

Arizona Conference Corporation
of
Seventh-day Adventists

Request for **Group** Status Workbook



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How to Fill Out This Request Workbook

This workbook contains the policies and guidelines your church needs to understand if it wishes to request status as a Group within the Arizona Conference. It also contains step-by-step procedures and working forms you need to request Group status.

What is Group Status?

Group status means that an organized church/district, with a full-time pastor, sees the need to develop a ministry for a particular target audience, or to plant new work in a non-entered area, so that the mission of the church can be fulfilled. Final authorization to obtain Group status is by vote of the Conference Executive Committee.

How to Proceed

- Step 1 Read the “Basic Policies and Guidelines” on Page 3.
- Step 2 Read “Getting Started” on Page 4.
- Step 3 With the help of the ministerial director/ethnic coordinator, fill-out the forms on pages 5-9 and submit the request to the conference office.
- Step 4 The Administrative Committee will review the request and make a recommendation to the Conference Executive Committee.
- Step 5 The Conference Executive Committee will study the full report and its vote will be a final action.

Basic Guidelines and Policies Governing the Organization of:

Groups

- **Overview:** All Groups must come under the sponsorship of an organized church/district with a full-time pastor. The primary formation of a Group should be to develop a ministry for a particular target audience, or to plant new work in an un-entered area, and by so doing can fulfill the mission of the Church.

The Sponsoring Church

- **Size:** Must have at least 150 members.
- **Pastoral Staffing:** Church/District must have at least one full-time pastor.
- **Stewardship:** Must be current in all its financial obligations including church expenses, accounts payable and loans.
- **Relationship:** Must agree to provide adequate and real guidance in the administration, nurture and evangelism for the new Group and share all financial responsibilities.
- **Process:** Must start processing the request from the *Group Status Workbook* with the Ministerial Director and Ethnic Coordinator.

The Group

- **Formation:** Groups will be permitted to begin, even if they are primarily made up of members from already existing Churches, only when they can show there are valid and verifiable reasons for establishing the Group.
- **Sponsorship:** Until advanced to Company status, a Group will remain an integral part of the Sponsoring Church.
- **Finances:** The finances of the Group will be handled through the treasury of the Sponsoring Church.
- **Review:** The Group's viability will be reviewed periodically by the Sponsoring Church, the Ministerial Director and the Ethnic Coordinator to ascertain if they should continue to function as a Group toward the Company status or if they should rejoin the Sponsoring Church.

Final Authorization

- Conference Executive Committee Vote

Getting Started

A new work, like a new-born child, is not expected to be an adult from its inception. Each situation is unique, but it is always necessary to use good judgment and meet certain objective criteria before proceeding. The following guidelines will be used by the Administrative Committee and the Conference Executive Committee to evaluate and authorize the establishment of new Groups.

Potential for Growth in Membership

The charter membership of a new Group must be large enough to demonstrate the viability of the growth for this new work. If the proposed Group will meet near already established churches, specific reasons why it is needed must be given, such as:

- Territory for evangelism is not effectively being reached by the existing churches.
- Ministry to a significant people group in the area needs to be undertaken.

Vision and Verifiable Ministry

A newly-formed Group must have the vision of eventually becoming a Company and an organized Church. Steps in this direction need to be carefully planned and include:

- **A Place to Meet.** The Group leaders, in cooperation with the Sponsoring Church, should locate an adequate site for the Group to meet.
- **Growth in Ministry.** The new Group must demonstrate the ability to operate a successful church program that includes and supports local church, local school, Conference and Adventist world-wide ministry and demonstrates a peaceful coexistence with the Sponsoring Church.

An Important Note About Church Planting and Pastoral Care

Research and experience demonstrate that church planting is the fastest and best way for churches to grow. In urban settings it is also unfortunately often prohibitively expensive, especially when each small Group wants its own pastor. The Arizona Conference is not financially able to assign pastors to a large number of small Groups within its territory. Therefore, in order to obtain authorization for the formation of a new Group, a Sponsoring Church must have solid and verifiable evidence of the feasibility of the project. **Starting a Group because of a Church's internal difficulties, or because some individual is looking for a way to receive possible future employment as a pastor are not valid reasons.**

Profile of the Sponsoring Church

Name of the Sponsoring Church _____

To be filled out and signed by the Senior Pastor _____

Signature and printed name please

Policy States: "The Sponsoring Church must agree to provide adequate and real guidance in the administration, nurture and evangelism for the new Group and share all financial responsibilities."

Briefly describe how your Church is going to interface with the Group you wish to sponsor:

Membership

To be filled out and signed by the Conference Secretary _____

Signature

How many pastors does the Sponsoring Church have? _____

Is the Sponsoring Church currently sponsoring other Groups? _____

Which ones? _____

Finances

To be filled out and signed by the Conference Treasurer _____

Signature

Is the Sponsoring Church current in the remittance of tithe and offerings? _____

If not, please explain: _____

Is the Sponsoring Church current in paying its Conference billings? _____

If not, please explain: _____

AN IMPORTANT NOTE: A CHURCH WISHING TO SPONSOR A GROUP MUST MEET ALL THE REQUIREMENTS ON THIS PAGE IN ORDER TO PROCEED WITH THE REQUEST.

Profile of the Proposed Group

Name of the Proposed Group _____

To be filled out and signed by the Designated Leader _____

Signature and printed name please

Policy States: "The Sponsoring Church must agree to provide adequate and real guidance in the administration, nurture and evangelism for the new Group and share all financial responsibilities."

Briefly describe how your Group is going to interface with the Sponsoring Church:

Basic Information

What is the main language intended to be used by the Group with its congregation? _____

What is the Group's Ethnic Region for eAdventist purposes? _____

What is the telephone and facsimile number for the Group? _____

What is the email address for the Group? _____

What is the website address for the Group? _____

What is the street address where the Group is meeting? _____

What is the mailing address for the Group? _____

What kind of facility will the Group be meeting at? _____

How long has the Group been meeting? _____

What Sabbath Schools, Worship Services and Programs are being held? _____

Group Information

What is the average weekly attendance of:

Adult, SDA members _____

Adult, non-SDA individuals _____

Youth/Children _____

Total _____

Profile of the Community

Facts and Figures

You can get the basic demographic information to aid you in filling out this page from the following places:

- Call the 1-800-SDA-Plus (1-800-732-7587) Line. This is a free service from our Pacific Union Conference Office.
- City Planning Departments. Call or visit the City Planning Department where you are located.
- The Local Library. The library should have information from the 2010 Census available.

Ethnic Company	2010 Totals	2010 Percent
<i>Example</i>	<i>14,000</i>	<i>15%</i>
Afro-American		
Asian		
Caucasian/Anglo		
Hispanic		

(If possible find out what totals and percent of your particular ethnic group are represented in the above figures. For instance, if a Brazilian group was doing this research, then they should try to discover what percent of the Hispanic group above are Brazilian).

Ethnic Company	2010 Totals	2010 Percent
<i>Example-Brazilian</i>	<i>7,000</i>	<i>7.5%</i>

The Sisterhood of Churches

Name the other SDA Groups, Companies or Churches within a 10 mile area of your Group:

Church/Company/Group	How Far Away?

Given the existence of the other churches listed above, state why your Group can have a unique mission in this area. _____

Formal Request and Signatures

Date: _____

We, the members of the Sponsoring Church: _____

hereby request permission to initiate and nurture a new Group in the Arizona Conference of Seventh-day Adventists which will be called _____

in the city of _____

We agree to follow all the specific policies and guidelines as outlined in this booklet and any general policies of the Conference which governs Groups, Companies and Churches.

Signed _____
Leader, New Group - Signature and printed name please

Contact Information _____
Address, Telephone Number and Email Address

Signed _____
Head Elder, Sponsoring Church - Signature and printed name please

Contact Information _____
Address, Telephone Number and Email Address

Signed _____
Pastor, Sponsoring Church - Signature and printed name please

Signed _____
Ministerial Director

Authorization

The Executive Committee of the Arizona Conference hereby authorizes the formation of the _____ Group which has met all the conditions set forth by voted Conference policy.

Signed _____
Conference Executive Secretary

Date: _____ Executive Committee Action No.: _____