



Commissioned Ruling Elder Policy – 2018

Purpose and Goals

The purpose of the CRE program is to provide appropriately trained and consistently excellent lay ministry among Commissioned Ruling Elders across congregations within the Presbytery, supported by the Committee on Ministry throughout their tenure.

The role of the CRE in the Presbytery of Cincinnati is found in the Book of Order G-2.1001.

Applicant Qualifications

The CRE Applicant will:

- Be an ordained Ruling Elder in PC(USA) in good standing (for more than XX years...?) (Book of Order G-2.0301)
- Be faithful in spiritual discipline and possessing mature spiritual depth
- Have significant experience in committee and Session involvement in the home congregation (or previous congregation)
- Possess a college education (Associate Degree or Bachelor Degree) or equivalent Involvement in the work of the Presbytery is considered to be helpful.

Discerning the Call to CRE

The Role of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry

The Applicant will:

- Submit to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) the following documents:
 - Written statement on personal faith journey, including a sense of call to the CRE ministry
 - An endorsement of the Session of their home church (form is available on the Presbytery of Cincinnati website)
 - Three references (from church, or at least one from outside church?) (form is available on the Presbytery of Cincinnati website)
 - Diploma from highest degree obtained
- Sign and agree to abide by the Sexual Conduct and Child Protection Policies of the Presbytery of Cincinnati
- Meet with and obtain the approval of the CPM to pursue the educational preparation requirement for CRE

Educational Preparation Requirement for CRE Applicant (G-2.1002)

- Theological training: Once the Applicant has been approved by the CPM for progression, the Applicant must complete a series of courses. These can be completed through the Dubuque Theological Seminary (Dubuque, Iowa; 8 core courses of the Christian Leadership Program plus one advanced course, selected in consultation with CPM) or the Union Theological Seminary (Richmond Virginia; nine courses of the Pathways to Learning and Leadership program). Training is provided online. Taking two courses at a time, the Applicant can reasonably expect to complete the required coursework within 18-24 months. The cost for the coursework (tuition,

books and supplies) is the responsibility of the CRE Applicant, although the Applicant can petition their Session to help defray some of that cost. Initial registration fee to UDTs or Union for all CRE Applicants approved by CPM will be paid by CPM.

- Preaching Institute: Training includes participation in and fulfillment of all requirements of the Ruling Elder Preaching Institute of the Presbytery of Cincinnati. This is part of the educational preparation requirement.
- Ongoing assessment by CPM: During this time, the Applicant will meet with CPM representatives at least annually, and will undergo a psychological/career assessment with the Midwest Ministry Development Center (Columbus), with those costs shared by the CRE Applicant, the Session and the Presbytery. The assessment report must be completed prior to completion of coursework to be released to the General Presbyter.
- Final grades and completion certificates must be submitted to CPM. Once all requirements have been satisfied, CPM will refer the CRE Applicant to the Presbytery of Cincinnati Committee on Ministry (COM).

CRE Candidate Qualifications for Commissioning through the Committee on Ministry

The CRE Candidate will:

- Demonstrate successful completion of all requirements of the CRE educational preparation and training program
- Submit a written Statement of Faith and Personal Information Form (PIF)
- Be examined by the COM in the following two ways:
 - o Preside at a Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and preach a sermon before the COM
 - Be examined by COM. Elements of examination may include Scripture, polity, and practice.
- When the COM is satisfied that the CRE Candidate can serve in a commissioned setting, the COM will designate the CRE to a congregational setting and the Presbytery of Cincinnati will vote to approve the call. The CRE will then undergo a Commissioning Service (G-2.1003, using the words contained in the service under W-4.04).

Ongoing Requirements for the CRE (G-2.1004)

The CRE will:

- Be supervised by a Mentor assigned by COM
- Complete at least two continuing education courses (workshops, etc.) per year, in consultation with COM
- Attend quarterly meetings with other CREs in the Presbytery as convened by the OCM Mentor Team in collaboration with the General Presbyter
- Attend Stated Meetings of the Presbytery of Cincinnati
- Participate in annual ministry goal-setting and assessment with the COM liaison and Session being served.