



# Membership Transfers

The church clerk corresponds between members and churches in the transferring of memberships.

“When members move to a different area, the clerk of the church holding their membership records should write to the secretary/clerk of the relevant conference requesting that a pastor in the new locality visit them and help facilitate their membership transfer to the new congregation.” (Church Manual – 19<sup>th</sup> Edition; page 51)

## Process for Granting and Accepting Membership Transfers

1. A church member asks the pastor or church clerk of the church they want to transfer to (the receiving church) to transfer their membership from the church it is currently held at.
2. The clerk of the receiving church enters the transfer request into eAdventist or reports it to the conference membership clerk to enter.
3. The church the member is transferring from (the granting church), takes the request to the church board to recommend it, favorably or otherwise, to the church body.
4. The church body is made aware of the transfer typically by first and second readings announced during the church service.
5. The granting church members vote on the transfer request, favorably or otherwise, on the day of the second reading.
6. The clerk of the granting church enters the date the church body voted to grant (or deny) the transfer request into eAdventist or reports it to the conference membership clerk to enter.
7. The clerk of the receiving church is notified that the transfer request has been voted on and, if it has been granted, takes the request to the church board for recommendation.
8. The church board’s recommendation is presented to the church for first and second readings announced during the church service.

9. The receiving church members vote on the transfer request, favorably or otherwise, on the day of the second reading.
10. The clerk of the receiving church enters the date the church body voted to accept (or deny) the transfer request into eAdventist or reports it to the conference membership clerk to enter.

See pages 51-55 of the 19<sup>th</sup> Edition Church Manual for additional information.

## Additional Transfer Information

- ❖ Only members in regular standing may be transferred to other churches.
- ❖ If a member’s transfer request is denied by one of the churches, that church should notify the other church of the reason for the denial.
- ❖ A person’s membership remains in the granting church until the transfer is completed.
- ❖ Members waiting for their transfer to be completed before holding a church office can be voted into a church office contingent on their transfer being completed.
- ❖ A transfer request should never be submitted without the member’s approval.
- ❖ The church board votes to recommend a membership transfer to the church body, but does not have the power to grant/accept a membership transfer on their own.
- ❖ Members who are not sure where their church membership is located should give the receiving church clerk information to be able to search for their membership such as date of birth, former name, etc. If that is not successful, the member’s information should be sent to the conference membership clerk who will assist in the search.
- ❖ If it has been determined by both the church and conference clerk that a member does not hold membership in another church within the NAD, only then should an alternate method of accepting them into membership be used.



## Frequently Asked Transfer Questions & Answers

**Q:** How long do transfers usually take?

**A:** Membership transfers should be completed within 3 to 6 months; however, there are a number of reasons why a transfer might take longer. (See next question.)

**Q:** What might make a transfer take longer?

**A:** How long a transfer takes from request to acceptance depends on many different factors including but not limited to:

- ❖ The time it takes to locate the person's membership record (if they don't know where it is located)
- ❖ The time it takes to mail/email/find accurate contact information to churches outside the North American Division or to church clerks who do not use or have access to an email
- ❖ The frequency of church board meetings at both the granting and receiving churches
- ❖ The time it takes to transition to a new church clerk if a change is being made

**Q:** What can I do to speed up the transfer process?

**A:** Here are a few tips you can use:

- ❖ Provide the person's full name (including previous names they might be listed under)
- ❖ Provide the person's date of birth
- ❖ Contact the church clerk or conference clerk directly if the person is unsure of where their membership is located and confirm you are requesting the membership from the correct church

**Q:** Is it ok for my church to vote on the acceptance of a member's transfer request before it is granted out by the granting church?

**A:** No, this is not recommended. If the person is not a member of the granting church the process will need to be repeated once the *correct* granting church is located. Another scenario where the accepting church must wait is if after research is done it is discovered that the member no longer has

membership in the Adventist church. If that is the case they will need to be accepted by rebaptism or profession of faith depending on the situation. This can be embarrassing for the member since they thought they were already accepted by transfer.

**Q:** Why do international transfers take so long to complete?

**A:** Unfortunately, eAdventist is not a system used by the world church, but by the North American Division. The conference clerk does not have contact information for church clerks throughout the world church. These successful contacts are dependent on the information you share with your conference clerk. The most helpful information you can provide is a current email address to the church pastor and/or clerk. The church clerk and conference clerk will work together to complete these transfers.