

Guidelines for Continuing Education Fund

The Board of Ordained Ministry of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference

“Throughout their careers, clergy shall engage in continuing education for ministry, professional development and spiritual formation and growth in order to lead the church in fulfilling the mission of making disciples for Jesus Christ. This shall include carefully developed personal programs of study augmented periodically by involvement in organized educational and spiritual growth activities. These practices embody the Wesleyan emphasis on lifelong growth in faith, fostered by personal spiritual practices and participation in covenant communities. Each Annual Conference, through the chairs of the clergy Orders and Fellowship or other leaders designated by the bishop, shall provide spiritual enrichment opportunities and covenant groups for deacons, elders and local pastors.” (§1350.1)

The Board of Ordained Ministry of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference (GNJAC) supports the ministers in their career development and enhancement through an annual continuing education fund and advanced degree/certification programs. Here are the key elements:

Annual Continuing Education Fund (Maximum of \$500 per Calendar Year)

1. Eligibility: Full members, provisional members, and local pastors who are appointed by the resident bishop can apply for the fund to support their participation in educational events.
2. Eligibility for Non-Members: Clergy whose membership is not in the GNJAC but who are appointed by the bishop to a local church within the conference are also eligible for the fund.
3. Funding Limit: The fund offers up to \$500 annually for participation in organized educational or spiritual growth activities.
4. Covered Costs: Eligible expenses include registration fees, out-of-state travel, written materials, and necessary purchases like electronic media or software.
5. Excluded Events: Conference-sponsored events, such as the annual Bishop's Convocation, do not qualify for this funding.
6. Exclusion of Ordination Requirements: Educational requirements for the ordination do not qualify for this funding.
7. Continuing Education Requirements for Clergy: To strengthen their leadership in ministry, clergy members in GNJAC must earn 8 CEUs (equivalent to 80 hours) of learning per quadrennium.

Fund for Advanced Degree and Certification Programs (Lifetime Maximum of \$5,000)

1. Purpose: The fund supports advanced degree and certification programs related to ministry that go beyond the required education for ordination.
2. Lifetime Limit: Eligible clergy can access a lifetime maximum of \$5,000 in financial assistance for these programs.

3. Grant Distribution: Grants of \$1,000 are awarded twice a year until the lifetime maximum is reached.

Reimbursement for Licensed School/Course of Study

1. Please visit the GNJ website page at www.gnjumc.org/resource/request-for-reimbursement-for-licensing-school-course-of-study to learn and request reimbursement.
2. For any questions, contact Rev. Gina Yeske at gyeske@epagnj.org.

How to Apply for the Continuing Education Fund

1. Download the Application:
 - Go to the GNJAC website: www.gnjumc.org/ordained-ministry/boom-continuing-education-funding/ and download the application in an editable PDF format.
2. Fill out the application form completely and save the file on your computer.
3. Submit all necessary financial documents, such as invoices and receipts for expenses with clear dollar amounts and dates, including but not limited to tuition, registration, hotel, rental, and airline.
4. Ensure that the total expenses you submit at least equal the amount of funding requested. For instance, if you request \$500, your supporting expenses must total at least \$500.
5. Submit the application and all supporting documentation in English.
6. Email the completed application and supporting documents to Rev. Jisun Yang at gnjboomce@gmail.com
7. Please allow 4-6 weeks for evaluation, approval, and the processing of funds disbursement.

Amended and approved on November 7, 2024, by The GNJ Board of Ordained Ministry