



**ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE
CATHOLIC CENTER
TEMPORAL GOODS POLICY MANUAL**

SECTION
200 Organizational Controls

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203 The Pastoral Council

SECTION 203 THE PASTORAL COUNCIL

The following section explains the purpose, membership, organization and functions of the pastoral council and is only a summary of “Building One Body in Christ.”

The Second Vatican Council recognized the importance of a pastoral council to facilitate communication between the pastor/pastoral life director (pld), the Board of Corporators, and the parish community. The Code of Canon Law states that through a council, where it exists, the Christian Faithful and those with offices of pastoral care “help in fostering pastoral activity.” From a legal standpoint, it cannot take on legal, management or governance responsibilities other than through the authority conveyed to it by the Parish Corporation. The Pastoral Council is not recognized by civil law as a legal entity and is not subject to regulation by civil law.

203.1 Policy The Pastoral Council Every parish in the Archdiocese of Baltimore is required to have a pastoral council. The pastoral council represents the entire parish community and fulfills the responsibilities of pastoral leadership on the council and charts the course and points the way for parish planning and development.

203.1a Role The pastoral council acts in a consultative capacity to the pastor/pld and monitors with the pastor/pld the development, implementation and evaluation of pastoral planning and budgeting efforts.

203.2 Policy Membership Pastoral council members must be:

- Baptized and confirmed members of the parish in good standing with the church.
- At least sixteen years of age.
- Willing and available to serve for the elected or appointed term.
- Contributing members of the parish in time, talent and treasure.
- Willing to engage in ongoing training and personal development.
- Catholics whose public posture is consistent with church teaching.

Procedures:

- The work of the council requires that its size facilitate interaction and comprehensive decision making. Ideally, councils should be no fewer than eight persons and no more than 20.



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- Whatever process is used to select members, it should foster a sense of ownership among parishioners for promoting the parish's mission and the council's work.
- Council members usually serve a two or three year term with an option to serve for a second term.

203.3 Policy Organization and Meetings The pastoral council is required to take written minutes of its discussions, actions and its recommendations and minutes shall be kept on file at the parish. The officers of the pastoral council are:

- Pastor/pld, who serves according to canon law, as its head and has ultimate responsibility for the council
- Chairperson, who chairs all council meetings and facilitates the work of the council
- Vice-chairperson, who assumes the role of the chairperson in the chairperson's absence
- Recording secretary, who maintains a written record of council meetings and the work of the council
- Corresponding secretary, who handles correspondence in the name of the council with individuals or groups within or outside the parish

203.4 Policy Functions The pastoral council serves as a consultative body to the pastor/pld and performs the following functions:

- Identifies the needs of the parish community and wider community in which it finds itself.
- Develops the parish mission statement.
- Develops a plan to carry out the mission.
- Ensures the implementation of the plan by monitoring its progress through periodic evaluations.
- Coordinates various groups, committees and activities related to the parish life of the community.
- Searches out and empowers the gifts of the community members.
- Promotes Archdiocesan policies and procedures.
- Implements Archdiocesan policies and procedures.
- Encourages a network of communication within the parish and surrounding community.
- Serves as a forum for dialogue among parishioners, pastor/pld and staff, neighborhood groups, neighboring churches and other local organizations.
- In communion with the finance committee, reviews and recommends the parish budget to the pastor/pld.