

LAY SERVANT MINISTRIES

Certification Guidelines

PURPOSE OF CERTIFICATION

Certification provides a structured process for members of the laity to participate in training opportunities and experiences to equip disciples of Jesus Christ to realize and respond to their personal call to ministry. Certification has been standardized across all conferences so laity can transfer their certifications upon relocation with both the receiving conference and district recognizing certifications. The processes were standardized including recertification requirements with the 2016 Book of Discipline.

NAMES AND CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Lay Servant

Certified Lay Servant is the foundation name for lay servants. Certification is completed through the District Committee on Lay Servant Ministries. A candidate must be a professing member of a local church or other recognized entity, having completed the Basic Course (Introduction to Lay Ministries) and United Methodist Heritage, have the recommendation of their local pastor and charge/church conference or church council. The candidate submits an application and the district committee upon receipt and review would certify the person to be a **Certified Lay Servant** and present Certificate!

In order to maintain certification, the Certified Lay Servant must:

- Submit an annual report, demonstrating service and leadership, to their local church charge conference (requirement form is attachment A), receiving recommendation from local church pastor and confirmation of congregation.
- Apply to district committee on lay servant ministries (via annual report form).
- Satisfactorily complete at least one advanced course every three years.

Certified Lay Speaker

A Certified Lay Servant who is called for the specific service of preaching can be certified as a Certified Lay Speaker by completing additional courses of:

- United Methodist Polity,
- Discovering Spiritual Gifts,
- Leading Worship,
- Leading Prayer,
- Preaching.

The candidate will submit their application (attachment B) showing completion of all training along with the recommendation of their local pastor and charge/church conference or church council to the district committee along with either a tape or script of at least one message given. The district committee will conduct an interview with the candidate (suggested questionnaire attachment C) and upon satisfactory review of all elements recommend the candidate for certification to the Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries. The conference committee would receive all applicable documentation and recommendations and after satisfactory review, determine certification as a **Certified Lay Speaker** to be added to the district roster of Certified Lay Speakers for use by local pastors as needed. The conference committee would issue a certificate for signature by the district superintendent and recommend the district director in conjunction with the DS make a presentation of the certificate.

In order to maintain certification, the Certified Lay Speaker must:

- Submit an annual report demonstrating service, leadership and preaching to their local church charge conference (requirement form is [attachment B](#)), receiving recommendation from local church pastor and confirmation of congregation.
- Apply to district committee on lay servant ministries (via annual report form).
- Satisfactorily complete at least one advanced course every three years.

Note: When the 2012 Book of Discipline was enacted, the NIC committee on lay servant ministries decided to “grandfather” lay speakers into the new title of Certified Lay Speakers. This “grandfathering” ended with the enactment of the 2016 Book of Discipline and the requirement for recertification every 3 years. Any courses taken prior to 2016 Discipline change are still valid.

Any member of the laity that considers themselves to be a Certified Lay Speaker and submitting an annual report as a Certified Lay Servant must have: 1) completed an advanced course within the last 3 years, 2) applied to the district committee for recertification, 3) been interviewed, 4) recommended by the district committee to the conference committee, 5) certified by the conference committee and 6) been presented with a certificate dated after 1-1-2017.

Certified Lay Minister

A Certified Lay Minister is a Certified Lay Servant who has been 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. A CLM is assigned by a district superintendent in accordance with ¶ 419.2. A candidate works through the district committee on lay servant ministries to be designated as a CLM candidate and then through the district committee on ordained ministry for discernment to proceed through the certification process and is assigned a mentor if deemed appropriate and one is available.

The candidate will complete the curriculum for CLM of: Call and Covenant for Ministry, Module 1; The Practice of Ministry, Module 2; Organization for Ministry, Module 3 and Connection for Ministry, Module 4. The candidate will complete an application and obtain written recommendations from their local pastor and charge/church conference or church council, and

receive a letter of recommendation from their district superintendent. Additionally, the candidate may need additional screening and assessment, as determined by the dCOM based on Screening Guidelines approved by the Cabinet (Fall 2019). The district committee on ordained ministry will interview (suggested questionnaire attachment E) and make a recommendation to the conference committee on lay servant ministries for final certification. The district committee on lay servant ministries will oversee the process of working with the CLM candidate to provide necessary documentation to the conference committee on lay servant ministry for certification consideration. Required documentation:

- Application form (attachment D)
- Letters of recommendation from local church pastor and DS
- Copies of course completion certificates
- Copy of recommendation from dcom
- Brief document of the candidate's call and planned ministry

The district director of lay servant ministry will bring forward the district's recommendation for certification including all documentation. The conference committee on lay servant ministries will review the candidate's package, if determined to be satisfactory will grant certification. The conference committee will issue a certificate for signature by the district superintendent and recommend the district director in conjunction with the DS make a presentation of the certificate, ideally in a commissioning service.

There are a number of specializations for Certified Lay Ministers once they have completed their certification: National Plan for Hispanic and Latino Ministry; Church Planter; Parish Nurse; Children's Faith Formation; Congregational Care; Small Group Leadership; Leading Men's Ministry; Blessings Ministry and more are coming.

In order to maintain certification, a Certified Lay Minister must:

- Submit an annual report to the charge conference or church council (attachment D), giving evidence of satisfactory performance as a CLM.
- Every two years, participate in a ministry review by the ministry team of designated ministry.
- Complete an advanced course or approved continuing education equivalent.
- Obtain recommendation from DS.
- Have all requirements for recertification reviewed by the district committee on lay servant ministries for referral to the district committee on ordained ministry for a review interview.
- Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries will review recertification package and if determined satisfactory grant recertification and issued updated certification

Conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries