



EASTMINSTER

PRESBYTERIAN

Policies and Procedures for Achieving and Maintaining Covenant Family Status at Eastminster Day School

(Revised 2-23)

1. Background and History
 - a. As the popularity of the Eastminster Day School (EDS) grew, it began to be recognized that some families would join Eastminster Presbyterian Church (EPC) in name only so that they could get priority admission to the Day School, sometimes while rarely attending church and never becoming involved, etc. In an effort, not to penalize those families, but instead to promote and reward active engagement and involvement and to encourage parents' intentional faith formation of their children, the Session of EPC developed and put into place in 2013-4 the Covenant Family Agreement and associated policies.
2. Eligibility Criteria: EPC member families may register to become a Covenant Family. Families may use the previous year's data, if available, in order to qualify as a conforming Covenant Family.
3. Benefits of being a Covenant Family:
 - a. Registration priority (Covenant Family status is **not** a guarantee for enrollment, but increases registration priority)
 - b. Discounted tuition
4. Covenant Family Status Criteria
 - a. Worship
 - i. The attendance of husband and wife must total at least **34** qualifying events per year in aggregate. (If a husband attends 19 times and a wife 15 times over the course of the year, this would add up to 34 attendances and would meet the criteria.)



EASTMINSTER

PRESBYTERIAN

- ii. A single church member parent must attend at least **17** services per year.
 - iii. Additional special services such as field services, peace service, Easter sunrise, Christmas Eve services are all recognized worship services in addition to regular Sunday morning worship.
 - iv. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to document their attendance by each signing the Friendship Pad in worship and noting that they are an EDS family.
 - v. Serving in the nursery or children's church, and performing Usher/Deacon/Elder duties on Sunday morning may be recognized as either worship attendance or a service (see below) involvement on those days, but not both. Parents must document this activity by either signing a friendship pad for attendance or submitting a service report on the EDS website.
- b. Service
- i. **4 per family per year:** Parents must participate in a service opportunity for a total of four times per year. A couple can meet this collectively.
 - ii. Qualifying service opportunities must be EPC sanctioned, and are published on the website. Numerous opportunities exist, some recurring, some one time events. For instance, serving as a Sunday school teacher, youth basketball coach, or official Scout leader counts as a service opportunity, and may allow multiple service events throughout the year.
 - iii. Parents must document these completed services online on the website. Parents will receive an auto-reply email after submitting a service form to retain for their records.
 - iv. Parents who are elders or deacons must also note that service on the website just as they do for other service opportunities.
 - v. Serving in the nursery or children's church, and performing Usher/Deacon/Elder duties on Sunday morning may be recognized as either service involvement or worship attendance on those days, but not both. Parents must document this



EASTMINSTER

PRESBYTERIAN

activity by either submitting a service report on the EDS website or by signing a friendship pad for attendance.

- c. Giving
 - i. The minimum financial contribution is **\$1300 per year** to the EPC General Fund.
 - ii. Contributions can be made in the Eastminster Presbyterian Church offering envelopes, by personal check, or by online giving.
 - iii. Only the EPC treasurer and senior administrators will know an individual's actual contribution to EPC. Others responsible for administering the covenant family program will only know whether a family has met the minimum requirements.

5. Responsibilities

- a. Families are solely responsible for documenting their own participation. To document worship attendance, each parent in attendance must sign the Friendship pad. To document service, each service involvement must be submitted individually on the EDS website. The EPC business office will keep financial records of contributions to the EPC General Fund. Parents should monitor their giving through quarterly statements from the church.
- b. Though the requirements are calculated per year, time is not an integral part of the equation (i.e. a year's worth of requirements might be met in 7 months).
- c. If EPC members seek Covenant Family status for the first time, the prior 12 months of involvement can be used to qualify.

6. Sign up process

- a. Sign up agreements must be completed on the Covenant Family page of the EDS website.
- b. Applications must be submitted by January 1st in order to be eligible for consideration as a conforming Covenant Family for the February enrollment lottery in a given year. Families who sign up after January 1st will be considered for conforming status in the June review (see below).



EASTMINSTER

PRESBYTERIAN

- c. The master list of Covenant Families is developed and maintained by the EPC Staff contact (jblair@eastminsterpres.org).

7. Review process

- a. In January, requirements are reviewed for the previous calendar year, ending December 31st. To qualify as a conforming family, the family must have met a year's worth of requirements.
 - i. *Conforming Covenant Family parents* who wish to enroll a child for the first time will have priority over non-conforming Eastminster families and non-church-member families.
 - ii. *Conforming Covenant Family Parents* who are re-enrolling current students:
 - 1. Have priority for status changes and re-enrolling. Status changes are full-time to part-time, part-time to full-time, two day to three day, three day to two day.
 - 2. Will continue to receive a discounted tuition rate for the current calendar year
 - 3. Will have priority registration for siblings
 - iii. *Non-conforming covenant family parents* of currently enrolled children (meaning those who have not met all requirements as of December 31st):
 - 1. Will receive no priority for status changes when re-enrolling
 - 2. Will not qualify for the discounted tuition rate for January through June
 - 3. Will register siblings of currently enrolled students using the EPC church member/non-church member category
 - iv. *Non-conforming covenant family parents* who wish to enroll a child for the first time are encouraged to seek EDS admission through the enrollment lottery.
- b. In June, requirements are reviewed for the previous January 1st – May 31st for **only those families who are seeking Covenant Family status** (new families or those seeking reinstatement). At this time, parents must have met the following pro-rated thresholds:



EASTMINSTER

PRESBYTERIAN

14 worship attendances (7 for single-member parent), 2 service opportunities, and \$550 in giving.

- i. *Conforming Covenant Family* parents (meaning those who have met all the requirements as of May 31st):
 1. Will pay the lower tuition rate for July through December
 2. If applicable, the child's waitlist status will be adjusted based on the order of enrollment priority found on the "Enrollment and Tuition" page of the EDS Website
- ii. *Non-conforming Covenant Family* parents who **have not met** the Covenant Family thresholds as of May 31st will pay the standard EPC member/ non-member tuition rate for July through December and are encouraged to work toward meeting the Covenant Family thresholds for the remaining calendar year.

- c. The January review will serve as the main yearly review of covenant families for the purposes of enrollment and for determining conforming vs non-conforming status.
- d. The June review will serve as an official review for families who did not qualify for conforming status in the previous January, or for new families who sign the Covenant Family Agreement after the January review. (See section 6 above).

8. Appeals

- a. An appeal of a family's Covenant Family Status must be submitted in writing to the current EPC staff contact (Janice Blair jblair@eastminsterpres.org). Inquiries into inaccurate record-keeping or tabulation, rules/guidelines interpretation, etc. should be made as soon as they are recognized by the parents. Appeals are due 10 days after parents are notified that their annual review is complete.
- b. Written appeals and supporting evidence will be brought from the EPC staff contact to the EDS Ministry Team as soon as possible. Though no formal vote is required, appeals will be considered by at least three members of the EDS Ministry Team.



E A S T M I N S T E R

P R E S B Y T E R I A N

- c. Parents will be notified of the appeal decision in writing via email and US Mail.
9. Summary of Process/Flow of data:
 - a. Parents sign up to be a Covenant Family on the EPC website.
 - b. A master list is maintained by the EPC staff contact
 - c. Parents meet requirements, and submit/maintain documentation to qualify as conforming families
 - d. EPC staff retrieve Service records and list of Covenant Family worship attendance prior to review dates.
 - e. Eastminster Day School Ministry Team reviews submitted data to determine families to be either conforming or non-conforming in the areas of attendance and service.
 - f. This list goes to the EPC Business Office to have the “Giving” threshold incorporated.
 - g. Tentative final list is shared with EPC staff contact and EDS Ministry Team and any appeals are considered.
 - h. Final list returned to EPC staff contact and emails/letters sent to parents. Final list shared with EDS director so that tuition adjustments and enrollment priority can be finalized.
10. Adjustments and amendments
 - a. Once approved by the Session, the official Covenant Family policies and procedures may be altered from time to time by discussion and official voting of the EDS ministry team. However, all changes will be submitted to the Session as an updated or revised version at least once per year.
11. Key personnel for questions
 - a. EPC staff in charge of Covenant Family: Janice Blair (jblair@eastminsterpres.org)
 - b. Day School Ministry Team Pastor: Douglass Key (dkey@eastminsterpres.org)