

Policy #21  
**INTERPRETATION of G-2.0509**

**COM Approval: June 18, 2015**

**PGA Approval: N/A**

G-2.0509:

*Whenever a former teaching elder has renounced jurisdiction in the midst of a disciplinary proceeding as the accused, that former teaching elder shall not be permitted to perform any work, paid or volunteer, in any congregation or entity under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (USA).*

Recognizing that the Committee on Ministry has jurisdiction over churches, it is incumbent upon the COM to offer interpretation and implementation of Book of Order provisions.

In the case of interpreting G-2.0509, the Committee on Ministry first acknowledges that this Book of Order provision is about protecting individuals within our churches. The underlying principle of this provision is about what kind of access is graceful yet protective of those who have voluntarily left the ministry in the midst of a process that is aimed at restoration and healing.

Therefore, the Committee on Ministry will make determinations on a case by case basis using the following process:

1. In such a situation, knowing that case files are closed for confidentiality, the Book of Order does provide for a “need to know basis.” Therefore, the Stated Clerk shall have a confidential conversation with the Executive Presbyter, the congregation’s consultant and the two co-chairs of the Committee on Ministry to inform them of important information.
2. Based on the above conversation, this need to know committee shall make one of two possible recommendations to the Committee on Ministry:
  - a. Recommendation One: the former teaching elder may be allowed to attend worship as a member of a PCUSA church. This is the limit of the individual’s involvement.

**OR**

- b. Recommendation Two: the former teaching elder may be allowed to attend worship, adult Sunday school, sing in the choir or attend congregational functions such as cookouts, a music program. There shall be no involvement in any committees, any leadership, any outreach programs, any children’s programs or activities. In the event of this limited participation, the Stated Clerk and a representative from COM shall meet with the session of the church outlining the appropriate participation and help the church with a monitoring system to ensure the guidelines are adhered to.