

How to use this Checklist for Session Minutes

1. The Clerk submitting minutes will enter the Minute's page number(s) where each item will be found in the Page # column. You only need to provide one instance of doing these things in your minutes. They are routine but essential, so they should appear in all your minutes.
2. For the Clerk reviewing the minutes, a check should be put in the appropriate column-
Y - if the item is in the minutes and done, complete
N - if the item is missing from the minutes or missing some elements
NA - if there is a reason explained in the minutes for why the item isn't present
3. The Clerk reviewing the minutes can comment next to an item for understanding. Minute reviews should be about the spirit of the law, at least as much as a letter of the law. When someone has put forth a good-faith effort but isn't perfect, weigh your decision and comments. Perhaps a helpful note rather than an exception is appropriate. Either way, the purpose of the Minutes Review is to learn from each other so that minutes capture important actions and maintain necessary institutional records.
4. The Clerk reviewing the minutes should also add a note at the bottom explaining anything that could be improved and listing things mentioned in the minutes to be celebrated.

What are Exceptions?

It simply means items that are missing. We record exceptions to help Sessions ensure that their minutes are complete.

Presbytery of Long Island Session Minute Checklist Manual

Please use this as a reference of what and why we are asking for specific items to be shown in the minutes

Frequently Used Abbreviations

RR: Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised

G: Form of Government

W: Directory for Worship

GA: General Assembly

PLI: Presbytery of Long Island

	Number of Elders	(G-3.0201) The Session is the council for the congregation. And unless otherwise noted in the bylaws, Elders on Session who are eligible under civil law are the trustees of the corporation.
	Page and Stamp <i>Minutes submitted, to begin with, the page with the most recent Presbytery's approval stamp.</i>	(G-3.0107 Records) Each council shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings. Minutes and all other official records of councils are the property in perpetuity of said councils or their legal successors. (G-3.0202f) Send to the Presbytery and GA requested statistics and other information according to the requirements of those bodies, as well as voluntary financial contributions Minutes must be for one year, meaning January 1 to December 31, "fiscal year." The minutes shall be consecutively numbered, starting with Page 1 or the first page after the last page number from the previous year (which should be stamped). We recommend that each year begin new with page 1, followed by the year. (1/2024, 2/2024).
	Name of Insurance Carrier, <i>coverage includes property & liability, coverage dates.</i>	(G-3.0112) Each council shall obtain property and liability insurance coverage to protect its facilities, programs, staff, and elected and appointed officers.
1	Meeting <i>Date, time, place, purpose, Moderator, Attendance, and quorum confirmed</i>	(RR) Date, time, place, and purpose (G-3.0105) Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of RR Newly Revised, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution. (G-3.0201) The pastor shall be the Moderator of the Session, and the Session shall not meet without the pastor or designated moderator. (G-3.0203) Sessions shall provide by rule for a quorum for meetings... Attendance, and quorum confirmed - Names of present, absent, and excused are listed and quorums declared
2	Prayer	(G-3.0105) Meetings of councils shall be opened and closed with prayer.
3	Approval of Minutes	(RR) Until your minutes are approved at a subsequent meeting, they are not approved.

4	Sacrament of Lord's Supper <i>Authorized</i> <i>Date Celebrated</i>	(G-3.0201b; W-2.4009; W-2.4012) The Session provides that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received. This responsibility shall include authorizing the celebration of the Lord's Supper at least quarterly... Session action to set dates for the celebration of the Lord's Supper can be set annually, quarterly, or at each time of celebration in advance.
5	Sacrament of Baptism <i>Authorized</i> <i>Name, DOB, parents, Date Celebrated</i>	(G-3.0201bW; -2.3011a; W-2.3012b) provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received. This responsibility shall include authorizing... the administration of Baptism as appropriate, (G-1.04; G-3.0204b) For infant baptisms, record full name of infant, parents' names, date of birth and names of persons presenting the child; for adult baptisms, record full name of the individual, parent's names, and date of birth of those being baptized.
6	Membership Reception <i>Letter of transfer, Profession of faith and Reaffirmation of Faith</i>	(G-1.0303) Persons may enter into active church membership in the following ways: Public profession of faith, Certificate of transfer, Reaffirmation of faith Minutes should record the full names of those received into membership and how they are received.
7	Membership Removal <i>Letter of transfer, Death, Deletion</i>	(G-1.0303) Record in full names of those transferred to other churches, including the names of any children and whether or not they are baptized. A notation to that effect should also be made if the member is a ruling elder and/or deacon. The record should also include the name of the church they are transferring to.
8	Pastoral compensation is reviewed annually by Session for temporary pastors.	(G-3.0303c) Establish minimum compensation standards, including provisions for dissolution terms, for pastoral calls, and for those serving in temporary pastoral service...within the Presbytery; The Session and COM approve temporary pastoral service compensation.
9	Budget <i>Approved annually by the Session</i>	(G-3.0113) Each council shall prepare and adopt a budget to support the church's mission... (G-3.0205) The budget is established and approved annually by the Session.
10	Clerk of Session <i>elected by Session (Term)</i> Church Treasurer <i>elected by Session (Term)</i>	(G-3.0104) The Clerk of the Session shall be a ruling elder elected by the Session for such term as it may determine. (G-3.0205) The session shall elect a treasurer for such term as the session shall decide... Please note the term length or the term date.
11	Financial Review <i>of all church funds Annual</i>	(G-3.0113) Annual financial review of all books and records for the church.
12	Annual Statistical Report <i>approved by Session and included in Minutes</i>	(G-3.0202f) ...send to the Presbytery and GA requested statistics... Statistical Report should be approved and included in the session records.
13	Minutes Reviewed by Presbytery <i>Noting missing items, if any</i>	
14	Annual Manse Review <i>Date noted with results.</i>	(PLI) Per the Board of Trustees & Committee on Ministry - 2023

15	Commissioner(s) to Presbytery <i>Elected</i> <i>Reported back to Session</i>	(G-3.0202) Relations with Other Councils Sessions have a responsibility to participate in the life of the whole church through participation in other councils... Sessions: elect, as commissioners to Presbytery, ruling elder(s) from the congregation, preferably for at least a year, and receive their reports
16	Newly Elected Officers <i>Session conferees with elders and deacons before ordination.</i>	G-2.0402 Preparation for Ministry as a Ruling Elder or Deacon When persons have been elected to the ordered ministry of ruling elder or deacon,
17	Ordination/Installation of Officers <i>Authorized</i> <i>Names, Date, Office, Term</i> <i>Celebrated</i>	the Session shall provide a period of study and preparation, after which the Session shall examine them as to their personal faith, knowledge of the doctrine, government, and discipline contained in the Constitution of the church, and the duties of the ministry. The Session shall also confer with them as to their willingness to undertake the ministry appropriate to the order. (G-3.0204 a,b) Each Session shall maintain the following roll and registers... of ruling elders and deacons, of installed pastors with dates of service,
18	Minutes Signed <i>by the Clerk</i>	G-3.0107 Each council shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings. Minutes and all other official records of councils are the property in perpetuity of said councils or their legal successors. (RR) Minutes are to be signed by the secretary and, if customary, may also be signed by the president. Minutes are your group's legal record of its proceedings, and the secretary's signature establishes evidence of the original document's authenticity. Should a legal matter arise connected to your minutes, unsigned minutes may be challenged for validity.
19	Sexual Misconduct Policy and its Procedures <i>Date adopted, Date reviewed, and any changes</i>	(G-3.0106) All councils shall adopt and implement the following policies: A Sexual Misconduct Policy Child and Youth Protection Policy
20	Child & Youth Protection Policy <i>Date adopted, Date reviewed, and any changes</i>	Antiracism Policy Harassment Policy (PLI) Policies should be reviewed annually, and any changes noted.
21	Antiracism Statement <i>Date adopted, Date reviewed, and any changes</i>	
22	Anti-Harassment Policy <i>Date adopted, Date reviewed, and any changes</i>	
	CONGREGATIONAL/ CORPORATE MEETINGS	Both the congregational and corporate business may be done at the same meeting.
23	Call of Congregational /Corporate meetings <i>church name, Date, time, purpose</i>	(G-1.0502) Annual and Special Meetings
24	Minutes <i>Date, time, place, type, purpose of the meeting, Moderator, and quorum confirmed</i>	(G-1.0501) An annual meeting of the congregation is held... A quorum is attested to. (G-1.0504) A moderator is named.

25	Public Notice of Call <i>Confirmation of dates announced</i>	<p>(G-1.0503) Meetings of the congregation shall be called by the Session, by the Presbytery, or by the Session when requested in writing by one fourth of the active members on the roll of the congregation. Adequate public notice of all congregational meetings shall be given. Congregations shall provide by their own rule for minimum notification requirements and give notice at regular services of worship prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The dates and how they were notified should be noted in the Congregational meeting minutes.</p>
26	Prayer <i>open and close</i>	<p>(G-3.0105) It is part of the Reformed tradition that we open and close our meetings, meals and other events, in prayer.</p>
27	Minutes of Previous Meeting Approved <i>by the congregation or Session</i>	<p>(RR) Until your minutes are approved at a subsequent meeting, they are not approved.</p>
28	Annual Financial Statements	<p>(G-3.0205) ... the Session shall prepare and adopt a budget and determine the distribution of the congregation's benevolences. ... It shall provide full information to the congregation concerning its decisions in such matters</p> <p>Full annual financial statements are reported to the congregation. The congregation provides the finances for the church, so every degree of transparency is essential.</p>
29	Nominations and Election of Church Officers, Office and Terms, Results	<p>(G-2.0401) Ruling elders and deacons are men and women elected by the congregation from among its members. The nomination and election of ruling elders and deacons shall express the rich diversity of the congregation's membership and shall guarantee participation and inclusiveness (F-1.0403). When elections are held, full opportunity shall always be given to the congregation for nomination from the floor of the congregational meeting by any active member of the congregation.</p>
30	Nominating Committee Elected	<p>(G-2.0401) Ruling elders and deacons shall be nominated by a committee elected by the congregation, drawn from and representative of its membership. Congregations may provide by their own rule for a congregational nominating committee.</p>
31	Pastor's Compensation <i>(Installed Pastor) approved by the congregation</i>	<p>(G-1.0504c) ...reviewing the adequacy of and approving changes to the terms of call of the pastor... A statement that the congregation acted on the terms of the pastoral call (Installed pastors only)</p>
32	Minutes Signed <i>Moderator and Clerk</i>	<p>(G-1.0505) The minutes are attested (signed) by the Moderator and the Clerk/secretary for the meeting. Congregational and corporate actions must be adequately attested to if someone challenges them later. Should a legal matter arise connected to your minutes, unsigned minutes may be challenged for validity.</p>
33	Congregational Meeting included in Session Official Minutes	<p>(G-3.0204) All minutes of meetings of the congregation are included in the session records.</p>