

# **Ministry Councils Guidelines for Effective Operation and Communication Hoffmantown Church**

1. Each Ministry Council is accountable to their Ministry Leader and the Ministry Leader is accountable to the Ministry Council and 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 Ministry Council meetings to be held during regularly scheduled church-wide activities— Sunday morning, Wednesday night, etc. The appropriate forms should be turned into the Administrative Assistant for that ministry.
3. A normal term of service for Ministry Council members is two calendar years, (with the exception of the Finance Committee whose terms are governed by the Church Bylaws). Each continuing member should be contacted yearly to re-affirm his/her commitment to serve on the given Ministry 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 Ministry Council. **Employees and Elders or Pastors may not serve as Ministry Council members. Also, multiple family members will not serve on the same Ministry Council.**
4. Ministry Council members should serve on only one Ministry Council at any given time. While rare, any exceptions must be approved by the Elders, and the Ministry Leader.
5. Prospective Ministry Council Chairpersons will generally have one year's experience on the Ministry 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 Ministry Council will review their own guidelines yearly and recommend changes to the Ministry Leader, once affirmed, then to the Elders for review. Ministry Council 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 Ministry Leader and 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 Ministry Council service will normally be held in January of each year to review the guidelines for Ministry Council service. All Ministry Council members are expected to attend. The *Sr. Associate Pastor* will be responsible for organizing and conducting the orientation.
8. Expectations of Ministry Council Members:
  - a. Attendance- If a member misses two or more consecutive meetings, the Ministry 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 Ministry 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 Ministry Council’s recommendations.
9. Once established, Ministry Council members will receive a written copy of the responsibilities of their Ministry 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 Ministry 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 Ministry Council meetings are to be in writing and kept on file by each Chairperson. A copy of those minutes should be provided to the Ministry Leader and 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/Pastor’s meeting.
11. Where clarification may be needed, the *Ministry Leader* (or their designee) may be asked to clarify the report of the Ministry Council’s business in a regularly scheduled Elders/Pastor’s meeting.
12. Ministry Councils are encouraged to enlist other church members / individuals for consultation purposes on special projects or Ministry Council needs.

13. If not already completed, individuals serving on every Ministry 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 that a Ministry Council member no longer meets the guidelines (for whatever reason), there should be a discussion about their continued involvement on that Ministry Council that could lead to their resignation.
14. Individuals wishing to resign from their Ministry 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/Pastor's meeting.

**Definition of Terms:**

**Ministry Council** – A group made up of members from Hoffmantown Church with a desire to serve a specific area of ministry. i.e. Men, Children, etc. (Not to be confused with Church Council)

**Ministry Leader** – The Pastor or Director called to headship over a specific area of ministry.

**Affirmed** – A validation or acknowledgement from the Elders.