Specialized Pastoral Ministry

ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENT STANDARDS
AND PROCEDURES

REVISED AND ADOPTED
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THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

MERCY FOREVER

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THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

Specialized Pastoral Ministry

Ecclesiastical Endorsement Manual

INTRODUCTION

A. Overview

This document outlines the process and procedures for ecclesiastical endorsement within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod ("LCMS") for ministries in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical education, by which the church body – specifically, the Office of National Mission – affirms and recognizes rostered church workers who attain the necessary levels of theological and ministerial competence.

B. Chaplaincy, Pastoral Counseling and Clinical Education

Those who serve in Specialized Pastoral Ministry reach directly into the primary social structures and institutions of our world. As they encounter people in the midst of these everyday settings, those who serve in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical education seek to extend the love of God in Jesus Christ to all people at the point of their deepest need. Specialized pastoral ministers are witnesses of the Gospel in a context of mercy.

"Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep."
(Romans 12:15 ESV)

1. Rooted in the Gospel

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28 ESV). The focus of Specialized Pastoral Ministry (SPM) begins in the love of God in Jesus Christ and intersects with human need through the care of the soul. These ministries are missional by nature and are a part of the church's witness and mercy outreach to the ill, the imprisoned, the elderly, the troubled, the conflicted, the weary, the tired, and the afflicted.

2. Diverse, Scattered and Specialized

In touching lives at so many points of mission, specialized pastoral ministers are diverse, specialized and geographically scattered. They extend into such settings as health care, long-term care, mental health, corrections, pastoral counseling, clinical education, rehabilitation and physical medicine, hospice, substance abuse, developmental disability, emergency services and workplace ministry.

Specialized pastoral ministers assist persons in their relationship to God, to others, and in understanding themselves in the midst of need. Those involved in these ministries declare and demonstrate Christ's love by providing spiritual and pastoral care, advocacy and opportunities for service.

C. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide:

1. Consistency and continuity with Lutheran doctrines of ministry and the authority of those who minister, as defined in ecclesiastical endorsement.

2. Policies, processes and procedures to assure and uphold the standards and criteria for ecclesiastical endorsement.

3. Qualifying criteria for call or appointment or other means of formal ecclesiastical relationships for positions of service in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, and clinical education ministries, including roles and responsibilities for accountability.

4. Guidance for seeking consultation for readiness to enter into specialized training to become an institutional or emergency service chaplain, pastoral counselor and/or clinical educator, or redirection in a field of specialized pastoral ministry.

5. Addenda for criteria and procedures for ecclesiastical endorsement in regard to:

a. Evaluating educational preparation (see page 9)
b. Peer review and continuing education (see page 9)
c. Reinstatement (see page 10)

d. Selection of conveners and consultation committee members (see page 10)
e. Appealing SPM consultation committee recommendations (see page 11)
f. SPM Code of Ethics (see pages 11 – 13)

I. Ecclesiastical Endorsement: Definition, Roles, Core Standards and Procedures

A. Definition of Ecclesiastical Endorsement

1. Benefit of Ecclesiastical Endorsement

Ecclesiastical endorsement is the recognition by the LCMS that a rostered person has met LCMS SPM standards for theological and ministerial competence to serve in ministries in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical pastoral education. It attests to the church body's assessment that an individual possesses the suitability, readiness, competence and aptitude to serve as its representative in a particular ministry. Ecclesiastical endorsement also signifies good standing on the church's roster of ordained, commissioned and consecrated ministers, and as such is subject to the ecclesiastical authority of the church body.

The ecclesiastical endorsement process enables the church body to provide guidance and support for persons seeking to enter or serving in SPM. The goal is to provide consultation both to districts and other calling entities in their consideration of call eligibility, and to individuals who are seeking recognition of their competence to serve in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical education ministries.

Endorsement through SPM is the approved means for the church body to provide the ecclesiastical endorsement required by professional certifying organizations, employment organizations and districts.

Ecclesiastical SPM endorsement is a function of the church and therefore is distinguished from the certification and/or credentialing for competence granted by a professional organization. Ecclesiastical endorsement describes the Synod's or district's approval of an ordained or commissioned minister serving in non-congregational related specialized ministry settings.

2. Limits of Ecclesiastical Endorsement

Ecclesiastical endorsement does not guarantee that professional certification will be achieved or that a call to serve in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling or clinical education will be issued.

It does not establish an employment, agency or supervisory relationship between the endorsing district and the minister receiving the endorsement. It does not imply or assure that the endorsed person has undergone any background or reference checks, screening, psychological testing or evaluation as part of the ecclesiastical endorsement process, though these are all regarded as highly valuable and their use by districts is recommended.

The ecclesiastical endorsement process is not the same as, nor is it related to, the Colloquy Committee process.

B. Roles and Responsibilities: A Partnership Process

1. Role of the SPM Consultation Committee

After receiving the completed Personal Data application form and other required written materials, the SPM consultation committee meets in person with applicants seeking ecclesiastical endorsement.

The overall role of the committee is to provide consultation to the applicant and applicant's district president, and to support the applicant in the achievement of his or her goals for ministry. Committee members and applicant enter into dialogue regarding theological and ministerial readiness for chaplaincy, pastoral counseling or clinical education.

Each consultation committee has a convener who receives the required materials from the SPM office and arranges for the consultation committee interview. The convener is also available to the applicant for personal consultation regarding the procedures or other matters of concern to the applicant about the process.

Formation and organization of the consultation committee is the responsibility of the convener with assistance from the SPM office. The consultation committee is selected from a pool of persons who have expertise in SPM. It normally consists of three to five members. The committee convener will invite a representative from the district to attend.

The consultation committee evaluates the individual's readiness to serve in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling or clinical pastoral education ministry by assessing the applicant's integration of Lutheran theology, ministerial practice, personal maturity and the understanding of ministry identity. It also provides guidance and counsel on methods and resources for acquiring the necessary theological and ministerial competencies if they are not met.

On the basis of its assessment, the consultation committee makes a recommendation regarding ecclesiastical endorsement along with other recommendations pertaining to the applicant's ministerial growth and development. The committee may recommend: 1) endorsement, 2) endorsement not recommended or 3) time-limited endorsement.

Time-limited endorsement may be granted in order to provide the time needed to acquire necessary CPE or equivalent training. Time-limited endorsement is normally reserved for those who qualify for endorsement under the grandparent rule. The grandparent rule applies to those who have been serving in full-time SPM and are not yet endorsed.

The convener is responsible for preparing the written report of the interview, with the consultation committee's recommendations regarding ecclesiastical endorsement, and sending it to the SPM office. If the recommendation is to endorse, the Religious Endorser emails the district president and asks for his concurrence. Following the district president's concurrence, the Religious Endorser sends a formal letter of ecclesiastical endorsement and includes the SPM Ecclesiastical Endorsement Certificate to be presented to the endorsee.

2. Role of District President

Upon request from the applicant, the SPM office sends and evaluation form to the applicant's district president and requests to have the completed form returned to the SPM office within two weeks. The form addresses any concerns the district president may have, verifies the roster status of the applicant, and confirms that the district president is the applicant's ecclesiastical supervisor. If the district president disagrees with the recommendation of either the consultation committee or the SPM director, the district president and SPM director will resolve the matter.

The district president is responsible for providing ongoing support and ecclesiastical supervision for ordained and commissioned ministers serving in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical education.

3. Role of the SPM Office

The SPM office is a program of the LCMS Office of National Mission. The SPM office is responsible for the administration of the ecclesiastical endorsement process and for providing initial information and counsel to applicants. The SPM staff develops and distributes the informational materials used by districts in interpreting the ecclesiastical endorsement process and procedures to applicants.

After receiving completed application materials, the SPM office determines if the materials are complete and then assigns the applicant's materials to a convener and provides counsel and guidance as needed to the convener.

Following the applicant's interview with the consultation committee, the SPM staff reviews the report and recommendations and provides a confidential summary to the applicant. In case of denial of ecclesiastical endorsement, the SPM office informs the applicant in writing and offers support and encouragement. The SPM office is responsible for transmitting ecclesiastical endorsement on behalf of the church body to external credentialing/certifying or employing organizations, districts or other calling sources, at the request of either the endorsee or district.

4. Role of the SPM Advisory Committee

The LCMS SPM Advisory Committee is comprised of members appointed by the SPM staff. It serves to assist staff in the coordination of activities related to Specialized Pastoral Ministry. The advisory committee provides consultation for the ecclesiastical endorsement process and related matters.

C. Ecclesiastical Endorsement – Core Standards

The core standards are considered basic requirements for ecclesiastical endorsement by the LCMS. Additional standards specifically related to chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical education are included in Section II.

SPM staff assesses and determines the completion of Core Standards A-D (page 3). SPM staff, the convener and the consultation committee have responsibility for the assessment of Core Standard E and F (page 4).

It should be noted that what is required for ecclesiastical endorsement in this section of the manual (Standards A – F) may be different from what is required by an employer or certifying organization. Before seeking employment or certification, the applicant is advised to research the expectations and qualifications of the certifying or employing organizations.

Standard A – Rostering

All applicants for ecclesiastical endorsement must be rostered, or eligible for active rostering.

Standard B – Congregational Service

The expectation of two years of congregational service is normative. If a calling entity seeks a seminary candidate, a consultation will be arranged between the appropriate representative of the educational institution and the respective district president. A representative of the ministry context may also be present. The SPM Coordinator may be the initiator of this consultation. The decision of the district president and school representative will be final.

Standard C – Education Preparation

It is normative for applicants to have a graduate degree in theology from an LCMS seminary or university, unless the applicant is rostered through one of the Synod's alternate routes. Alternate route candidates will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

In addition, the candidate must complete the required supervised training hours necessary for the type of endorsement being sought. The specific standards for each specialized pastoral ministry (institutional chaplain, emergency service chaplain, pastoral counselor and clinical educator) are noted under Section II of this manual.

Criteria for evaluating educational preparation are outlined in Section II and Addendum I.

Standard D – Professional Certification/ Credentialing

Endorsed specialized pastoral ministers are strongly encouraged to obtain certification by an appropriate professional organization. Although not required to retain endorsement in the LCMS, professional certification is a highly valued credential and is required for employment in some organizations.

Standard E – Required Written Materials

Materials should be submitted in the following order (for further reference, see Section II).

a. Personal Data Form

b. Personal history essay of the applicant's life and spiritual journey, including an understanding of how one's history impacts and influences one's ministerial and personal functioning.

c. Description of the applicant's vocational goals.

d. Documentation of the clinical and academic education (e.g., name of college and/or seminary and copy of diploma) that serves as preparation for the ministry for which ecclesiastical endorsement is sought, including supervisory reports and self-evaluations of the educational experiences.

e. A 1,200– to 1,500–word essay of a Lutheran theology of pastoral care. This essay should address how the applicant understands Lutheran chaplaincy, pastoral counseling or clinical education as a ministry of the church, including attention to its contribution to the church's mission. The essay should develop a Lutheran theological framework for specialized pastoral ministry that addresses the effects of sin upon creation, justification, the proper distinction between Law and Gospel in the care of souls, the applicant's religious/pastoral identity and the use of religious resources in ministry.

f. Two recent descriptions or verbatims of visits/ relationships that demonstrate the applicant's integration and application of theological and ministerial understandings in the specific ministry for which ecclesiastical endorsement is sought. Verbatims/case studies should include a description of how the applicant prepared for the visit, observations, applicant's reason for presenting the verbatim, spiritual assessment and theological reflections, analysis and critical review of applicant's ministry (including alternate interventions, if any). The applicant should also note any systemic or contextual support or injustice that may have been present and if or how it was addressed. Finally, the verbatim/case study should include a plan for follow up ministry.

g. An evaluation by the applicant's district president indicating the applicant's current roster status and the role of the district president in ecclesiastical supervision.

h. A written statement that the SPM Code of Ethics has been read and agreement with the content of the code acknowledged.

i. Manuscript, notes or recording of a recent sermon, devotion or Bible study.

Standard F – Ministerial and Theological Competence

The SPM Consultation Committee will use the following criteria to determine readiness for ecclesiastical endorsement. The candidate is invited to demonstrate readiness through the written materials, as well as when interacting with the committee. Although the SPM Consultation Committee will be present to provide support, guidance and consultation, it is also charged with the task of assessing a candidate's level of theological and ministerial competence in the area of specialized pastoral ministry for which one is seeking endorsement.

Criteria used for reviewing the candidate:

a. Ministerial/Religious Identity
Develop a clear formation and integration of Lutheran identity with personal and ministerial functioning. Be prepared to identify what makes you uniquely Lutheran in your identity as a minister who is seeking to be formally recognized as a specialized pastoral minister, and then how that identity impacts your ministry.

b. Interpersonal Competence
Demonstrate the ability to form personal and pastoral care relationships that show respect to others, the ability to be empathetic and compassionate, emotionally available and sensitive to the joys and struggles of persons as appropriate within the ministerial role.

c. Theological Competence
Articulate and demonstrate particular Lutheran doctrines of faith that inform and guide your ministry. Be prepared to show your ability to address pastoral care and ethical issues from a Lutheran perspective with attention to your ministry setting.

d. Self-Awareness
Demonstrate awareness of the influence of your history,

faith journey and personality, in using your "self" in ministry. You should also be able to demonstrate an ability to critique yourself and establish healthy boundaries for ministerial relationships and self care.

e. SPM Code of Ethics
Acknowledge understanding of, and adherence to, the SPM Code of Ethics (Addendum VI).

f. Authority and Leadership
Articulate and appropriately claim your professional and personal authority and leadership in service of the Gospel. Give evidence of your ability to respectfully engage in intervention or advocacy on behalf of others.

g. Educational Competence
Demonstrate the ability to communicate as an educator and consultant in your area of expertise (SPM specialty) with peers, fellow staff, community religious leaders and the community at large.

h. Integrative Competence
Provide evidence of the integration of clinical knowledge and method with theological and ministerial understandings of the human condition (e.g., the way people may think, feel, behave in circumstances of crisis, suffering, trauma, etc.), and the way in which a specialized pastoral minister might intervene.

D. Steps in the Process of Obtaining Ecclesiastical Endorsement

1. The applicant requests an information packet from the LCMS SPM office.

- The applicant prepares required materials. (See Standard E for a listing of the required materials.) The applicant should consult with the SPM staff when questions or concerns arise.

- The applicant requests that the district president write a letter to the SPMoffice to confirm current roster status.

2. The applicant submits a completed copy of the required materials to the SPM office.

3. The LCMS SPM office reviews and processes the materials.

- SPM staff determines that the materials are complete, professionally written and that they adequately address core standards.

- SPM staff authorizes the convening of a consultation committee. The original copy of the materials is kept for the applicant's personal file in the SPM office. The SPM office sends a set of the materials to the convener and each committee member.

- SPM staff informs the applicant that an LCMS convener has been contacted.

4. The applicant contacts the convener to establish a mutually suitable time for the consultation. In consultation with the convener, the applicant may suggest an individual to serve on the consultation committee who represents a particular cultural perspective and/or ministry emphasis. If necessary, the requested individual may sit in as an advisor with non-voting status.

5. The convener arranges a consultation committee meeting and selects committee members who are familiar with chaplaincy, pastoral counseling or clinical education ministry — appropriate to the ministry specialty being considered — and, whenever possible, are rostered, ecclesiastically endorsed and, if appropriate, hold professional certification. The convener shall invite a representative of the applicant's district. In most instances, the consultation committee consists of three to five members.

6. The consultation is intended to be a collegial gathering where the applicant and committee members may process the applicant's materials or other topics raised by the applicant or committee members.

- At all times, the conversation is guided by the competencies that need to be demonstrated by the applicant. For greater understanding of the content to be discussed and reviewed, see "Standard F: Ministerial and Theological Competence."

- Feedback and counsel are provided concerning the applicant's competency in Lutheran theology, theological integration with one's ministry, pastoral/ministerial identity and church relationship. The committee may also provide recommendations for future personal and professional growth related to these competencies.

- The consultation committee makes one of the following recommendations:

  - Ecclesiastical Endorsement recommended. (The applicant meets the standards and possesses adequate theological and ministerial competence in all areas assessed.)

- o Ecclesiastical Endorsement not recommended. (The applicant has not sufficiently met the standards. The specific area(s) that need further development and growth will be identified in the convener's report. The applicant shall provide to the SPM office a plan for meeting endorsement standards and the committee's recommendations. The convener's report and applicant's plan shall be provided to subsequent consultation committees. At subsequent consultation committee meetings with the applicant, only the competencies that were not met receive the committee's focus.)

- o Time-Limited Endorsement recommended. If the applicant has at least 2 units of CPE, a time-limited endorsement for no more than 3 years may be granted, during which time the endorsed minister agrees to meet with a mentor and complete the necessary number of CPE units to satisfy the required total of 4 units for ecclesiastical endorsement as an institutional chaplain.

- The convener shall share the recommendation of the committee with the applicant at the conclusion of the meeting.

- It is suggested that the committee offer assistance to the applicant in processing the committee's recommendation. If requested, additional recommendations and referrals will be made to assist in the processing of the SPM consultation.

7. The convener shall forward the recommendation of the consultation committee to the SPM office within 10 business days.

- The SPM office sends an evaluation form regarding the consultation process to the applicant.

- The SPM office writes a confidential summary to the applicant within seven business days of receipt of the convener's report.

- If the recommendation is to endorse, the Religious Endorser emails the district president and asks for his concurrence. Following the district president's concurrence, the Religious Endorser sends a formal letter of ecclesiastical endorsement and includes the SPM Ecclesiastical Endorsement Certificate to be presented to the endorsee, preferable at a gathering of ministry peers.

- If the applicant and/or the district president do not concur with the committee's recommendation, a second consultation may be requested. If the applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the consultation, an appeal may be initiated by the applicant. See Addendum V.

- SPM staff forwards an acknowledgement of ecclesiastical endorsement to appropriate certifying or employing organizations, other districts, or to other entities as requested by the applicant.

E. Maintaining Ecclesiastical Endorsement

1. Requirements:

To maintain ecclesiastical endorsement, the following requirements must be met:

- Biennial peer review (See Addendum II for guidelines).
- Twenty contact hours annually of SPM related learning (See Addendum II for guidelines).
- Active involvement in a local congregation (e.g., worship, leadership, service, etc.) along with denominational involvement (e.g., circuit pastors meetings or comparable church professional gatherings, district functions or conferences, etc.).
- Signed statement that within the last calendar year, the specialized pastoral minister has read (reread) the LCMS SPM Code of Ethics (See Addendum VI).
- Submit a signed, annual ministry report (Maintenance of SPM Endorsement Form is on the SPM website) to the SPM office with a copy to the district president.
- Fulfillment of requirements to maintain certification in one's SPM professional organization may be used to partially satisfy maintenance of ecclesiastical endorsement (see Maintenance of SPM Endorsement Form on the SPM website).

2. Forwarding of Ecclesiastical Endorsement

Individuals needing a letter of ecclesiastical endorsement sent to a certifying or employing organization, or to a district, should request in writing confirmation of their ecclesiastical endorsement from the SPM office.

3. Termination of Ecclesiastical Endorsement

Ecclesiastical endorsement is automatically terminated when a specialized pastoral minister is expelled from Synod for reasons noted in Article XIII of the Constitution of the LCMS, and Bylaw 2.14 (see *LCMS 2010 Handbook*) or resigns membership in the Synod.

Ecclesiastical endorsement may also be forfeited if one does not adequately maintain his/her ecclesiastical endorsement (See E. 1.).

If a specialized pastoral minister loses professional certification or license (where it is required), the minister

must promptly report this to the SPM office. The reasons for the loss of certification may lead to the loss of ecclesiastical endorsement.

II. Standards and Criteria for Ecclesiastical Endorsement for Ministries in Chaplaincy, Pastoral Counseling and Clinical Education

A. Ministry in Institutional Chaplaincy

1. Description

Chaplaincy is a ministry of the church that is missional in nature and is characterized contextually in a wide variety of diverse and specialized settings. This expression of ministry embodies the church's initiative in ministry, among others, to the ill, the imprisoned, the elderly, the troubled, the conflicted, the afflicted and the addicted. Ecclesiastically endorsed LCMS chaplains offer a particular ministry to persons in pluralistic and multi-cultural contexts that are characterized and undergirded by Lutheran theology and traditions. Such ministry contexts include, but are not limited to, hospitals, nursing homes, prisons and jails, VA medical facilities, work-place sites, hospice centers, etc.

2. Specific Criteria and Standards

- Articulate an understanding and integration of Lutheran theology that undergirds one's ministry in a chaplaincy setting, and yet demonstrates an openness and sensitivity to all faith groups.

- Articulate and demonstrate a ministerial ability to utilize the expressions of the Lutheran church in chaplaincy ministry, i.e., prayer, sacraments, scripture, rites and rituals.

- Demonstrate an ability to provide competent ministry in a pluralistic, multi-cultural and multi-disciplined environment.

- Demonstrate an ability to establish and maintain professional and interdisciplinary relationships.

- Develop and foster collaborative relationships with community clergy and faith group leaders.

- Give evidence that consideration has been given to pursuing certification from a professional chaplaincy organization, such as:
  - American Correctional Chaplain's Association (ACCA)
  - Association of Professional Chaplains (APC)
  - College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy (CPSP)
  - National Institute of Business and Industrial Chaplains (NIBIC)
  - United States Military Family Life Chaplains

B. Ministry in Emergency Service Chaplaincy

1. Description

Emergency Services Chaplains provide spiritual care to Law Enforcement and Fire Services. Police Chaplains serve in city, county, state and federal police agencies. The most difficult and frequent task of the chaplain is making death notifications.

Duties may include officiating at an emergency service worker's funeral or memorial service, making hospital visits, teaching, joining police and/or fire personnel in ride-a-longs and providing critical incident stress debriefings following incidents of trauma and/or disaster. Because there are significant differences in culture between police and fire personnel, it is critical that the chaplain understand both.

2. Specific Criteria and Standards

- Articulate an understanding and integration of Lutheran theology that undergirds one's ministry in an emergency chaplaincy setting, and yet demonstrates an openness and sensitivity to all faith groups.

- Demonstrate an ability to provide competent ministry in a pluralistic, multicultural and para-military environment.
- Give evidence that consideration has been given to pursuing credentialing from a professional emergency service chaplain organization, such as the International Conference of Police Chaplains (ICPC) or the Federation of Fire Chaplains (FFC).

- Provide evidence of a minimum of 5 years' experience with a recognized emergency service organization or department.

- Document a minimum of 160 hours of continuing education related to the emergency services field (1 CEU equals 10 hours of training) under responsible sponsorship, qualified direction and qualified instructors.

- Submit two personal letters of reference (one from the agency being served, another from one's district president or another person who is knowledgeable of the applicant's ministerial ability, character, etc.).

C. Ministry in Pastoral Counseling

1. Description

Pastoral counseling is a ministry conducted by an authorized representative of the church who establishes a professional therapeutic role using both psychological and theological frames of reference to observe, understand, interpret and foster healing and wholeness in the process. There is a dual nature to the pastoral counselor's role-identity and expertise. The pastoral counselor participates fully in a pastoral/theological as well as a counseling/psychological process. As such, a pastoral counselor must be dually credentialed, both by the church body as a rostered minister and by a professional organization or by a government board recognized for certifying competence in counseling.

The roles and responsibilities of the pastoral counselor allow for a wide variety of ministry activities including individual, marriage, family and group counseling, as well as education in mental health, wellness, wholeness and family life. Pastoral counseling, rooted in the Word and Sacrament ministry of the church, is an intrinsic part of the health and healing ministry of the church, seeking to foster spiritual wholeness and mental health as a style of ministry integrated into the total mission of the church.

2. Specific Criteria and Standards

a. The minister applying for endorsement to serve as a pastoral counselor should be advised that identifying oneself and serving as a pastoral counselor outside of one's congregation may not be legal or ethical without appropriate certification from a recognized, professional counseling organization and/or state licensing board. Counseling certifying organizations include the following:

- American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC)
- American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT)
- American Psychological Association (APA)
- Association of Certified Social Workers (ACSW)
- College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy (CPSP)
- National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC)

b. Written materials should relate the applicant's knowledge of contemporary mental health and psychotherapeutic issues, including systemic, social and community concerns, and concepts of health, healing, wellness and wholeness from a pastoral theological perspective.

D. Ministry in Clinical Education

1. Description

The ministry of the clinical educator is to teach, guide and supervise those engaged in learning the art of pastoral care in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical education. Such educators include certified supervisors/educators of the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), American Association of Pastoral Counseling (AAPC) and College of Psychotherapy and Pastoral Supervision (CPSP). Certified clinical educators are clinically trained, knowledgeable about learning theory, competent in program management and have learned the art of supervision through conceptual models from theology, education and the behavioral sciences. Clinical educators seek to help students convert experience into learning in integrative ways, to address issues of theological reflection and ministerial formation and to develop practical skills and tools for ministry. Clinical educators serve not only those preparing for full-time ministries in specialized settings, but also provide pastoral education for parish pastors, lay ministers, deaconesses, seminarian and deaconess students, and laypersons who seek greater competency in a congregation's ministry of visitation.

2. Specific Criteria and Standards

a. Written materials should demonstrate the applicant's competence and knowledge in educational and supervisory issues, including personal and pastoral formation, theological reflection on whole-person learning, group dynamics, education vs. therapy, basic understanding of an institution as a system, the meaning of prophetic intervention, and interfaith and multicultural ministry.

b. The pastoral relationship descriptions should reflect competence and skill in educational ministry and the ability to maintain one's identity and authority as an educator/supervisor.

c. An external certifying credential is required to maintain ecclesiastical endorsement as a clinical educator and may be obtained by a recognized professional organization such as:

- American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC)
- Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. (ACPE)
- College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy (CPSP)

Addendum I: Criteria for Evaluating Educational Preparation for Ecclesiastical Endorsement

A. Supervised Clinical Pastoral Education and

Counseling Practicums

This category outlines the process by which it is normative for an applicant to meet the requirement of supervised clinical education.

The requirement of clinical education preparation is based on the model of a CPE unit of 400 hours. In this type of educational preparation, both the hours of actual ministerial experience and the time involved in educational and supervisory activities are counted. This method of counting hours shall apply to other supervised clinical education programs and counseling caseload management. The required hours of clinical pastoral education for each specialized pastoral ministry are as follows:

- 1,600 hours for ministry in institutional chaplaincy
- 1,600 hours for clinical pastoral supervisory education
- 400 hours for pastoral counseling training
- Emergency Services Chaplaincy (See specific standards in II. B. 2.)

Although this clinical education normally is beyond the M.Div. or other educational preparation requirements for entry into ministry, clinical pastoral education can be acquired in tandem with one's vicarage or internship.

B. Formal Educational Events

Seminars, course work, academic programs, institutes, workshops and other formal educational events that are not part of a regular ongoing supervised practicum shall be counted on the basis of actual time at the event, hours of study, preparation of papers and consultations or presentations.

C. Documentation

The documentation for educational experience in Categories A and B above should include a description of the program or event, self-evaluations and supervisory evaluations (where they apply). The materials should also identify the relevance of the educational program or event to one's chosen category of specialized pastoral ministry (e.g., chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, clinical education).

D. Procedures

SPM staff reviews the documentation that is submitted by the applicant and has the responsibility for determining whether or not the applicant has met the requirements for educational preparation.

Addendum II: Guidelines for Peer Review and Continuing Education

Biennial peer review is required to maintain ecclesiastical endorsement. What follows are guidelines. There are many acceptable and professionally responsible ways to satisfy this requirement.

Peer review is to include no less than two peers (three including oneself) in any or all categories of SPM (chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and clinical education). It is encouraged, where possible, to have a peer review group that includes at least one other LCMS specialized pastoral minister. Although biennial peer review is required, more frequent meetings with one's peers contribute depth and richness to support and accountability. Although face-to-face peer review is generally preferable, geographical separation may determine electronic peer review to be the best option — at least on occasion.

Examples of peer review include the following:

1. Presentation of case material and self-evaluation from one's ministry.

2. Presentation of oneself regarding a professional challenge or opportunity, or a personal need/struggle which is impacting ministry.

3. Presentation of theoretical material developed by the presenter and/or recently learned which is having a significant influence on the way one is thinking and functioning.

4. A presentation of an overview of the presenter's three covenant areas of responsibility: baptized self (spiritual, emotional, physical, cognitive and relational), marriage/family and ministry.

Continuing one's education and professional development is an expectation of any professional. It is a requirement for maintaining ecclesiastical endorsement. No less than 20 contact hours per year is required. The hours need to relate to one's specialty (chaplaincy, pastoral counseling and/or clinical education) and may be acquired through seminars/conferences, workshops, academic classes, reading (no more than 5 hours per year may be applied to continuing education requirements), individual or group supervision, spiritual direction, therapy, etc.

Addendum III: Criteria and Procedures for Reinstatement of Ecclesiastical Endorsement

The following criteria and procedures shall be used for restoration of ecclesiastical endorsement:

1. If termination of ecclesiastical endorsement was due to loss of rostering (expulsion or resignation from membership in the Synod), the individual must be reinstated to rostered standing in the church body in order to apply for restoration of ecclesiastical endorsement. See *LCMS 2010 Handbook*, Bylaw 2.18.

2. If termination of ecclesiastical endorsement was due to inadequate maintenance of ecclesiastical endorsement (see I, E, 1 of this manual), in order to be restored to ecclesiastically endorsed status, one must apply to the SPM office.

3. Application for restoration of ecclesiastical endorsement is accomplished by writing a detailed description of the process that resulted in termination of ecclesiastical endorsement and the rationale for desiring restoration. The application must include written support from the district president and then sent to the SPM office.

4. The SPM Endorser will determine the necessity of a consultation committee meeting with the applicant who is requesting restoration of endorsement.

5. If the SPM staff determines that a consultation committee meeting is not warranted, the SPM Endorser will review the written application, consult with the applicant, with others when necessary, and with the applicant's district president regarding restoration of ecclesiastical endorsement.

6. If it is determined that a consultation committee meeting is warranted, the meeting with a consultation committee regarding restoration of ecclesiastical endorsement will address those issues that led to the loss of endorsement. The consultation committee will make its recommendation to the SPM office.

7. A rostered minister may reapply for restoration of endorsement after 12 months of receiving a decision to have the minister's endorsement terminated.

Addendum IV: Criteria for Selection of Conveners and SPM Consultation Committees

A. Conveners

Conveners are appointed and supervised by the LCMS SPM office. The criteria used in selecting conveners will include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Currently endorsed.

2. A minimum of three years of service in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling or clinical education.

3. Strong visible ties with the LCMS and a sense of Lutheran identity as a chaplain, pastoral counselor or clinical educator.

4. Experience as a member of an ecclesiastical endorsement committee and/or other peer review processes.

5. Individual qualities such as: conscientiousness, attentiveness to paperwork, ongoing familiarity with endorsement standards, knowledge of area support resources, familiarity with the committee process, ability to lead, mobilize and interpret, etc.

6. Successfully completed convener orientation and training.

Conveners will be appointed for a five-year term of office, with the possibility of appointment to additional terms. No convener shall serve longer than 10 years consecutively.

The LCMS SPM office may replace conveners it has appointed. Reasons for replacement may include, but are not limited to, geographic inaccessibility, loss of ecclesiastical endorsement or personal limitations.

B. SPM Consultation Committees

SPM Consultation Committees meet at the request of the SPM office or the convener (often at the request of a minister who is seeking consultation).

1. Consultation may be requested for the following reasons:
a. Ecclesiastical endorsement for ministry in chaplaincy, pastoral counseling or clinical education.
b. Readiness to enter training for specialized pastoral ministry.
c. Consultation for changing or adding a specialized competency area

2. Committee members will include no less than two additional specialized pastoral ministers or individuals who are familiar with the ministry of specialized pastoral ministers.

3. At the request of the candidate, the SPM office, in consultation with the convener, may add an individual to the committee who represents a particular cultural perspective and/or ministry emphasis.

4. Committee members will be LCMS.

5. A minister requesting consultation may request the presence of a particular person or ministry specialty (institutional chaplain, emergency crisis chaplain, pastoral counselor or clinical educator). A candidate may also request a person of a specific gender and/or race/ethnicity. When possible and appropriate, the request will be honored.

6. The committee members agree to read the materials presented by the applicant and engage the person collegially with respect, candor and with the intention to provide the consultation requested. The committee will provide feedback and recommendations to the candidate and to the SPM office.

7. A written report is sent to the SPM office. Normally, this is written soon after the consultation appearance. The report will be written no later than two weeks following the date of the consultation meeting. The SPM office will then send the report to the applicant.

8. The consultation provided by the committee is a service of the church and colleagues in the various specialized pastoral ministries. The expense incurred by the applicant or minister meeting with a consultation committee is the responsibility of the one making the request for consultation. However, effort will be made to minimize the expenses.

Addendum V: Appealing a Consultation Committee Recommendation

An applicant wishing to appeal a consultation committee recommendation regarding ecclesiastical endorsement must notify the LCMS SPM office in writing within 30 calendar days of the applicant's consultation. The grounds upon which the appeal is based shall be presented in writing at that time.

Within 21 calendar days of receiving the appeal, the SPM office will acknowledge reception of the written appeal and notify the convener and the appellant's district president of the appeal.

Within 30 days from the date the SPM office sends acknowledgement to the appellant and notification to the convener and district president, the SPM office shall assist the appellant in reviewing the recommendation of the consultation committee and in clarifying the grounds for the appeal as well as the LCMS SPM Endorsement Standards and Procedures relevant to the appeal.

The appellant may request a new committee consultation. A new committee may be convened at the discretion of the LCMS SPM office. If it is determined to be necessary, the SPM office will establish a new convener and committee. The subsequent committee convener shall have access to the previous committee's report. The appellant's SPM representative and district president or designee may attend the new committee meeting as observers to support the appellant.

The recommendation of the appeals process shall be final.

Addendum VI: Specialized Pastoral Ministry (SPM) Code of Ethics

A. Prologue

From the fall of humanity until the present, the opportunity to care for the broken of the world has been evident. Throughout his ministry, Jesus modeled intentional and healing care of the soul and directed his followers to do the same. Martin Luther, in his explanation to the fifth commandment, offered this reminder, "We should fear and love God so that we ... help and support him (our neighbor) in every physical need." C.F.W. Walther wrote in his Pastorale (Pastoral Theology), "... a preacher above all has concern for spiritual needs" and also "the needs of the poor, the sick, widows, orphans, the infirm, the destitute, the aged, etc."

Specialized pastoral ministers, along with all ministers of the Gospel, are privileged to join the company of Christians who from the days of Christ have been propelled by God's grace to reach out with the love of God to all who are hurting and in need.

B. Expectations and Guidelines

Upon receiving ecclesiastical endorsement and/or accepting a call into specialized pastoral ministry, the ordained or commissioned minister by virtue of the endorsement and/or divine call is obligated to represent the LCMS with integrity and meet other expectations and requirements as outlined within this manual.

Because specialized pastoral ministers work in a pluralistic context, it is assumed and expected that specialized pastoral ministers will work cooperatively with other faith groups and with denominational specialized pastoral ministers without compromising the Synod's theology and practice. Thus, specialized pastoral ministers must be spiritually mature and confident (without being arrogant) in their Lutheran identity and theology.

As part of working and ministering within a variety of contexts and institutions which may or may not be Christian in their mission, the specialized pastoral minister

is responsible for attending to the spiritual and emotional needs of all people regardless of their faith-identity or lack of it. Arranging for spiritual care (e.g., rituals and resources) from clergy of other church and religious bodies is an expected and understood element of LCMS Specialized Pastoral Ministry. Thus, as part of their normal ministry, specialized pastoral ministers willingly and lovingly work side-by-side with clergy of dissimilar spiritual identity and do so with a positive and helpful attitude without compromising their own convictions.

The LCMS' Specialized Pastoral Ministry program is an integral part of the Office of National Mission, which recognizes that specialized pastoral ministers are witnesses to the Gospel in a context of mercy. That is, chaplains, pastoral counselors and clinical educators can — by the guidance of the Holy Spirit as well as with grace and appropriateness — share the Gospel of Jesus and live the love of Christ as they go about their specialized duties. Indeed, there are countless opportunities to minister to the unchurched along with nurturing the faith of those within the body of Christ. Specialized pastoral ministers serve in complex, pluralistic religious environments and must exercise a keen sense of pastoral discretion. They must deftly apply the axiom to "cooperate without compromise."

Ordained specialized pastoral ministers, as ministers of mercy in service to the Gospel, will have opportunities to baptize, to commune, to hear confessions and grant absolution. Such ministry opportunities call for pastoral judgment from the specialized pastoral ministers whose theological foundation is solidly based on Holy Scripture and the *Book of Concord*, and whose pastoral practice remains committed to the ministry guidelines of the LCMS.

C. Worship and Ministry Privileges and Limitations

Because Lutheran specialized pastoral ministers are ministers of the Gospel, it is appropriate to seek out opportunities to lead worship and teach Bible class whenever possible. Within the complex and diverse settings in which specialized pastoral ministers serve, worship (especially) is to be structured in a way that as many people as possible would be served and edified by the Word of God, and able to hear Law and Gospel — faithfully proclaimed in all its truth and in accord with the confessional vows of specialized pastoral ministers.

When opportunities present themselves for specialized pastoral ministers to baptize infants or adults, it is to the benefit of the baptized who have no church affiliation, that they be referred when possible to an LCMS congregation where they can be nurtured and brought up in the Christian faith and grow into disciples of Jesus. The same can be said when ministering to others who are present at other religious services conducted by the specialized pastoral minister.

Specialized pastoral ministers may be asked to conduct a service or rite that violates the confessional practice of the LCMS. If the conflict of interest cannot be resolved, the specialized pastoral minister shall respectfully clarify his/her reasons with one's supervisor and offer resolutions to meet pastoral requirements for ministry. Should a supervisor and specialized pastoral minister not be able to amicably resolve the pastoral conflict, the specialized pastoral minister should contact his/her ecclesiastical supervisor and Synod's Specialized Pastoral Ministry Endorsing Agent in order to prepare options and seek counsel.

The SPM Endorsing Agent will assist the specialized pastoral minister and ecclesiastical supervisor as they manage the conflict to a satisfactory resolution.

Public and ceremonial prayer does not constitute an act of worship or implied act of unity in so far as the specialized pastoral minister is not asked or expected to deny or withhold the name of Jesus.

D. Ministry and Accountability

As an ordained or commissioned rostered worker within the LCMS, the specialized pastoral minister is to be in an ecclesiastical supervisory relationship with his/her District President or his representative. As part of this accountability, the specialized pastoral minister is to be an active member of a local congregation and, when possible, participate in circuit pastors' conferences or an equivalent gathering of Lutheran professional church workers (deaconesses, DCEs, etc). As with all ordained and commissioned ministers, when possible, specialized pastoral ministers are expected to participate in regional and district conferences for professional church workers. Clergy are strongly encouraged to participate in circuit meetings.

In addition, the specialized pastoral minister is to maintain her or his endorsement as outlined in Section I. E, and Addendum II.

The specific behaviors named below are based on the codes of ethics from the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Association of Professional Chaplains, American Association of Pastoral Counselors and the LCMS Council of President's 1990 document, "Commitments of the Shepherd: Principles of Conduct for Ordained Ministers of the Gospel." For additional study and clarification, the specialized pastoral minister is advised to study the original documents. If there is ever a conflict between what is directed by one's professional organization and what is directed by the LCMS' "Principles of Conduct" or SPM Code of Ethics, the LCMS specialized pastoral minister is expected to follow the direction of the LCMS. If it should happen that one finds his/her conscience in conflict with the LCMS, let this conflict be experienced as encouragement to seek pastoral supervision and guidance from one's district president and the SPM Endorsing Agent.

In relationship to those served, the specialized pastoral minister:

1. Affirms and respects the human dignity and individual worth of each person.

2. Does not discriminate against anyone who is in need of specialized pastoral ministry.

3. Respects the integrity and welfare of those served or supervised, refraining from disparagement and avoiding emotional, sexual or any other kind of exploitation.

4. Approaches the religious convictions of a person, group and/or student with respect and sensitivity; avoids the imposition of her or his theology on those served or supervised.

5. Respects confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, regulations or other applicable rules, and ordination vows.

In relationship to other groups, the specialized pastoral minister:

6. Maintains good standing in his or her home church and in district/synod.

7. Abides by the professional practice and/or teaching standards of the state, the community and the institution in which he or she is called/employed. If, for any reason, she or he is not free to practice or teach according to conscience, the SPM shall notify the district president, employer and the SPM Endorsing Agent.

8. Maintains professional relationships with other persons in the institution in which she or he serves, within the community, and the church body.

9. Does not directly or by implication claim professional qualifications that exceed actual qualifications or misrepresent his or her affiliation with any institution, organization or individual; is responsible for correcting the misrepresentation or misunderstanding of his or her professional qualifications or affiliations.

In relationship to the the LCMS, the specialized pastoral minister:

10. Continues professional education and growth, including participation in the Synodical, district and circuit affairs when possible.

11. Intentionally ministers within the bounds of the LCMS's doctrine and practice.

12. Does not intentionally make false, misleading or incomplete statements about one's work or ethical or moral behavior when questioned by his or her colleagues or ecclesiastical supervisor.

In collegial relationships, the specialized pastoral minister:

13. Respects the integrity and welfare of colleagues; maintains professional relationships on a professional basis, refraining from disparagement and avoiding emotional, sexual or any other kind of exploitation.

14. Shall take collegial and responsible action when concerns about incompetence, impairment or misconduct arise.

In the conduct of business matters, the specialized pastoral minister:

15. Carries out administrative responsibilities in a timely and professional manner.

16. Implements sound fiscal practices, maintains accurate financial records and protects the integrity of funds entrusted to his or her care.

17. Distinguishes private opinions from those of the LCMS, the organization or institution to which he or she is called/employed in all publicity, public announcements or publications.

In relationship with God — and by the power and care of the Holy Spirit — the specialized pastoral minister:

18. Relies on God's grace, remembers his/her baptism, remains in the Word, receives Holy Absolution and the Lord's Supper, has the mind of a servant, repents from sin and lives in forgiveness.

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