

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

GENERAL LAY LICENSING PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Initial licensing and renewal of lay licenses occurs prior to the **first Sunday of Advent** each year using applications provided by the diocese in mid-September. License applications include the endorsement of the member of the clergy in charge of the congregation and certification of approval voted by the Vestry or Bishop's Committee.

Initial licensing forms and renewal forms may be found on the diocesan website <http://www.nhepiscopal.org/lay-licensing> (under For Congregations/Lay Leadership/Lay Licensing). Please print the forms, complete them, and get the required signatures and scan/email or mail to the Bishop's Office.

Lay licenses are not transferable from parish to parish. If someone licensed to serve in one parish transfers their membership to another parish, they must re-apply through the new parish to be licensed to serve.

Applicants must be confirmed or received in the Episcopal Church.

Please make sure all applications are:

- filled out completely
- signed by the applicant, the rector or priest-in-charge and certified by the Clerk of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee following approval at a Vestry/Bishop's Committee meeting.

Incomplete applications will be returned to the submitting parish.

Training takes place at the parish level under the supervision of the clergy.

For licensing the applicable sections of Title III, Canon 4, are as follows:

Section 1(a). A confirmed communicant in good standing or, in extraordinary circumstances, subject to guidelines established by the Bishop, a communicant in good standing, may be licensed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to serve as Pastoral Leader, Worship Leader, Preacher, Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, Evangelist or Catechist. Requirements and guidelines for the selection, training, continuing education, and deployment of such persons, and the duration of licenses shall be established by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry.

Section 2(a). 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 shall be issued for a period of time to be determined under Canon III.4.1(a) and may be renewed. 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.

(b). In renewing the 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 or other community of faith in which the person is serving.

(c). 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.

The titles Worship Leader (WL), Eucharistic Minister (EM) and Eucharistic Visitor (EV) replace the terminology of "Lay Reader, Lay Eucharistic Ministers I & II". Any number of communicants may be trained by the parish clergy and licensed by the Bishop to assist in the distribution of consecrated bread and wine in church. One or two persons in each congregation who possess special sensitivity and training may be licensed to take the sacrament to shut-ins immediately following the service.

WORSHIP LEADER. The canons define a Worship Leader as a lay person who regularly leads public worship under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER. A Eucharistic Minister is a lay person 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 of the congregation or other community of faith.

EUCCHARISTIC VISITOR. A Eucharistic Visitor is a lay person 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 of the congregation or other community of faith.

Eucharistic Visitors are required to complete Safe Church Training

A Safe Church Training schedule is posted on our website at www.nhepiscopal.org/safe-church