



South Carolina Conference
The United Methodist Church

GUIDE FOR LOCAL PASTORS



DISCIPLINARY PARAGRAPHS & BOARD POLICIES TO KEEP IN MIND

¶ 315. License for Pastoral Ministry—All persons not ordained as elders or deacons who are appointed to preach and conduct divine worship and perform the duties of a pastor shall have a license for pastoral ministry. Those listed below (¶315.2a-d) shall have been approved by a three-fourths majority vote of the Board of Ordained Ministry (¶ 634.2h) and a three-fourths majority vote of the clergy session.

¶ 317. Responsibilities and Duties of Those Licensed for Pastoral Ministry—1. Provisional elders approved annually by the Board of Ordained Ministry and local pastors approved annually by the district committee on ordained ministry may be licensed by the bishop to perform all the duties of a pastor (¶ 340), including the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion as well as the service of marriage (where state laws allow), burial, confirmation, and membership reception, within and while appointed to a particular charge or extension ministry. A charge or extension ministry is defined as “the people within or related to the community in which it is located.” Those licensed for pastoral ministry may be appointed to extension ministry settings when approved by the bishop and the Board of Ordained Ministry.

2. Such authorization granted by the license may be renewed annually by the district committee or the Board of Ordained Ministry.

3. The license shall remain valid only so long as the appointment continues and shall be recertified by the bishop when assignments change between sessions of the annual conference.

4. A local pastor shall be under the supervision of a district superintendent and shall be assigned a clergy mentor while in the Course of Study or in seminary (¶ 349).

5. Local pastors shall be amenable to the clergy session of the annual conference in the performance of their pastoral duties and shall attend the sessions of the annual conference.

6. The membership of local pastors under full-time and part-time appointment is in the annual conference where they shall have the right to vote on all matters except constitutional amendments, election of delegates to General, jurisdictional, or central conferences, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy. Local pastors who have completed Course of Study or a Master of Divinity degree and have served a minimum of two consecutive years under appointment before the election may vote to elect clergy delegates to General and jurisdictional or central conferences.

7. All local pastors shall receive written communication about decisions made regarding their relationship with the annual conference.

¶ 317.1 Full-Time Local Pastors—Those eligible to be appointed fulltime local pastors are persons (a) who may devote their entire time to the church in the charge to which they are appointed and its outreach in ministry and mission to the community; (b) who receive in cash support per annum from all Church sources a sum equal to or larger than the minimum base compensation established by the annual conference for full-time local pastors; (c) who, unless they have completed the Course of Study or other approved theological education, shall (i) complete four courses per year in a Course of Study school, or (ii) shall have made progress in the correspondence curriculum prescribed by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (¶ 1406.12, .13), or (iii) be enrolled as a pre-theological or theological student in a college, university, or school of theology approved by the University Senate; (d) who, when they have completed the Course of Study or a Master of Divinity degree from a seminary listed by the University Senate, are involved in continuing education (¶ 351); (e) who shall not be enrolled as a full-time student in any school.

¶ 317.2 Part-Time Local Pastors—Those eligible to be appointed as part-time local pastors are persons (a) who have met the provisions of ¶ 315; (b) who do not devote their entire time to the charge to which they are appointed; or (c) do not receive in cash support per annum from all Church sources a sum equal to or larger than the minimum base compensation established by

the annual conference for full-time local pastors; and (d) who, unless they have completed the Course of Study or other approved theological education, shall (i) complete two courses per year in a Course of Study school, or (ii) have made progress in the correspondence curriculum prescribed by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, or (iii) be enrolled as a pre-theological or theological student in a college, university, or school of theology approved by the University Senate.

Part-time local pastors may be appointed to small membership churches that are grouped together in a charge under the supervision of a mentor. Mentoring shall continue until such time as educational requirements have been met unless requested by the clergyperson or district superintendent.

¶ 317.3 Students Appointed as Local Pastors—Students enrolled as pre-theological or theological students in a college, university, or school of theology listed by the University Senate (a) who have met the provisions of ¶ 315, and (b) who shall make appropriate progress in their educational program as determined by the Board of Ordained Ministry may be appointed as part-time or full-time local pastors in a conference other than the conference in which they are certified candidates. (c) Students who are appointed as local pastors continue to relate to the district committee on ordained ministry in the conference in which they are certified candidates and shall be responsible to them for the continuation of their certified candidacy.

¶ 317.4 Local Pastors Serving on Loan—Local pastors may be appointed for up to 5 years as part-time or full-time local pastors in a conference other than the conference in which they are certified candidates. Local pastors who are appointed on-loan continue to relate to the district committee on ordained ministry in the conference in which they are certified candidates, and they shall be responsible to them for the continuation of their certified candidacy. As well, they relate to the district committee on ministry of the conference in which they are appointed to continue their license and eligibility for an appointment.

¶ 317.6. Local pastors Service on Committees—may serve on any board, commission, or committee with voice and vote, except on matters of clergy character, qualifications, status, and ordination. However, local pastors who have completed the Course of Study may serve on the district committee on ordained ministry with voice and vote. Local pastors who have completed the Course of Study may serve on the Board of Ordained Ministry with voice and vote.

¶ 319. Continuance as a Local Pastor—1. Persons licensed as local pastors who are not provisional members shall continue in college, in a program of theological education at an approved seminary, or in the Course of Study.

2. Upon completing each year's education and other qualifications, a local pastor who is not a provisional member may be recommended for continuance by the district committee on ordained ministry. The clergy members in full connection of the annual conference may approve continuance of a local pastor after reference to and recommendation by its Board of Ordained Ministry.

3. A full-time local pastor shall complete the Course of Study curriculum within eight years of beginning the Course of Study and a part-time local pastor within twelve years of beginning the Course of Study, unless a family situation or other circumstance precludes the local pastor's opportunity to meet said requirements. The local pastor may be granted an annual extension beyond the prescribed limit upon a three-fourths vote of the district committee on ordained ministry, recommendation by the conference Board of Ordained Ministry, and the vote of the clergy members in full connection.

4. A local pastor may choose to remain in a local relationship with the annual conference upon having completed the Course of Study.

5. Retired Local Pastors—a) Candidates for ministry at age 72 or older may enter or continue in the candidacy process to pursue appointment in retired local pastor status. b) A local pastor who has made satisfactory progress in the Course of Study as specified in ¶ 318.1 or .2 may be recognized as a retired local pastor. Retirement provisions for local pastors shall be the same as those for clergy members in ¶ 358.1, .2, .4, with pensions payable in accordance with applicable provisions of the Clergy Retirement Security Program. c) Retired local pastors who are not under appointment may attend annual conference sessions with voice but not vote. A retired local pastor may be appointed by the bishop to a charge and licensed upon recommendation by the district committee on ordained ministry without creating additional claim upon the conference minimum compensation nor further pension credit. A retired local pastor who is serving under appointment shall attend annual conference sessions with voice and vote (¶ 602.1d). d) Local pastors who have completed the Course of Study may upon retirement annually request from the District Committee of Ordained Ministry and the bishop a license to continue to serve in the local church where they hold membership for the purpose of providing sacramental rites of baptism and Holy Communion, at the request of the appointed pastor. This license does not constitute an appointment and does not provide vote at the annual conference session. e) Retired local pastors who are appointed shall continue to make satisfactory progress in the Course of Study (¶ 319).

¶ 320. Exiting, Reinstatement, and Retirement of Local Pastors Who Are Not Provisional Members—1. Discontinuance of Local Pastor—Whenever a local pastor retires or is no longer approved for appointment by the annual conference as required

in ¶ 318, whenever any local pastor severs relationship with The United Methodist Church, whenever the appointment of a local pastor is discontinued by the bishop, or whenever the district committee on ordained ministry does not recommend continuation of license, license and credentials shall be surrendered to the district superintendent for deposit with the secretary of the conference. After consultation with the pastor, the former local pastor shall designate the local church in which membership shall be held.

SCBOMP- XV.f Changes of Conference Relationships, Retirement ¶358—i. Local Pastors who retire under any section of ¶358 must have completed an MDiv. (or its equivalent), the basic course of study, or be current on their educational progress (no more than one year behind) in order to continue to be listed as a retired Local Pastor in the business questions. Local Pastors who retire without meeting this condition will be discontinued if not under appointment as retired Local Pastor. ii. Local Pastors who are under appointment as a retired Local Pastor must complete the Basic Course of Study while serving if they have not already done so.

Licensed Local Pastor Who does this? This is for anyone who is called to serve in a pastoral role but does not (yet) have a seminary degree or commissioned.

Who to talk to:	Steps:
	Prerequisites <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be a Certified Candidate 2. For a Full Time Local Pastor, be able to devote full time to charge to which appointed. 3. For a Part Time Local Pastor, devotes less than full time to charge to which appointed.
DS or the Coordinator of Clergy Services	Becoming a LLP <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Connect with your DS or the Chair of your DCOM to inform them of your intentions to becoming a LLP. 2. Meet with and be recommended to attend Licensing School and be a Local Pastor if Appointed by your DCOM. (3/4 majority vote). 3. Successfully complete Licensing School (Held in April and May). 4. Receive approval for licensing by a 3/4 majority vote of the clergy session at Annual Conference. 5. Receive an appointment from the Bishop

Congratulations! You're A Licensed Local Pastor!

To maintain your status, you must

- Make satisfactory academic progress
 - Full time LLP's – Complete four courses of study per year with the entire curriculum to be completed within eight years
 - Part time LLP's – Complete two courses of study per year with the entire curriculum to be completed within twelve years.
- Satisfactory written Annual Report of Mentor if a Mentor is assigned
- Submitted a **written** statement of **educational plans** for the ensuing year to the District Committee on Ordained Ministry (college, seminary or Course of Study)
- Submit an "Official" transcript to the dCOM each year showing academic progress until the completion of the Course of Study or Seminary.
- Meet with the dCOM annually and receive their recommendation for continuation.
- Have License signed and renewed annually by the DS after dCOM recommendation for continuation.

Note: You are only a Licensed Local Pastor if and while appointed. If for some reason you are no longer appointed, you return to lay status and are considered a Certified Candidate Approved to Be Licensed if Appointed.

HELPFUL TERMS TO KNOW

Advanced Course of Study (ACOS) – Advanced theological education program of the Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. It is provided for those who are licensed as local pastors to complete the Disciplinary Basic Graduate Theological Courses. Participants in the program must have completed candidacy for ordained ministry, the studies for license as a local pastor, been approved/recommended for license by the dCOM and conference Board of Ordained Ministry, completed the Basic Course of Study and is serving an appointment.

Approved for Service – A process by which ordained, provisional and licensed clergy from other United Methodist Conferences, Methodist Denominations and other Christian Denominations can be approved to serve United Methodist Churches in South Carolina.

Associate Member – Associate members are clergy members of the Annual Conference and have voice and vote at annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments and matters of ordination, clergy character and conference relations of clergy.

Certified Candidacy – Candidacy phase when a candidate has completed the mentoring process and has met with and been certified as a candidate for licensed or ordained ministry by the district committee on ordained ministry.

Commissioning – The credentialing of provisional deacons and elders. The act of the church that publicly acknowledges God's call and response, talents, gifts and training of the candidate. The church invokes the Holy Spirit as the candidate is commissioned to be a faithful servant leader among the people, to lead the church in service, to proclaim the Word of God and to equip others for ministry.

Conference – The governing and administering body for United Methodists in the South Carolina Area.

Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (BoM) – The body that oversees, cares for, and evaluates candidates for ministry through the candidacy process, and is also responsible for maintaining a relationship with local pastors in the conference.

Course of Study (COS) - The basic theological education program of the Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. It is provided for those who are licensed as local pastors who are unable to attend an approved seminary. Participants in the program must have completed candidacy for ordained ministry, the studies for license as a local pastor, been approved/recommended for license by the dCOM and conference Board of Ordained Ministry, and is serving an appointment. Often referred to as the Basic Course of Study (BCOS).

Deacon – Persons called by God, authorized by the Church, and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of Word, Service, Compassion and Justice to both the community and the congregation.

District – The body that oversees, cares for, and evaluates candidates for ministry through the candidacy process, and is also responsible for maintaining a relationship with local pastors.

District Committee on Ordained Ministry (DCOM) - The body that oversees, cares for, and evaluates candidates for ministry through the candidacy process, and is also responsible for maintaining a relationship with local pastors in each district.

District Superintendent (DS) – an elder appointed by the bishop, usually for a six-year term. The DS oversees the ministry of the district's clergy and churches, provides spiritual and pastoral leadership, works with the bishop and others in the appointment of ordained ministers to serve the district's churches, presides at meetings of the charge conference, and oversees programs within the district.

Elder – Persons who are ordained to a lifetime ministry of Word, Sacrament, Order and Service; authorized to preach and teach the Word of God, to administer the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion, and to order the life of the Church for mission and ministry.

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HELPFUL TERMS TO KNOW

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) – The GBHEM is the leadership development agency of the United Methodist Church. It prepares global leaders for a global church and the world. Every elder, deacon and licensed local pastor benefits from the training and candidacy programs.

Local Licensed Pastor (LLP) – Persons who are licensed and appointed to preach, conduct divine worship, and perform the duties of a pastor in the context of a specific appointment, but are not ordained as elders. Licensed local pastors are clergy members of the Annual Conference and have voice and vote on all matters except constitutional amendments and matters of ordination, clergy character and conference relations of clergy.

Ordination – The church affirms and continues the apostolic ministry through persons empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Other Denomination (OF) – Ordained Clergy Members of other Christian Denominations that have been Approved to Serve United Methodist Churches in South Carolina. They retain their membership in their home denomination and therefore do not have voting rights in the South Carolina Conference.

Other Elder (OE) – Ordained Clergy Members of other United Methodist Annual Conferences or Methodist Denominations that have been Approved to Serve United Methodist Churches in South Carolina. They retain their membership in their home conference or denomination and therefore do not have voting rights in the South Carolina Conference.

Provisional Member – Conference relationship of commissioned ministers (deacons and elders) who are on trial in preparation for membership in full connection in the annual conference as deacons and elders. During that three-year period, they are participants in the Clergy Leadership Academy and under the care of the Conference Board of Ordained. Provisional members have voice and vote at annual conference on all matters except constitutional amendments and matters of ordination, clergy character, and conference relations of clergy.