STEP 5 | VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS

As you get to know your candidates better, the discernment process can get more and more difficult. As you begin Step 5, you may continue considering as many of the remaining candidates as you would like, however, don't be afraid to whittle down your list even more.

This step will include a virtual interview of each of the remaining candidates with the entire PNC. A candidate might have answered one of your initial questions in a way that you know will not work at your church. A candidate might have had some glaring shortcomings during the phone interview. If that is the case, then immediately thank them for their interest and let them know that you will not be considering them for the position "at this time." Again, we believe that this phrase is important because in some instances (albeit very rarely) you might want to circle back to a candidate later down the line.

If you are using ECO's Pastoral Search Assistance resource, each candidate who makes it to this stage of the process will receive personalized interview questions based on his or her own personality and leadership attributes as these interview questions are matched to the Job Model the PNC creates. Or, you can see the ECO Clergy Interview Guide. However, no matter what path you've decided for this process, we also want you to ask questions based on your church's profile and what you have discerned about your candidates thus far. Allow ample time for the candidates to ask questions of the PNC as well.

After these interviews are completed, proceed with only the candidates who you are confident would be a good fit for your church. Ask permission to call their references. We recommend that you perform background checks at this time as well. When calling their references, make sure you have a list of questions prepared beforehand. Have at least two members of the PNC on each of these calls.

Now would be a good time to update your session, staff, and congregation on where the PNC is in the pastoral search process.