

## Southside Baptist Network Church Planting Guidelines

The goal of these Church Planting Guidelines is to prepare a Prospective Church Planter (Church Planter) to qualify with the Southside Baptist Network (SBN), the Georgia Baptist Mission Board (GBMB), and the North American Mission Board (NAMB) as a Church Planter, who is prepared to launch a new church.

Nationwide statistics suggest that **80% of new church starts fail within 3 years**. Those statistics suggest that many Church Planters begin a new church without the proper preparation and support. SBN, working together with Sending Churches, NAMB, and GBMB, wants to prepare the Church Planter to be successful in fulfilling his call. **The following guidelines serve as a guide for the Church Planter to work with SBN to be successful in launching a new church.**

### Church Planters Come from Sending Churches

Church Planters should have a Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Sending Church to complete the process and to enable his new church plant to be received into membership. This also enables him to qualify for various types of assistance from SBN, GBMB, and NAMB. A Sending Church is defined as “a church which commissions and is responsible for a new church plant until the plant is self-sustaining, self-governing and self-propagating.” Throughout this process the Church Planter is first accountable to the Sending Church. The Sending Church will also help the Church Planter become familiar with how a local church functions in partnering with SBN, GBMB, and SBC missions and ministries.

- A Church Planter must be a member of a Southern Baptist church.
- A Church Planter who is a member of a Southern Baptist church and has a Sending Church, but does not live in the local area, is encouraged to join a local Southern Baptist Church when he moves to the area. He should share his vision with the new church and seek their support as a Supporting/Sponsoring Church.
- A Church Planter who is a member of a local Southern Baptist church is encouraged to seek the support of his church to be the Sending Church and to seek other churches to come alongside as Supporting/Sponsoring Churches.

Once both the Church Planter and the Sending Church are ready to move forward with planting a church, the following process will begin.

### FIRST STEP TO PLANT WITH THE SOUTHSIDE BAPTIST NETWORK

The Church Planter should schedule a meeting with the Associational Mission Strategist (AMS) and a member of SBN’s Church Planting & Strengthening Team. At this meeting the Church Planter will...

- Share his church planting calling and vision

- Submit a resume with references, a copy of his testimony, and a detailed plan regarding the church plant
- Sign and acknowledge he agrees with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, the SBN doctrinal statement
- Submit a completed SBN Confidential Church Planter Questionnaire. The questionnaire is found on the SBN website, [www.southsidenetwork.org/church-plantingmissions](http://www.southsidenetwork.org/church-plantingmissions)
- Submit a letter of recommendation from his Sending Church's Lead/Senior Pastor
- Submit any additional recommendations from the Lead/Senior Pastor of other Supporting Churches.  
*Although it is a requirement by SBN and NAMB that the Church Planter have a Sending Church, he is also encouraged to have at least one Supporting/Sponsor Church. A Sponsor Church is defined as a church that partners with a church plant through praying, participating in and/or providing for the needs of the church plant. Often there could be multiple supporting churches partnering with a particular plant and helping to meet different needs.*
- Submit the Church Planter Background Check request form  
*SBN does a background check on all Church Planters.*

## **SECOND STEP TO PLANT WITH THE SOUTHSIDE BAPTIST NETWORK**

The results of the initial meeting with the Church Planter will be shared with the entire SBN Church Planting and Strengthening Team. The team will review all the information and documentation provided by the Church Planter.

The Church Planting and Strengthening Team will vote whether to send the Church Planter to the NAMB Church Planting Assessment. If the team has any questions after seeing the documentation, they may ask to meet with the Church Planter to hear from him directly.

If approved, the Church Planter should register at the North American Mission Board ([namb.net](http://namb.net)) website and begin the assessment process to qualify as a church planter with SBN and NAMB. The Church Planter should commit to the first available NAMB Church Planting Assessment that fits his schedule.

The Church Planting and Strengthening Team's budget will reimburse the Church Planter for the assessment cost once it has been completed.

The Church Planting and Strengthening Team will provide a coach to assist the Church Planter to make the most of the NAMB Assessment. This coach will help the Church Planter know what to expect and how to best prepare for the NAMB Assessment.

SBN will, when possible, send a representative along with the Sending Church to support the Church Planter at the NAMB Assessment.

SBN requests a copy of the report that is given by NAMB after the Church Planter's Assessment is complete.

### **THIRD STEP TO PLANT WITH THE SOUTHSIDE BAPTIST NETWORK**

The final NAMB Assessment report will be presented to the SBN Church Planting & Strengthening Team.

- **If the Church Planter receives a REDIRECT score from NAMB:**  
SBN's Church Planting and Strengthening Team will work with the Church Planter's Sending Church to ensure a proper care plan is provided to the Church Planter along with pathways to help the Church Planter grow towards God's desire for his life.
- **If the Church Planter receives a DEVELOPMENT NEEDED score from NAMB:**  
SBN's Church Planting & Strengthening Team will meet with the Church Planter to hear him share his vision for the church plant and will also work with the Church Planter's Sending Church to ensure a proper development plan is provided as the Church Planter moves forward. Each Church Planter's unique plan and support level will look different based on the needs of the plant and the abilities of SBN at the time. SBN will provide a pastor to help the Sending Church coach the New Church Planter.
- **If the Church Planter receives a READY score from NAMB:**  
SBN's Church Planting & Strengthening Team will meet with the Church Planter to hear him share his vision for the church plant and will also work to support the New Church Planter as he begins planting. Each Church Planter's unique plan and support level will look different based on the needs of the plant and the ability of SBN at the time of the planting. SBN will provide a pastor to help the Sending Church coach the New Church Planter.

#### **Financial Support:**

In some cases, SBN's Church Planting & Strengthening Team may recommend to the AMS approval of SBN funding for the Church Planter (contingent on funding availability). Each case will be reviewed on the basis of merit, need, and their assessment report. Continued financial support beyond the first year for the Church Planter will be evaluated annually based on the number of gospel presentations, salvations, baptisms, and church growth. The typical timeframe of financial support granted by SBN is 3 years.

If approved by NAMB, the Church Planter becomes a NAMB Church Planter and is assigned a NAMB coach to walk him through the next steps during the launching of the new church plant.

The Church Planter is also encouraged to contact the Church Planting Ministry of the Georgia Baptist Mission Board (GBMB) for possible financial support.

### **UPON APPROVAL AS AN SBN CHURCH PLANT**

- Agreed upon support and funding will begin at the scheduled time
- Pastor Coaching will be available as needed as well as access to SBN's Church Planting and Strengthening Team.
- SBN churches will be notified of the new Church Planter and his ministry so they will be able to support the work with their prayers and encouragement.
- Quarterly Reports submitted to GBMB or NAMB are to be forwarded to the AMS for awareness of progress, needs, and prayer.
- New church plants are expected to give 3% of undesignated receipts to Associational Missions (SBN)
- The Credentials Team will recommend the Church Plant to be under Watch Care status to the Executive Council for at least one year in accordance with Section 2 of the SBN Bylaws.

### **Southside Baptist Network Church Planting Guidelines Checklist:**

- \_\_\_ Schedule a meeting with the AMS.
- \_\_\_ Submit resume with references.
- \_\_\_ Submit copy of testimony.
- \_\_\_ Submit detailed plan regarding the church plant.
- \_\_\_ Have background check done by SBN, NAMB, or GBMB.
- \_\_\_ Complete SBN confidential Church Planter Questionnaire (see SBN website).
- \_\_\_ Subscribe to the Baptist Faith and Message.
- \_\_\_ Enlist Sending Church.
- \_\_\_ Seek out a Sponsoring Church.
- \_\_\_ Be or become a member of a Southern Baptist church.
- \_\_\_ Complete the NAMB assessment (namb.net).
- \_\_\_ Apply for funding with the GBMB.
- \_\_\_ Have church planting coach secured through NAMB, GBMB, or SBN.
- \_\_\_ Meet with the SBN Church Planting & Strengthening Team. Share vision for the church plant.
- \_\_\_ Forward quarterly reports to the AMS (contingent upon sending reports to NAMB/GBMB).
- \_\_\_ Give 3% of undesignated receipts to Associational Missions (SBN).