

Chapter 20 | Clergy Endorsement

For more information, contact the United Methodist Endorsing Agency at umea@gbhem.org or (615) 340-7411.

“Endorsement is the credential which certifies that a clergyperson performs a valid ministry of The United Methodist Church and has presented evidence of required specialized education, training, skills and professional certification necessary to perform that ministry. Once the clergyperson no longer serves in that particular setting, the endorsement is withdrawn.” (¶1421.5)

The United Methodist Endorsing Agency (UMEA)

- Official endorsing agency of the UMC
- Provides ecclesiastical endorsement to those who serve as pastoral counselors, chaplains and in other endorsed settings of ministry, which is required of UMC clergy (elders, deacons, associate members and persons licensed for pastoral ministry)
- An office of GBHEM’s Division of Ordained Ministry

Endorsement Process

- Visit www.gbhem.org/chaplains to request an application
- Applicants must complete a process that includes:
 - An application, including an autobiography and statement explaining their understanding of their call to ministry
 - Status and reference checks
 - An interview
 - Clergy seeking endorsement in health care, prison, counseling and workplace settings will be expected to join the appropriate professional pastoral care organization and receive professional certification from that association. For instance, those desiring to serve as hospital chaplains must join the Association of Professional Chaplains or the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy and be board certified by one of those organizations.
- Bishop’s role. The Endorsing Committee will send a letter to the bishop requesting agreement to appoint if the individual is endorsed. The process is terminated if the bishop is unwilling to appoint.

Notifying the Bishop

The UMEA informs the bishop when the endorsement is either granted or denied. If the endorsement is withdrawn for any reason, the bishop is notified immediately. The UMEA sends a list to each bishop of those persons endorsed from his/her Annual Conference each year and requests their reappointment.

Notifying the UMEA

Since endorsement requires that a person be in effective relationship with the Annual Conference, it is essential that Cabinets and BOMs notify the UMEA when any endorsed clergy has a change in status including location, leave or retirement. Endorsement may be continued in retirement with the approval of the bishop.

Elders and Deacons Recommended for Endorsement

BOMs should encourage elders and deacons to seek endorsement when their appointment setting makes them eligible.

Resources

For more information and a list of the current endorsements settings, visit: www.gbhem.org/chaplains