



## **Certified Lay Minister Process**

Resources: The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, paragraph 271  
General Board of Discipleship Website: [www.gbod.org/laity/clm](http://www.gbod.org/laity/clm)

### **What is a Certified Lay Minister? (see Book of Discipline P271)**

A Certified Lay Minister (CLM) is a lay person certified for intentional leadership and assigned by the bishop or district superintendent to a ministry. The candidate does not replace clergy – but rather, works with clergy so that the congregation has the pastoral leadership necessary for vital mission and ministry. A CLM is not ordained or licensed clergy under appointment of the bishop. Unlike other forms of leadership, a CLM must be a part of a ministry team. It is recommended (but not required) that this person be a certified Lay Speaker or have equivalent training before starting certification.

A CLM may have one of two roles:

- to serve as part of a ministry leadership team in a ministry,
- to serve as a part of a ministry team providing pastoral, but not sacramental leadership to a local congregation or other faith community (such as prison ministry, homeless, hospital).

Certification requirements are:

- Successful completion of Lay Ministry Academy, or equivalent, as decided by the Certified Lay Ministry Steering Committee
- Pass a Background Check
- Completion of Tier 1 Psychological Testing and Evaluation
- A letter of recommendation (*use form "Recommendation for Certified Lay Ministry"*) from
  - Home Church Pastor
  - Church Council or Charge Conference
  - District Superintendent

## **For Pastors and Congregations**

### **What is the role of the home church pastor in the certification process?**

- Hold a conversation to discuss the person's call to CLM with the interested person, which may be initiated by the pastor or by the individual.
- If the pastor affirms the call, sign a letter of recommendation to the church (administrative) council or charge conference, that the person is a member in good standing and highlighting the person's service and abilities as examples of the fruits of ministry. (*See attached form "Recommendation for Certified Lay Minister."*)
- Meet with the candidate and church (administrative) council or charge conference to discuss candidate's call to ministry.

### **What is the role of the candidate's home church's Church (Administrative) Council or Charge Conference?**

- Meet with the pastor and candidate to discuss and affirm (or not) the candidate's call, so the person can begin the process of certification.
- Write a letter of recommendation to the District Superintendent with its decision. (*See attached form "Recommendation for Certified Lay Minister."*)
- Receive the Certified Lay Ministry report annually at Charge Conference and assure Continuing Education requirements (10 hours every 2 years) are met. (*See attached form "Certified Lay Minister Annual Report."*)



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### **For Superintendents and District Committees on Ordained Ministry**

#### **What is the role of the District Superintendent?**

- Receive a letter from a local Church (Administrative) Council or Charge Conference recommending a candidate to begin the process of certification. (*See attached form "Recommendation for Certified Lay Minister."*)
- Notify the District Committee on Ordained Ministry of the candidate's entry into the certification process. (*See attached form "Recommendation for Certified Lay Minister."*)
- Affirm a clergy Certified Lay Ministry Candidate mentor/supervisor (recommended to be the home church pastor or where the CLM is serving).
- Recommend the candidate to the District Committee on Ordained Ministry for certification and continuing mentor/supervisor assignment or remove the candidate from the process. (*See attached form "Recommendation for Certified Lay Minister."*)
- If the candidate will be serving in Certified Lay Ministry capacity within the District and after the candidate has completed the certification training (by completing the Cal-Pac Lay Ministry Academy or meeting the General Board of Discipleship and the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry Certified Lay Ministry requirements), meet with the candidate to discuss:
  - o Background testing results,
  - o Assessment of certification experience,
  - o Congregation leadership experience,
  - o Additional support necessary to be successfully certified and effective in leadership.
- Annually continue responsibility for affirming the assignment of the Certified Lay Minister.
- District Office, with the District Committee on Ordained Ministry: keep a record of all Certified Lay Ministry assignments and Continuing Education. (*See attached form "Certified Lay Minister Annual Report."*)

#### **What is the role of the District Committee on Ordained Ministry?**

- Meet with a candidate for Certified Lay Ministry upon the candidate's completion of all coursework, screening and assessments and recommendation of the District Superintendent, and also upon receipt of a formal letter from the candidate requesting an interview.
- Interview the candidate (supportive and encouraging, not theological inquisition – remember the role of the Certified Lay Minister; the committee is responsible for approving the candidate for certification, not ordination):
  - o as a guide toward continuing growth and development as a lay pastoral leader, and
  - o to raise any questions related to process and recertification expectations.
- District Office, with the District Committee on Ordained Ministry: keep a record of all Certified Lay Ministry assignments, Annual Reports, and Continuing Education. (*See attached form "Certified Lay Minister Annual Report."*)
- Meet biannually with the Certified Lay Minister, assuring that the candidate has completed a continuing education course, and as a guide toward continuing growth and development as a lay pastoral leader.