

Guidelines for Support and Supervision Of the Deacon Resident in Ministry

The purpose of the Deacon Resident in Ministry Program

The Deacon Resident in Ministry program of the Louisiana Annual Conference is a period of three years or more in which a commissioned, provisional member of the Conference is supervised and evaluated by the Board of Ordained Ministry. The basis of this supervision is provided for by the Discipline of the United Methodist Church under paragraph 326: *“During this provisional period, arrangements shall be offered by the Board of Ordained Ministry for all provisional members to be involved in residency curriculum that extends theological education by using covenant groups and mentoring to support the practice and work of their ministry as servant leaders, to contemplate the grounding of ordained ministry, and to understand covenant ministry in the life of the conference. Wherever they are appointed, the service of provisional members shall be evaluated by the district superintendent and the Board of Ordained ministry in terms of the provisional member’s ability to express and give leadership in servant ministry. Provisional members planning to give their lives as Deacons in full Connection shall be in ministries of Word and Service in the local church or in an approved appointment beyond the local church.”*

In order for the Resident in Ministry program to work effectively, it takes the combined efforts and cooperation of the local church or approved appointment beyond the local church, the Senior Pastor, the District Superintendent, and the Board of Ordained Ministry. These guidelines are offered by the Board of Ordained Ministry to assist in these efforts.

Responsibilities of the Staff/Parish Relations Committee of the Local Church

There are four primary areas of responsibility for the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee of the Local Church in supporting the Resident in Ministry.

A. Support

- Pray regularly for and with the provisional member
- Work to be sensitive to the provisional member’s areas of responsibilities and duty: pastoral responsibilities, the Board of Ordained Ministry’s academic and personal growth requirements, professional and mentoring relationships, and individual and family life.
- Demonstrate concern and support for the provisional member and his or her family.
- Interpret for the congregation the purpose of the Resident in Ministry program, the provisional member’s responsibilities within it, and the congregation’s responsibility to support the Resident in Ministry.
- Make the provisional member feel welcome to share his/her faith story and his/her feelings surrounding the process.

B. Involvement

- Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee in consultation with Senior Pastor shall have a written job description (primary appointment) or list of ministry responsibilities (secondary appointment) to outline expectations of the Deacon’s servant leadership within the congregation. Items to be considered include: ministry responsibilities, worship leadership, conducting marriages, burying the dead, connecting the church to the world and the world to the church, teaching and proclaiming the word, assisting the elders in administering the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, forming and nurturing disciples, embodying the church’s mission to the world, expressing the ministry of compassion and justice, etc.
- Assist the provisional member in identifying areas of concern and growth of the congregation.
- Regularly observe the provisional member engaged in all aspects of ministry.
- Participate in all aspects of the provisional member’s ministry.

- C. Feedback
- Obtain feedback from the congregation on the provisional member's work in all areas of pastoral ministry and share this feedback, honestly and constructively, with the provisional member.
 - Assure the provisional member that all feedback and personal conversations are privileged and private communication.
 - Hold the provisional member accountable to personal time off and his/her own spiritual care and nurture.
- D. Evaluation
- Prepare to offer honest and constructive feedback to the Board of Ordained Ministry in the in-parish visit. The in-parish visit will be conducted once a year, usually in January or February. The format of the in-parish visit is described in the In-Parish Visit form that is included with these guidelines.

Responsibilities of the Senior Pastor

Senior Pastor and Deacon are to meet quarterly to discuss how their leadership together is fostering effectiveness in ministry among the congregation.

- Pray regularly for and with the provisional member.
- Work closely with the Staff/Parish Relations Committee to insure that the above mentioned SPRC responsibilities are being met.
- Work to insure that the provisional member's job description and responsibilities are well defined.
- Meet regularly with the provisional member to offer honest, constructive feedback on the provisional member's work in the areas of his/her responsibilities.
- Regularly observe the Provisional member engaged in all areas of his/her areas of ministry.
- Hold the provisional member accountable to personal time off and his/her own spiritual care and nurture.
- Encourage the provisional member to become immersed in the covenant ministry and life of the district and conference.
- Prepare to offer honest and constructive feedback to the Board of Ordained Ministry in the in-parish visit. The in-parish visit will be conducted once a year, usually in January or February. The format of the in-parish visit is described in the In-Parish Visit form that is included with these guidelines.
- Appointment of Deacon in Full Connection and Probationary members shall be reviewed annually with Deacon, SPRC and Senior Pastor collectively. Senior Pastor will be responsible for officiating meeting.
- Salary compensation applies to Deacons serving within a local congregation full-time and part-time per conference salary standards. Secondary appointment salary compensation may or may not apply.
- Opportunities shall be provided to educate the congregation regarding the ministry of the Deacon (call to word and service, non-itinerant appointment, areas of possible service, etc.) 2008 UMC Book of Discipline ¶330 and 331

Responsibilities of the District Superintendent

- Pray regularly for and with the provisional member.
- Regularly observe the provisional member engaged in his/her areas of ministry.
- Encourage the provisional member to become immersed in the covenant ministry and life of the district and conference.
- Prepare to offer honest and constructive feedback to the Board of Ordained Ministry in the in-parish visit. The in-parish visit will be conducted once a year, usually in January or February. The format of the in-parish visit is described in the In-Parish Visit form that is included with these guidelines.

Guidelines adopted by the Division of Deacons and Diaconal Ministers on March 27, 2011