



2025 Appointment Transition Information

These policies are provided by the Cabinet to assist in the maintenance of consistent, uniform, and fair expectations for all the churches and clergy of the Arkansas Conference who are experiencing a move this year. We hope they are helpful and clear. This policy and the forms and resources mentioned are available online at <https://arumc.org/pastors-in-transition/>; we encourage you to consult that page as you move through this transitional period. If you have any questions, please contact your District Superintendent.

1. Summary of Important Dates:

- a. Last Sunday in current appointment: June 29, 2025
- b. Compensation of new pastor starts: July 1, 2025
- c. Moving Day: July 1, 2025
- d. First Sunday in current appointment: July 6, 2025

2. Equipping and Preparation:

- a. Clergy should view the "Right Start!" video modules for pastors in transition. These videos are located at <https://arumc.org/pastors-in-transition/>
- b. SPRC members should view the "Right Start!" video modules for Staff-Pastor Parish Relations Committee members whose congregations are receiving a new pastor. These videos are located at <https://arumc.org/pastors-in-transition/>
- c. All $\frac{1}{4}$ time and full-time clergy receiving new pastoral appointments are **required** to attend "The Right Start Workshop," an event specifically designed to aid clergy as they complete ministry in their current setting and prepare to begin service in a new congregation. The Right Start Workshop is scheduled for **May 21st** from 10:00am to 2:00pm at the Methodist Foundation for Arkansas, located at 601 Wellington Village Rd, Little Rock, AR 72211.
- d. Bishop Merrill will host a Zoom Gathering for SPRCs receiving a new pastor on May 21st at 6:00pm. The district office will send out the zoom link.

3. **First Sunday: July 6, 2025** will be the first Sunday in the new appointment. Other than the introduction meeting, the new pastor is not to be in the receiving church prior to moving day unless invited by the current pastor or as requested by the District Superintendent.
4. **Moving Day:** The official moving day is **Tuesday, July 1st, 2025**. The departing clergy person is to vacate the parsonage by noon on this day. However, it is recommended that clergy and pastoral families move out of the parsonage two days prior to the official moving date, if possible. This practice gives the sending church time to do any repair work, painting, etc. in the parsonage before the new pastor moves in.



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5. **Announcement of New Appointment:** The District Superintendent will instruct you of the time for an email and social media announcement. Usually it is scheduled at 1:00pm the day or two after the SPRC is informed. Announcements are synchronized between two or more congregations (the sending and the receiving congregations), so it is important to stick to the schedule as instructed so that members in all congregations learn of the change at the same time. Usually, the announcement will begin, "Bishop Laura Merrill has announced her intention to appoint Rev. _____ as pastor for _____ United Methodist Church, effective July 1, 2025. The SPRC should offer thanks for the outgoing pastor's ministry, seek prayers for the transition, and welcome the new pastor and her/his family. Please focus on the missional aspects of the appointment, present the news in an encouraging way that helps support the congregation's ministry, and share that the appointment process is conducted in consultation between clergy, the SPRC/PPRC, and the district superintendent. The SPRC Chair or a representative should follow up the email/social media announcement with a verbal announcement during worship on the Sunday following, to inform anyone who missed the digital announcement.
6. **Parsonage:** The departing pastor shall leave the parsonage clean and in good order. Before leaving, the pastor shall conduct a walk-through of the parsonage with the chairpersons of the Board of Trustees and the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. If there has been misuse or abuse beyond normal wear and tear, arrangements are to be made for repair at the departing pastor's expense. In cases of parsonage damage beyond normal wear and tear, the district superintendent is to be informed of the situation as soon as possible, and the SPRC Chair should not sign the Pastor's Moving Expense form statement that "I have inspected the parsonage and found it to be sufficiently clean and in order for the incoming pastor." The new pastor and chairpersons of the Board of Trustees and the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee are also to have a walk-through of the parsonage as soon as practical after arrival. Written notes on the condition of the parsonage are to be shared with both the parsonage committee and new pastor. Parsonage resources are at <https://arumc.org/pastors-in-transition/> :
 - a. **Parsonage Damage Report and Checklist** (PDF)
This document may be used by the SPRC and Trustee Chairs as part of an inspection during a pastoral transition.
 - b. **Parsonage Guidelines During a Pastoral Transition** (PDF)
Actions to be completed during the pastoral transition with responsibilities shared between the church and the clergy family.
 - c. **Parsonage Standards** (PDF)
These standards have been approved by the Arkansas Conference.



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7. Moving Expense: This is the responsibility of the Conference to the limits of the moving policy. Pastors may download a Moving Expense Form from the website at <https://arumc.org/pastors-in-transition/>. The pastor is to complete the form, obtain the required signatures, and return it to the **departing** district office. The departing district superintendent will sign and send a copy to the conference office for payment. If there has been misuse or abuse beyond normal wear and tear, the SPRC Chair should not sign the Pastor's Moving Expense form before first contacting the district office.
8. Compensation and Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) Deductions: The Arkansas Conference fiscal year is the appointment year (July 1-June 30). Compensation is the sending church's responsibility for the moving pastor through June 30. Moving pastors and sending church treasurers should arrange to reimburse under the Accountable Reimbursement Plan (ARP) any professional expenses incurred by the moving date of July 1st. The total expended from the ARP or any discretionary funds for moving pastors should be no more than ½ of the annual budgeted amount.

A new compensation form should be filled out and signed by the pastor, the chair of the Staff-Pastor Parish Committee, and the congregation's Treasurer. Although not the norm, any changes to the bottom-line compensation require a duly called charge conference by the DS. Completed and signed compensation forms are due in the district office by **June 9, 2025**. Completed forms should include updating deductions, particularly Personal Investment Plan (UMPIP) Deductions. Contact the District Office for questions about the Compensation Form. Contact the Administrative Services department of the Conference Office concerning pensions, benefits, and the UMPIP.

9. Fixing of the Appointments: Appointments for the conference year will be fixed during the annual conference.
10. Retiring Pastors: are paid through June by their local church. Their retirement benefits become effective July 1.
11. Statement on Misconduct of a Sexual Nature Policy: As you begin your new appointment, the receiving district office will need an updated and signed *Policy Statement on Misconduct of a Sexual Nature* on file for you until your next Charge Conference.



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12. **Use of arumc.org emails:** We use your arumc.org email address as the primary contact. It is very helpful to both the district and conference office to not change emails each time a pastor is moved to a new appointment. If you do not have an [arumc.org](#) email, we kindly request that you set one up and then inform us of your new email. If you prefer to use another email address, you can forward your [arumc.org](#) email to your existing email.

Here is the link for individuals requesting an ARUMC email account:

<http://arumc.wufoo.com/forms/r7x2z1/>

Here is a link that shows you how to forward your [arumc.org](#) email to another email account:

<https://support.google.com/mail/answer/10957?hl=en>

If you are having trouble logging in or need a password reset, please email Day Davis at day.davis@arumc.org.

13. **Updating Pastoral Changes:** Each pastor/church is responsible for updating [Find-a-church](#), the religion section of the local newspaper (if applicable), and other social media platforms.
14. **Monthly SPRC Meetings are expected:** The SPRCs of congregations receiving a new pastor are expected to meet monthly with the pastor, particularly in the first year. The Appointive Cabinet has created an annual timeline that outlines suggested topics for discussion in these monthly meetings and also previews the expectations for the annual assessment and consultation cycle. This timeline can be found at <https://arumc.org/pastors-in-transition/>.
15. **Goodbye means Goodbye!** Remember that saying goodbye includes an understanding that when the pastor leaves, she/he does not return for pastoral functions. The church will have a new pastor for those ministries. Please note the 2014 Pastoral Transition Covenant at <https://arumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2021-Pastoral-Transition-Covenant.pdf>.