



Presbyteral Council Statutes

A. Preamble

In accordance with the norms of the Code of Canon Law, cc. 495-502, a Presbyteral Council is established in the Archdiocese of Vancouver. This Council is a body of priests, representing the Presbyterate, which acts as the senate of the Archbishop.

B. Name, Purpose and Objective

1. This body shall be known as the Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Vancouver.
2. The role of the Council is to assist the Archbishop in the governance of the Archdiocese so that the pastoral welfare of that portion of the people of God committed to him may be most effectively promoted (c. 495 §1).
3. It is for the Archbishop to convoke the Presbyteral Council, to preside over its meetings, and to determine the agenda, or to accept proposals from the members (c. 500 §1).

The Presbyteral Council enjoys only a consultative vote. The Archbishop is to consult the Council in matters of greater importance but requires its consent only in the cases expressly defined by law (c. 500 §2).

The Presbyteral Council may never act without the Archbishop. The Archbishop alone has authority to promulgate its decisions (c. 500 §3).

C. Composition of the Presbyteral Council

1. *Ex Officio Members*

- a. The Archbishop;
- b. The Vicar(s) General;
- c. The Chancellor (if a priest).

2. *Elected Members*

Eleven priests are to be elected from among the diocesan and religious priests. The following have both active and passive right of election:

- a. All diocesan priests who are incardinated in the Archdiocese and possess current faculties of the Archdiocese;
- b. Diocesan priests who are not incardinated, as well as priests who are members of a religious institute or a society of apostolic life, who actually live in the Archdiocese and exercise therein some office by appointment of the Archbishop;



- c. Priests who are appointed by the Archbishop as Deans are also eligible for election as members of the Presbyteral Council. One retired (incardinated diocesan) priest to be elected by the retired (incardinated diocesan) priests who meet the qualifications in C. 2. a., following the usual procedure for elections.
- d. Priests eligible to vote in elections for members of the Presbyteral Council who have been ordained less than seven years as of December 31 in the year of the election ("junior priests") will elect one member from their number to serve on the Council, without voting for a second member.
- e. For further information go to Appendix 1.

3. *Appointed Members*

- a. It is the right of the Archbishop to freely appoint members to the Presbyteral Council without prejudice to c. 497 1°.

4. *Consultors*

"Some priests are to be freely selected by the diocesan bishop from among the members of the Presbyteral Council to constitute a College of Consultors; their number is to be not less than six nor more than twelve; the College is established for a five-year term, and is responsible for the functions determined in the law; when the five year term is over, the College continues to exercise its proper functions until a new College is established" (c. 502 §1). Consultors continue as members of the Presbyteral Council until the end of their term as consultors.

D. Elections, Terms of Office, Vacancies

1. *Elections*

- a. The members to be elected will represent the whole presbyterate but will be elected as follows: one from each of the deaneries; one from the retired priests; and one from those ordained less than seven years. See Appendix 1 for more details.
- b. The Elections Committee appointed ad hoc by the Archbishop shall prepare, distribute, and receive ballots for the election so that the election starts after July 15 and is completed by August 31.

2. *Terms of Office*

- a. The term of office in the Presbyteral Council for elected and appointed members is three years. The election takes place every three years for eleven members.
- b. Each elected member of the Presbyteral Council is eligible for re-election for one other three-year term. After a term out of office, a priest becomes eligible once again for election.



3. Vacancies

- a. The balloting results will be kept on file and in the event of the incapacity of a member, the priest with the next highest number of votes shall be chosen to complete the unexpired term.
- b. If a priest elected from one deanery is transferred during his term to another deanery, his term is concluded and the priest with the next highest number of votes shall complete the unexpired term.
- c. When the See is vacant, the Presbyteral Council ceases and its duties are fulfilled by the College of Consultors until such time as the new Archbishop constitutes the Presbyteral Council anew.

E. Officers of the Presbyteral Council and Their Function

1. The Archbishop is *ex officio* Chair of the Presbyteral Council.
2. The Chair shall convene and preside at all meetings. He shall also prepare the agenda for the meeting.
3. The Chancellor shall record the proceedings of all meetings. He or she shall keep the roll of members, file all records and communications, and send notices of all regular meetings. He or she may delegate the recording to the Vice-Chancellor or another appropriate person.

F. Meetings

1. The Presbyteral Council shall meet at least quarterly. Special meetings may be called by the Archbishop.
2. Due notice of regular meetings shall be given to all members by the Chancellor at least one week in advance, after consultation with the Archbishop.
3. A quorum of the Presbyteral Council shall consist of a simple majority of the members.

G. Amendments

These statutes can be amended only by a two-thirds majority of the members concurring with the Archbishop, thirty days' written notice of motion to amend having been transmitted to all members.



Approved: Memorial of St. George
April 23, 2026

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Richard W. Smith".

✠ Richard W. Smith
Archbishop of Vancouver

The following policy is hereby SUPERSEDED:
Presbyteral Council Statutes, issued on September 03, 2022



Appendix: Procedure for Elections

For use of the *ad hoc* Elections Committee and Secretarial Staff

1. The Archbishop appoints an *ad hoc* Elections Committee, consisting of three members not eligible for re-election. The nomination balloting is to begin after July 15 and the entire election is to be completed by August 31.
2. The Chancery staff prepares separate alphabetical lists of all priests in each deanery and retired priests with active and passive right of election (see above: C.2). These lists have *asterisked those not eligible for nomination in the upcoming election; that is, those just completing a second consecutive term (including consultors) and *ex officio* members. The names of priests ordained less than seven years are put on a separate list; that is, their names are not included in the above lists.
3. The First Ballot (Nomination) is prepared for each of the nine deaneries and the retired priests and junior priests, and is sent to all those on each list, including those not eligible for re-election. Every priest nominates one priest from the appropriate list. A deadline is given for returning the nomination ballot.
4. After the deadline, the Election Committee counts the ballot. An alphabetical list is made of the top three of those nominated: three from each deanery, three from the retired priests, and three from the junior priests.
5. The Second Ballot (Election) is finalized for each deanery, the retired priests, and the junior priests unless, in the case of retired priests and junior priests, one has received an absolute majority of votes. The names of those nominated are listed in alphabetical order. The ballots have three names listed from which the priests choose one. The deadline for receiving the ballot is clearly indicated.
6. After the deadline for receiving the election ballots, the Election Committee will count them. In case of a tie on the second ballot, the priest who is senior, first by ordination and, if necessary, second by age, will be elected. There will be no third ballot. An elected member retains the right to decline election.
7. The Elections Committee shall inform the Archbishop of the results, and he in turn shall notify the newly-elected members and the entire presbyterate. The newly-elected will then assume their position at the next meeting.
8. An incardinated priest assigned to study or on leave will vote either from the junior priests or in the deanery in which he last served (as above No. 2). These priests will be noted on the ballot and while eligible to vote, they are not eligible for election. Ballots will be sent by email.