

Procedure for Requesting Diaconal Assistance for Individuals in Need Within the OPC

Committee on Diaconal Ministries
The Orthodox Presbyterian Church

***Excerpted from CDM Operating Manual (Rev. 12)
May 1, 2015***

VII. Ministry to Individuals in Need Within the OPC

A. Philosophy

The Committee on Diaconal Ministries (CDM) is privileged to be able to respond to appeals for diaconal assistance for individuals in need within the OPC, using funds entrusted to it through the faithful giving of individuals and churches. In striving to follow a Presbyterian structure within the diaconate, the CDM requires that appeals for aid for individuals be presented to it only after having first been considered at the local and regional levels of the church.

B. Policy

1. The CDM may receive requests for diaconal assistance for individuals in need within the OPC.
2. The CDM should receive such requests from a presbytery or a presbytery's diaconal committee.
3. The CDM should receive such requests with the expectation that the presbytery or its diaconal committee has:
 - a. Received the request from a session or deacon board that has determined that the need cannot be fully met within the local congregation.
 - b. Examined the request and ascertained the legitimacy and extent of the need.
 - c. Determined that the need cannot be fully met within the Presbytery.
 - d. Participated in responding partially toward the need, if at all possible.
4. The CDM shall extend diaconal assistance with the understanding that the presbytery or its diaconal committee will provide oversight and continuing care to individuals receiving assistance from the CDM.

C. Procedure

1. The CDM shall create and maintain a Request Form to be completed by those requesting diaconal assistance for an individual in need within the OPC.
2. The CDM shall require that the request be accompanied by financial documentation as well as a report of the presbytery's investigative work and conclusions and advice to the CDM in this matter.
3. The CDM shall make the form available on OPC.org or upon request.
4. The CDM shall request the completed form be sent to the CDM Administrator. He shall forward it on to the appropriate committee and, upon their request, shall contact the requestor if further information is needed.
5. The CDM shall be prepared to consider a recommendation that may come to it in conjunction with said request in cases where a direct response to the request from the subcommittee is outside the purview of that subcommittee. In urgent matters, that recommendation may come to the CDM via Email Referendum or by the call of a Special Meeting.