

General Board Child Care Policy

Background

A long established goal of the denomination and its General Board has been to have greater representation of young adults serve on the Board. This goal has been pursued through the vigorous efforts of the American Baptist Churches Nominating Committee as well as by the establishment of the new Young Adult Caucus. This goal and these actions reflect the recognition that the denomination needs to develop younger leaders who can continue to provide leadership for the succeeding generations of American Baptists.

Younger Representatives often have unique needs that must be met in order for them to accept the call to serve on the General Board. One stated need was the provision of child care while Representatives were in General Board meetings. A first step in addressing this need was taken in 1993 when the General Board Executive Committee adopted a child care policy for Representatives with a child under two years of age. A second step was taken in February 2000 when a child care survey was distributed to the General Board. As a result of this survey, it is now recommended that the General Board Executive Committee expand upon its 1993 child care policy to include financial assistance (when needed) for the care of children and youth, aged fourteen and under, while parents or guardians attend General Board and its related meetings.

Proposed Policy

1. For Representatives who are parents or guardians of a child two years of age or younger
 - a. Bonded child care may be provided at the meeting site of each General Board and General Board Executive Committee meeting.
 - b. The following conditions and procedures will apply:
 - (1) A Representative must request on-site child care on the Room Reservation Form for any meeting. Only requests made on the Room Reservation Form submitted by the required deadline stated on the form will be honored.
A Representative who brings a child to a meeting without prior notice may find that child care is unavailable.
 - (2) Transportation, food and additional lodging costs must be borne by the parent or guardian. No additional money will be provided by the denomination to cover these expenses.

- (3) Child care will be provided and paid for by the American Baptist Churches during meeting hours only. Each Representative must make his or her own arrangements for child care if such care is needed beyond the scheduled meeting periods.
 - c. Under certain circumstances, it may be more cost-effective for the parent of an infant to bring their own caregiver to care for the child at the General Board meeting. When the comparative cost is less than the bonded child care alternative, special permission may be granted upon consultation with Special Services staff.
2. For Representatives who are parents or guardians of a child or youth fourteen years of age or younger
- a. A child care reimbursement stipend will be given to any Representative who is a parent or guardian of a child or youth aged fourteen years of age or younger, on a need-only basis.
 - b. This stipend would be given for actual child care costs, up to a maximum of \$125 per meeting (not per day or per session).
 - c. The following conditions and procedures will apply:
 - (1) All child or youth care shall be arranged by the parent or guardian, not through the American Baptist Churches or its staff.
 - (2) Representatives who have financial need for the stipend must complete a child care reimbursement form and submit the completed form to the Associate General Secretary/Treasurer.
 - (3) For a child age two or younger, the provisions in this section may be utilized in lieu of the special provisions stated in Section One.
 - (4) In no instance may a parent or guardian request benefits under Section One and Section Two at the same meeting.

Projected Costs

In 1993, the General Board recognized its need to provide child care for parents of infants in order to encourage the participation of young adult parents at the General Board meetings. That policy limited assistance to on-site care for infants two years old or younger. At the last two General Board meetings, two children were provided care at a cost of approximately \$620.00.

The exact financial impact of the proposed policy cannot be identified since the actual use is not known. Out of the survey conducted in February 2000, 12 General Board members have one or more children under 14. We do not know what the level of need or what opportunity for alternative child care might be represented by these 12 Representatives.

Since the proposal is for a need-only basis, up to the actual amount spent on child care, a reasonable estimate might be that:

½ would need the entire stipend	(6 x \$125)	\$750
¼ would need \$100	(3 x \$300)	300
¼ would need \$75	(3 x \$75)	<u>225</u>
Total		\$1,275

This would estimate a range of approximately \$2,500 - \$3,000 annually, assuming General Board Executive Committee members were eligible for reimbursement for all four meetings per year.

Approved by the Executive Committee of the General Board (EC3563), June 2000.