



Administrative and Legal Considerations for Sending Churches and Church Plants

Sending Churches must often provide a church plant with practical guidance on various administrative and legal matters. NAMB *strongly recommends* that Sending Churches and church plants formally document their relationship, goals, and expectations in a clear, written church planting agreement as early as possible. While it is impossible to provide a complete summary of all administrative and legal considerations that may need to be addressed with a church plant, NAMB *expects* that the Sending Church, at a minimum, will carefully evaluate the specific circumstances of each church plant with respect to the following matters, directing the church plant to seek appropriate professional guidance when necessary:

- **Clarify your goals and expectations with a signed, written agreement**

- **Incorporate the church plant and draft operating documents**
 - Incorporation under applicable state/provincial law
 - Creation of church bylaws and related governing documents
 - Basic operating policies and procedures
 - Staff and volunteer conduct and background screening policies
 - Insurance coverage

- **Develop policies and procedures for accounting and employment**
 - Southern Baptist Convention/ Canadian National Baptist Convention cooperation
 - Tax-exempt status through the Southern Baptist Convention (US) or Canadian Registered Charity (Canada)
 - Establishing bank accounts and check-signing procedures
 - Establishing accounting and cash-management systems
 - Operating and capital budgeting
 - Employment - Employees vs. Independent Contractors
 - Ordained minister housing allowance
 - Ordained minister self-employment tax (US only)
 - Payroll and benefits

Additional Resources

Please visit namb.net/SendingChurch for additional Sending Church Resources, including a model Church Planting Agreement for use in defining the relationship between the Sending Church and the church plant.

NAMB is aware of the following additional third-party resources[†] which provide professional assistance with many of the administrative and legal matters listed above:

[†] NAMB is not affiliated with any of the third-party resources listed above, derives no direct benefit from use of these resources, and makes no representations, assurances, or warranties of any kind with respect to the services provided by such third-parties. Use of the identified resources above is not required; however, NAMB strongly recommends that Sending Churches and church plants consult independent professionals of their own choosing in order to fully understand their respective rights and obligations.

Legal and Accounting

- StartChurch – Contact Trey Lewis, tlewis@startchurch.com – startchurch.com – Mention NAMB for a pre-negotiated flat rate of \$699 for a basic “Governing Documents Package.” Assistance with accounting and employment matters is available for additional costs.
- Church Ministry Services (SBC of Virginia) – Contact Eddie Urbine – sbcv.org/church-ministries-2 – (804) 270-1848
- Dime – simplifiedime.com – (678) 287-1090
- Church Network Hub – Contact Jeanette Fanai - 206-686-1795 churchnetworkhub@gmail.com
- Church Planting Hubs are established in British Columbia, Alberta, & Ontario. Contact NAMB Canada for contact information for the respective organizations. (905) 829-5244 kgoodfellow@namb.net

Legal Only

- Church Law Group – (972) 444-8777
- Simms Showers, LLP – simmsshowers.com/practice/church-law
- Carters Professional Corporation – (519) 942-0001 www.charitylaw.ca (Canada only)
- Canadian Council of Christian Charities (membership required) – (519) 669-5137 www.cccc.org