

**Associations: Definition, Minimum Membership, Application Process for a New Association, Dissolution, Merger of Associations
An Example from the Bylaws of the Georgia Baptist Convention**

Article VII. Recognition of Associations for Representation on the GBMB Executive Committee

Section 1. Definition of Association. An “Association” shall be a self-governing fellowship of Affiliated Churches, recognized by the GBMB and sharing a common faith, active on mission in their setting, and occupying a geographic area or an affinity relationship of effective ministry which is both reasonable and discernible.

Section 2. Minimum Membership. Each Association shall consist of a minimum of eight (8) Cooperating Churches.

Section 3. Application Process. Each new Association shall submit an application provided by the office of the GBMB Executive Director, which shall require the new Association to state the reasons for the recognition of such Association for representation on the GBMB Executive Committee. All applications must be submitted at least six (6) months prior to the next annual meeting of the Convention.

Section 4. Special Committee. All applications shall be reviewed by a special committee composed of the President of the Convention, chairman of the GBMB Executive Committee, chairman of the GBMB Administration Committee, and the president of the Associational Missionaries Fellowship. The GBMB Executive Director and one staff member, appointed by the GBMB Executive Director, shall serve as ex officio nonvoting members of this special committee.

Section 5. Review and Approval. The GBMB Executive Committee shall review the recommendation of the special committee and recommend approval of the application to the Convention or refer the application back to the special committee for further review. All applicant associations shall be recognized for representation on the GBMB Executive Committee upon favorable action by the Convention at its annual meeting.

Section 6. Dissolution of Association; Merger of Associations. Any Association recognized by the Convention may vote to dissolve or to merge with another Association in accordance with its (or each Association’s) own governing documents. If the governing documents for any Association does not provide a process for dissolution or merger, then such action may be approved by a majority vote of a quorum of the Association’s governing body, at a meeting held (in person or by virtual or telephonic means) with a proper quorum and where the agenda item of a possible merger and/or dissolution has been properly noticed. The results of any affirmative vote to dissolve shall be communicated to the GBMB Executive Director within five (5) business days, along with a plan of dissolution and one or more persons responsible for winding up the affairs of the Association. The results of any affirmative votes to merge two or more Associations shall be communicated to the GBMB Executive Director within five (5) business days of the last Association to approve it, along with a plan of merger approved by each Association and a person from each Association responsible for carrying out the merger. No merger shall proceed until each participating Association properly approves the plan of merger.