



ROCKY MOUNTAIN

— DISTRICT COUNCIL —

of the Assemblies of God

Information, Requirements and Procedures for Obtaining Ministerial Credentials

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Please read each section of this booklet carefully.

If you have questions that are not adequately addressed in this booklet, please contact the office of the District Secretary-Treasurer by phone (719) 522-0195 or by e-mail: kphillips@rmdc.org

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Purpose

The purpose of a ministry credential is to recognize those who have a genuine call to **full-time** Christian ministry and to properly certify that ministry. Certification does not precede ministry, but is rather an acknowledgment of what God has already begun to do through an individual.

2. Recognition of Ministerial Candidates

The granting of credentials is a serious responsibility. The District Presbytery will refrain from haste and act with deliberation in recommending ministerial recognition.

Many individuals in our churches have an ability to preach but would find themselves out of harmony with the will of God should they attempt to enter the ministry on a full-time basis.

Only the General Council Credentials Committee, upon recommendation of the District Presbytery acting as the District Credentials Committee, grants credentials. Credentials are granted on the basis of a person's involvement in ministry (not what an applicant plans to do, but ministry in which they are already involved), as well as on his/her qualifications and the evidence of a Divine call. After reading this information about the credential process, candidates may feel they qualify for a certain credential. However, you should be aware that the District Presbytery is in no way obligated to grant a credential, to grant the desired level of credential, or to upgrade credentials simply because an applicant has satisfied the educational requirements and completed the application process.

3. Proper Motives

A candidate should be certain that his/her motives are pure when applying for ministerial recognition. He/she should not suppose that a ministerial credential would automatically open our assemblies to preaching and ministry opportunities. A ministry anointed by the Holy Spirit will prove to be the best credential and will provide opportunities for service.

4. Integrity

It is expected that those applying for credentials possess a good reputation among those outside as well as inside the church in matters of financial integrity, honesty and morals which are above reproach (Titus 1:7; I Timothy 3:7).

5. Unity and Cooperation

The Assemblies of God is a cooperative fellowship based on mutual agreements voluntarily entered into by its members. All members holding credentials shall be amenable to both The Rocky Mountain District and The General Council in matters of doctrine and conduct. They shall agree to be governed by the District and General Council bylaws and policies.

Each applicant for credentials should possess a conviction that God is directing him/her to become part of the Assemblies of God Fellowship. He/she should purpose in his/her heart to be in harmony with the principles and practices of the fellowship, and should in no way allow himself/herself to come into conflict with or be a divisive force against the churches and ministers of the fellowship.

6. Advancement (Upgrade) of Credentials

The District Credentials Committee is **not** obligated to advance or upgrade a Certificate of Ministry to a License to Preach until fitness and ministerial activity justifies the action. Neither shall a Licensed Minister be Ordained solely upon the basis of having completed the process and having held a License to Preach for two full consecutive years. Ordination is granted at such a time as the candidate has met all of the General and District Councils' requirements for Ordination **and** has demonstrated a mature, full-time ministry. The Credentials Committee will determine if the maturity of the applicant and his/her ministry are sufficient to warrant Ordination.

7. Ministers from Other Fellowships

All applicants, who have been licensed or ordained by other reputable church bodies, who desire affiliation with the Assemblies of God will be expected to demonstrate to the District Credentials Committee that their past record is above reproach. Also, they should meet the requirements and qualifications outlined in this booklet.

The District Credentials Committee shall not accept mail-order ministerial licenses and ordination certificates as well as credentials from questionable groups. Individuals holding such credentials must qualify for Assemblies of God recognition by meeting the qualifications and requirements outlined in this booklet.

CREDENTIAL APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Please refer to the enclosed insert for specific dates regarding each credential level process!

Step 1

An applicant (*first time and upgrade*) must apprise his/her pastor of the desire to be credentialed or to upgrade their credentials with The Rocky Mountain District. In order to obtain an Official Application Packet, the applicant must submit a request through the **on-line RMDC Credentialing Tracking System** through our website at: www.rmhc.org or by going directly to: <http://tools.rmhc.org/>.

Once we receive your request, we will E-mail you the link and Login & Password to access the Credentialing Packet **online**, which includes the following:

1. Letter of Instructions
2. Official Application Form
3. Information Authorization/Release Forms
4. Background Check Disclosure
5. Reference Forms
6. Exam Synopsis

Step 2

Upon receiving the Official Application Packet, the applicant is to complete and remit the following:

1. Official Application – Must be filled out completely and signed.
2. \$150.00 Application Fee – This is a one-time, non-refundable fee. (*Make check payable to RMDC.*)
3. Letter of Intent – Attach a letter of intent to describe/explain in detail your desire for credentials, the nature of your call to ministry as well as your plans to devote your time to the ministry of the gospel.
4. **Transcript(s)** – **Must show successful completion of all required coursework needed to satisfy the education requirements for desired level.**
5. Reference Forms – It is the responsibility of the applicant to see that all **reference forms** are delivered/mailed to their references. Then, **the references** are to complete and return the forms to the District Office in the envelope provided.
6. Information Authorization/Release Form(s) – Must be completed by applicant (and spouse, if applicable) **and** notarized by a notary public.
7. Background Check Disclosure – Must be completed by applicant.
8. Social Security Card – Applicant must submit a copy of their Social Security Card to verify their identity.

Mail all of the above-mentioned items to:

RMDC
Attn: Secretary-Treasurer
6295 Lehman Drive, Suite 202
Colorado Springs, CO 80918-8434

Step 3

Upon receipt of the completed **Official Application packet** (*Step 2*), it will be reviewed by the District Secretary's office. The completed packet (including all references) must be received in the District Office (**on or before August 31st for Ordination**). **Certified and Licensed credentials may be applied for at any time during the year!**

Step 4

All applicants must complete a **written exam**, which General Council requires to be proctored. Upon completion of Official Application materials, applicants will be notified of the time and place for their scheduled exams.

Step 5

Once exams have been graded, interviews will be scheduled and the applicant will be notified by mail of their interview date, time and location.

Please refer to the enclosed insert for dates for Ordination **Preliminary & Formal Interviews**.

No applicant will be approved for credentials without a formal interview!

Step 6

Completed Credential Applications are presented to the District Presbytery or the Credentials Committee at their regularly scheduled meetings once the file is complete. The committee will review applications. Then, their recommendation & the application file will be forwarded to the office of the General Secretary for final approval and issuance of credentials.

Applicants will not receive any additional correspondence from the District Secretary's Office concerning their credential application until notification is received from the General Secretary's office.

MINISTRY DESCRIBED

Christ's gifts to the Church include apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11), exhorters, administrators, leaders, and helpers (Romans 12:7, 8). We understand God's call to these ministry gifts is totally within His sovereign discretion without regard to sex, race, disability, or national origin. In terms of maturity of ministry, three classifications of credentials are recognized: Ordination, License, and Certification.

All ministers currently holding ministerial credentials are authorized to perform the ordinances and ceremonies (sacerdotal functions) of the church in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

BASIC QUALIFICATIONS

The following qualifications pertain to all applicants for ministerial recognition:

a. Salvation

Testimony as to having experienced the new birth (John 3:5).

b. Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Testimony as to having received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues, according to Acts 2:4. The Spirit-filled life will enable the applicant to fulfill the threefold mission of the church (Article V, paragraph 10 of the General Council constitution).

c. Evidence of Call

Clear evidence of a divine call to the ministry, evidenced by a personal conviction, confirmed by the work of the Spirit and the testimony of fellow ministers.

d. Christian Character

A blameless Christian life, reflected by a good reputation with believers and non-believers. (Titus 1:7; I Timothy 3:7).

e. Doctrinal Position

A thorough understanding of and agreement with the doctrinal position of the Assemblies of God as contained in the Statement of Fundamental Truths.

f. Assemblies of God Polity

A satisfactory working knowledge of the principles, practices, and purposes of the Fellowship through a study of the General Council and District Council constitution and bylaws.

g. Commitment to the Fellowship

An active loyalty to our constitutional agreements, a cooperative spirit, and a readiness to seek and receive the counsel of older brethren and those in positions of authority.

h. Basic Education Requirements - Please refer to page 7 of this booklet regarding this topic.

i. Marriage status. We disapprove of any married persons holding ministerial credentials with the Assemblies of God if either marriage partner has a former spouse living, unless the divorce occurred prior to his or her conversion or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness (Matthew 19:9), or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever (1 Corinthians 7:10-15), except as hereinafter provided.

j. Ecclesiastical annulments and marriage dissolutions. The Executive Presbytery shall have the authority to determine whether an applicant qualifies for an ecclesiastical annulment. In such cases there must be clear and satisfactory evidence of deception, fraud, or other conditions which have a profound impact preventing the creation of a valid marriage union, unknown at the time of marriage by the applicant. The Executive Presbytery shall have the authority to determine whether an applicant qualifies regarding a former marriage when the termination of that marriage is consistent with the scriptural position of the Fellowship relating to the granting or holding of ministerial credentials; or if a former marriage ended prior to conversion. In those cases involving pre-conversion divorce, they shall be decided on an individual basis just as those that deal with ecclesiastical annulments. Appeals from the decisions of the Executive Presbytery may be made to the General Presbytery.

k. Eligibility of women. The Scriptures plainly teach that divinely called and qualified women may also serve the church in the ministry of the Word (Joel 2:29; Acts 21:9; 1 Corinthians 11:5). Women who meet the qualifications for ministerial credentials are eligible for whatever grade of credentials their qualifications warrant and have the right to administer the ordinances of the church and are eligible to serve in all levels of church ministry, and/or district and General Council leadership.

l. Ministers from other organizations. If a minister from another reputable body desires to affiliate with the Assemblies of God, the credentials committees of both the General Council and the district councils are under no obligation to accept the applicant's previous ministerial status, but will judge each candidate on his or her own merits as to the level of credentials to be granted. Such applicants shall be required to:

- (1) Conform to Assemblies of God criteria for recognition.
- (2) Complete an application for ministerial recognition.
- (3) Submit a letter of recommendation from a neighboring Assemblies of God minister or the sectional presbyter for the applicant's area.
- (4) Submit a recommendation from the body with which the minister was formerly affiliated. If such is not available, letters of recommendation should be sought from three reputable ordained ministers who are familiar with the applicant's ministry, two of whom should be with the applicant's former credentialing body.
- (5) Take the credential examination.
- (6) Complete such courses as may be prescribed by the General Presbytery for ministers transferring from other credentialing bodies.
- (7) Meet with the district credentials committee for an oral interview.
- (8) Be recommended by the district credentials committee for action by the General Council Credentials Committee.
- (9) All previously ordained ministers so approved shall receive recognition as ordained Assemblies of God ministers with the laying on of hands by the district presbytery. All other applicants so approved shall receive the appropriate level of credential recognition.
- (10) Ministers who receive Assemblies of God recognition shall relinquish their ministerial credentials with any other organization, unless an exception is granted by the General Council Credentials Committee upon recommendation of a district council credentials committee for a minister serving as a missionary in this country who holds a credential with a member body of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship, or in special and/or unique cases as determined by the General Council Credentials Committee.

m. Residency Requirements

An applicant for ministerial credentials must have been a resident of the Rocky Mountain District as follows:

- 1) Certified & Licensed – No minimum requirement
- 2) Ordained - One year **before** credential would be granted

EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

General Guidelines

1. The education requirements for ministerial credentials were changed in 2005. The 'grace period' to be grandfathered into the process under previous requirements ended in 2010.
2. There are three (3) ways to satisfy education requirements for credentials with the Assemblies of God:

a. Attend an Assemblies of God college as a Biblical Studies or Ministerial Studies major. Under this option, the requirements are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Certified -- | Successfully complete 2 full years of A/G college course work as a <i>Biblical Studies</i> or <i>Ministerial Studies</i> major with sufficient ministry involvement. |
| Licensed -- | Successfully complete 3 full years of A/G college course work as a <i>Biblical Studies</i> or <i>Ministerial Studies</i> major with sufficient ministry involvement. |
| Ordained -- | Successfully complete 4 full years (Graduation) of A/G college course work as a <i>Biblical studies</i> or <i>Ministerial Studies</i> major with sufficient ministry involvement |

b. Successfully complete the Global/Berean University correspondence courses prescribed by the General Presbytery for the level of credential being sought. For the requirements under this option, see the section on Global/Berean Correspondence Requirements.

c. Attend a recognized Bible College other than Assemblies of God. Under this option, the transcript must reflect successful completion of courses equivalent to current General Presbytery requirements. In addition to sufficient courses on the transcript, the candidate will be required to take any or all of the following Global/Berean correspondence courses: *A/G History; Missions & Governance; Introduction to Pentecostal Doctrine; Relationships & Ethics in Ministry.*

(NOTE: A grade of 'C' or better is required on **all** courses to be applied toward education requirements.)

3. An applicant who has attended an A/G college as a non-Bible or non-ministries major will be considered for credentials on a case-by-case basis. The District Office will evaluate completed Bible and ministry-related courses with current General Presbytery requirements. Credit will be given for similar courses, provided the extensiveness of study is equivalent to Global/Berean courses. Once evaluation has been done, remaining courses must be successfully completed to satisfy the education requirements. If the District Office is unfamiliar with the institution from which your transcript is received, you will need to supply a catalog with course descriptions from the institution so an accurate evaluation can be made.

GLOBAL/BEREAN CORRESPONDENCE REQUIREMENTS

Certificate of Ministry

- BIB 114 Christ in the Synoptic Gospels
- THE 114 Introduction to Pentecostal Doctrine
- BIB 115 Acts: The Holy Spirit at Work in Believers
- BIB 117 Prison Epistles: Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon
- BIB 121 Introduction to Hermeneutics: How to Interpret the Bible
- MIN 123 The Local Church in Evangelism
- THE 142 Assemblies of God History, Missions, and Governance
- MIN 181 Relationships and Ethics in Ministry
- MIN 191 Beginning Ministerial Internship

License to Preach

- THE 211 Introduction to Theology: A Pentecostal Perspective
- BIB 212 New Testament Survey
- BIB 214 Old Testament Survey
- BIB 215 Romans: Justification by Faith
- MIN 223 Introduction to Homiletics
- THE 245 Eschatology: A Study of Things to Come
- MIN 251 Effective Leadership
- MIN 261 Introduction to Assemblies of God Missions
- MIN 281 Conflict Management for Church Leaders
- MIN 291 Intermediate Ministerial Internship

Ordination

- THE 311 Prayer and Worship
- BIB 313 The Corinthian Correspondence
- BIB 318 The Pentateuch
- BIB 322 The Poetic Books
- MIN 325 Preaching in the Contemporary World
- MIN 327 Church Administration, Finance, & Law
- MIN 381 Pastoral Ministry
- MIN 391 Advanced Ministerial Internship

For information on Global/Berean University or to receive a catalog with pricing and registration materials, call Berean University at 1-800-443-1083. **Please note: Regardless** of where you receive your education, you **must** complete the Berean course "*A/G History, Missions, and Governance*", or one equivalent to it, before you will be allowed to continue the credential process.

**SPECIFIC QUALIFICATIONS
PER CREDENTIAL CLASSIFICATION**

ORDINATION

Educational Requirements

See page 7. All required courses must be completed **before** submitting an application!

Qualifications for Ordination

- (1) Applicants must be 23 years of age or older.
- (2) They must have met all the requirements in making application and in completing the prescribed application form.
- (3) No person may be ordained to the ministry until he or she has shown evidence of a divine call and has held a ministry license and has been actively engaged in ministry and proclamation of the gospel for at least 2 full consecutive years immediately prior thereto.
- (4) *Residency requirements of applicants.* Applicants must be residents of or hold credentials in the district where they make application and appear before its credentials committee. District councils are required to refrain from approving any applicant for ordination who may have been licensed in another district, until such licensed minister shall have been a member of the district in which he or she is seeking ordination at least 1 year. Applicants who have not been a member of the district where they apply for ordination for 2 full consecutive years must meet the requirements and secure the endorsement of the officers of the district in which they were previously licensed, as well as the district of their residence.
- (5) *Exceptions to requirements.* The General Council Credentials Committee, upon request by a district credentials committee and where exceptional circumstances exist, may waive the requirements for an applicant holding a ministry license for 2 full consecutive years or being a member of the district in which he or she is seeking ordination for at least 1 year.
- (6) In order to maintain active status, ordained ministers shall be engaged in viable ministry and proclamation of the gospel except for cases of disability, retirement, or other valid circumstances as determined by the general secretary.

Ordination Transfers

Transfers from one denomination to another are no longer allowed. Only one exception exists: An individual holding an Ordination Certificate with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada may request a denominational transfer. A letter of clearance must accompany the request. All other applicants must meet the requirements as described in this booklet.

Sister Pentecostal Fellowships / Foreign Assemblies of God

Ministers holding credentials with foreign Assemblies of God fellowships and other sister Pentecostal fellowships must also meet the minimum requirements as listed. A letter of recommendation and clearance must accompany the request to be credentialed with the General Council of the Assemblies of God. (See page 3, #7-Ministers from Other Fellowships and page 6, #1-Ministers from Other Organizations.)

LICENSE

Educational Requirements

See page 7. The applicant must complete all required courses **before** making application!

General Requirements

Qualifications for license shall include clear evidence of a divine call, character and preparation suitable for that calling, practical ministry experience, and an evident purpose to devote one's life in service to the proclamation of the gospel.

CERTIFICATE OF MINISTRY

Educational Requirements

See page 7. All required courses must be completed **before** making application!

General Requirements

They shall show promise of usefulness in the gospel work. They shall devote full or part time to Christian ministry and, at the discretion of the district credentials committees, may remain under the supervision of a pastor or a ministry coach or mentor. They shall show evidence of a divine call and be actively engaged in some aspect of ministry and proclamation of the gospel, except in case of ill health or advanced age.

Pastoral Requirements

In the event a certified minister is serving in a position as the pastor, he or she shall be expected to advance to the ministry license level within 2 years of acceptance of the pastorate. This shall not apply to any minister who has reached the age of 65 or older, or whose certificate has been issued on a provisional basis. Any exceptions shall be at the discretion of the district credentials committee.

Exception for Provisional Issuance

A Certificate of Ministry may be issued on a provisional basis to a person who has not met all the credentialing requirements but who is deemed by the district credentials committee to be essential to the continuity of a church or a ministry. The reason for such a provisional issuance must be ministry driven, and the justification for its use is terminated when the minister ceases to be involved in the ministry for which it was initially granted unless the minister accepts another qualifying assignment. Other limitations are:

- (a) The ministry certificate on a provisional basis will be issued for 1 year and shall not be renewed more than two times.
- (b) A person who has been granted the Certificate of Ministry on a provisional basis must meet the qualifications for a ministry certificate within a 3-year period.

ADDITIONAL CREDENTIAL INFORMATION

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF MINISTERS

A Financial Responsibilities and Agreement of Understanding form must be completed by all first-time, upgrade and reinstatement applicants.

The Financial Responsibilities of Ministers are as follows:

TO THE GENERAL COUNCIL

Ordination	-	\$20.00 per month, which equals \$240.00 per year
License to Preach	-	\$15.00 per month, which equals \$180.00 per year
Certificate of Ministry	-	\$ 7.50 per month, which equals \$ 90.00 per year

TO THE DISTRICT COUNCIL

100% of Ministerial Tithe per month

All Sources of Ministry Income

OR

(If secularly employed)

Ordination	-	\$60.00 per month, which equals \$720.00 per year
License to Preach	-	\$45.00 per month, which equals \$540.00 per year
Certificate of Ministry	-	\$30.00 per month, which equals \$360.00 per year

(Whichever is Greater)

If a minister receives no ministerial or secular income, the minister must remit to the district the following:

Ordination	-	\$20.00 per month, which equals \$240.00 per year
License to Preach	-	\$15.00 per month, which equals \$180.00 per year
Certificate of Ministry	-	\$ 7.50 per month, which equals \$ 90.00 per year

TITHING IS NOT AN OPTION

A minister must be careful when designating income to avoid paying tithe. It is understood that designations are made to help decrease the tax liability of the minister. Within the law, this is permissible and encouraged. However, the Biblical tithe is to be paid on "***the increase***" which includes regular ministerial compensation, i.e. salary, housing allowance, Social Security allowance, etc. – funds received for the support of the minister. Funds deposited into retirement accounts by the church (MBA, IRA's) or the payment of hospitalization premiums by the church, or the furnishing of a church owned parsonage (where no funds are received) would be exempt. The District Presbytery, which functions as the District Credentials Committee, has said that if a credentialed minister is secularly employed, and/or unemployed, the prescribed amount per month, per credential classification, must be met for the annual renewal of the minister's credential. The General Council Credentials Committee requires the financial obligation to the General Council whether employed or not!