

GUIDELINES FOR THE ARIZONA SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION:

- When requested, assist in the beginning and development of the new church by providing resources in the areas of prayer support, strategy development, enlistment, assessment, training, and financial support in accordance with the latest ASBC Policies, NAMB Guidelines, and NAMB Personnel Policies.

REQUIREMENTS:

- The lead church planter (pastor) must fulfill the NAMB requirements listed in the North American Mission Board Personnel Information Form for Field Personnel Assistance dated May 6, 2006, and subsequent updates under the section Endorsements. (See The North American Mission Board, *MISSIONARY PERSONNEL HANDBOOK*, dated November 2007.)
- Where applicable, the congregation and lead church planter (pastor) must fulfill the North American Mission Board, SBC, *CONGREGATIONAL ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES* (As printed in the CP Group Annual Update 2006-2007, August meeting 2006, and subsequent updates.)
- Financial assistance is based on an expectation that the new congregation has a need for the assistance and is progressing toward becoming self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating under the headship of Jesus Christ; therefore, the financial assistance will be reduced by a minimum of 1/5 of the initial amount, per year, for up to 5 years.
- Any **monthly assistance** amounts requested from the ASBC, unless indicated otherwise, are committed to the end of a calendar year and will be evaluated yearly through a re-application (renewal) process initiated by the ASBC.
- A congregation receiving Congregational Assistance is required to give at least 7% of their undesignated receipts to the **Cooperative Program** and expected to give at least 3% to their local association.
- The lead church planter (pastor) who has a continuous bad credit record or has been convicted of a felony will be evaluated to receive cooperative program financial assistance.

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- As a general rule salary and housing assistance should not exceed 50% of the total compensation for the lead church planter (pastor).
- Upon receiving assistance, the lead church planter (pastor) of the new congregation is required to attend the next ASBC's Church Planter Basic Training Journey event in order to continue receiving Congregational Assistance.

Procedure to apply for assistance: Contact the ASBC Church Planting Facilitator, request application forms, complete all forms, and send to ASBC Church Planting.

Procedure for processing initial applications for assistance: When a request for financial assistance is received in writing, the Church Planting Administrative Assistant notifies the Church Planting Facilitator; enters the request into the *Processing Checklist Log*; and prepares an appropriate file to receive the following forms and other pertinent information:

- A completed NAMB *Personnel Information Form for Field Personnel Assistance*
- A completed *Congregational Assistance Application* form
- Budget Projections Worksheet*

Note: When Personnel salary and housing assistance is requested, the CP Administrative Assistant sends *Questionnaires* to references provided by the church planter on the PIF.

Using the *Processing Checklist Log*, the CP Administrative Assistant monitors the return of the forms needed to apply for financial assistance; and updates the CP Facilitator periodically.

If the request is for \$6,000 or **under** in one budget year, the CP Facilitator can approve or disapprove the request by notifying the sponsor, and copying the church planter, the Association, the Executive Director/State Missionary, and CP Administrative Assistant that the request has been approved, subject to NAMB remittance of funds and reporting the action to the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention Church Planting Resource Team at their next meeting for inclusion into the minutes.

If the request is **over** \$6000 in one budget year, the *Application for Congregational Assistance* is submitted to the ASBC CP Resource Team. If the ASBC CP Resource Team approves or disapproves the request, the CP Facilitator, in writing, notifies the sponsor of the Team's decision, subject to NAMB remittance of funds, and copies the church planter, the Association, the Executive Director/State Missionary, and the CP Administrative Assistant. The CP Administrative Assistant prepares the *NAMB Personnel Action* form (for SALARY and HOUSING) or the *NAMB Recurring Non-Personnel* form (for RENT) or the *NAMB Non-Recurring Non-Personnel Form* (for START-UP); obtains the Executive Director/State Missionary's signature; sends the form to the North American Mission Board; and files the documents in their proper file.

Upon receiving an approved request, the CP Administrative Assistant prepares the *NAMB Personnel Action* form (for SALARY and HOUSING) or the *NAMB Recurring Non-Personnel* form (for RENT) or the *NAMB Non-Recurring Non-Personnel Form* (for START-UP); obtains the Executive Director/State Missionary's signature; sends the form to the North American Mission Board; and files the documents in their proper file.

The CP Administrative Assistant periodically reviews the *NAMB Remittance Report*, and makes whatever corrections may be needed.

The CP Administrative Assistant prepares an *Assistance List* each month and sends to the Business Office.

The Business Office writes *Assistance Checks* dated the last business day of the month.

The Business Office gives the *Assistance Checks* to the CP Administrative Assistant.

The CP Administrative Assistant distributes the *Assistance Checks* to the field on the last business day of the month, after first receiving the current *Monthly Report* from the congregation receiving assistance.

If the *Assistance Checks* are not sent out, the CP Administrative Assistant notifies the CP Facilitator.

Procedure for reapplying for financial assistance for the next budget year (RENEWALS):

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In May, the CP Administrative Assistant prepares a *Renewal Checklist Log*, which indicates which congregations are receiving assistance, what kind of assistance, when the assistance started, the current assistance amount, and a log of the RENEWAL PACKAGE items received, from the congregations.

After receiving the *Renewal Checklist Log*, the CP Facilitator determines which congregations receive a RENEWAL letter, that notifies them that current assistance will end December 31, and if they have a need for continued support in the next year, to apply by August 15; or a NON-RENEWAL letter, notifying the congregation that assistance ends December 31, and if they feel there is further assistance needed, to write a letter of explanation requesting a RENEWAL. A RENEWAL letter is then sent with instructions on how to submit the RENEWAL PACKAGE.

The RENEWAL PACKAGE consists of the following forms:

Renewal Congregational Assistance Application form and Transmittal letter
Church Planter Self-Evaluation form
Supervisor's Annual Review form
Budget Projections Worksheet

In mid-June, the CP Administrative Assistant sends a RENEWAL letter or a NON-RENEWAL letter per the CP Facilitators instructions.

By August 1, the CP Administrative Assistant prepares a *Growth and Cooperative Program Giving Report* for congregations on assistance and gives to the CP Facilitator.

When the *Renewal Packages* are received by August 15, the CP Administrative Assistant updates the *Renewal Checklist Log*, the *Growth and Cooperative Program Giving Report* to submit to the ASBC CP Resource Team in their September meeting for approval or disapproval of financial assistance per congregation for the next year.

The CP Facilitator, in writing, notifies the sponsor of the Team's decisions, subject to NAMB remittance of funds, and copies the church planter, the Association, the Executive Director/State Missionary, and the CP Administrative Assistant.

By the NAMB deadline of October 31, the CP Administrative Assistant prepares and sends *Electronic Renewal Requests* to the North American Mission Board per the approved *Renewal Checklist Log*.

General Note: All funding requests must be given to the CP Administrative Assistant before the 24th of the month in order to receive funds by the 10th of the following month.

General Note: If the request is either RECURRING NON-PERSONNEL or NON-RECURRING NON-PERSONNEL, and the funding is crucial and cannot wait for remittance by NAMB, advanced funding can be requested in writing to the Executive Director/State Missionary for approval or disapproval.