

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Office of the Secretary

Convention Overture Template

Instructions

These instructions and the accompanying template are offered to facilitate uniform submission and efficient processing of overtures to the 2026 Synod convention.

Bylaw 3.1.6.2 states that overtures to a convention of the Synod may be submitted only by:

1. a **member congregation** of the Synod,
2. a **convention** or **board of directors of a district**,
3. an **official district conference** of ordained and/or commissioned ministers,
4. the **faculty of an educational institution** of the Synod,
5. the **Board of Directors** of the Synod,
6. a **board or commission** of the Synod (listed in Bylaws 3.2.2, 3.2.2.1, 3.2.3, and 3.2.3.1),
7. a **committee established by a prior convention**,
8. or a **forum of a circuit**.

Overtures must be received at least twenty weeks prior to the opening date of the convention (that is, before **February 28, 2026**), or they are *late* and subject to the procedure of Bylaw 3.1.6 (a). To help us see that overtures are processed in time for *printing* in the *Convention Workbook*, please ensure they are submitted at least a month earlier (**February 1, 2026**).

Please use the accompanying template in Microsoft Word (if at all possible) to craft your overture in proper form. Enter your information in the [bracketed areas] so that the overture will automatically be formatted in the *Convention Workbook* style. The document uses Microsoft Word *styles* to maintain proper formatting of each paragraph. If you need more paragraphs, please “cut and paste” existing paragraphs of the template (and then add your content to them), rather than trying to format new paragraphs yourself.

Please save your final overture to your computer with a unique name indicative of its contents (*e.g.*, “To Request Assistance for Church Workers”). You can delete all blue highlighted form instructions and any other extraneous material from the template.

A properly composed overture will include:

- I. **Title** – begins with “To” and summarizes clearly the action the convention is asked to take—including specifically the suggested amendment of Constitution or bylaws.
- II. **Preamble** – background or reasons for the action to be taken. The Preamble is stated in either *classic* or *rationale* form:
 - a. **Classic form** – One or more clauses beginning with “WHEREAS” constitute, together with the resolving clauses that follow in the main body, one grammatical sentence. Except for the last, each concludes with “; and” (transitioning to the next clause).
 - b. **Rationale form** – One or more text paragraphs, including bulleted list(s) as necessary, precede the resolving clauses of the main body. Please use *manually* outline numbered list(s) only as indicated and only where absolutely necessary.
 - c. In either form, the preamble concludes with “therefore be it” as the transition to the main body.
- III. **Main Body** – requested or recommended convention action
 - a. Consisting of one or more *resolving clauses*, joined grammatically into one sentence.
 - i. Each resolving clause begins: “*Resolved*, That...”
 - ii. Resolving clauses prior to the second-last, if any, end with “; and be it further”
 - iii. The second-last *Resolved* statement, if any, ends with “; and be it finally” if there are more than two resolves and “; and be it further” if there are only two.
 - iv. The final *Resolved* statement ends with a period.

- b. If bylaws are to be amended, the *Resolved* statements must identify the specific bylaw number(s) to be changed and be followed by the present and proposed bylaw wording, preceded by the header: ~~PRESENT~~/PROPOSED WORDING. When bylaw changes are proposed, please underline the new wording and ~~strike out~~ deletions. Use a similar process for proposed constitutional amendments.
 - c. If it is necessary to cite bylaws at length, please cut and paste the bylaw from the *2023 Handbook Today's Business Edition*, available in Microsoft Word format at <http://www.lcms.org/convention/overtures>.
 - d. Follow the final bylaw paragraph with “and be it further” before another *Resolved* statement is added.
- IV. **Originating Entity** – include name and locale at the close of the overture
- V. **Signatures** – **two** officers of submitting entity

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A hard copy signed by two officers of the submitting entity must be mailed to the Office of the President. To expedite the processing of your overture, also email an electronic copy of the overture (Microsoft Word format, please) as indicated below. Please be sure to save at least an electronic copy for your records.

1. Submit overtures to the Office of the President via an electronic system at:

forms.lcms.org/form/LCMS/CONV/OVERTURE

You will be asked to sign in (or create an account) using an email address that you control. Once in the system you will be presented with a form to fill, having a place to upload your overture.

2. Print one hard copy, **sign as instructed (two officers of submitting entity)**, and **mail to:**

Office of the President
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
1333 South Kirkwood Road
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295