



United Methodist Endorsing Agency

General Board of Higher Education & Ministry | Division of Ordained Ministry

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Extension Ministry Endorsement Process

All people have the right to receive the full ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The church is aware of its responsibility to provide adequate professional ministry to those in particular situations beyond the local church. These call for an ecumenical ministry to persons of different denominations and faith groups. In order to assure high standards of competence and keep faith with ecumenical agreements concerning uniform standards for ministry in specialized settings, the United Methodist Endorsing Agency (UMEA) shall have Disciplinary mandated functions for appointments in extension ministries that require endorsement.

The United Methodist Church operates as a connectional system. The General Conference determines which parts of that system have responsibility for various functions. Individuals are accountable to the annual conference. Standards and criteria for ordination, certification, and endorsement are established by the whole church. Individuals who provide ministries of pastoral care in specialized settings such as the military, pastoral counseling, the workplace, health care, or prisons and jails are accountable to the annual conference and to UMEA.

Endorsement is the process established by the church to ensure that people providing ministry in these settings are capable and appropriate representatives of the denomination. Endorsement provides an additional means of relationship between those people in extension ministry and the whole ministry of the church.

Who needs endorsement?

The Discipline states UMEA has certain responsibilities for people appointed to ministries of pastoral care in specialized settings—including but not limited to ministry in the military, correctional institutions, the Department of Veterans Affairs, health-care settings, pastoral counseling, marriage and family counseling, workplace ministries, community service ministries, and other related ministry settings that conference Boards of Ordained Ministry and bishops may designate. Clergy to be appointed to any of the above appointments (ABLC for deacons and extension ministry for elders) shall receive ecclesiastical endorsement.

2004 Book of Discipline ¶1421.5

What is ecclesiastical endorsement?

Ecclesiastical endorsement is an affirmation that a person is, or will be, performing a valid extension ministry consistent with the covenantal community of The United Methodist Church and has presented evidence of having the special education, experience, and skills necessary to perform that ministry. Endorsement is given to a specific setting. Should an individual move from one setting to another, the endorsement will be reviewed and, if approved, issued for the new setting. **From application to endorsement, the process normally takes two to four months.**

Requirements for Ecclesiastical Endorsement

People seeking endorsement to a specific setting must meet the following criteria:

1. associate member deacon, commissioned on probationary track for deacon/elder or full member of an annual conference;
2. graduation from an accredited college and seminary;
3. additional requirements are specified by setting.

The Endorsement Process

For an application contact the United Methodist Agency (UMEA) via mail, phone, or e-mail.

Applicants are responsible for providing materials requested on the application form to UMEA.

- Provide names and addresses of two personal references and your district superintendent. UMEA will contact your bishop for a reference report.
- Provide a succinct life history and statement of your understanding of ministry as it pertains to ministry in the setting for which you are seeking endorsement.

When all your materials have been received and requirements met, an interview will be scheduled. UMEA will cover your expenses for the initial interview.

The Interview

A central interviewing committee is made up of endorsed chaplains. Whenever possible, at least one member of the committee will represent the setting for which you seek endorsement. The purpose of this interview is to understand your perception of Christian faith as it relates to the setting in which you desire to minister.

Areas examined will include:

- **Moral and emotional stability**
(ability to effectively face crisis and adversity)
- **Self-evaluation**
(ability to objectively evaluate present ministry)
- **Theory of Christian ministry**
(ability to express clearly)
- **Motivation**
(exhibits desire for endorsement in chaplaincy or pastoral counseling)

- **Continuing education**
(willingness to obtain education, experience, and certification as they apply)
- **Sense of humor**
(ability to laugh at themselves and others appropriately)
- **Cooperativeness/diversity**
(ability and willingness to work effectively in diverse settings)
- **Balance**
(ability to keep family and work in balance)
- **Institutional vs. congregational ministry**
(understands the difference, especially how institutions may affect their ministry)
- **Pastor**
(has someone who provides personal pastoral care)

One member of the committee will serve as presenter for you and will be especially familiar with your materials. You will be notified of the recommendation at the time of your interview. **Following the interview the committee will make a recommendation to the Endorsing Committee.**

The Endorsing Committee

The Endorsing Committee has the authority to grant or deny ecclesiastical endorsement. It is composed of elected members of the DOM and chaired by a bishop. The committee meets three times a year and has responsibility for policy and process regarding endorsement.

Once you are endorsed, a copy of your endorsement will be sent to your bishop, your district superintendent, and the chairperson of your conference board of ordained ministry. You will receive a copy for your files.

Provisional endorsement may be granted if you successfully complete the endorsing process but lack the required professional certification. Such endorsement will include specific requirements to be fulfilled before full endorsement can be issued. Provisional endorsement is valid for one year. Extensions may be granted annually when requested.

If you disagree with the decision of the Endorsing Committee, you may appeal to that committee either in person or in writing within 90 days of notification of the committee decision. You must, however, pay your own expenses for a personal appearance.

Endorsement is to a setting. If you no longer serve in that setting, the endorsement is withdrawn. As well, please contact UMEA if you change settings, since a new endorsement may be required.

Endorsement for Deacons

There are four components to service as a chaplain: appointment, endorsement, certification, and employment. A deacon may be appointed to serve as a chaplain, if the request for appointment is approved by the bishop, endorsement is granted, the deacon is working toward certification and an employee is willing to hire. It is critical that everyone understands that deacons have no sacramental authority.

Deacons are eligible for endorsement to non-military settings by the United Methodist Endorsing Agency and must meet the same requirements as elders: full/probationary conference membership, training, experience, and certification as appropriate.

Endorsement to military settings and the Federal Bureau of Prisons is limited to elders due to the requirement for sacramental authority in those settings.

Civilian Chaplaincy

Standards for endorsement include relationship with and/or certification by the appropriate national professional pastoral care organization. Those recognized include:

- American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) www.aamft.org
- American Association for Mental Retardation/ Religious Division (AAMR) www.aamr.org
- American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC) www.aapc.org
- American Correctional Chaplains Association (ACCA) www.correctionalchaplains.org
- Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) www.acpe.edu
- Association of Professional Chaplains (APC) www.professionalchaplains.org
- College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy (CPSP) www.cpsp.org
- Federation of Fire Chaplains, (FFC) www.firechaplains.org
- International Conference of Police Chaplains (ICPC) www.icpc4cops.org
- National Institute of Business and Industrial Chaplaincy (NIBIC) www.nibic.com
- National Association of Veterans Affairs Chaplains (NAVAC) www.navac.net

Contact information is also available when you visit the UMEA Web site, Information, go to “Related Links” on the side bar.

In situations not covered by recognized certifying agencies, UMEA will set minimum standards which may include specialized training for the type of ministry for which endorsement is sought and may include at least one year of supervised clinical training or comparable professional experience.

Civilian Settings

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|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Children’s Home | 9. Police |
| 2. Clinical Pastoral Education Supervisor | 10. Prison/Correctional Institution |
| 3. General Hospital | 11. Retirement Community |
| 4. Hospice | 12. Specialized |
| 5. Marriage and Family Therapy | 13. Substance Abuse |
| 6. Mental Health | 14. Veterans Affairs |
| 7. Mental Retardation | 15. Workplace |
| 8. Pastoral Counseling | |

Military Chaplaincy

Army

Active • Reserve • National Guard

Navy

Active • Reserve

Air Force

Active • Reserve • Air National Guard

In order to meet basic requirements for initial appointment (active duty or reserve) you must:

- be a citizen of the United States.
- be physically qualified for general service based on an examination by the military.
- meet current requirements determined by the military.

Applicants are responsible for contacting the military branch for which they are seeking endorsement.

U.S. Army Recruiting Command

866-684-1571

www.goarmy.com/chaplain

Commander of Navy Recruiting Command

866-484-5232

www.chaplain.navy.mil

U.S. Air Force Recruiting Service

Active Duty

478-926-2821

www.usafhc.af.mil

Reserves

478-327-2274

www.afrc.af.mil/hq/hc

Air Guard

703-607-5256

www.ang.af.mil

For further information contact:

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