

Policy for Churches in Self-Suspension

Definition

“Self-Suspension” is defined as a state where the Senior Pastor and the Board of Directors of a local MCC Church have failed to pay the required assessments to the Board of Pensions (USA). This choice leads to the act of self-suspension.

Self-Suspension occurs when either of the following occur:

1. ...five years of significant non-payment of BOP assessments accrue. “Significant non-payment” is defined as five years where the church in question paid BOP assessments in the amount of 25% or less per year.
2. ...three years of significant non-payment during which BOP forms were not submitted at least 75% of the time.

Consequences of Self-Suspension for Senior Pastor *(there are no consequences for Staff Pastors)*

When a church enters self-suspension according to the criteria above, the Senior Pastor of that church shall experience the following consequences:

1. For every year of suspension, the Senior Pastor will not receive BOP credit for years of service.
2. Self-suspended years of service can be credited on the Senior Pastor’s record if remedied during their tenure at the Local Church in self-suspension. However, any years not remedied at the time of a Senior Pastor’s departure or retirement will never be credited.
3. When said Senior Pastor moves to a different church in MCC, assuming that church is not in self-suspension, the Senior Pastor will once again begin accruing years of service. However, accumulated years of self-suspension will not be restored.
4. While active serving a church in self-suspension, the Senior Pastor’s General Conference voting privileges will be removed.

Consequences of Self-Suspension for the Local Church

1. While in active self-suspension, the Local Church’s Lay Delegate voting privileges at General Conference will be removed.
2. During a Pastoral Search, it is expected that the Local Church will make their self-suspension status clear to all Senior Pastor candidates.
3. Prior to each General Conference, the Board of Pensions will publish a list of self-suspended churches.

Reinstatement Criteria for Self-Suspended Churches with a Senior Pastor with Ongoing Service

1. In the event that a self-suspended church with a Senior Pastor with ongoing service makes a repayment agreement with the Board of Pensions that will achieve the two following criteria, a church can be reinstated:
 - a. That assessments in arrears to BOP will be paid within 20 years.
 - b. That current assessments will be paid in full and kept current.
2. Probation Status: If a church on a repayment plan falls three quarters behind in their payments, the church will re-enter self-suspension and all of the consequences of self-suspension will resume.

Reinstatement Criteria for Self-Suspended Churches with a Newly-Installed Senior Pastor

1. In the event that a self-suspended church with a newly-installed Senior Pastor makes a repayment agreement with the Board of Pensions that achieves the following criteria, that church can be reinstated:
 - a. That current assessments will be paid in full and kept current.
2. Probation Status: If a church on a repayment plan falls three quarters behind in their payments, the church will re-enter self-suspension and all of the consequences of self-suspension will resume.
3. If self-suspended church with a newly-installed Senior Pastor has kept current with their BOP payments for more than three years, the Probation Status (#2) will be removed.