

# **MISSIONS POLICY HANDBOOK**

**Revision – September 8, 2009**

**Approved by BMA of MO Association on Oct. 23, 2009**

## **MISSIONS POLICY HANDBOOK**

This handbook is intended to outline the current policies governing mission work sponsored by the Baptist Missionary Association of Missouri (BMA of MO). All missions personnel should keep a copy of this handbook for future reference. Personnel with questions about these or other missions related policies should direct their questions to the Director of Missions for the BMA of MO.

This handbook will be updated periodically as policies are changed or added. Updated copies of the handbook will be distributed to all missionary personnel and to missionary committeemen of each BMA of Missouri church.

### **Special Missions Committee**

Members of this committee shall be duly elected missionary committeemen. The duties of this committee shall be to:

1. Seek out qualified people for the work of missions, giving due regard to recommendations from the churches.
2. Investigate each applicant before making a recommendation to the Missionary Committee.
3. Work with the Director of Missions as advisors in the various aspects of state missions.
4. Make recommendations on salaries and benefits for all missionary personnel.
5. Visit each mission point at least once each year and bring to the Missionary Committee at the annual meeting a recommendation concerning the continuation of the mission point.
6. Serve as a chaplaincy committee for the purpose of endorsing those who would serve as institutional chaplains. Such endorsements shall be based upon an individual's qualifications, a letter of recommendation from his home church, and a signed statement of agreement with our doctrinal statement.

7. This committee is authorized, between sessions of the Association, to approve emergency loans from missions funds for any BMA of Missouri department. The Association shall set guidelines for repayment at its next session.
8. This committee shall perform other duties as requested by the Association.

### **Director of Missions**

The Director of Missions shall:

1. Receive and disburse all missions funds as directed by the Association.
2. Submit a monthly written report including financial summary to be published in *The Missouri Missionary Baptist*" He shall also submit reports to the semi-annual and annual meetings of the State Association.
3. Solicit special offerings for missions from the churches as needed.
4. Act as an advisor to missions personnel and to the mission congregations.
5. Investigate any allegations of unsatisfactory work by a missionary, working with the Special Missions Committee as needed. If warranted, a full report shall be made to the Missionary Committee, including any recommendations for remedial action to be taken.
6. Serve in planning the programs of the semi-annual meeting and missions symposium, as prescribed under Article II of the by-laws.

### **Assistant Director of Missions**

In the event of disability or a vacancy in the office of Director of Missions, the Assistant Director of Missions shall be responsible for:

1. The normal receiving and disbursing of funds.
2. Working with the Chairman of the Special Missions Committee to conduct all necessary duties of the office of Director.

The Assistant Director shall receive one half of the salary of the Director while serving in capacity outlined above.

### **Missionaries**

#### **I Definitions and Staffing Priorities**

The BMA of Missouri recognizes two different types of missionary positions and gives priority to missionary staffing in the following order:

- Church Planter – The church planter is a solo missionary or the lead man of a missionary team.
- Associate Missionary – The associate missionary will work with an elected church planter, with duties directed by the church planter. This position may be either full or part-time.

## **II Candidacy Requirements**

### **A. Application**

Each prospective missionary must submit a completed application to the Director of Missions. Applications and deadline information are available from the Director of Missions. Applications require a 90 day processing period.

### **B. Experience/Preparation Required.**

#### **1. Church Planter**

##### **(a) Church Membership**

The Candidate must be a member of a BMAA church.

##### **(b) Ministerial Experience**

The Candidate must have completed at least one of the following:

- Two years experience as a pastor or associate pastor.
- One year training as an assistant church planter.
- A degree with an emphasis in Bible or religion from an accredited college, university, or seminary.
- An acceptable training program specifically designed to prepare for the challenges of church-planting.

#### **2. Associate Missionary**

##### **(c) Church Membership**

The Candidate must be a member of a BMAA church.

##### **(d) Ministerial Experience**

The Candidate will ideally have experience in pastoral or associate roles. However this requirement may be waived if the applicant possesses proven gifts and abilities that will clearly benefit the mission effort. A specific training program may be designed for the candidate to complete before going to the field, or during his time of service there.

### **C. Suitability to Mission Work**

The suitability of an applicant for the missions field is a key factor in the evaluation process. Information will be gathered from a wide spectrum of individuals acquainted with the applicant. Means of obtaining this information may include (but not limited to) extensive written questionnaires sent to the references submitted by the applicant as well as oral and/or written contact with the applicant's friends and acquaintances.

The Director of Missions may also utilize the services of a professional church planter assessment firm to assist in determining a candidate's aptitude for successful church-planting.

## **III Field of Service.**

The missionaries shall consult with the Director of Missions and the Special Missions Committee in matters of selecting a field of service or changing fields. Similar consultation should also be periodically sought in planning the work in the selected field.

#### **IV Accountability**

- A. All missionary personnel are accountable to the BMA of MO while receiving support from this body.
- B. The church planter shall comply with the policies and practices of the sponsoring church until such time that the mission is organized into a New Testament church. Ascertaining compliance is the responsibility of the church planter.
- C. The church planter shall submit a monthly update of his work, with copies sent to both the Director of Missions and *The Missouri Missionary Baptist*. All missionary personnel shall give a written annual report to the Director of Missions and shall also be prepared to give an oral report as needed at any meeting of the BMA of MO or the Missionary Committee.
- D. The Director of Missions shall see that the church planter and his work are reviewed annually, and this review shall primarily focus on the following areas:
  1. Personal Life
    - a. Devotional/spiritual life
    - b. Family life and worship
    - c. Work/study habits and schedule
  2. Ministry (in light of spiritual gifts)
    - a. Interpersonal skills (working with people)
    - b. Leadership growth and maturity
  3. Financial Stewardship
  4. Progress and Growth of the Mission
    - a. Sunday school or small groups
    - b. Teaching/training ministries
    - c. Worship
    - d. Outreach
    - e. Fellowship
  5. Advance Planning for Future
    - a. Goals and projections
    - b. Decisions relative to staying as pastor at the end of funding

#### **Mission Congregations**

#### **V Accountability**

- A. All mission congregations are accountable to the BMA of MO while receiving support from this body.
- B. Each mission shall comply with the policies and practices of the sponsoring church until such time that the mission is organized into a New Testament church. The mission may receive and dismiss members, observe the ordinances, and otherwise conduct her business only in a manner acceptable to the sponsoring church. Ascertaining compliance is the responsibility of the church planter.

#### **VI Expectations**

- D. Ministry Development
  1. The initial development of a new mission will follow this outline:
    - Stage 1: The identification of a core group of key individuals committed to the purpose and work of the mission.

- Stage 2: The training of these individuals, under the direction of the church planter, to fill key leadership and support roles.
  - Stage 3: The launching of the public worship services.
2. Activities prior to the launching of public services will emphasize personal evangelism, small group Bible study and other means of discipleship, and sharing of the mission's vision.
  3. Under the leadership of the church planter, the mission will strategize for the congregation's spiritual and numerical growth by developing and utilizing such tools as a written vision statement, proper organizational structure, assimilation of new members (with emphasis on their areas of giftedness), and the multiplication of small groups.

#### E. Fiscal Development

The mission congregation should strive to become progressively more self-supporting and contributing to the advancement of the work of God. Specifically, under the direction of the church planter (in consultation with the Director of Missions), the mission should strive for increasing fiscal responsibility for the following:

##### 1. Normal Operating Expenses

In order to teach congregational and personal responsibility, and to free financial support for other fields of ministry, the mission congregation should increasingly shoulder the financial responsibility for normal operational expenses. Such expenses include (but are not limited to) building (rent or mortgage) payments, utilities, supplies, and the salaries and benefits of the missionary/pastor and staff.

The mission should strive to be self-supporting within five years. At the end of this period, if further support is deemed necessary, a one-year phase-out of supplemental support will be worked out by the Director of Missions and Special Missions Committee.

After one year a mission congregation shall assume a portion of the salaries for missionary personnel on that field. The initial amount shall be determined in consultation with the Director of Missions, and this amount shall increase a minimum of ten dollars per month. (This amount is to be sent monthly to the Director of Missions who shall forward it to the Revolving Loan Fund Treasurer to be applied to the indebtedness of the mission congregation.) If necessary, the mission congregation may suspend the incremental increase for 60 days after discussing the situation with the Director of Missions. If additional time is needed they shall counsel with the Director of Missions and the Special Missions Committee concerning their future plans.

##### 2. Property Indebtedness

The mission congregation should regularly contribute to retiring any property indebtedness.

##### 3. Contributing to Outside Ministries

As funds are available, the mission should regularly contribute to the various ministries of the BMA on local, state and national levels.

## VII Church Organization

In consultation with the Director of Missions and the pastor of the sponsoring church, a mission congregation shall consider organizing into a New Testament church when she has reached sufficient maturity in the following areas:

A. Spiritual Mindedness

A significant percentage of the congregation should show a spiritual maturity as evidenced by holy living and a dedication to God and His people.

B. Lay Leadership

The lay people in the congregation should be filling key leadership and support roles in the congregation.

C. Fiscal Stability

The congregation should be able to assume full financial responsibility of her financial obligations, including (but not limited to):

- Paying the salary and benefits needs of church staff.
- Paying the normal operating expenses.
- Paying one-tenth (minimum) of their building indebtedness each year (unless other arrangements have been worked out with the loaning organization, the Special Missions Committee, and the Director of Missions).

**Ministry Funding**

A ministry fund of up to \$10,000 shall be available for each new mission project. Capital expenses (\$500 or more) require approval of the Director of Missions and/or the Special Missions Committee.

**Salaries and Benefits**

**VIII Salary and Housing Allowance**

- A. Salary and Housing Allowance for missionary personnel shall be determined at the annual and/or semi-annual meeting.
- B. Insurance for immediate family health care and workman's compensation will be provided for full-time missionary personnel only.
- C. All missionary personnel shall be allowed:
  1. Two paid weeks of vacation per year.
  2. Two paid weeks (two Sundays away from field) for revival or other ministry-related service.

Church planters shall notify (in advance) the Director of Missions of these and all other absences from the field. Associate missionaries must receive permission from the church planter before being absent from their normal missions duties.

- D. Missionary personnel and their immediate families shall have necessary and reasonable expenses (i.e., travel, lodging, food) paid to attend the annual meeting of the BMA of America, the annual and semi-annual meetings of the BMA of Missouri, and the BMA of MO Men's Retreat.
- E. Disabled missionary personnel shall receive full salary for three weeks, after which time the Special Missions Committee shall review the case and salary adjustments shall be made to reflect any disability income.

## Co-Operative and Supplemental Programs

### **IX "Partnership" or "Cooperative" Mission Work**

A "Partnership" or "Cooperative" mission endeavor may be entered into with other BMA associations or churches that do not conflict with current BMA of MO missions policies. Such endeavors will be pursued only after the investigation and recommendation of the Special Missions Committee and will be reviewed annually by that Committee.

Except for partnerships with the BMA of America North American Missions Program, the policies of the BMA of MO will be deemed to take precedence unless otherwise approved by the Special Missions Committee.

The BMA of MO's contribution to the partnership work (e.g., salary, benefits, work fund) will be determined by the Director of Missions and the Special Missions Committee, subject to the approval of the Missions Committee and State Association at their next regularly scheduled meetings.

### **X Supplemental Help for Bi-Vocational Missionaries**

Supplemental support to aid an established bi-vocational missionary may be considered under the following guidelines:

1. The missionary must meet the requirements, qualification and guidelines as set forth in this handbook.
2. The funding for this project shall be under the direction of the Special Missions Committee, and shall:
  - a. Be set at the time supplemental support is established.
  - b. Be reduced proportionally as total contributions from all sources for a missionary exceeds full-time missionary salary as set elsewhere in this policy manual.

### **XI Pastoral Supplement Program**

The *Pastoral Supplement Program* is intended to help a church during times of change when a full-time pastor is needed but the church is unable to financially support such a ministry. This help may be requested by a church within the BMA of Missouri in order to supplement the salary of a full-time pastor under the following guidelines:

1. All requests shall be investigated by the Missions Director and Special Missions Committee and their recommendation shall be based upon:
  - a. The viability of the church to fully assume the full-time salary in a reasonable amount of time.
  - b. The willingness of the church and pastor to work with the Missions Director in establishing and achieving specific goals for growth.
2. The amount of supplemental support shall not exceed \$1,200 per month per church and shall not exceed two years in length.
3. This support will be reviewed by the Special Missions Committee every six months and adjustments made at the Committee's discretion.
4. The Special Missions Committee may activate this program between sessions of the State Association subject to approval by the Association at its next regular meeting.

