

Instructions for Petitions to the General Conference, 2008 The United Methodist Church

“Any organization, clergy member, or lay member of The United Methodist Church may petition the General Conference....” (§507, *The Book of Discipline*)

Format for Petition Submissions

1. All petitions must be submitted digitally: by e-mail, 3.5-inch diskette, CD, or through the General Conference website.
2. Petitions must be typed, double-spaced. Microsoft Word or any other software that allows files to be saved as rich-text format (RTF) may be used.
3. The top of each page of the petition should read as follows:
Page Number: (i.e. – “Page 1 of 4”); Suggested Title: (i.e. – “Establish Quorum”); *Discipline* Paragraph or Resolution Number: (i.e. “*Discipline* No. 506”); Financial Implications: (i.e. – “Financial Implications: ‘None’ or ‘Yes’”)
4. The bottom of the final page of the petition should include:
Date; Signature of the Petitioner; Identification of the Petitioner: (i.e. – “Member of Local Church”; “Secretary of Annual Conference”); Phone; Fax Number; E-mail Address

“Each petition must be signed by the person submitting it, accompanied by appropriate identification, such as address, local church, or United Methodist board or agency relationship.” Telephone numbers must also be included. “Each petition submitted must identify the individual submitting it, accompanied by identification as above, and must contain a valid digital mail return address by which the submitter can be reached. Electronic signatures will be accepted in accordance with common business practice. (§507.3, *The Book of Discipline*).

Content of Petition Text

To Amend or add to the *Book of Discipline* or *Book of Resolutions*:

5. “Each petition must address only one issue if the *Discipline* is not affected; if the *Discipline* is affected, each petition must address only one paragraph of the *Discipline*, except that, if two or more paragraphs in the *Discipline* are so closely related that a change in one affects the others, the petition may call for the amendment of those paragraphs also to make them consistent with one another.” (§ 507.2, *The Book of Discipline*)
6. State action desired, i.e., “Amend ¶ No. ___”; “Add new sub-paragraph after ¶ ___”; “Delete ¶ ___ and substitute the following...”; “Add new paragraph...; etc.”
7. Use **bold** for proposed additions and ~~strike through~~ for proposed deletions. If more convenient, double underlines may be used for proposed additions and single underlines for proposed deletions. Do not submit petitions that have been prepared by using the "track changes" feature.
8. “All petitions submitted to the General Conference, except those submitted by individual members of The United Methodist Church and local church groups, which call for the establishment of new programs or the expansion of existing programs will be invalid unless accompanied by supporting data that address the issue of anticipated financial requirements of the program.” (§507.4, *The Book of Discipline*)
9. Rationale for the petition may be included and may not exceed fifty (50) words for each petition.

Sending Petitions to the Petitions Secretary

10. “Petitions must be postmarked by a national postal service no later than 180 days prior to the opening session of the General Conference.” (§507.5, *The Book of Discipline*) This date is October 26, 2007. “If petitions are transmitted by a means other than a national postal service, they must be in the hands of the Petitions Secretary no later than 180 days prior to the opening session of the General Conference.” (§ 507.6, *The Book of Discipline*) This date is October 26, 2007.
11. Petitions (3.5 inch diskette or CD) mailed via U.S. Postal Service should be mailed to:
Gary W. Graves, Petitions Secretary
United Methodist General Conference
P. O. Box 187
Beaver Dam, KY 42320-0187

12. Petitions (3 hard copies required and 3.5-inch diskette or CD) submitted via commercial overnight carriers (Federal Express, UPS, DHL) should be sent to:
Gary W. Graves, Petitions Secretary
United Methodist General Conference
302 N. Lafayette Street
Beaver Dam, KY 42320
13. E-mail petitions should be e-mailed to petitions@umpublishing.org
14. Petitions may also be submitted within the General Conference website.