



The Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast

LAY MINISTRY LICENSING GUIDELINES

(Title III, Canon 4 of the Constitution & Canons of the General Convention)

SELECTION and MINISTRIES

A confirmed communicant in good standing or, in extraordinary circumstances, subject to guidelines established by the Ecclesiastical Authority, a communicant in good standing, may be licensed by the Ecclesiastical Authority.

The Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith may request the Ecclesiastical Authority with jurisdiction to license persons within that congregation or other community of faith to exercise such ministries. The license may be revoked by the Ecclesiastical Authority upon request of or upon notice to the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

The policy of the Diocese is a term of three (3) years for licensing. Regardless of the specific date on which the request is made, all licenses will be dated from January 1 until December 31 of the appropriate year.

In renewing a license, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall consider the performance of the ministry by the person licensed, continuing education in the licensed area, and the endorsement of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation in which the person is serving.

A person licensed in any Diocese under the provisions of this Canon may serve in another congregation or other community of faith in the same or another Diocese *only* at the invitation of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight, *and* with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority in whose jurisdiction the service will occur.

LECTOR - an active member of a congregation trained in reading of the Word and appointed **without license** by the clergy or other leader exercising oversight, to read lessons, the Psalms, or lead the Prayers of the People. Since there has been no requirement in the Canons for Lectors to be licensed, no licenses are issued by this office.

LAY EUCHARISTIC MINISTER - authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements at a Celebration of Holy Eucharist. A Eucharistic Minister should normally act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight. **(Must be licensed – [LEM Application link](#))**

LAY EUCHARISTIC VISITOR - authorized to take the Consecrated Elements in a timely manner following a Celebration of Holy Eucharist to members of the congregation who, by reason of illness or infirmity, were unable to be present at the Celebration. A Eucharistic Visitor should normally act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight. **(Must be licensed – [LEV Application link](#))**

Persons applying for the below Ministries must attend the diocesan lay leadership program to be licensed.

LAY WORSHIP LEADER - regularly leads public worship under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.

LAY PREACHER – authorized to preach. Persons so authorized shall only preach in congregations under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.

LAY CHRISTIAN FORMATION LEADER/CATECHIST - authorized to prepare persons for Baptism, Confirmation, Reception, and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows, and shall function under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.

LAY PASTORAL CARE LEADER - authorized to exercise pastoral or administrative responsibility in a congregation under special circumstances, as defined by the Bishop.

If there is no clergy oversight in the church, a Vestry resolution must accompany the application for licensing for all of the aforementioned licensed ministries.
