

**Handbook
for
Lay Supply Ministers
and
Certified Lay Ministers

2023-2024**



Center for Clergy Excellence
www.vaumc.org/ProfessionalLayMinistries

Handbook for Lay Supply Ministers and Certified Lay Ministers

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Section 1 Requirements for laity serving as pastoral leaders	2
Section 2 Oversight	3
Section 3 Responsibilities, Limits of Authority	3
Section 4 Conference Relationship	4
Section 5 Steps to becoming a Certified Lay Minister	4
Section 6 Steps to becoming a Certified Candidate for Licensed or Ordained Ministry	5
Section 7 Steps to Obtaining a License as a Local Pastor	5
Section 8 Requirements for Licensing as a Local Pastor	6
Section 9 Licensing School	7
Section 10 Who's Who	7
Appendix A: Lay Supply and Certified Lay Minister Guidelines	
Appendix B: Becoming a Certified Candidate	

Lay Supply and Lay Certified Minister's Handbook

The Role of Lay Supply as Defined by the United Methodist Church

The Discipline allows laity to be assigned to a specialized leadership role or as a specialized part of a staff team by the bishop and cabinet. These guidelines recognize the need to clarify the selection process, guidelines and responsibilities, training, support and supervision for lay supply pastors and certified lay ministers.

¶205.4 (2016 Book of Discipline) states *“When a pastoral charge is not able to be served by an ordained or licensed minister, the bishop, upon recommendation of the cabinet, may assign a qualified and trained layperson, lay minister or lay missionary to do the work of ministry in that charge. The lay person is accountable to the district superintendent or another ordained or licensed minister appointed to oversee the charge, who will make provision for sacramental ministry and provide guidance and mentoring to the layperson assigned. The layperson assigned is also accountable to the policies and procedures of the annual conference where assigned.”*

¶ 268. *Certified Lay Minister*—1. A certified lay minister is a certified lay servant, certified lay missionary, or equivalent as defined by his or her central conference, who is called and equipped to conduct public worship, care for the congregation, assist in program leadership, develop new and existing faith communities, preach the Word, lead small groups, or establish community outreach ministries as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergyperson. A certified lay minister is assigned by a district superintendent in accordance with ¶ 419.2.

2. The certified lay minister serves to enhance the quality of ministry much like a class leader did in early Methodism through service in the local church, circuit or cooperative parish, or by expanding team ministry in other churches and charges. As with lay ministry in early Methodism, the certified lay minister uses his or her spiritual gifts as evidence of God's grace.

This document includes guidelines on:

- Selection and Requirements of Laity Who Serve as Pastoral Leaders for Congregations, Oversight,
- Responsibilities, Limits of Authority,
- Conference Relationship
- Basic descriptions of United Methodist Sacraments, Polity, and Organization

Section 1.

Requirements for Laity Who Serve as Pastoral Leaders for Congregations

Requirements

A person serving as Lay Supply:

1. According to the Book of Discipline those assigned as Lay Supply, at the end of one year of service, are encouraged to begin the process toward licensing for pastoral ministry or

certified as a lay minister. Information about licensing as a local pastor can be found on the Conference website: www.vaumc.org

2. Shall complete a criminal and sex offender background check (instructions available in the district office).
3. All Lay Supply and CLM who are assigned to lead churches will participate in their first year of assignment in the following:
 - a. A Just In Time training to be scheduled for the last week of June to prepare to be scheduled which is held on a Friday evening and Saturday in August.
 - b. A four-part curriculum which meets once a month
 - i. Afterwards, persons assigned as Lay Supply have the option to participate in a cohort which meets monthly for continuing education, support, and discernment.

Section 2.

Oversight

1. A “sacramental clergy person” is assigned to each church/charge served by lay supply.
2. “Meet the Pastor” meetings are held prior to the assignment. At this meeting, the district superintendent clarifies the position and responsibilities of the person serving as lay supply and the importance of continuing education. The “sacramental clergy person” could be present, if appropriate.
3. Salary is set by the district superintendent in consultation with the local church. Non-ordained Lay Supply are treated as lay employees of the church. If the lay supply pastor is ordained in another denomination but not yet credentialed by the Board of Ordained Ministry, they may be considered clergy for tax purposes only.
4. An annual evaluation will be held with the district superintendent
5. The district superintendent or bishop can remove the person serving as Lay Supply from the position at any time.

Section 3.

Responsibilities, Limits of Authority

1. If assigned as the pastor in charge, the lay supply pastor or certified lay minister assumes some duties of the pastor, including specifically
 - a. worship leadership,
 - b. preaching, visitation,
 - c. hospital visitation,
 - d. funerals,
 - e. charge conference reports,
 - f. and teaching.
2. These persons may not preside at the sacraments of Holy Communion or baptism. An ordained clergy person with sacramental authority (active or retired) shall be present to consecrate the elements and preside for communion and to baptize.
3. These persons may not officiate at weddings, even if authorized by the state to do so. Licensed or ordained clergy must be present for a church wedding as well as premarital counseling.

Section 4.

Conference Relationship

1. Note that this is not an appointment, per Judicial Council ruling #890. Lay supply are used to serve churches when licensed or ordained clergy are not available, generally short term. The District Superintendent is ultimately the pastor for that church and is totally responsible.
2. In the list of appointments, the conference code SY is used when assigning a Lay Supply pastor to a church/charge or LM if the person is a certified lay minister.
3. According to the VA Conference rules, lay supply and certified lay ministers are members of the District Conference (see Rule VI. C.)
4. Regarding Annual Conference, lay supply and certified lay ministers have neither voice nor vote.
5. All expenses for Just In Time Training, except travel and lodging, are paid by the Conference by way of Ministerial Education Funds.

Section 5.

Steps to Becoming a Certified Lay Minister

A CLM is under assignment by the district superintendent (D.S.) to serve a specific ministry, or a congregation in a variety of capacities. Candidates have the opportunity to travel together in a cohort, completing the learning modules, as well as the steps required for certification.

For more information visit: <https://vaumc.org/clm/>

Section 6.

Steps to Becoming a Certified Candidate

Members of the United Methodist Church who are considering a call to licensed or ordained ministry are invited to apply for admission to Candidacy Studies program. The Candidacy process in the VAUMC is currently organized in phases:

Phase I: Inquiring Candidate seeking to become an Admitted Candidate

Phase II: Admitted Candidate Seeking to become a Certified Candidate

Phase III: Certified Candidate seeking to become a Licensed Local Pastor

To begin the Candidacy Process, click here: <https://vaumc.org/clergyexcellence-candidacyforms/>

Notes:

- Phase II and Phase III can be worked simultaneously
- Candidates who have completed Phase II can apply for Provisional Membership (ordination track) directly if they so choose:
- Candidates can also apply for Provisional Membership after Phase III

Section 7.

Who's Who

Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church (VAUMC): The conference in which you hold membership and/or maintain a designated relationship such as Certified Lay Minister, Lay Supply, Certified Candidate, Licensed Local Pastor, Ordained Deacon or Elder, and many more. Visit: vaumc.org to learn about our mission and ministry.

District Superintendent DS: Your primary relationship is with your District Superintendent. The District Superintendent is your supervisor.

District Committee on Ordained Ministry (dCOM): Your primary relationship related to your conference status and recommendation for ministry. The chair of the DCOM is your primary contact.

Center for Clergy Excellence (CfCE): The conference staff in the Center for Clergy Excellence is available for technical assistance, mentoring, and resourcing.

Rev. Jessie Squires Colwell, Director

804-521-1140, JessieColwell@vaumc.org

Works with the Board of Ordained Ministry, the Bishop's Office and is a member of the extended cabinet. The Director serves as conference registrar including the tracking of clergy status and credentialing. Continuing education, clergy development, and clergy care are also managed by the Director.

Rev. Crystal R. Sygeel, Associate Director for Call and Candidacy

804-521-1141, CrystalSygeel@vaumc.org

Supports candidates in the initial phases of candidacy and discernment. The Associate Director equips the leadership teams for Candidacy Summit, Licensing School, and the Lay Supply Cohort. The VAUMC Mentor program, and training the District Committees on Ordained ministry are also coordinated by the Associate Director.

Rev. Lyn Whitley Harding, Program Administrative Coordinator

804-521-1142, LynHarding@vaumc.org

Provides administrative support to the Center and oversees all event logistics.

The Program Administrative Coordinator facilitates worship for the Conference Center staff.

Section 8 The Current Candidacy File Management System: Jotform/Basecamp

In recent years, the VAUMC has moved away from the web-based record management software program designed by The United Methodist Church: Passage UMC.

- Clergy excellence stills engages Passages as a historical data base but candidates are discouraged from engaging their accounts.
- All applications for candidacy in the VAUMC are processed via Jotform.
- In general, candidates are to collect all of the necessary documentation in order to upload it into the corresponding application of each phase.
- Applications are set to automatically submit to the appropriate committee (dCOM, Board of Ordained Ministry, Clergy Excellence).
- When forms are received they are uploaded into Basecamp on the candidate's behalf.
- Candidates do not have access to basecamp. It's important to maintaining personal files of all documentation used to fulfill requirements for the VAUMC.
- The VAUMC anticipates providing its own record sharing system in 2024