

Call Process

The Step-by-Step Process for Rostered, Ordained or Commissioned Ministers of the Gospel to Receive a BNM Call into Specialized Pastoral Ministry (SPM)

1. When an SPM-endorsed minister expresses interest in receiving a call from the LCMS Board for National Mission (BNM) to serve in a specialized setting no less than 30 hours per week, the SPM office will direct the minister to send a formal letter of request to the SPM office.
2. Upon receipt of the minister's letter of request, the SPM office will request an email from his or her district president indicating that he recommends and supports the minister receiving a call from the BNM. If the place where the minister would be serving is in a different district than the one where the minister holds membership, the SPM office also will contact that district president and request an email indicating his support.
3. Upon receiving an email of support and recommendation from the district president(s), the SPM office will:
 - › Send a formal letter to the minister's district president (representing the district in which the minister holds membership) requesting (1) confirmation that the minister is rostered and in good standing in the district, (2) a copy of the Personal Information Form and Self-Evaluation Tool for the minister, and (3) a completed evaluation included with the letter of request.
 - › Send a letter to the minister's circuit visitor requesting the completion of the same evaluation form sent to the district president.
4. Upon receiving an email response of reference and support from the applicant's district president, the SPM office will send a letter to the applicant (copying the district president) that:
 - › Acknowledges receipt of the district president's support for the call and indicates that the processing of the minister's request has commenced.
 - › Requests that the minister signs and returns a check list with appropriate attachments indicating that:
 - (1) The minister has completed (online) and included the Personal Data Form.
 - (2) The minister has read, understands and agrees to the SPM Code of Ethics (enclosed with the letter).
 - (3) The minister understands and agrees that the call is location-specific and will not travel with the minister to a different location or call.
 - (4) The minister understands that there is no guarantee of future ministry, no insurance or retirement benefits from the BNM, and no other benefits that typically accompany a call to a parish — other than prayer support and encouragement from the BNM and SPM office.
 - (5) The minister has formally requested a letter of employment verification on official letterhead from the employer.
5. Upon receipt of the required information from the district president and the applying minister, the SPM director confirms that the person is qualified to be considered for a call from the BNM. Qualifications include:
 - › Confirmation that the applicant is rostered;
 - › Evidence of ecclesiastical endorsement in Specialized Pastoral Ministry;
 - › Evidence that ecclesiastical endorsement has been maintained;
 - › A completed Personal Data Form;
 - › Letter(s) of recommendation and support from the district president(s), along with the PIF and SET;
 - › A current or upcoming full-time (no fewer than 30 hours per week) ministry position in a Specialized Pastoral Ministry setting;
 - › A letter of employment verification from the employer;



- › A signed statement indicating that:
 - (1) He/she understands the limits of the call — which include no guarantee of future ministry, no insurance or retirement benefits from the BNM (as the source of the call), and no other benefits that typically accompany a call to a parish — other than prayer support and encouragement from the BNM and the SPM office
 - (2) He/she understands that the call from the BNM is context-specific and that the call does not travel with the specialized pastoral minister to a different location should accepting a different call become a reality; and
 - › A signed copy of the SPM Code of Ethics.
6. When all of the documentation is in order — and no later than six weeks prior to the Board for National Mission meeting — the SPM director delivers the paperwork, including a completed Diploma of Vocation and Supplement, to the ONM executive director for his or her review and determination if an interview is needed.
 7. If the candidate is determined to be qualified, the ONM executive director will write a letter of recommendation to the Board for National Mission.
 8. Four weeks prior to a BNM meeting, an electronic packet for each call being recommended will be delivered to each board member for consideration. The packet will include:
 - › The documentation listed in “5” above
 - › The Diploma of Vocation
 - › The Supplement to the Diploma of Vocation
 - › A letter of recommendation from the ONM executive director
 9. When a divine call has been issued by the BNM and there are no changes to the Supplement to the Diploma of Vocation, a hard copy of the Diploma of Vocation and Supplement will be presented to the BNM chairman for his signature.
 10. If there are changes in the Supplement, the SPM director makes any necessary changes to the Supplement to the Diploma of Vocation as directed by the ONM executive director, obtains the signature of the BNM chairman, prepares a cover letter for the LCMS secretary’s signature and sends the completed cover letter and call documents — via FedEx or UPS with a required signature of reception — to the minister receiving the call.
 11. The SPM director informs the minister’s district president in writing that the call has been sent, copies the president of the LCMS Missouri District and directs the minister to contact his district president.
 12. If the call is accepted, the minister is to contact the LCMS Missouri District President’s Office to (a) inform them that the BNM call has been accepted, (b) request the paper work for initiating an installation service in the minister’s district and (c) initiate the process of having the call transferred from the LCMS Missouri District to the minister’s district if the call is not within the LCMS Missouri District.

Questions? Please contact:

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