

## **Council Guidelines for Effective Operation and Communication Hoffmantown Church**

1. All Councils are responsible to the Elders. Councils provide an opportunity for the Body to be engaged. Councils make recommendations, provide support and serve in that ministry area.
2. Regular meetings are to be scheduled by the *Ministry Leader* or Administrative Assistant for that ministry area. At no time are Council meetings to be held during regularly scheduled church-wide activities— Sunday morning, Wednesday night, etc. The appropriate forms should be turned in to the Administrative Assistant for that ministry.
3. A normal term of service for members is two calendar years. Each continuing member should be contacted yearly to re-affirm his/her commitment to serve on the given Council. A member may serve a maximum of two terms, if requested, and must then rotate off for one year prior to being considered for that Council in the future. Member terms should be staggered in order to provide better continuity for the Council. **Employees and Elders may not serve as Council members. Also, multiple family members will not serve on the same Council.**
4. Council members should serve on only one Council at any given time. While rare, any exceptions must be approved by the Elders.
5. Prospective Council Chairpersons will generally have one year's experience on the Council prior to Chairing the Council. The ministry leader will ultimately make the decision as to the Chair and will then submit their recommendation to the Elders for final affirmation. This recommendation to the Elders should be submitted to the Sr Executive Assistant to the Sr Pastor.
6. Once established, each Council will review their own guidelines yearly and recommend changes to the Elders for review. Guidelines should include the following:
  - a. A purpose statement clearly defining WHY this council exists . . . along with a bulleted list of duties, and, if appropriate, things the council is not to do-- i.e. not competing with other regularly scheduled activities.
  - b. Specify the number of people on the team (ideally, 5-10). Names of specific individuals will be recommended to the Elders for final affirmation.
  - c. Council members will only be members of Hoffmantown who have signed the *Affirmation Statement* to the *Guidelines for Leaders at Hoffmantown Church* and completed the *Servant Ministry Application*.
  - d. Any other guidelines that may be unique to your ministry area—i.e. if in Children's or Student area, must complete a volunteer application form and have a background check.
7. An annual orientation to Council service will normally be held in January of each year to review the guidelines for Council service. All Council members are expected to attend. The *Sr. Associate Pastor* will be responsible for organizing and conducting the orientation.

8. Expectations of Council Members:
  - a. Attendance- If a member misses two or more consecutive meetings, the Council may need to have a discussion with that member about possibly identifying a replacement.
  - b. Active participation- All should agree to actively participate in Council discussions.
  - c. Confidentiality- All should agree to keep confidential those things that need to be confidential and to share those things that need to be shared within each member's sphere of influence; etc.
  - d. Recommendations—Per the direction of Hoffmantown, the desire is to determine the leading of the Lord with the desire to move toward “unanimity” (versus “majority rules”) in the Council's recommendations.
9. Once established, Council members will receive a written copy of the responsibilities of their Council from their Ministry Leader. After the responsibilities have been established, they need to be submitted to the *Sr Executive Assistant to the Sr Pastor* for reporting to the Elders. During the Annual Council Orientation meeting, the Council will select a Recording Secretary. Contact information for each Council member will be gathered at that time and entered on the *Council Roster*. The completed *Council Roster* will then be passed along to the appropriate *Ministry Leader* for forwarding to the *Sr Executive Assistant to the Sr Pastor*.
10. Minutes from Council meetings are to be in writing and kept on file by each Chairperson. A copy of those minutes should be provided to the *Sr Executive Assistant to the Sr Pastor* within two weeks after the meeting, so that the report can then be included in an upcoming Elders' Meeting. Three times per year, the Council Chairpersons will attend an Elder's meeting.
11. Where clarification may be needed, the *Ministry Leader* (or their designee) may be asked to clarify the report of the Council's business in a regularly scheduled Elders' meeting.
12. Councils are encouraged to enlist other church members / individuals for consultation purposes on special projects or Council needs.
13. If not already completed, individuals serving on every Council will be expected to sign the *Affirmation* to the *Guidelines for Leaders at Hoffmantown Church* in the annual orientation meeting. This statement certifies that individuals who have been enlisted to serve currently meet the leadership guidelines of Hoffmantown Church. Also, at any point in time a Council member no longer meets the guidelines (for whatever reason), there should be a discussion about their continued involvement on that Council that could lead to their resignation.
14. Individuals wishing to resign from their Council should submit a letter, so stating, to their *Ministry Leader*. Said letter will then be forwarded to the *Sr Executive Assistant to the Sr Pastor* so the letter can be included in the agenda for reporting to the Elders.