



The Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church  
800 West Daisy Gatson Bates Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas 72202  
(501) 324-8000 | Toll-Free (877) 646-1816 | Fax (501) 324-8018

### **What is a “Petition to General Conference”?**

A petition is a document sent to General Conference. Petitions are nearly always intended to change the *Book of Discipline* or the *Book of Resolutions*. In rare cases a petition may ask to maintain something already written in one of these books. Most of the time, though, a petition seeks to revise church laws and/or policies. *Please note: even a proposed change to the Book of Resolutions is still called a “petition,” not a “resolution”.*

### **Who can write a petition?**

Any member of a United Methodist Church, any United Methodist Clergy, any congregation or any officially recognized United Methodist group, committee, board or agency may submit a petition to General Conference.

To send in a petition to General Conference directly, they must be uploaded to an online portal created for General Conference. The link to the page for the portal will be publicized as soon as its available.

Annual Conferences can send petitions to General Conference also. This can happen when a person or group from the list above sends a petition to the Annual Conference Session and the Conference votes to send it. At the 2019 Annual Conference, we will be voting on petitions for the General Conference in 2020.

### **How do I get my petition to the Annual Conference so they can vote to send it to the General Conference?**

The petition should be sent to the Annual Conference’s email for petitions and resolutions. The author or someone the author selects may present it to the Annual Conference session for a vote. Petitions put forward by an individual instead of a group must have 10 signatures of clergy or lay members of Annual Conference 2019.

Petitions should use the right format and follow all other rules for petitions. Click [here](#) for a previous General Conference’s instructions for more information about formatting. Additionally, remember the ten signatures required by the Arkansas Conference if you are submitting it as an individual.

Petitions should be emailed to [petition.resolution@arumc.org](mailto:petition.resolution@arumc.org). If sent in by March 15, the petition will be included in the Pre-Conference Journal. Because the General Conference will want us to submit all petitions digitally, we ask that all petitions to be voted on at Annual Conference be sent to this email address in digital format.

If sent between March 16 and May 17, the petition will be included in packets distributed at Annual Conference. The submitter will have to provide 1300 copies for the packets. If a petition is given to the Conference Secretary between May 18 and 3pm on May 28, with 1300 copies provided by the submitter, the petition can be distributed at the door.

The formatting rules and other rules for creating a petition are complicated. Please strongly consider sending your petition before any deadlines in order to receive all the assistance you need. If you miss the print deadline, please strongly consider sending the petition before the deadlines for the 1300 copies. You can save money by getting corrections that will give you the best chances of success before making copies.

It is the goal of the officers of the Conference to help you receive the opportunity to present your petition within the time available for voting at Annual Conference. Petitions are reviewed according to the rules and regulations in the *Discipline*, the *Standing Rules*, and the *Session Rules* of the Conference, and the broadest understandings of Christian civility. You will receive this feedback to aid you in your work.



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### Tips to Keep in Mind

- Petitions deal with one paragraph of the *Discipline*. Sometimes changing one paragraph means others must be changed, and that is the only reason more than one paragraph can be changed.
- Many petitions are sent to General Conference. The number of petitions that will come up for vote at General Conference is generally narrowed down. It is possible that a petition submitted will be heard, not heard, or heard but amended in some way at the General Conference level.

For questions or concerns, email the Conference Secretary at [aubrietta.jones@arumc.org](mailto:aubrietta.jones@arumc.org).