

The Clearness Process for Traveling Under NEYM's Concern about FUM's Personnel Policy

If you are interested in visiting Friends outside of your meeting or in other yearly meetings, traveling under a concern about FUM's personnel policy, this information may be helpful to you, as you enter into a process of prayerful discernment regarding this possibility.

Good Order in Traveling with a Concern

Do not travel alone. Historically Quakers have traveled with an elder or companion who is a seasoned Friend. The elder/companion provides spiritual support, logistic support, and helps with discernment along the way. Your call may be to act as an elder for another person. The M&C Discernment Sub-committee might be able to help you find a traveling companion.

For travel within your Quarter:

Go through a clearness process with your Monthly Meeting. The purpose of a clearness committee is as much to help arrive at clearness for the traveler as for the meeting. Get a travel minute/letter of introduction, approved by the Monthly Meeting as a whole. Some Quarters may have funds to support this travel.

For travel outside the Quarter, inside the Yearly Meeting:

In addition to the above, you generally also need endorsement from the Quarterly Meeting. The M&C Discernment Sub-committee would appreciate knowing you are traveling under the weight of the concern about FUM's Personnel Policy.

For travel outside the Yearly Meeting:

In addition to the above, you also need the endorsement of the M&C Discernment Committee and the NEYM Permanent Board. Friends are of course free to make their own arrangements to visit Friends in other yearly meetings but such visitors are not representatives of New England Yearly Meeting. Because of scheduling, the approval from the Quarter is sometimes out of sequence.

Summary of Steps for Clearness to Travel Outside New England Yearly Meeting

1. Arrange for a clearness process within your Monthly Meeting.
2. Contact the M&C Discernment Sub-committee to let them know you are considering travel with this concern.
3. Go through the clearness process with your monthly meeting. Have a letter of introduction or travel minute written and approved by your Monthly Meeting.
4. Forward the letter of introduction or travel minute to the M&C Discernment Sub-committee. Include a note with when and where you intend to travel, along with any request for partial financial support. Some limited funds have been allocated

for this by NEYM. Ministry and Counsel Discernment Sub-committee goes through a discernment process, gets the endorsement of the Permanent Board and returns the travel minute to you. (The monthly meeting and M&C processes may be concurrent but both must be completed before the names are presented to the Permanent Board.)

5. Travel under the weight of the concern.
6. Report back to your Monthly Meeting and the M&C Discernment Sub-committee after your return.

Summary of Steps for Clearness to Travel Within New England Yearly Meeting Outside Your Quarter

1. Arrange for a clearness process within your Monthly Meeting.
2. Contact the M&C Discernment Sub-committee to let them know you are considering travel with this concern.
3. Go through the clearness process with your monthly meeting. Have a letter of introduction or travel minute written and approved by your Monthly Meeting.
4. Forward the letter of introduction or travel minute for endorsement by the Quarterly Meeting.
5. Concurrently with #4, forward the letter of introduction or travel minute to the M&C Discernment Sub-committee. Include a note with when and where you intend to travel.
6. Travel under the weight of the concern.
7. Report back to your Monthly Meeting and the M&C Discernment Sub-committee after your return.

Ways to Travel when Traveling under a Concern

Attend the yearly meeting sessions of another yearly meeting in FUM. Visit with Friends over meals, in workshops and during breaks. Come to know and be known.

Attend a meeting for worship of an individual meeting. Contact someone at a meeting before traveling, and seek hospitality. Attend the meeting's first day school programs for adults. Suggest a potluck with a few Friends before or after meeting. Share your meeting's joys and concerns, ask about those of the host meeting. Share your own spiritual journey and ask about the spiritual journey of others. Listen for where the words come from.

Travel to an area for a week or two. Contact meetings well before traveling. Visit as many meetings in an area as possible. Visit with clerks, pastors, families in the meetings.

Reporting Back

There are several ways travelers might report back. Some face-to-face contact is essential, though writing can be part of the process.

- a) Travelers are encouraged to meet with their monthly meeting clearness committee upon their return.
- b) The Ministry and Counsel Discernment Sub-committee would like to meet with a group of those returning for a de-briefing session.
- c) Travelers may be called to witness to their experience with meetings or groups in NEYM.

Travelers may “report” at sessions, in business sessions, workshops, interest groups, and/or informal conversations.