

**Certified Lay Minister (CLM)  
Greater New Jersey Conference  
District Committee on Ministry Guidelines**

**Disciplinary Provisions (2008 Discipline)**

**¶205.4**

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 lay person, lay minister or lay missionary to do the work of ministry in that charge.....The lay person assigned is also accountable to the policies and procedures of the annual conference where assigned.

**¶271**

In order to enhance the quality of ministry to small membership churches, expand team ministry in churches and in deference to an expression of gifts and evidence of God's grace associate with the lay ministry of early Methodism, the certified lay minister is to be recognized and utilized.

1. The certified lay ministry shall preach the Word, provide a care ministry to the congregation, assist in program leadership, and be a witness in the community for growth, missional and connectional thrust of The United Methodist Church as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergy person.
2. A certified lay speaker or a person with equivalent training as defined by his/her district or conference may be certified as a lay ministry by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry after he/she has:
  - a. Been recommended by the pastor of the local church where he/she holds membership and by vote of the Church Council or Charge Conference.
  - b. Completed courses relevant to his/her assignment including preaching and exegesis, the care of the congregation, and other courses as recommended by the General Board of Discipleship and General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in consultation with leaders in the annual conference, and other appropriate Agencies and organizations.
  - c. Demonstrated appreciation of the history, polity, doctrine, worship and liturgy of the United Methodist Church through service in his/her local church.
  - d. Been recommended by the District Superintendent after completion of appropriate screening
  - e. Made application in writing to the District Committee on Ordained Ministry for review and approval.
  - f. Appeared before the District Committee on Ordained Ministry for review and approval
3. The certified lay minister is to apply in writing for recertification bi-annually\* to the District Committee on Ordained Ministry upon:
  - a. Ministry Review by Church Council or Charge Conference of which he/she is a member
  - b. Satisfactory completion of an approved Continuing Education Event, and
  - c. Recommendation of the District Superintendent.
4. The certified lay minister under assignment is to appear bi-annually before the District Committee on Ordained Ministry for recertification after:

- a. Ministry Review by Church Council or Charge Conference where assigned.
  - b. Satisfactory completion of an approved Continuing Education event, and
  - c. Recommendation of the District Superintendent.
5. Transfer of Certification by Certified Lay Ministers  
A certified lay minister who moves may transfer certification to the new district upon receipt of a letter from the previous district's Committee on Ordained Ministry confirming current certification. For transfers between Districts in the GNJAC, files will be forwarded to the registrar of the receiving district. For transfers to another annual conference, a copy of the file will be retained by the sending district.
6. The certified lay minister is a lay person and as such is not eligible for support by equitable compensation funds or pension which are provided for clergy members. The local congregation is encouraged to provide appropriate compensation.

*Note: GNJAC policy requires a person to meet with the DCOM annually for support, review and recertification (see below)*

### **Coursework - four required modules:**

*(details available at: <http://www.gbod.org/site/c.nhLRJ2PMKsG/b.5689183/k.C816/Courses.htm>)*

- **Call and Covenant for Ministry**  
Description: Understanding of theology and call for ministry, exploring spiritual gifts, and developing a ministry covenant.  
Minimum Time: 10 hours
- **The Practice of Ministry**  
Description: Four Sections: Leading Worship, Preaching/Sharing Faith, Discipleship Ministries, and Caring for a Congregation.  
Minimum Time: 8 hours per section
- **Organization of Ministry**  
Description: Focus on the leader's task of organizing a congregation for mission and ministry. It provides specific guidance on topics central to a congregation's health.  
Minimum Time: 8 hours
- **Connection for Ministry**  
Description: United Methodist theology, practice, and polity are explained with the roles of the local congregation district, conference, and general church.  
Minimum Time: 8 hours

### **GNJAC Policies for Certified Lay Ministers**

1. Prior to certification, all CLM candidates will complete a psychological assessment as determined by the Board of Ordained ministry for the conference.
  - a. Psychological assessments will be administered by a mentor/proctor approved by the Board and Laity Council, who will also receive the assessment reports and review them with the CLM candidate prior to coming to the DCOM for interviews.
  - b. A copy of the report will be on file with the Psychological Assessment Officer(s) of the Board.
  - c. In order to maintain confidentiality, following review of the report with the CLM candidate, a copy of the recommendation page only will be sent to the registrar of

- the DCOM for the person's file, and the full report sent to the Psychological Assessment officer(s) of the board.
- d. The Psychological Assessment officer(s) of the Board will communicate with the DCOM concerning issues that are identified in the report that would require follow up.
  - e. Psychological assessments will be paid for by the CLM candidate, to be reimbursed by the church/ministry to which she/he is first assigned.
2. Certified Lay Ministers will meet with the District Committee on Ministry for review **annually**. (*Note: this adds to the Disciplinary requirement for biannual review*). The DCOM will review with the CLM his/her ministry and review supporting documentation for recertification. The DCOM will approve recertification by a majority vote. Persons not approved for recertification are no longer available for assignment by the Bishop and District Superintendents. The file of persons no longer recommended will be maintained by the DCOM, with a notation of the circumstances surrounding the denial of recertification placed in the file.

### **File Requirements:**

#### *For initial certification:*

1. Application for Certification as a Lay Minister (submitted with written request for certification to the DCOM)
2. Copy of Certified Lay Speaker certificate or other certificate documenting equivalent training as approved by the Conference Committee on Lay Speaking and Laity Council
3. Letter of Recommendation from the local church pastor where he/she holds membership
4. Copy of minutes or letter from the secretary of the Church Council/Charge Conference confirming an affirmative vote of approval.
5. Certificate of satisfactory completion of the four Modules developed by the GBOD and GBHEM
6. Written confirmation of completion of Safe Sanctuary and Sexual Ethics training as provided by the GNJAC.
7. Written confirmation of a clear Child Protection background check for Laity (this includes criminal background check) through GNJAC Safe Sanctuary web page
8. Recommendation page from the report of the Psychological Assessment (Psych. Assessment reports will be kept in a confidential file by a person designated by the Board of Ordained Ministry and Laity Council)
9. Written recommendation of the District Superintendent
10. Documentation of vote by dCOM

#### *For re-certification*

1. Copy of a ministry review from the church where he/she is a member (if not assigned to another local church) or from the Church Council/Charge Conference where the

assignment is made. In that all committees are amenable to the Church Council/Charge Conference, this review can be assigned to the SPR/PPR of the church.

2. Documentation of satisfactory completion of required Continuing Education
3. Recommendation of District Superintendent
4. Documentation of vote by the dCOM

### **Information for the District Committee on Ministry**

1. The Certified Lay Minister process is a unique process that *does not* transfer into the certified candidate/licensing as a local pastor/ordination process. A CLM who desires certification as a candidate for ministry and licensing as a local pastor would begin that process from the beginning.
2. The Certified Lay Minister *always* works as a part of a team either within one church or under the direct supervision of a supervising/equipping pastor. The CLM does not replace a clergy person but works with them to provide pastoral leadership for vital mission and ministry.
3. Certification is meant to be an on-going process, not an end in itself. Therefore, once the initial coursework and application process is completed, on-going formation and education continues to be a priority.
4. A CLM certification is not tied to an assignment. Once a person is certified, he/she is eligible for assignment by the bishop and district superintendent either within his/her local church or in another local church or mission opportunity.
5. The Bishop and District Superintendent is responsible for the assignment of the supervising/ equipping pastor (also referred to as the CLM mentor in some places)
6. The DCOM is charged with the responsibility of approving a CLM candidate. It is not assumed that the CLM has knows everything about ministry before certification, so the certification process includes:
  - a. Evaluation of a candidate's sense of call to this particular ministry (as compared to Lay Speaking, Licensed Local Pastor, certified professional, etc.)
  - b. Assessment of a person's readiness to be certified, including a review of educational requirements completed and screening assessments (i.e. Psychological Assessment and Safe Sanctuary requirements for laity), ability to work in a team, specific gifts and graces for fulfilling the ministry of a CLM
  - c. Exploring with the CLM candidate the support and accountability structures that will be in place for on-going formation.
7. The DCOM is responsible for:
  - a. Verification that all the training requirements for certification/recertification have been met
  - b. Review of file documentation
  - c. Review of Psychological Assessment
  - d. Face to face interview of CLM candidate prior to certification.
  - e. Recommending support and accountability structures, continuing education opportunities, interpreting the role of the CLM
  - f. Interviewing CLMs annually for the purpose of support, review and re-certification
  - g. Submitting annually a list of Certified Lay Ministers to the Board of Ordained Ministry for inclusion in the report for the Clergy Session of the Annual Conference

## **Interviewing the potential Certified Lay Minister**

### *Suggested Questions for Interviewing CLM candidates:*

1. How does the person understand his/her call as a Certified Lay Minister? How will this certification help the potential CLM to fulfill his/her ministry as a lay person?
2. How does the person understand the roll of the Certified Lay Minister? What does certification authorize a CLM to do? What is the CLM candidate's expectations concerning assignment?
3. How has the CLM candidate been involved in the work and life of his/her local church? Where has he/she demonstrated leadership there?
4. How amenable is this person to working on a team with others? What evidence is there to demonstrate that this person will be effective in team ministry?
5. What gifts and graces for ministry does the CLM candidate have? How has the candidate discerned this?
6. What have been the most beneficial parts of the training process? What are the areas that the CLM candidate feels she/he needs further training and education?
7. In that a CLM is encouraged to have another means of support/employment, how does he/she see this work informing his/her ministry in the church? How is this work a gift for ministry?
8. How does the CLM candidate understand United Methodist polity and does he/she support it?
9. What areas of ministry is the CLM candidate interested in? Preaching? Evangelism? Caring Ministries?

### *Questions to be answered by the DCOM:*

1. Does this candidate adequately understand the role of the Certified Lay Minister?
2. Is the CLM the most effective way for the candidate to respond to God's call on his/her life?
3. In that all CLMs work under the direction of the supervising/equipping pastor, is this person open to direction and guidance from others?
4. Will the candidate be effective in working in a team ministry?
5. Are the gifts and graces that the candidate articulates appropriate for the ministry of a Certified Lay Minister?
6. What would be some areas for future growth that could be recommended to the CLM? (these should be shared with the candidate and also be forwarded to the Director of the Certified Lay Minister program for the conference for planning for future training opportunities) Note: because the CLM certification is not tied to an assignment, it may be difficult to pin-point a specific course of action – there may need to be more than one option suggested depending on assignment.
7. Certification is not dependent on assignment, and certified persons are available for assignment to a wide variety of ministries and settings. Are there particular settings or ministries in which the DCOM believes the candidate would be most effective that should be noted in this candidate's file?

**CERTIFIED LAY MINISTER APPLICATION**  
**Greater New Jersey Conference**  
**The United Methodist Church**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Local Church where you are a member \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor's Name \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been a member of this congregation? \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been a United Methodist? \_\_\_\_\_

Leadership responsibilities you have held within your local church \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Education**

High School: \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Post-High School Education: \_\_\_\_\_

Completion of Program or Degree? \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Completion: \_\_\_\_\_

**Training:**

Local Church Lay Speaker's Course \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No Date \_\_\_\_\_

Certified Lay Speaker \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No Date of last course taken? \_\_\_\_\_

Other Training: (Please list) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you completed the 4 CLM Modules? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Have you completed the GNJAC Sexual Ethics Training? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Have you completed the GNJAC Safe Sanctuary Training? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**Interest in Ministry**

Why do you wish to become a Certified Lay Minister? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

Are you currently a Certified Lay Speaker? \_\_\_\_\_

Recent classes you have taken: (Please give the name of the class, a brief description, and the year it was taken)

---

---

---

Please list your top five spiritual gifts:

---

---

---

---

---

What do you believe to be your greatest strengths and weaknesses for ministry?

---

---

---

---

---

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Payment Request for Certified Lay Minister's Psychological Testing

Certified Lay Minister \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Clergy Supervisor to Proctor Psychological Test: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

District: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment for Test is **\$550.00** to be paid by the Certified Lay Minister, making it payable to the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. Kindly submit with this form with Certified Lay Minister's check to the attention of BOOM Treasurer, Rev. Linda Ross, 6011 Main Street, Mays Landing, NJ 08330.

***\*This amount will be placed in a holding account until billing from the psychological testing center is received.***

Approved by District Superintendent: \_\_\_\_\_

District: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail Check and Form to:  
Rev. Linda Ross, BOOM Treasurer  
6011 Main Street  
Mays Landing, NJ 08330**