

1 **OVERTURE 6** from Rocky Mountain Presbytery (to CCB, OC)
2 “Amend *BCO* 18-2 to Allow Flexibility on Applications to Come Under Care”
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4 **Be it resolved:** That *BCO* 18-2 be amended by the current language as follows (underlining
5 for additions, ~~striketrough~~ for deletions):
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7 **18-2.** Every applicant for the ministry must put himself under the care of Presbytery,
8 which should ordinarily be the Presbytery that has jurisdiction of the church of which
9 he is a member. The endorsement of his Session must be given to the Presbytery,
10 consisting of testimonials regarding his Christian character and promise of usefulness
11 in the ministry. The endorsement should also describe the activities of ministry the
12 applicant has participated in with brief evaluation.

13 Every applicant for care shall be a member of the congregation whose session
14 provides an endorsement for at least six months before filing his application, except in
15 those cases deemed extraordinary by the Presbytery.

16 Every applicant ~~must~~ should file his application with the clerk of the Presbytery
17 at least one month before the meeting of the Presbytery (unless a Presbytery has a
18 different stated application deadline). An applicant for care may not be received under
19 care and examined for ordination at the same meeting of the Presbytery, since he must
20 serve a period of at least one year of internship prior to ordination (see *BCO* 19-7 and
21 21-4). An applicant for internship is obliged to be under care and may be licensed to
22 preach the Gospel; further, one who is not already under care may be taken under care,
23 be licensed to preach the Gospel, and become an intern at the same meeting of
24 Presbytery.
25

26 So that the amended section will read as follows:
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28 **18-2.** Every applicant for the ministry must put himself under the care of Presbytery,
29 which should ordinarily be the Presbytery that has jurisdiction of the church of which
30 he is a member. The endorsement of his Session must be given to the Presbytery,
31 consisting of testimonials regarding his Christian character and promise of usefulness
32 in the ministry. The endorsement should also describe the activities of ministry the
33 applicant has participated in with brief evaluation.

34 Every applicant for care shall be a member of the congregation whose session
35 provides an endorsement for at least six months before filing his application, except in
36 those cases deemed extraordinary by the Presbytery.

37 Every applicant should file his application with the clerk of the Presbytery at
38 least one month before the meeting of the Presbytery (unless a Presbytery has a
39 different stated application deadline). An applicant for care may not be received under
40 care and examined for ordination at the same meeting of the Presbytery, since he must
41 serve a period of at least one year of internship prior to ordination (see *BCO* 19-7 and
42 21-4). An applicant for internship is obliged to be under care and may be licensed to
43 preach the Gospel; further, one who is not already under care may be taken under care,
44 be licensed to preach the Gospel, and become an intern at the same meeting of
45 Presbytery.

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Rationale

As previously written *BCO* 18-2 restricts the ability of Presbyteries to receive the applications of applicants for the ministry any time after one month before a Presbytery meeting.

In the case of some Presbyteries, this deadline has delayed the licensure and ordination process for ministry applicants by setting an inflexible application deadline. In the case of some Presbyteries (that meet three times a year), the process for ministry applicants can be delayed more than five (5) months.

The adopted text of the 1st General Assembly required a candidate to file his application “at least two months before the meeting of the Presbytery.” The 17th General Assembly adopted a change in the requirement, replacing “two months” with “one month”, thus requiring an applicant to submit an application “at least one month before the meeting of Presbytery.”

The change adopted by the 17th Assembly was a reasonable change that reflected the amount of time needed for Stated Clerks to collect and disseminate applications in preparation for Presbytery meetings. This change reflected cultural changes in communication with the advent of Fax and email.

Given the ability to disseminate applications more quickly via internet, email, Dropbox, etc. Another change to 18-2 is reasonable.

This amendment seeks to eliminate an inflexible deadline for ministry applicants (with a change to *should* from *must*) and give discretion to individual Presbyteries in setting their own application deadline. This could alleviate the delay of ordination for some ministry candidates and will better reflect the current time needed to collect and disseminate applications in preparation for Presbytery meetings.

Adopted by the Rocky Mountain Presbytery at its stated meeting, April 25, 2024.
Attested by TE Del Farris, stated clerk.