

Policy Updates Overview

Commission on Ministry
February 2026



**THE PRESBYTERY OF
SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND**

Overall Information for the Presbytery

- Three **updates** to current PSNE policies are being presented today for a vote:
 - Sexual Misconduct
 - Policy on Administrative Commissions for Ordinations/Installations
 - COM Manual (Guiding Principles)
- Two **new policies** are being presented today for a first reading, second reading
May
 - Commissioned Ruling Elders (CRE)
 - Dissolution of Pastoral Relationships
- Teams working on policy updates/changes
 - COM - John Merz, Sue Labins, Barbara Riihimaki, Janet Wade Utay
 - Sexual Misconduct Response Team - Terrlyn Curry Avery, Deb Packard, Steve Hart, Lisa Baker, Steve Hart and Ed Sackett
 - CRE Policy - joint team from the three New England Presbyteries: PSNE, PoB, PNNE

Policy Update #1 - Policy on Admin Commissions

Presented today for vote

- Update to existing policy
- Only applies to the creation of Administrative Commissions for installations and/or ordinations
- Includes reporting form to the Stated Clerk

Policy Update #2 - Commission on Ministry Manual

Presented today for vote

- Update to existing policy
- Name change from “Manual of Operations” to “Guiding Principles for the COM”
- The collection of documents maintained on the COM website for the COM represents the Manual of Operations for the COM in its entirety
- Gets rid of extra verbiage/redundancies

Policy Update #3 - Update to Sexual Misconduct

Presented today for vote

- Update to existing policy
- Eliminates and streamlines the parts of the current policy that were redundant and represented extra or confusing verbiage (already contained in the Book of Discipline)
- Updates language, definitions, roles, and responsibilities
- Contains new and updated training requirements for all clergy, commissioned ruling elders, students under care, ruling elders serving in the Presbytery and those leading new worshipping communities and immigrant fellowships
- Conforms with all new requirements in the Book of Order
- Was reviewed by PCUSA legal counsel and PSNE counsel before presentation to the Presbytery

New Policy #1 - Pastoral Dissolutions

First Reading - No vote today

- This was initially presented to the Presbytery in May of 2025 for a first reading, but postponed at the October 2025 meeting so that COM could make additional changes.
- Entirely new policy to conform with new Book of Order requirements
- Includes provisions for all types of pastoral dissolutions
- This is a first reading, feedback and/or questions can be provided via the Stated Clerk (info@psne.org) through April 1, 2026 to the COM for consideration for the second reading at the May 2026 meeting of the Presbytery

New Policy #2 - Commissioned Ruling Elders

First Reading - No vote today

- Entirely new policy to conform with the Book of Order requirements
- Shared work between the CPM and COM, and includes processes for educational and training requirements in concert with the Synod of the Northeast and/or other theological training programs
- This policy was developed jointly during 2025 with a team from the 3 New England Presbyteries - PSNE, PoB, PNNE - so that we can share this ministry resourcing area between the three Presbyteries more easily
- This is a first reading, feedback and/or questions can be provided to the Stated Clerk info@psne.org by April 1, 2026 for the COM for consideration for the second reading at the May 2026 meeting of the Presbytery