



The Process for Calling Commissioned Ministers of Religion

Introduction

These guidelines have been developed in an effort to assist congregations in the process of Calling qualified workers to serve with them in ministry. While we are involved in making business decisions, it is vital that those who have accepted the responsibility of securing workers for ministry begin so with prayer so that they might be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

It is the Holy Spirit who guides and directs the process of Calling workers in His kingdom through people on behalf of congregations. A Call comes from God through the congregation and is extended by God to the Called person. All Rostered personnel are engaged by Call rather than contract.

In the Call process, the Synod (national church body) and its District assist congregations and workers and maintain the integrity and orderliness of the process. A Call is extended by a single congregation, recognized service organization, Synodical board, district board, or any entity that has the authority to extend a Call by virtue of its representing LCMS congregations. The District becomes involved in the process when a Calling entity seeks to issue a Call, whether from the field or through placement. The District authorizes the installation of workers who have accepted Calls.

Calling entities seeking to Call a worker from the field should follow the steps below. Calling entities seeking the placement of a Synodical university graduate should use the form on the web [linked here](#).

Steps for Calling Entities in the Call Process

1. Read and follow the Constitution and Bylaws of your congregation. Typically, they will speak to such issues as how the Calling Committee is formed, the process for nominating candidates, the process for Calling a worker, and the like.
2. **Notify the Executive Director for School and Youth Ministries of the Florida-Georgia District that a vacancy exists.** Request that the Executive Director schedule a meeting with the Call Committee to familiarize the Committee with the Call process.
3. Prior to developing a list of candidates, Call Committees are to submit the following to the District Executive:
 - A paragraph that articulates the primary goal that the calling entity hopes to attain as a result of the work that the new worker will undertake.
 - A listing of three professional or ministry skills and three character or personality traits that the calling entity feels will be most important for the new worker to be successful in ministry with them.
 - Articulation of the primary goal and identification of the skills and traits should represent the consensus of the Call Committee and should be determined by including input from the appropriate boards, pastor(s), and other appropriate church leaders and staff.
 - A description of the relationship of the worker to the Pastor(s) and to governing boards as outlined in the calling entity's Constitution and Bylaws.
 - A copy of the Role Description for the position to be filled.
4. Request access to the Commissioned Minister Information Form (CMIF) database to conduct searches for potential candidates or request that the District Executive develop a list of qualified candidates. [Contact Cindy Hammerstrom](#) at the District Office to secure the access code, which must be renewed every 60 days. Additionally, you may offer the congregation the opportunity to nominate commissioned minister candidates for consideration



5. Process the credentials of potential candidates and gather additional information by telephoning them to determine if they are open to considering a Call.
6. **Submit names of “short-list” candidates to the District Executive, who will validate them** for consideration as Commissioned Ministers of Religion. This requirement is for the benefit and protection of the calling body.
7. Interview the candidates by phone, Zoom, and/or in person. It is appropriate to conduct a second interview with the top candidates. At this point, on-site interviews may be helpful. Calling entities to pay expenses for personal interviews.
8. Contact all references and other helpful sources as appropriate. Conducting a background check of the final candidate is highly recommended; a call may be extended pending the clearance of a background check.
9. Prepare official Call documents, which include information regarding job responsibilities, compensation, and demographic information for the congregation and community. [Email Cindy Hammerstrom](#) at the **District Office** for instructions.
10. Review the process to be certain that each step has been properly addressed.
11. Following the congregation’s Constitution and Bylaws, a Call may then be extended.
12. Immediately following the Call meeting, telephone the individual to inform them of the congregation’s action.
13. Overnight the Call Documents. Send a letter to the congregation being served by the Called person, assuring them of your prayers for them and for their ministry.
14. **Inform the District Executive** of the congregation's decision.
15. Give consideration to inviting the Called person and spouse to visit the congregation at congregation's expense.
16. Remain in regular contact with the individual who has been Called while they are deliberating their decision. Offer your support and assistance in whatever way is helpful.
17. If the Call is accepted, [email Cindy Hammerstrom](#) to request permission from the District President to install the Called person. This must be done BEFORE an installation occurs. If the Call is declined, restart the process at the appropriate stage.
18. **Inform the District Office** of the installation date and installing official. This may be included in the email requesting permission to install.
19. Plan for appropriate welcome and orientation of the worker to the congregation and to their new role.
20. Don’t forget to **invite the District Executive** to the installation!

Contacts:

Exec Director for School/Youth Ministries:
School Ministries Phone: 877-457-5556 x3
Administrative Assistant for School/Youth:

Mrs. Jennifer Tanner jtanner@flgadistrict.org
Jennifer Tanner Cell # 904-710-0472
Cindy Hammerstrom chammerstrom@flgadistrict.org