



ARCHBISHOP'S CUSTOMARY FOR DIOCESAN ELECTION OF A BISHOP

This customary is a guide to help the Standing Committee and Diocese understand what is required for the election of a new bishop. This is an important and sacred process, not just in the life of the diocese, but also in the life of the Province. Please saturate the whole process with prayer seeking God's guidance, wisdom, and direction.

Authorization for an Election

The Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Church in North America require the Executive Committee, representing Provincial Council, to review the sustainability of each diocese. In addition, the College of Bishops is required by Canon to give its approval for an election process to begin, as well as its consent to the bishop-elect before he can be consecrated. (See Appendix 1).

Step-by-Step Process for the Diocese

1. Approval of Executive Committee regarding Sustainability
2. Approval of the College of Bishops to begin diocesan election process
3. Setting of Dates for the Election, the Consent by the College of Bishops, and the Consecration or Installation of the new Bishop (all done in consultation with the Archbishop)
4. Diocesan Discernment Process
5. Election of the New Bishop
6. Consent of the College of Bishops of the Bishop-Elect (in person)
7. Consecration of the New Bishop

1. Approval of Executive Committee Regarding Sustainability

The Canons require that the diocese go through this review so that the Province can ascertain if the diocese is viable in its mission and in its financial ability to provide for its bishop. This means providing for the bishop's ministry to the diocese and his ministry with the province, including all the travel needs of the bishop and his wife to conduct his ministry.

To assist the Executive Committee and the College of Bishops in their canonical duties, please fill out the form found in Appendix 2, and return it as soon as possible to the Archbishop's Office, emailing to Rebekah Beach at Rebekah.beach@anglicanchurch.net. It should be signed by the Chair of the Diocesan Standing Committee (or by the Vice-Chair if the Bishop is the Chair).

The Executive Committee will review this information and make a recommendation to the Archbishop who will present it to the College of Bishops for their consent to the diocese beginning the election process (this also includes the election of suffragan or coadjutor bishops for the diocese).

2. Approval of College of Bishops for a Diocese to Begin its Election Process.

The College of Bishops considers the Executive Committee's review of sustainability and other matters it may deem appropriate in making a decision to permit the diocese to begin the process leading to the election of a bishop. A diocese cannot announce its intention to elect a bishop or go forward with its process without first obtaining the College of Bishops' approval to do so.

3. Setting of Key Dates with the Archbishop's Office

The next step in this process is for the diocese to consult with the Archbishop's Office and to set the following dates as soon as possible:

- a. Election Date
- b. Bishop-Elect Interview with the College of Bishops at either its June or January meeting
- c. Consecration date for the new bishop

4. Diocesan Discernment Process

The primary responsibility for selecting a bishop rests with each Diocese, but since a Bishop is consecrated for the whole church, the Province and the College want to be as supportive and helpful as possible. Collaboration between the Diocese and College of Bishops will help insure that the discernment process in the College can go as smoothly as possible.

A. Nomination Process.

Following the Canons of the diocese and the rules set in place by the diocesan Standing Committee, a nominating committee should be chosen and an appropriate election process should be designed, including profile, job description, application, deadlines, etc. Once the diocese has completed its profile and position description, the Nominating Committee will call for nominations according to the process designed by the diocese. The Nominating Committee may also ask the College of Bishops for help in identifying suitable candidates.

B. Before a Candidate Can Stand for Election

When the Nominating Committee has narrowed down its list of nominees to those whom it believes are qualified to stand for election, it shall take the following steps prior to any announcement of a final slate of candidates standing for election:

1. Diocesan Screening and Selection of Finalists

The Diocese's screening of the finalists will include the following elements:

- a. The finalist will submit a statement of personal testimony to the Nominating Committee about how he came to faith in Christ and his journey of discipleship and ministry since that time.
- b. Appropriate background checks will be conducted using Oxford Document Management (ODM) which satisfies the need for Criminal Background check, employment history, educational history, references and credit check. The confidentiality of all background check materials shall be safeguarded and access restricted to as limited a group as possible. It is recommended that access be restricted to the Chair of the Committee, the Diocesan Chancellor and one other member of the Committee. This does not preclude consultation with professionals qualified to interpret the background materials and/or bishops made available to the Nominating Committee for such consultation.
- c. A background check with Vigilant Employment Screening will also be used to conduct a County Civil Search for every county in which the finalist has ever resided, and an Internet Mining and Social Media Search. (These can usually be done within seven days.)
- d. Reference interviews will be conducted with the finalist's present and former bishops, and also with the leadership of the congregations where he has served.
- e. The finalist should have an independent psychological evaluation by someone not known to the individual (to avoid a conflict of interest), who can evaluate the finalist's mental and emotional fitness for the office of the bishop. (The College of Bishops can provide a list of appropriate psychologists.)
- f. The finalist will also provide certification from a qualified physician that he is medically fit to serve as a bishop, particularly in light of the requirements of extensive travel, including some international travel.
- g. An interview should be conducted with the finalist's wife asking specific questions related to her support of this possible call and the health of their marriage.
- h. A bishop is consecrated not for a diocese only, but for the whole church, and so the College of Bishops takes care to ensure that the processes for election and consent not only include thorough background checks listed above, but also the following focusing on personal morality.
 1. The maintenance of Biblical sexual ethics and behavior are a commitment in the ACNA. For this reason, in addition to the Oxford and Vigilant background checks, there are two levels of screening for pornography use or addiction and other inappropriate sexual behavior. The first level is required of each potential candidate/nominee. That is coordinated through the Rev. Dr. Sam Pascoe (samcpascoe@yahoo.com). The cost for this screening and evaluation is \$100, which would be covered by the Diocese for each candidate.
 2. The results of this first level screening will be reviewed by Dr. Pascoe and discussed with the candidate and may be referred to the Archbishop (or his representative) if circumstances warrant.
 3. Following election, the bishop-elect will also undergo a more thorough screening with Dr. Pascoe. This screening addresses sexual health in much greater depth, using a built-in metric that indicates validity. This is not a pass/fail instrument. The purpose of this instrument is to discover issues that should be considered by the College of Bishops before consent is given to the election and that may call for pastoral care and support for the bishop-elect in his ministry as a bishop. The results of this second level screening will be reviewed by Dr. Pascoe and discussed with the candidate and may be referred to the Archbishop (or his representative) if circumstances warrant.
 4. Cost of the in-depth testing instrument and evaluation is \$250.00. This cost will be borne by the Province.

- i. The above information will be used to consider whether the Nominating Committee should put forward a finalist's name for possible election. This information as it pertains to the one elected will also be sent to the College of Bishops for their consideration of consent of the election.
- j. **Qualified Nominees shall receive a letter from the Dean of the College of Bishops (see Appendix 3)** informing them the diocese intends to name them as a finalist provided they would be willing, if elected, to sign the following Covenant with the College of Bishops if they should be elected.
 - a. Will attend all College of Bishops, Provincial Council/Assembly meetings unless given permission by the Archbishop to be excused.
 - b. Will accept at least one appointment to serve on a College of Bishops committee.
 - c. Will subscribe to Covenant Eyes and have it installed on all of his personal and office cell phones, computers and tablets.
 - d. Will promote discipleship, church planting, and evangelism as primary values and function of the diocese.
 - e. Will attend all Gafcon/Global South Bishops conferences unless given permission by the Archbishop to be excused.
 - f. Will accept at least one partnership with a Gafcon/Global South bishop and diocese.
 - g. Will honor the College of Bishops agreements explaining how overlapping jurisdictions deal with church planting, transfers, and admitting new congregations.
 - h. Will teach and encourage the 10/10/10 principle of giving (10% from individuals to church, church to diocese and diocese to Province) and call upon the diocese to tithe to the ACNA unless given permission by the Archbishop for a different arrangement.

Only qualified nominees who sign the above Covenant with the College of Bishops may be named as Finalists by the Diocese.

C. First Public Announcement of the Candidates

It is at this point, after the full screening process above has been completed, that the Standing Committee (or The Nominating Committee on behalf of the Standing Committee) may announce publicly the candidates for the office of bishop.

5. Election of the New Bishop

Having set the date in coordination with the Archbishop's Office, the diocese holds the election of the bishop in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the diocese. The diocese should arrange to have a member of the College of Bishops present as an observer for the election and to offer support for the diocese.

6. Consent of the College of Bishops (In Person)

After the diocese elects a new bishop, the bishop-elect will be invited to the next College of Bishops meeting to be interviewed by the bishops, who then must give consent (by two-thirds majority) to the election. If the required screening described in 4.B.1 above has not been done, the College will not be able to give

consideration to the bishop-elect until the required screening is completed. If the bishops do not consent, the diocese will be required to hold a new election.

7. Consecration of the New Bishop

On the appropriate day, the Archbishop (or the Bishop appointed by the Archbishop) and the bishops gather with the laity and clergy of the diocese to consecrate the new bishop.

Appendix 1

PERTINENT CANONS REGARDING THE ELECTION OF A BISHOP

Title I, Canon 5

Section 7 – Concerning Diocesan Sustainability

The Executive Committee shall review the annual Diocesan Reports with the objective of determining the sustainability of the several dioceses. The Executive Committee may open a dialogue with any diocese it feels is in need of assistance with the objective of strengthening its sustainability.

Title III Canon 8, Of Bishops

Section 1 - Concerning Requirements for Bishop According to Holy Scripture

A Bishop is called by God and the Church to be a shepherd who feeds the flock entrusted to his care. A Bishop is an overseer of the flock and as such is called to propagate, to teach, and to uphold and defend the faith and order of the Church willingly and as God wants him to – not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to his care, but being a wholesome example to the entire flock of Christ (1 Peter 5:2-3). These requirements are in addition to the requirements set forth in Canon 2 for Deacon (1 Timothy 3:8-13) and for Presbyter (1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17; Titus 1:6-9).

Section 2 - Concerning the Ministry of Bishops

By the tradition of Christ's One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, Bishops are consecrated for the whole Church and are successors of the Apostles through the grace of the Holy Spirit given to them. They are chief missionaries and chief pastors, guardians and teachers of doctrine, and administrators of godly discipline and governance.

Section 3 - Concerning Criteria for the Episcopate

To be a suitable candidate for the episcopate, a person must:

1. Be a person of prayer and strong faith;
2. Be pious, have good morals and exhibit Godly character;
3. Have a zeal for souls;
4. Have demonstrated evidence of the fruit of the Holy Spirit;
5. Possess the knowledge and gifts which equip him to fulfill the office;
6. Be held in good esteem by the faithful;
7. Be a male Presbyter at least 35 years old;
8. Have demonstrated the ability to lead and grow the Church.

Section 4 - Concerning the Election of Bishops

1. With the consent of the College of Bishops, a diocese may commence the process of election of a Bishop. Such election is subject to the approval of the College of Bishops as described in this section.
2. Bishops shall be chosen by a Diocese in conformance with the constitution and canons of the Diocese and consistent with the Constitution and Canons of this Church.
3. An electing body from the Diocese shall certify the election of a Bishop for consent by the College of Bishops, or may certify two or three nominees from which the College of Bishops may select one for the Diocese.
4. Where the originating body is newly formed, that body shall normally nominate two or three candidates, from whom the College of Bishops may select one.
5. Consent or choice shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the membership of the College of Bishops present and voting, which consent must be given within 60 days of certification and in writing. For purposes of the election of Bishops at a meeting of the College, a quorum shall be a majority of the active members of the College.

6. Upon the consent or choice of a Bishop-elect by the College of Bishops, the Archbishop shall take order for the consecration and/or installation of such Bishop.
7. In the event the Bishop-elect or the nominees are rejected by the College of Bishops, the College shall so inform the originating body in writing.

Appendix 4

Practicalities and Coaching of the Election Process

The Archbishop will appoint a Bishop to serve as a resource, a consultant, and a coach for the diocesan Standing Committee and Nominations Committee while they going through the election process.

He will be available to the diocesan leadership throughout all the different phases of the diocesan process: the preparation of documents, the search, the screenings, the review, the election, and the consecration of the new bishop. He will also be available to the retiring bishop and wife to help assess their needs and plans as their wish.

Here are some practicalities to be aware of during each of these phases:

1. The Preparation of Documents:

Each diocese entering the transition in the office of bishop in accordance with the Archbishop's Customary for the Election of a Bishop will review the following documents for authorization to proceed.

1. A copy of the Archbishop's Customary for the Diocesan Election of a Bishop.
2. A copy of your diocesan Constitution and Canons
3. A copy of the ACNA Constitution and Canons.
4. Diocesan Budget
5. Appendix 2 of the Archbishop's Customary

2. The preparation of Calendar:

Once the diocesan bishop has shared with the Standing Committee that he concluding his service the diocese (either by retirement or resignation) and the diocese has started the process for the affirmation of their sustainability (see Archbishop's Customary), some important dates need to be set and agreed upon between the diocese and the Archbishop's office.

In the setting of these dates, it should be remembered that there is a **two-step process** before the announcement of the election date. As stated in the Archbishop's Customary, the official dates cannot be set before the Executive Committee approves the sustainability of the diocese and the College of Bishops affirms an election can go forward. The Executive Committee usually meets monthly and the College of Bishops can approve the election going forward with an electronic vote. The call for the Election of a Bishop **cannot** be publicly announced until these two steps have been taken.

In consultation with the Archbishop's office, the following dates should be set as soon as possible:

1. Election Date
2. Bishop-Elect Interview with the College of Bishops at either its June or January meeting
3. Consecration date for the new bishop

3. The Search, Screening and Review

When the diocesan Nominations Committee is appointed, the committee should conduct its work with the above dates in mind and with intercessors assigned to pray for the committee throughout the process. Following the requirements of the kinds of information needed for the bishop-elect for the College of Bishops, the Search Committee should be thorough in its work with the examination and review of the final candidates presented for election.

4. After the Election

When an election has taken place, the Bishop-Elect and his wife (if married) should plan on attending the next scheduled College of Bishops' Meeting. At this meeting the bishop-elect will be interviewed by the College and a vote taken to consent to his election. If the College does not consent to the election, or if the needed information from the bishop-elect was not a part of the diocesan selection process, the process will be returned to the diocese until they can select a bishop-elect according the Canons of the Province and rules of the College of Bishops. When the consent to an election is given by the College of Bishops, the diocese, the bishop-elect, and the Archbishop's office will work together regarding the consecration of the new bishop.