

People Care Committee
Recommendations for Discernment
2022 Annual Sessions

Background: People Care Committee has taken on the role of responding to requests for Direct Membership of individuals. In order to understand our recommendation, please read this text from SCYMF Bylaws describing the two ways people become members of SCYMF.

Text from SCYMF Bylaws section on Membership:

“SCYMF welcomes to membership local meetings and individuals who desire to participate with SCYMF in worship, ministry, and service as we seek to experience and follow Christ in the manner of Friends. Friends of any age are welcome to request membership and follow the discernment process.

Membership of Local Meetings. To be eligible for membership, local meetings must be incorporated and maintain good standing under state law.

Local meetings become members through the following process: The first step is to communicate in writing with the Presiding Clerk of the meeting, expressing a desire to join. Local meetings are admitted by approval at a business meeting. Prior to the business meeting, the Presiding Clerk or designee will meet with the local meeting seeking to join in order to answer questions, speak to concerns or otherwise assist in the discernment about membership.

Indirect membership for individuals. Individuals that are active members of a SCYMF local meeting are a member of SCYMF.

Direct membership for individuals. An individual may apply for direct membership in SCYMF in the following ways:

Option 1. By form. To apply by form, an individual must complete a membership application and deliver it to SCYMF.

The application form will ask the individual to affirm that they wish to lovingly participate in our SCYMF community that seeks to follow Jesus in the Quaker way and are satisfied with their own discernment to join

SCYMF. The Presiding Clerk or designee may return an incomplete application form. The Presiding Clerk or designee may also recommend a discernment process. Before applying for membership, an individual generally should (a) regularly attend or participate in SCYMF or a Friends' community of faith if one is available in their area, (b) discern together with persons that are currently members of SCYMF whether they are clear to join SCYMF; and (c) familiarize themselves with SCYMF. Information about SCYMF may be obtained through its newsletter, website, officers, and committees. The applicant becomes a member when their name is added to the membership roll by an agent of SCYMF. A sample membership form is found in exhibit A.

Option 2. Approval by the business meeting.

This process may be further refined in Faith & Practice.

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Equality of individual members. Regardless of whether a member is admitted directly or has indirect membership, individuals members shall have the same and full privileges and responsibilities of membership."

End of Bylaws text. Full text available here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1gz09YOKhsx1LRYAf3yRfWVKHYNsmbmASM3rFTSLEAlc/edit>

Link to membership application form

<https://www.scymfriends.org/membership>

SCYMF Membership Discussion Items:

1. People Care suggests we alter the membership application process in the Bylaws to read (edits and additions to what exists already are in green)

Describe your connection to SCYMF and share what membership means or represents to you at this time:

And the last question on the form:

Have you done all of the following:(a) regularly attended or participated in SCYMF or a Friends community of faith if one is available in your area, or remotely if a Zoom or similar accomodation is available (b) discerned together with persons that are currently members of SCYMF whether you are clear to join SCYMF; and (c) familiarized yourself with SCYMF? If not, what has your discernment process looked like?

2. People Care Committee will use the practice of Clearness Committees for guiding the applicant's membership process. Once the Clearness Committee has come to clarity, People Care will add the new member's name to SCYMF's membership role.
3. We find Option 2 mentioned in the Bylaws (approval by the business meeting) to put undue focus on the applicant in a public setting after the Quaker process for clearness has already been carefully observed. People Care will include the addition of new members in its annual report to the meeting for business.