

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Purpose

The purpose of a ministry credential is to recognize those who have a genuine call to **full-time** Christian ministry and to properly certify that ministry. Certification does not precede ministry, but is rather an acknowledgement of what God has already begun to do through an individual.

Recognition of Ministerial Candidates

The granting of credentials is a serious responsibility. The Credential Committee will refrain from haste and act with deliberation in recommending ministerial recognition.

Many individuals in our churches have an ability to preach but would find themselves out of harmony with the will of God should they attempt to enter the ministry on a full-time basis.

Only the General Council Credentials Committee, upon recommendation of the District Presbytery acting as the District Credential Committee, grants credentials. Credentials are granted on the basis of a person's involvement in ministry (not what an applicant plans to do, but ministry in which they are already involved), as well as on his/her qualifications and the evidence of a Divine call. After reading this information about the credential process, candidates may feel they qualify for a certain credential.

However, you should be aware that the Credential Committee is in no way obligated to grant a credential, to grant the desired level of credential, or to upgrade credentials simply because an applicant has satisfied the educational requirements and completed the application process.

Proper Motives

A candidate should be certain that his/her motives are pure when applying for ministerial recognition. He/she should not suppose that a ministerial credential would automatically open our assemblies to preaching and ministry opportunities. A ministry anointed by the Holy Spirit will prove to be the best credential and will provide opportunities for service.

Integrity

It is expected that those applying for credentials possess a good reputation among those outside as well as inside the church in matters of financial integrity, honesty and morals which are above reproach (Titus 1:7; 1 Timothy 3:7).

Unity and Cooperation

The Assemblies of God is a cooperative fellowship based on mutual agreements voluntarily entered into by its members. All members holding credentials shall be

amenable to both The Mississippi District and The General Council in matters of doctrine and conduct. They shall agree to be governed by the District and General Council bylaws and policies.

Each applicant for credentials should possess a conviction that God is directing him/her to become part of the Assemblies of God Fellowship. He/she should purpose in his/her heart to be in harmony with the principles and practices of the fellowship, and should in no way allow himself/herself to come into conflict with or be a divisive force against the churches and ministers of the fellowship.

Advancement (Upgrade) of Credentials

The District Credential Committee is not obligated to advance or upgrade a Certificate of Ministry to License until fitness and ministerial activity justifies the action. Neither shall a Licensed Minister be Ordained solely upon the basis of having completed the process and having held a License for two full consecutive years. Ordination is granted at such a time as the candidate has met all of the General and District Councils' requirements for Ordination and has demonstrated a mature, full-time ministry. The Credential Committee will determine if the maturity of the applicant and his/her ministry are sufficient to warrant Ordination.

Ministers from Other Fellowships

All applicants, who have been licensed or ordained by other reputable church bodies, who desire affiliation with the Assemblies of God will be expected to demonstrate to the District Credential Committee that their past record is above reproach. Also, they should meet the requirements and qualifications as outlined.

The District Credential Committee shall not accept mail-order ministerial licenses and ordination certificates as well as credentials from questionable groups. Individuals holding such credentials must qualify for Assemblies of God recognition by meeting the qualifications and requirements as outlined.