

Minimum Standards for Ministerial Assessment Specialists

The Division of Ordained Ministry (DOM) at the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of The United Methodist Church oversees the selection process in general of persons entering licensed or ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church and the psychological assessment process in particular. The DOM has established a recommended process for the required psychological evaluations, offers recommended assessment instruments, offers training, and sets standards for those approved to provide the assessments.

An individual approved by the DOM to provide psychological assessments is called a *Ministerial Assessment Specialist (MAS)*. An MAS is approved by an application process, through which those applying demonstrate that their credentials, experience and training meet the DOM's requirements. Only those approved as an MAS may participate in the psychological assessment process service provided by the DOM.

Criteria for an approved MAS includes three primary competencies:

1. **Psychological Assessment** – a psychologist with specific training and experience in personality and vocational assessment, including test theory and construction, administration, scoring and interpretation
2. **Interview Assessment** – a psychotherapist with graduate training in personality theory and psychotherapy, including experience in the application of clinical evaluative skills to vocational or personnel selection and evaluation.
3. **Ministry Assessment** – a person who values church and religious experience, and is familiar with ministry issues as they apply to the selection and nurture of candidates in The United Methodist Church.

An MAS demonstrates knowledge of:

1. Technical assessment issues (e.g., how ministry candidates score differently from other norm groups on the instruments the DOM provides)
2. Evaluatory criteria (e.g., how the criteria used in the decision-making processes – in ministry generally and the UMC in particular – are different from criteria in other selection contexts)
3. Effective interviewing (e.g., how to interpret test results in ways that relate to the ministry context, balancing agendas of nurture and selection)
4. Effective report-writing (e.g., how best to convey assessment information to both candidate and board/committee, who are typically non-clinicians)

The knowledge, experience and credentials described above are to be demonstrated in the psychological assessment process at appropriate points. All three competencies must be present in a Ministerial Assessment.

In order to maintain their approved status, Ministerial Assessment Specialists must remain in good standing with the professional associations appropriate to their credentials. The MAS approval also involves participation in DOM training events. The MAS approval must be renewed on a quadrennial basis and is subject to review at any time, at the discretion of the DOM.

Definition of Terms for New MAS's

Ministerial Assessment Specialist (MAS) – is a psychologist who meets the minimum standards set by the Advisory Committee on Candidacy and Clergy Assessment of the Division of Ordained Ministry at the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and is approved to provide psychological services to annual conferences of The United Methodist Church.

An MAS is selected, and contracted, to work directly with the annual conference board of ordained ministry to provide psychological assessment consultation to individuals and to interview committees who work with candidates for ministry in the screening and nurture process.

An MAS provides information concerning an applicant's internal and interpersonal functioning by writing a psychological report viewed as a written consultation to interview committees for use in the formulation of questions they may need to raise with the candidate in their face-to-face interview, and as a part of the information they will need to consider in making their final decision.

Test scores and other data from the psychological assessment should be governed by contractual arrangement between the annual conference and the psychological consultant. When a relationship between the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) and a ministerial assessment specialist is discontinued, test data and copies of reports should be passed on to another ministerial specialist retained by the annual conference.

Division of Ordained Ministry (DOM) – Boards of Ordained Ministry relate directly to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) Division of Ordained Ministry (DOM). The staff of the DOM is equipped to provide consultation services, training, and other resources in the development of BOM programs. Those responsible for recruitment, enlistment, and candidacy shall relate to the Enlistment and Candidacy Team of the DOM. Those responsible for education, provisional membership, and licensing of local pastors shall relate to the Education Ministry Team of the DOM. Those responsible for support systems, continuing education, and supervision shall relate to the Support, Accountability and Nurture Ministry Team.

Standard Battery – is a standard core battery of instruments established for regular use by ministerial assessment specialists in the psychological dimensions of the evaluation procedures utilized by district committees and annual conference boards of ordained ministry. The process for selecting the instruments to be included in the core battery involves three steps: survey of instruments being utilized by ministerial assessment specialists in such assessments; seminar/workshop experiences with ministerial assessment specialists in five different regional meetings over a two year period; a synthesis of the results from both the survey and workshops by the Advisory Committee on Candidacy and Clergy Assessment, to the Division of Ordained Ministry.

The following is a list of instruments to be included in the standard core test battery, though the clinician may choose to add supplementary instruments of his/her own choosing in addition to these:

- Personal Data Inventory (PDI)
- Sixteen Personality Factor (16 PF)

- The Incomplete Sentence Blank
- The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory – 2 (MMPI-2)
- The Personal and Professional Reference List

The Book of Discipline – is the book of law of The United Methodist Church. It is the instrument for setting forth the laws, plan, polity, and process by which United Methodists govern themselves. Each General Conference amends, perfects, clarifies, and adds its own contribution to the *Discipline*.

Elder – Those whose leadership in service includes preaching and teaching the Word of God, administration of the sacraments, ordering the Church for its mission and service, and administration of the *Discipline* of the Church are ordained as elders. ¶ 303.2

The elder has primary responsibility for Word, the apostolic task of the faithful transmission of the faith and proclamation of the Word of God.

Deacon – Those who respond to God’s call to lead in service and to equip others for this ministry through teaching, proclamation, and worship and who assist elders in the administration of the sacraments are ordained deacon. ¶303.2

Deacons are those persons called by God, authorized by the church, and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of Word and Service to both the community and the congregation in a ministry that connects the two. They exemplify Christian discipleship; create opportunities for others to enter into discipleship, and connect the needs and hurts of the people with the church.

Local Pastor – Full-time and part-time licensed local pastors under appointment are clergy members of the annual conference in which they are appointed. Those who are licensed for pastoral ministry and appointed to the local church shall preach, conduct divine worship and perform the duties of a pastor. ¶ 602, 315

The licensed local pastor has answered the call from God to serve the mission of Jesus Christ through the work of the local congregation in The United Methodist Church. The licensed local pastor while appointed to a particular charge shall perform all the duties of a pastor, and has the authority of a pastor only within the setting and during the time of the appointment and shall not extend beyond it.

Advisory Committee on Candidacy and Clergy Assessment (ACCCA) – An advisory committee to the Division of Ordained Ministry that engages in ongoing research projects which creates literature on clergy assessment. This literature has become the basis of consultation and testing for both boards of ordained ministry and ministerial assessment specialists.

Ministerial Assessment Specialist Application



Application

Through this application the certification, qualifications, training, and experience of each applicant are reviewed against the required criteria listed on the previous page. Approval by the Advisory Committee and the DOM signifies that the applicant meets one or more of the standards.

In order for this application to be accepted, please include a cover sheet of malpractice insurance when submitting the application.

Ministerial Assessment Specialist Application



Part 1 – Professional Demographic Information

Name: _____ Highest Degree: _____

Current Job Title: _____ Organization: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Street

Office Phone #: (____) _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Cell Phone #: (____) _____

Fax #: (____) _____ Email: _____

Web Site: _____

Conference(s) of The United Methodist Church that contract for your professional services:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Part 2 – Certifications

State Licensure:

I certify that I currently hold a valid license as a psychologist, or related mental health discipline (designate the actual title used in your state(s)), that I am in good standing with the state’s licensing or regulatory agency, and that I can practice psychology without limitations or restrictions of that license in the following states/provinces. I agree to keep my license current and will inform the Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry of the Conference(s) where I serve and the DOM if/when I am no longer licensed. I have included a copy of each license with this application.

<u>State</u>	<u>Licensing Title</u>	<u>License Number</u>	<u>Original Date of Issue</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Ethical and Legal Status:

1. I certify that:
 - a. I have never had any licensing board or professional ethics body require me to surrender my license or find me guilty of a violation of ethics codes, professional misconduct, unprofessional behavior, incompetence or negligence in any state, province, or county, and
 - b. I have never been the subject of a complaint to an ethics committee and have never been charged with or convicted of a felony in any state, province or county, the disposition of which was other than acquittal or dismissal.
2. I agree that should I become the subject of an ethics complaint or the subject of an investigation by the state licensing/regulatory agency, or should I be indicted for a criminal act or have civil professional malpractice suit brought against me at any time when I am identified as, or serving as a Ministerial Assessment Specialist, that within 10 working days I will notify in writing the Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry of the Conference(s) where I serve and the Division of Ordained Ministry that such an action has been taken and identify the nature of such complaints, investigations, indictments, and/or suits.
3. I agree to abide by all applicable laws and administrative regulations of the state(s) where I practice, by the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct of the American Psychological Association (or by the professional ethics code of my profession if I am not a psychologist) and by all other standards and guidelines promulgated by the American Psychological Association.

Professional Malpractice Insurance:

I certify that I have purchased and will maintain in force as long as I am certified as a Ministerial Assessment Specialist professional liability insurance coverage. I have included a copy of the cover sheet of that insurance with this application.

Signature and Date

If you are not able to certify to, or consent to, each of the above items, please provide a detailed explanation. Your explanation will be considered by the ACCCA in reviewing your application.

Ministerial Assessment Specialist Application



Part 3 – General Competence in Personality & Vocational Counseling and Assessment

Education:

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Degree</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>APA Major</u>	<u>Approved</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Professional Certifications: (such as those awarded by AAPC, AAMFT, etc.)

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Certificate</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Professional Experience: (especially those that relate to competencies required to perform services of a Ministerial Assessment Specialist)

<u>Position</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Institution</u>	<u>Responsibilities & Duties</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Membership in Professional Associations:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Type of Membership</u>	<u>Since Beginning Date</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Part 4 – Specific Competencies in Psychological Testing and Assessment

Graduate and Post-graduate courses in psychological testing/measurement and personality assessment: (List name of course and assessment technique, such as intellectual and cognitive, objective personality, projective, interest, aptitude and vocational)

Course Name

Assessment Technique

The following instruments are included in the Board of Higher Education and Ministry battery of tests for clergy assessment. List your skill training, supervised experience and professional experience relative to these tests and assessment techniques:

Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2:

16 Personality Factor, Fifth Edition:

Incomplete Sentences:

List the psychological tests and inventories which you utilize in the assessment process with ministers:

Part 5 – Ministry Assessment

Church Membership: _____

Ordained: YES: Deacon Elder

 No

Training in evaluation criteria for ministry:

List your training/experience concerning the way that ministerial candidates score differently from other norm groups on the MMPI-2 and other psychological assessment instruments.

Training in evaluation criteria for ministry:

List your training/experience concerning how the criteria used in the decision-making process in ministry differ from criteria in other selection contexts.

List your training/experience concerning how these evaluation criteria apply to the United Methodist ministry in particular, including your involvement in and knowledge of the United Methodist Church and ministry.

Effective interviewing in the ministry context:

List your experience/training in interpreting test results in ways that relate to the ministry context, balancing the needs for both nurture and selection.

Effective report-writing:

List the experience/training which prepares you to write a report to convey assessment information to both candidate and board/committee in language which communicates to non-clinicians.

Part 6 – Continuous Improvement and Quality Assurance

Continuing education is one means of maintaining professional expertise relative to the specialized objectives of the psychological assessment of candidates for Church vocations.

Have you attended a national or regional training session for ministerial evaluators?

YES No

Comments:

Would you be willing to attend a Ministerial Assessment Specialist training session if partially funded (travel and hotel cost) by DOM or the BOM for which you provide services?

YES No

Comments:

Attestation:

I attest and certify that I have answered the above application questions truthfully and that the information given in or attached to this application is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant's Signature

Date

SEND THIS APPLICATION ALONG WITH COVER SHEET OF MALPRACTICE INSURANCE TO THE MAILING OR EMAIL ADDRESS BELOW:

GBHEM
Attn: Psychological Assessment Office
PO Box 340007
Nashville, TN 37203-0007
Email: assessment@gbhem.org