

Licensing Policy

A Policy of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists; and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up (Ephesians 4:11-12).

No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was (Hebrews 5:4).

1. General Principles

All full- or part-time¹ paid local church ministry² staff and fully or partially funded international workers are required to be licensed by The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada (the "C&MA"). In special circumstances self-funded workers may be issued the appropriate license.

Only a person of sound Christian experience, with a godly life and a keen sense of mission, and who is in full agreement with the doctrines and teachings of the C&MA, may be approved by the C&MA for licensing.

Individuals in active violation of Scriptural moral standards shall not be licensed. The term "violation of Scriptural moral standards" as used by the C&MA shall include, but not be limited to: guilt in a criminal offense, misappropriation of funds, dishonesty or fraud in business or legal transactions, sexual activity outside of a monogamous heterosexual marriage, and sexual harassment or assault. The implications for eligibility for licensing of previous violations of Scriptural moral standards shall be assessed on a case-by-case basis through the approval process. The innocent party in a divorce or a person married to the innocent party in a divorce may be considered for licensing and appointment to district or national offices. The decision shall be informed by, and be in accordance with, the Statement on Family and Marriage.

2. Licensing Authority

Authority to issue licenses on behalf of the C&MA shall be vested in the district superintendent for personnel ministering within the district and those who are international workers, and in the president for district superintendents, vice presidents, and those who minister at Ambrose University and École de Théologie Évangélique du Québec, and in the C&MA Board of Directors for the president.

Each license holder is ultimately accountable to the authority that issues the license. Any licensing authority of the C&MA shall recognize the action of another C&MA licensing authority in matters of licensing and discipline as equal to its own acts.

3. Terms of License

Licenses for initial appointment to a specific ministry will be issued at time of placement. All licenses are issued annually with January 1 deemed to be the anniversary date.

Licenses remain valid during the period of time in which the worker is appointed to a specific ministry as defined by the licensing authority. Workers who transition to a new location of ministry shall re-sign A Call to Excellence.

¹ Part time = 15 hours/week or more

² Local church ministry = a primary focus on meeting the spiritual needs of people and/or providing church leadership.

A person with a portable license who is unassigned may retain their license for the balance of the current year and one additional year. Any extension of time beyond this period shall be at the discretion of the licensing authority only. In order to retain a license, the unassigned person must be available for ministry.

All license holders directly employed by C&MA churches may hold any position the church determines, with the understanding that annual reporting is defined by and presented to the governing authority of the local church.

All license holders not directly employed by C&MA churches but serving the denomination may be granted licenses to hold any position approved by either national or district entities (dependent on the scope of such ministry), with the understanding that annual reporting is defined by and presented to the licensing authority and that such licenses may only be extended upon satisfactory presentation of such reports.

Official workers and workers emeritus shall retain active membership in a C&MA church unless such membership is not possible due to exceptional circumstances as approved by the licensing authority.

Licenses are subject to revocation by the issuing authority if conditions leading to licensing are not met or if disciplinary action under the Discipline, Restoration, and Appeal for Official Workers Policy or Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct for Official Workers and Churches is in effect. Workers who fail to be relicensed by the district superintendent for reasons other than the application of the discipline policy may appeal to the District Executive Committee, and those who fail to be relicensed by the president may appeal to the Board of Directors.

If a worker's license lapses for reasons other than disciplinary action, their license may be reinstated within two years upon appointment to a specific ministry.

After a lapse of between two years and five years the candidate must:

- a) affirm that the statements contained in the original application forms and doctrinal questionnaire are still valid;
- b) comply with all current requirements for licensing; and
- c) be interviewed by a licensing committee at the discretion of the licensing authority.

After a lapse of five years the candidate must reapply for licensing.

4. Categories of License

There shall be three categories of license issued by the C&MA. These licenses are considered to be clergy licenses by the C&MA. The portable and non-portable licenses provide voting delegate status at District Conference and General Assembly.

4.1. Official Worker License (Portable)

The portable license shall be for persons who are called, gifted, and appropriately trained to serve the Church at large both within the setting of a local church and/or in other ministries. Persons holding the portable license are eligible for ministry anywhere within, or on behalf of, the C&MA. All senior pastors and non-local church licensed personnel³ shall carry the portable license unless specifically authorized by the licensing authority.

Only those holding a portable license may use the titles "pastor" or "reverend" (upon ordination) and may oversee the administration of the ordinances and the solemnization of marriages.

³ For example, this includes district superintendents and district office staff, National Ministry Centre leadership, para-church ministry leadership, pastors of affiliated churches, chaplains, evangelists, theological faculty and leadership of official schools (post-secondary), etc.

4.2. Official Worker License (Non-Portable)

The non-portable license shall be for persons who are called and gifted to serve in a particular local church or as an international worker in a particular ministry.

Those holding the non-portable license may administer the ordinances under the authority of the senior pastor, district superintendent, or Global Ministries strategy director and, if responsible for a church, may be given the title “pastor” by special permission of the district superintendent or president.

4.3. Worker Emeritus License

Those workers who have held an official worker portable license for at least twenty-five years and who have retired from employment in the C&MA may be granted a lifetime worker emeritus license by the licensing authority. The worker emeritus license does not qualify the worker for voting status at District Conference or General Assembly. Those carrying the worker emeritus license continue to uphold the code of ethics for licensed workers (‘A Call to Excellence’), commit to the fulfillment of other licensing conditions established from time to time by the licensing authority, and are subject to the Policy on Discipline, Restoration and Appeal for Official Workers, Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct for Official Workers and Churches, and the Policy on Process for Mediation and Arbitration for Official Workers of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada.

5. Prerequisites

5.1. Official Worker License (Portable)

5.1.1. Appropriate Training:

- a) theological training at a bachelor’s degree level from an accredited Bible college, college, or university; or
- b) any bachelor’s degree or for candidates who are strong theologically, its equivalent as decided by the licensing authority, plus the completion of a diploma/certificate program from an Association of Theological Schools (ATS) or an Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE) accredited institution or other such institution as approved by the licensing authority.

5.1.2. Successful completion of the approval process.

5.1.3. Commitment to the successful completion of the Alliance History and Thought course for credit within one year.

5.1.4. Commitment to the successful completion of the requirements of the Ordination Policy.

5.1.5. Commitment to the fulfillment of other licensing conditions established from time to time by the licensing authority.

5.2. Official Worker License (Non-Portable)

5.2.1. Successful completion of the approval process.

5.2.2. Commitment to the successful completion of the Alliance History and Thought course for credit within one year.

5.2.3. Commitment to the successful completion of the Foundations for Ministry Certificate or its equivalent, as determined by the licensing authority, within a reasonable time frame.

5.2.4. Commitment to the fulfillment of other licensing conditions established from time to time by the licensing authority.

6. Approval Process

6.1. Official Worker License (Portable)

6.1.1. Satisfactory completion of denominational application forms. All forms shall be submitted to the appropriate licensing authority.

- a) Application Form
- b) Applicant Reference Form
- c) Biographical Inventory
- d) Doctrinal Questionnaire
- e) A Call to Excellence: Code of Ethics for official workers of the C&MA in Canada
- f) Criminal record check
- g) Endorsement from the board of the local church in which the applicant is a member when applying
- h) Applicants for international ministry may be required to complete additional application forms

6.1.2. Satisfactory interview with a Licensing Committee appointed by the District Executive Committee. The standard C&MA licensing interview form will be used to record the interview, along with the standard interviewer guide and candidate study guide.

6.2. Official Worker License (Non-Portable)

6.2.1. Satisfactory completion of denominational application forms. All forms shall be submitted to the appropriate licensing authority.

- a) Application Form
- b) Applicant Reference Form
- c) Biographical Inventory
- d) Doctrinal Questionnaire
- e) A Call to Excellence: Code of Ethics for official workers of the C&MA in Canada
- f) Criminal Record Check
- g) Endorsement from the board of the local church in which the applicant is a member when applying.
- h) Applicants for international ministry may be required to complete additional application forms.

6.2.2. Satisfactory interview with a Licensing Committee. The standard C&MA licensing interview form will be used to record the interview, along with the standard interviewer guide and candidate study guide. The committee will be comprised of the district superintendent or appointee and at least two

other ordained persons holding a portable license. If one of these is the senior pastor of the church in which the applicant will serve, the other must be from outside that church.

7. Exceptions

A written appeal, including a clear rationale and any supporting documentation, may be submitted by the licensing authority to the president of the C&MA, requesting an exception to some requirement of the Licensing Policy on behalf of a candidate who, at the time of licensing, does not meet said requirement. The president shall conduct a thorough review of the written appeal and consult with the licensing authority. Following these steps, a summary of the president's findings shall be provided to the licensing authority and, solely at the discretion of the president, an exception may be granted.

8. Amendments

The Licensing Policy may be amended by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Adopted – Board of Directors, November 2007

Amended – Board of Directors, April 2011

Amended – Board of Directors, November 2017

Amended – Board of Directors, May 2019

Amended – Board of Directors, November 2019

Amended – Board of Directors, November 2020