

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 United Methodist group 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 Conference may also receive petitions to future General Conferences. This can happen when a person or group from the list above submits a petition to the Annual Conference Session and the Conference votes to send it.

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 Conference Secretary via email. 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 the current Annual Conference.

Petitions should use the right format and follow all other rules for petitions. Go to www.arumc.org/ac2020 for more information about formatting.

Send the petition to clark.atkins@arumc.org by March 15. Pursuant to changes to Par. 213.1 of our Conference’s Standing Rules as adopted at Annual Conference 2019 all resolutions and petitions must now be included in the Pre-Conference Journal to be considered by the Annual Conference Session. The deadline for submission of Resolutions and petitions is March 15. 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.

It is the goal of the officers of the Conference to help you ensure your voice is heard. We are at your service as you navigate this process. The formatting rules and other rules for creating a petition are complicated. Please strongly consider sending your petition well before the March 15 deadline in order to receive all the assistance you need.

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 is generally narrowed down. It is still possible it will be heard, not heard, or it might be amended in some way.

For questions or concerns, email the Conference Secretary at clark.atkins@arumc.org.