

**K. PETITIONS and RESOLUTIONS****ADOPTED BY 2017 ROCKY MOUNTAIN ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION**

Petitions appear in final form and in the order listed below. Petitions not listed were not adopted.

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**AC01: Health Insurance Programs and Funding****Section I – Health Insurance Provider, Plan Sponsor, Plan Availability and Plan Eligibility**

As Plan Sponsor, the Conference will provide and/or make health insurance programs available consistent with ¶639.6, *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016* (Retiree Health Care Access) and ¶639.7 (Group Health Care Plans). For 2018, this program will be provided through the HealthFlex health insurance plan for active clergy and lay staff. For retired clergy and their spouses, and retired lay staff, the program will be provided through OneExchange.

Plan availability, eligibility and participation for active clergy and lay staff are subject to the terms and conditions of the applicable documents for the coverage period, and are available from the Conference Treasurer and Benefits Officer or Wespeth Benefits and Investments (formerly known as General Board of Pension and Health Benefits). Coverage and plan participation information for retired clergy and their spouses, and retired lay staff, is available from the individual plans selected by each participant through the OneExchange program.

Eligibility will be established by Wespeth Benefits and Investments and the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits for active clergy and lay staff. Eligibility for retired clergy and their spouses, and retired lay staff, will be established by the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits.

**A. ACTIVE CLERGY**

1. HealthFlex shall be available for all clergy serving full-time in a Rocky Mountain Conference local church or in the Conference office or any other unit of the Conference which provides pension contributions to the Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP), with the exception of clergy described in I.A.3.
2. HealthFlex shall be available for active clergy serving full-time who are Medicare-eligible but do not qualify under the Multiple Small Employer Exception (serving a church with 20 or more employees).
3. OneExchange shall be available for active clergy serving full-time who are Medicare-eligible and qualify under the Multiple Small Employer Exception (serving a church with 19 or less employees).

**B. RETIRED CLERGY**

The OneExchange program shall be available to assist all retired clergy and spouses meeting the qualification guidelines established by the Conference to identify a supplemental plan in addition to Medicare.

Clergy must be Medicare-eligible and have been in the active plan for five consecutive years in the Rocky Mountain Conference or Yellowstone Conference immediately prior to their retirement to be eligible to participate in the OneExchange program sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Conference. An exception shall be made for clergy who retire prior to the age of Medicare-eligibility and elect to have qualified group plan coverage or coverage through a private plan outside of the Conference. Other exceptions may be requested for consideration and approval by the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits. Retirees who have been granted exceptions and who are not enrolled in HealthFlex when they attain the age of Medicare-eligibility shall be offered a one-time opt-in privilege. If this opt-in privilege is not exercised at least 30 days prior to attaining the age of Medicare-eligibility by contacting the Conference Benefits office, the retiree is not eligible to participate in the OneExchange program.

Clergy who have opted out of Social Security will need to be enrolled in both Medicare Parts A and B to be eligible to participate in the OneExchange program.

**C. CLERGY ON MEDICAL LEAVE**

HealthFlex shall be available for clergy on Medical Leave and receiving disability benefits from Wespeth Benefits and Investments, until such time as the clergy becomes Medicare-eligible. When these clergy become Medicare-eligible, the OneExchange program shall be available for them.

**D. LAY EMPLOYEES**

HealthFlex shall be available for all eligible full-time lay employees of the Rocky Mountain Conference meeting the qualification guidelines established by the Conference. The OneExchange program shall be available for all eligible

retired lay staff. Lay employees must have been in the HealthFlex plan for five consecutive years immediately prior to their retirement to be eligible to participate in the OneExchange program.

## **Section II - Plan Participation, Coverage, Costs and Conditions**

### **A. ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS**

Every charge in the Conference shall be direct-billed monthly for the insurance premium for single coverage for every elder, deacon in full connection, local pastor, associate member, or provisional member appointed full-time serving that charge and eligible for HealthFlex, regardless of participation. The cost includes vision and dental coverage.

Less than full-time clergy are not eligible to enroll in the HealthFlex plan; however the local church may choose to provide other coverage for its ¾ time and ½ time appointed clergy. For less than full-time appointments, the local church – working with its respective District Superintendent – is encouraged to contribute towards the clergy's medical care outside of HealthFlex by providing additional income. Costs for this coverage will be borne totally by the local church and/or appointed pastor. This is in addition to the minimum salary, housing, pension and allowable professional reimbursable amounts for pastors serving less than full-time. Per the Affordable Care Act, funding provided by employers to assist employees in purchasing individual health insurance is considered taxable compensation.

Each charge shall be direct-billed monthly for the insurance cost of its lay staff participants. The Conference shall pay the insurance premium for single coverage under HealthFlex for lay staff as specified by Personnel Policies for lay staff.

Active clergy serving full-time who are Medicare eligible and who qualify under the Multiple Small Employer Exception (serving a church with 19 or less employees) will participate in the OneExchange program. It is recommended that the employing church contribute towards the clergy's medical care by providing additional income. Such financial assistance is considered taxable income.

### **B. RETIRED PARTICIPANTS**

Each eligible retired participant and eligible spouse shall work with a Licensed Benefit Advisor at OneExchange to identify the appropriate coverage and cost-effective supplemental plan most suitable to the individual needs and requirements of the participant. Each eligible participant shall be provided a monthly stipend established as a fixed dollar amount which shall be deposited in a personal Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) to be used by the participant to pay for health insurance premiums and other qualifying out-of-pocket medical expenses. Any HRA money unused in one calendar year will be rolled over for use in subsequent years, consistent with then-existing tax laws.

The stipend amount will be reviewed at least every two years. The review will take into account the two categories of HRA contribution levels:

- a) Retired eligible participants with 20 or more years of Pre-82 service
- b) Retired eligible participants with less than 20 years of Pre-82 service

The spouse's eligibility is determined by the retired participant's eligibility. However, a non-HealthFlex participant spouse of a retired eligible participant may take advantage of the OneExchange program but will not receive a stipend payment to a Health Reimbursement Account.

Retirees, spouses and surviving spouses eligible to receive pensions but not yet eligible for Medicare who choose to remain in HealthFlex shall receive a subsidy from the Conference up to 20% of their applicable active rate. These retirees may also choose to enroll in another qualified group plan or in a private plan, but this coverage will not be subsidized by the Conference. If they choose to enroll in a private plan, it may have a negative impact on their ability to obtain coverage for pre-existing conditions when they move to the OneExchange program.

The Conference shall not provide a health insurance stipend for retired lay employees from a local church. Eligible retired employees of the Conference office shall be eligible for a stipend as specified in Section II.B.

**C. CLERGY ON MEDICAL LEAVE**

Health insurance for clergy on Medical Leave and receiving disability benefits from Wespeth Benefits and Investments shall be provided through HealthFlex and paid 100% by the Conference. Spousal and dependent coverage shall be made available but not subsidized in any manner by the Conference. Clergy on Medical Leave and receiving disability benefits will be required to participate in the OneExchange program upon Medicare eligibility. When clergy on Medical Leave and receiving disability benefits who have opted out of Social Security retire, they will need to be enrolled in both Medicare Parts A and B to be eligible to participate in the OneExchange program.

**Section III - Plan Administration and Mandatory Payments**

- A. The Conference benefits staff, working with the Center for Health, will process active participant enrollments, collect premiums, reconcile funds and help coordinate plan activities. Retired participants will work directly with OneExchange advisors on an annual and as needed basis.
- B. The monthly payment of the health premiums specified in Section II. A. is mandatory for all full-time clergy appointed to serve a local church in the Rocky Mountain Conference. If a church is delinquent in health premium payments, the Conference Treasurer's office will initiate action and notify the respective District Superintendent and Bishop of the delinquency. The Conference Cabinet will be kept apprised of all communication regarding the delinquency. The affected charge will continue to be direct-billed for the monthly premiums throughout this entire period.
- C. The 2018 active insurance rates will be established by the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits after premium rate information is received from the Center for Health.

Effective Date: January 1, 2018

Termination Date: December 31, 2018

Originator of the Petition: Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits

**AC02: District Superintendent, Director of Mission and Ministry, and Treasurer / Benefits Officer / Director of Support Services Compensation**

- A. Base compensation for District Superintendents will not exceed 1.7 times the Conference Average Compensation. The 2018 base compensation for District Superintendents is proposed to be \$103,306, which includes cash salary and a cash-based housing allowance. This amount is 1.56 times the 2018 Conference Average Compensation.
- B. A District Superintendent serving more than six consecutive years shall receive an additional \$1,000 in the seventh consecutive year. For the eighth consecutive year, an additional amount of \$250 shall be provided, for a total of \$1,250.
- C. Base compensation for the Director of Mission and Ministry and the Treasurer / Benefits Officer / Director of Support Services is established at the same amount as the base compensation for District Superintendents. The Director of Mission and Ministry and Treasurer/Benefits Officer/Director of Support Services positions shall receive an annual service year increment of \$250 for each completed year of service - up to a maximum of \$3,500.
- D. The Conference, through its Council on Finance and Administration and in consultation with each clergyperson, shall designate a cash-based housing allowance applicable to such clergyperson in accordance with Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code. The designation shall be made on or prior to January 1, 2018, or if employed after January 1, 2018, upon commencement of employment.
- E. Car expense shall be reimbursed at the 2018 IRS business rate for basic automobile use. Where annual business-related travel exceeds 23,000 miles, the above positions will be provided with a leased vehicle, which is a more cost effective option.
- F. HealthFlex (health insurance), CPP (death and disability benefit) and CRSP (Clergy Retirement Security Program) payments shall be made by the Rocky Mountain Conference in accordance with guidelines established by the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits. In addition, \$600 for continuing education from accountable reimbursement funds shall also be provided.
- G. The Rocky Mountain Conference Council on Finance and Administration is authorized to reduce the base compensation amount specified in A. and the continuing education amount specified in F., based on revenue projections.

Effective Date: January 1, 2018

Termination Date: December 31, 2018

Originator of the Petition: Personnel Policies and Practices Committee

### AC03: 2018 Minimum and Equitable Compensation

The Rocky Mountain Annual Conference defines the following compensation terms:

**Minimum Base Compensation (MBC)** is the specific amount of cash salary, housing, and benefits set by annual petition for all clergy (Elders, Deacons, Associate Members and Local Pastors) who are in good standing and appointed to full-time service according to the provisions of the current *Book of Discipline*.

Effective January 1, 2018, this will be:

**Cash salary** of \$37,748, which is 57% of the 2018 Conference Average Compensation (CAC) of \$66,225. For clergy who are in good standing and appointed to less than full-time service in the local church, the cash salary shall be adjusted in one-quarter increments as follows:  $\frac{3}{4}$  time = \$28,311,  $\frac{1}{2}$  time = \$18,874,  $\frac{1}{4}$  time = \$9,437.

**Housing** is provided either by a parsonage or a cash housing allowance that allows the clergy to obtain housing in their community that meets conference parsonage standards. In 2018, depending upon the location, the allowance is *suggested* to be an annual amount of no less than \$10,929 for a full time appointment. For those communities where housing equivalent to conference parsonage standards costs less than \$10,929 per year, it is suggested that the annual amount be no less than \$10,929 for a full-time appointment.

**Benefits** are established by other annual conference petitions and by the current Book of Discipline and include health insurance, CRSP pension funding, UMPIP pension funding, and CPP death and disability funding.

In addition, **reimbursable expenses** are those expenditures made by the clergy in the fulfillment of their responsibilities that are allowed, by IRS regulations, to be reimbursed as business expenses. These include travel (including to Annual Conference), continuing education, books and periodicals, and meeting expenses. These amounts should be agreed upon by the local church and the clergy. For full-time appointments, it is recommended that this amount be set at an annual minimum of \$2,500.

In addition, we define **Equitable Compensation** as the Minimum Base Compensation plus a consideration of the following factors:

- Experience and years of service
- Cost of living in the community
- Years of education
- Work load
- Attainment of goals agreed upon by clergy and the SPR/PPR Committee.
- Each clergy's housing equity goals

#### **Redistribution within the compensation package**

Because it affects both the Conference and the Denominational Average Compensation, as well as the pastor's pension funding, no more than 20% of the pastor's cash salary can be moved from taxable salary to tax-exempt reimbursable expenses.

**Equitable Compensation Fund** is the amount budgeted in the Conference annual budget for emergency supplementation of clergy salaries in churches or charges that are unable to provide minimum compensation. As defined in ¶342, ¶624, and ¶625 in *The Book of Discipline 2016*, this fund, and any disbursements from it, is overseen by the Commission on Equitable Compensation.

#### **Student Local Pastors**

Student local pastors as defined in ¶318.3 in *The Book of Discipline 2016* under appointment are to receive base compensation, prorated for less than full time work as agreed between the local church, the student pastor, and the district superintendent.

Professional expenses of the student or the actual costs incurred while working at the church are recommended to be reimbursed by voucher. For travel expenses student pastors are to be reimbursed by voucher at the 2018 IRS Rate.

#### **Vacation**

Pastors should be provided with four (4) weeks' vacation every year. Churches are encouraged to discuss vacations with their pastor(s), particularly during the first year of reappointment.

**Study Leave/Sabbatical**

1. Full time pastors, to continue their education, shall be allowed study leave of at least one week each year and may be allowed at least one month each quadrennium (§350.2, *The Book of Discipline 2016*). Such study leave shall not be considered vacation.
2. Full -time pastors (after 6 [six] years of full-time appointment) may be allowed up to 6 [six] months formation and spiritual growth leave. (§350.3 and §351, *The Book of Discipline 2016*)

**Sick Leave**

The policy for clergy sick leave is at the discretion of the local church in consultation with the District Superintendent.

**Maternity/Paternity Leave**

Pastors may be allowed up to a maximum of eight weeks of paid maternity/paternity leave. Such leave shall comply with the guidelines established in §355 in *The Book of Discipline 2016*.

Each Rocky Mountain Conference annual budget shall include an amount that is to be used for the purpose of pulpit and pastoral supply during the absence of a pastor on maternity/paternity leave. During such leave, the local church will be responsible for continuing all clergy compensation. The church may request conference financial support to help defray pulpit supply costs. The cabinet shall direct the use of these funds and, normally, such assistance will provide only partial funding of the total costs that may be involved. For 2018, the Rocky Mountain Conference budgeted amount shall be \$1,000.

Effective Date: January 1, 2018

Termination Date: December 31, 2018

Originator of the Petition: Commission on Equitable Compensation

**AC04: Clergy Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training**

Rocky Mountain Conference clergy as identified in Schedule A must attend a Rocky Mountain Conference Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training workshop at least once in each quadrennium\*.

Rocky Mountain Conference clergy as identified in Schedule B must attend a Rocky Mountain Conference Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training workshop at least once in each quadrennium\* if the person is serving in a ministry setting either by appointment of the Bishop, by DS assignment, or by arrangements with the ministry setting.

While not required, lay employees and volunteers in leadership roles in UM ministry settings are strongly encouraged to attend a Rocky Mountain Conference Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training workshop at least once in each quadrennium\*.

\* Note: For purposes of this petition, “quadrennium” is defined as the time period beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> following one UMC General Conference and extending through June 30<sup>th</sup> following General Conference four years later.

Schedule A

- AF Affiliate Member
- AM Associate Member
- CLM Certified Lay Minister
- COD Clergy, Other Denomination
- DM Diaconal Member
- DP Provisional Deacon from Another Conference
- FD Deacon in Full Connection
- FE Elder in Full Connection
- FL Full-time Local Pastor
- OA Associate Member, Other Conference
- OD Deacon, Other Conference
- ODP Provisional Deacon, other Conference
- OE Elder, Other Conference
- OF Full Member, Other Conference
- OP Provisional Member, Other Conference
- PD Provisional Deacon
- PE Provisional Elder
- PL Part-time Local Pastor
- PM Probationary Member (1992 Book of Discipline)
- SP Student Local Pastor
- SY Supply Pastor

Schedule B

- OR Retired Member Other Conference
- RA Retired Associate Member
- RF Retired Affiliate Member
- RD Retired Deacon
- RI Retired Diaconal Minister
- RE Retired Elder
- RL Retired Local Pastor
- RP Retired Probationary Member

**Clergy Serving in Extension Ministry**

The requirement for quadrennial Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training applies to clergy serving in extension ministry (defined as any ministry setting beyond the local church). However, these settings are sometimes at great distance from the Rocky Mountain Conference, and the Conference Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training workshop may not address ethical issues in ways that are relevant to the range of extension ministries to which our clergy are appointed. Therefore, clergy serving in extension ministry may petition the Chair of the Ethical

Education Task Force (with copy to their respective District Superintendent) to substitute training either closer to them or more appropriate for their setting. Information describing the alternative training's content sufficient to allow the Chair of the Ethical Education Task Force (EETF) to determine equivalency to our standards must be provided well ahead of participation in such training. A decision regarding the acceptability of the alternative training will be rendered in writing (or by e-mail) by the Chair of the Ethical Education Task Force, and upon completion, the clergy person(s) making the request shall provide an official certificate of completion to the Chair of the Ethical Education Task Force and their District Superintendent as proof of their participation in that training.

**Clergy for Whom English and/or for Whom North American Culture is Not their Primary Language or Culture**

Clergy for whom English and/or for whom North American culture is not their primary language or culture are not exempt from this quadrennial ethics training requirement. Nor are they exempt from conducting their ministry within the laws of the State in which they serve or within the guidelines and requirements of *The Book of Discipline*. However, the Ethical Education Task Force recognizes that extra effort needs to be made to develop Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training that is accessible and understandable to them, and the Task Force commits itself to this work.

**Concerning Compliance**

The Clergy Continuing Formation Report received from each person as per Schedule A or Schedule B in connection with each local church's annual church or charge conference shall include the following question: "When and where did you last attend a Rocky Mountain Conference Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training workshop?" The office of the District Superintendent shall review each report to ensure compliance. In addition, the Chair of the Ethical Education Task Force shall report to the Cabinet prior to the Annual Conference session marking the start of the fourth year of the quadrennium (see \* Note above for definition of "quadrennium") the list of clergy in compliance with this Conference mandate and those out of compliance, with the intent being that all clergy are given ample opportunity to participate in acceptable ethics training.

Clergy mandated by this petition to complete Ethical Education training who fail to do so by the end of the current quadrennium (see \* Note above for definition of "quadrennium") shall have a letter noting their non-compliance placed in their District and Conference personnel files. Two such letters shall result in the matter being referred to the Bishop for possible further disciplinary action.

**Content of the Conference Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training**

The curriculum used by the RMC Ethical Education Task Force shall be focused on matters of understanding ministry as a sacred trust with clergy being held to the highest standards of ethical behavior within this understanding. Therefore, matters of power and appropriate behavior in clergy relationships, particularly where intimacy and sexual expression intersect with the sacred trust of clergy leadership, along with clergy emotional and spiritual self-care, will be central to the Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training. To the extent that mandatory reporting of suspected abuse (including neglect) of any sort of children, youth, and vulnerable adults by State law is a necessity for clergy, this topic will be addressed, as well. Finally, matters of financial ethics are critical to the sacred trust of ministry, as the persons we serve are asked to entrust not only their spiritual lives to the ministry of the church but a portion of their financial resources, as well. And so ethics related to handling the finances of a particular ministry setting will also be addressed. Other areas of ethics in ministry are, no doubt, of great importance and sacred trust, e.g., "Safe Sanctuaries" (ministries dealing with safe and ethical treatment of children, youth, and vulnerable adults), appropriate use of social media and church technology, and how best to be in ministries with those on the margins of society, to name a few. However, these areas will not be addressed by the Conference Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training because they are seen as being more the purview of the local church rather than this AC legislation.

**Frequency of Offerings of the Conference Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training**

The Conference Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training will be offered the day prior to the start of the Annual Conference sessions the last 3 out of the 4 years in each quadrennium and as part of the Board of Ordained Ministry credentialing process for incoming clergy, whether they be clergy seeking commissioning as provisional members of the Annual Conference or credentialed clergy coming into the RMAC from other locations. In addition,

Training workshops will be supported by the EETF if they are held at ministry settings around the Annual Conference and facilitated by others prepared to do so.

**Delivery of the Conference Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training**

The appointive Cabinet, the Board of Ordained Ministry, and the EETF are committed to the principle that the best training is interactive and occurs with participants interacting with each other in a person-to-person environment. Therefore, development of Internet-based, individual Ethics and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training will not be a priority of the EETF. However, efforts will be made by the EETF to develop workshops that utilize “virtual meeting technology” to allow participants in remote locations to participate in web-based training workshops via Internet connection.

**Renaming of the Ethical Education Task Force**

The Ethical Education Task Force will henceforth be known as the Conference Committee on Ethics in Ministry (CCEM) unless and until it is changed by action of the Annual Conference in the future.

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

Termination Date: June 30, 2021

Originator of the Petition: Steve Easterday-McPadden

### **AC05: Rocky Mountain Conference Safe Sanctuary Policy**

The Rocky Mountain Conference shall affirm its commitment to maintaining sacred trust for vulnerable populations, including but not limited to children, youth and at-risk adults, by mandating adherence to the policies and procedures of Safe Sanctuary during Conference and District sponsored activities and/or events.

The Rocky Mountain Conference Safe Sanctuary policies, practices, and procedures shall be reviewed and affirmed annually by the Director of Mission and Ministry, the Conference Treasurer and their designees. Any identified revisions during the process of review will be reported to the Annual Conference session.

To ensure integrity, consistency, and accountability, the policies and procedures established by this petition shall be implemented and strictly adhered to by the organizers and event workers/leaders of District and Conference events. These shall apply to all personnel (clergy and lay, volunteer or paid) staffing the event and will be overseen by the Director of Mission and Ministry or his/her designee(s) for the event. It is recognized that certain Conference and/or District sponsored activities and/or events may not call for all the requirements of this policy. The power to waive and/or modify the requirements will rest solely with the Conference Director of Mission and Ministry.

#### **Application**

Each event worker/leader shall submit a signed application which may include, but not be limited to, references, relevant occupational history, residential history, and a voluntary disclosure of relevant criminal history.

#### **Authorization and Release**

Each event worker/leader shall submit a signed authorization and release to perform such background and reference as may be necessary or advisable for the position he/she will serve during the event. Required background checks may include, but not be limited to, criminal, credit and/or employment.

#### **Behavioral Covenant**

Each participant shall submit a signed behavioral covenant which stipulates expected standards of behavior by organizers and event workers/leaders before and during the event.

#### **Local Church Statement**

Each person seeking to serve/work in an official capacity at a District and/or Conference event shall submit a signed statement from his/her local church pastor indicating that the person in question has been either a member of said local church, or has attended regularly for a minimum of six months. The local church pastor must also verify that the person has successfully completed a background screening in accordance with current Conference Office recommendations and practices. Event workers younger than 18 years of age, in lieu of such a background screening, are only required to submit a signed statement from his/her local pastor and a reference check form.

#### **Motor Vehicle Check**

Each event worker/leader who will be transporting children, youth or vulnerable adults shall submit copies of a Motor Vehicle Check, proof of insurance and a valid driver's license.

#### **Affirmation Statement**

Each event worker/leader shall submit a signed statement stating that he/she understands and will abide by the job description, expectations, and safe practices regarding work with children, youth and vulnerable adults. This will include an adherence to laws regarding mandatory reporting by the State in which the event is held.

#### **The Designated Safety Advocate (DSA)**

In addition to the policies and procedures that promote integrity, consistency and accountability, a Designated Safety Advocate (DSA) shall staff every District and conference event. This individual will be appointed by the Director of Mission and Ministry or his/her designee. The Designated Safety Advocate (DSA), who must not be the event coordinator, shall be responsible for ensuring on-site that the event complies with Safe Sanctuary policies and procedures as well as all legal and code requirements. The Designated Safety Advocate shall be responsible for, but not be limited to, the implementation of the following tasks:

#### **Basic Competencies**

The Designated Safety Advocate (DSA) assigned to an event sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Conference or any of the Districts within the Conference must know and adhere to the following standards: mandatory reporting laws for

the event for the State in which the event is held, the Conference “Crisis Communication Plan” which, unless otherwise designated, shall be the Director of Communications, and a working familiarity with the “Training Resources” as a resource list for Safe Sanctuary policies and procedures.

**Behavioral Covenant and Medical Release Forms**

The DSA must ensure that all participants, workers, leaders (including the DSA) and their adult guardians, if applicable, have read and signed an agreement to abide by the terms of a behavioral covenant (which is event specific) in advance of the event. In addition, the DSA will ensure that all participants, workers, leaders and their adult guardians have submitted a signed medical release form.

**Leader Background Checks**

The DSA must ensure that each paid and volunteer staff have successfully completed a background screening in accordance with current Conference Office recommendations and practices.

**Building Safety**

The DSA must ensure that the building utilized for the event conforms with building occupancy limitations per applicable “Certificates of Occupancy.” In addition, the DSA must ensure that all event leaders are educated in emergency preparedness policies including but not limited to floor plans, building capacities, fire/emergency evacuation procedures and emergency exits.

**Insurance**

The DSA must ensure that all groups have the necessary certificates of insurance both for liability and worker compensation and that they are displayed as required by law. In addition, the DSA must assure that all District and Conference events conform to Federal and State wage and tax laws for employees.

**Leadership at Event**

The DSA shall identify him/herself to all leaders and participants at the beginning of the event and present the safety standards and procedures for the event. In addition, the DSA must ensure that any child care services provided at the event are either licensed or exempted from licensing per Federal and/or State regulations. In the event of reported abuse or neglect, the DSA will ensure appropriate responses by the event and Conference leaders.

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

Termination Date: June 30, 2021

Originator of the Petition: Rocky Mountain Conference Committee on Ethics in Ministry  
(formerly known as Ethical Education Task Force)

**AC12: One Year Study Group to Assess the Impact of Clergy and Seminarian Debt and Make Recommendations to the Rocky Mountain 2018 Annual Conference**

A one year study group shall be convened by the Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry and charged with assessing more fully the effects of new clergy educational debt for the purpose of making recommendations that will effectively address the issue to the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference at its 2018 meeting. The group will meet virtually so as to require no budget.

The study group shall consist of the following persons or their designate:

- Chair, Board of Ordained Ministry – convener;
- Chair, Board of Pensions and Health Benefits;
- Chair, Council on Finance and Administration;
- Chair, Conference Trustees;
- Chair, Equitable Salary Committee;
- Chair, New Church Development Committee;
- A person ordained in the last 3 years;
- One of co-chairs, Order of Elder;
- One of the co-chairs, Order of Deacon;
- One of the co-chairs, Fellowship of Local Pastors;
- Director, Iliff School of Theology Spiritually Integrated Financial Resilience program;
- A representative from the Cabinet; and
- A representative from the Conference Treasurer’s office.

**PETITION DETAILS**

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

Termination Date: June 30, 2018

Originator of the Petition: Cathie Kelsey

**AC22: Study the Effects of Rolling Back Tithe Plus Mission Giving to 10%**

The Rocky Mountain Conference Council on Finance and Administration shall facilitate a study of the effects of rolling back the Tithe Plus Mission (13%) giving formula (apportionment), to a formula based on the traditional tithe, or 10% of adjusted gross revenue, and shall provide a recommendation to the 2018 Annual Conference, consistent with ¶615, *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016*.

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

Termination Date: June 30, 2018

Originator of the Petition: Longs Peak United Methodist Church

**AC23: Recording the Total Financial Cost of Annual Conference to the Local Church**

The Rocky Mountain Conference shall provide the local church a voluntary system to collect and record the total costs of transportation, housing, registration, and food, for each local church to attend Annual Conference in 2017, 2018, and 2019. The data will be made available monthly on the Rocky Mountain Church's website.

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

Termination Date: June 30, 2020

Originator of the Petition: Jeffrey R Babb

**AC11: Standing United and Embracing Our Differences**

We, as members of the 2017 Annual Conference Session of the Rocky Mountain Conference of The United Methodist Church, strive to stand united and welcoming to all, regardless of the social, political, and theological differences that exist within our society. In order to make that possible, we commit to embracing difference on a conference, congregational, and individual level.

As we continue to live into the Bishop's call to live into Beloved Community as an annual conference, we commit to intentional partnerships between conference boards and committees as we strive to respect the many diverse voices across our region.

We also covenant to engage in intentional dialogue and conversation on a congregational level about understanding diversity and embracing difference. We will then report back to the District Superintendents on our progress at our Charge Conferences.

Finally, we challenge ourselves to embrace difference on an individual level in our day-to-day lives. As John Wesley asked the early Methodists, "Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion?"

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

Termination Date: June 30, 2018

Originator of the Petition: Conference Council on Youth Ministries