

The Episcopal Diocese of California

Guidelines for Those Seeking Holy Orders

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Introduction

This information is for individuals who feel called to ordained ministry in The Episcopal Church.

The People of God, infused with the Holy Spirit and assisted by resources and training provided by the Bishop and Commission on Ministry, seek persons whose demonstrated qualities of Christian commitment and potential for servant leadership and vision mark them as prospects for ordained leadership in the Church. Such persons must be confirmed adult communicants in good standing.¹

Seeking the life of the Spirit and the patterns of God's activity in daily life, the church and the world is one way to explain discernment. Discernment is both an internal and external process, as it involves exploration and discovery by individuals about themselves and by the church about individuals.

The language used to describe the discernments process and its components may be common to Christian churches or particular to The Episcopal Church. To make this more accessible, each phase of the process is described using familiar categories: application, supporting documentation, assessment, and decisions.

¹ *2018 Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church*. Title III, Canon III.3.1.

General Guidelines

The Diocesan website is always the resource of record and will be updated more frequently than comprehensive guidelines.

With the exception of confidential medical, psychological and background evaluations, the entire application and documentation process will be conducted digitally, and the vocations office will not maintain paper files.

The person in discernment is responsible for coordinating their process, in conversation with the vocations office, sponsoring congregation, Commission on Ministry, and others who may have oversight of the process. This includes anticipating when meetings with a Vestry or Bishop's Committee need to be scheduled.

Interviews with the Commission on Ministry or Standing Committee are generally block scheduled or coordinated at a high level with the vocations office, the Chair of the COM, and the Standing Committee Liaison to the Commission on Ministry. The candidate should contact the vocations office well in advance of an anticipated interview to coordinate schedules.

Throughout the process, the person in process is responsible for maintain regular relationships with a spiritual director; the Commission on Ministry liaison, once assigned; and the clergy in charge, Vestry or Bishop's Committee, and as informed by the clergy, the Local Discernment Committee of the sponsoring congregation.

The person in the process is responsible for submitting any changes in personal or legal information to the vocations office.

Applications and documents submitted under these guidelines are valid for three years. If an individual is inactive or leaves the process for three years or more, new applications and/or documentation is required.

The Bishop's office, typically represented by the vocations office, is responsible for communicating all decisions to the applicant and sponsoring or supporting parties, especially the clergy in charge of the sponsoring congregation.

Initial discernment

Beginning Discernment for Ordination to Holy Orders

1. The rector/vicar of the congregation provides the name of an individual who desires and is eligible to pursue Holy Orders (aspirant) to the vocations office.
2. The aspirant must be a confirmed adult communicant in good standing, younger than 72 years of age, and resident in the sponsoring congregation for a minimum of three years.
3. The aspirant attends Day of Discernment conducted multiple times per year by the Working Group Head for Formation and a representative of the Commission on Ministry. Contact us to inquire about the next Day of Discernment.
4. The aspirant begins regular spiritual direction, which continues throughout the discernment process. A spiritual director is a trained professional who accompanies an individual in their spiritual journey. Visit www.sdiworld.org to learn more about spiritual direction generally. A directory of spiritual directors is available from most seminaries, and recommendations may be available from the diocese.
5. The aspirant undertakes Time of Discernment, a 12-week self-directed program of discernment. Submit this form to begin Time of Discernment.
6. The rector establishes a local discernment committee (LDC). The LDC is encouraged to participate in diocesan formation that explores the role and charism of the LDC.
7. After the aspirant has done sufficient discernment with the LDC (at minimum six-monthly meetings), and the LDC feels they are called to ongoing Discernment for Holy Orders, they begin the nominations process.

Nomination

A confirmed adult communicant in good standing may be nominated for ordination to the diaconate or priesthood by the person's congregation or other community of faith.² The Nomination process formally introduces the aspirant to the diocesan level and notifies the Diocese and the Bishop of an individual's desire to pursue holy orders.

² 2018 Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church. Title III, Canon 6.2.and Canon 8.2.

There is an 18-month minimum time of discernment and formation for ministry, beginning with the date that the aspirant accepts the nomination, and before a date of ordination.³

If the LDC and clergy are in agreement about nomination, the aspirant with appropriate assistance from the LDC, will prepare the application at <https://diocal.org/nomination>.

Annual Deadline to Apply for Nomination

Applications may be submitted on a rolling basis. **Beginning in 2020, all nominations forms must be submitted by June 1** for the nominee to be considered for postulancy at the annual November Vocations Conference.

All application materials from all parties are submitted electronically in online forms, and where files are uploaded to the form, the files are in standard formats (.pdf, .doc/x, etc.) The website is the application of record and may contain additional information. These requirements are listed below for ease.

Aspirant's Application for Nomination

Prior to 2019, forms N1, N2

1. Application for Nomination for Holy Orders
2. Baptismal Certificate
3. Confirmation Certificate
4. Reception Certificate (if applicable)
5. Description of Discernment Process
6. Explanation of previous application for Holy Orders (if applicable)
7. Dates of Day of Discernment and Time of Discernment
8. A ~400-word autobiography

Supporting Documentation

The aspirant is responsible for coordinating this documentation. All of the information is submitted online at <https://diocal.org/nomination>. Where signatures are canonically required, they are uploaded in common image formats (.pdf, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, etc.) in the form.⁴

³ 2018 Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church. Title III, Canon 6.6.a.1.

⁴ See 2018 Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church. Title III, Canon 11.3.c

N03 Report Regarding Nomination from the LDC

The LDC will prepare and submit a written report to the Vestry or Bishop's Committee and forward to the vocations office.

N04 Congregational Endorsement of Nomination for Holy Orders

The Vestry/Bishop's Committee will consider the recommendation of the LDC and, if in agreement, endorse the nomination of the aspirant and forward to the vocations office.

Assessment and Decisions

All other phases of the Holy Orders process include an assessment of the application and supporting documentation, and a subsequent decision. Nomination does not. Once the aspirant's application and supporting documentation is received, they are a nominee.

As a nominee

The nominee will begin the application for postulancy, and coordinate the supporting documentation, especially with the LDC.

The nominee may engage in a supervised ministry.

- a. See <https://diocal.org/ministryplacement> to notify the vocations office and bishop of your intent to undertake supervised ministry.

The Commission on Ministry (COM) will appoint a liaison to begin working with and providing support for the nominee.

The person remains a nominee until the application for postulancy has been assessed and the Bishop issues a decision granting or denying postulancy.

Nomination is a preliminary step in discerning a possible call to Holy Orders and does not guarantee ordination.

Postulancy

Postulancy is the time between nomination and candidacy and begins formal preparation for ordination. Postulancy involves continued exploration of and decision about the Postulant's call to the Diaconate or Priesthood.⁵

Before proceeding with an application for postulancy, the LDC, clergy person in charge and the nominee must come to a shared understanding about whether or not the congregation will endorse the application of the nominee for Postulancy.

Annual Deadline to Apply for Postulancy

All postulancy applications must be submitted by July 31 for the Nominee to be considered for postulancy at the annual November Vocations Conference. All application materials are submitted in online forms at <https://diocal.org/postulancy>. The list below is representative for ease, but comprehensive details are available in the form itself.

Nominee's Application for Postulancy

Prior to 2019, forms P1-P4

1. Application for Postulancy
2. Work History
3. Statement of Reasons for Seeking Holy Orders
4. Digital Photograph of nominee
5. Educational history
6. Transcripts from all post-secondary institutions
7. Educational Plan
 - a. For aspirants to the priesthood, the traditional plan is a Master of Divinity degree.
 - b. For aspirants with an existing graduate degree in theology or a related discipline, ordination in another tradition, or substantive work as a chaplain or other lay religious professional, a Master of Divinity degree may not be the most appropriate vehicle for formation and discernment. These aspirants will be asked to assess their background in conversation with a representative of the Commission on Ministry, the Vocations Officer and an advisor.

⁵ Canons III.6.3 and III.8.3.

- i. Later, if the aspirant is admitted to postulancy, that assessment will help guide the formation plan.

Supporting Documentation

The nominee is responsible for coordinating this documentation. All of the information is submitted online at <https://diocal.org/postulancy>. Where signatures are canonically required, they are uploaded in common image formats (.pdf, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, etc.) in the form.⁶

P05 Recommendations

Letters of recommendation are to be submitted from three lay people and one clergy person (not in charge of the sponsoring congregation).

P06 Local Discernment Committee

The LDC will give a written evaluation of the nominee with recommendation to the Vestry or Bishop's Committee and vocations office. Once submitted, the evaluation is automatically shared with the clergy in charge of the sponsoring congregation.

P07 Clergy Recommendation

The clergy with oversight addresses the nominee's application for postulancy and call to Holy Orders.

P08 Congregational Endorsement of Application for Postulancy and Attestation

Based on the evaluation and recommendation of the LDC, and other relevant information it may have, the Vestry or Bishop's Committee must decide whether or not to endorse the application of the nominee for Postulancy. If endorsed, they complete the online form.

Fitness for Ordained Ministry and Eligibility for Vocations Conference

Assessment of the application for postulancy is two-fold: first, establishing that the nominee is fit for ordained ministry by means of psychological and medical evaluations, a background check, and a personal financial statement. When these are completed, the nominee is invited to the annual Vocations Conference, typically held around the second weekend in November. The Vocations Conference gathers all nominees with the Commission on Ministry and other interested parties for a time of prayer, reflection and group interviews. Following the Vocations Conference, the Commission on Ministry makes its recommendation to the Bishop.

Psychological Evaluation

Prior to 2019, form F2

Upon submission of the Application for Postulancy, the nominee will be prompted to complete a required Behavioral Screening Questionnaire (BSQ), and to contact a professional contracted by the

⁶ See *2018 Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church*. Title III, Canon III.11.3.c

Diocese to perform clergy psychological evaluations. The Behavioral screening Questionnaire and full report of the psychological examination will be given to the Bishop's office and retained in the individual's confidential file.

The sponsoring congregation is responsible for paying for the psychological evaluation. The diocese will pay the provider and bill the congregation for reimbursement.

Medical Evaluation

The nominee undertakes a complete medical evaluation using the forms required by the Church Medical Trust.

The nominee is responsible for paying for the medical evaluation.

Financial Statement and Aid Request

Prior to 2019, form P3 Personal Financial Statement and F3 Budget and Financial Aid Request

nominees are required to provide a comprehensive financial statement, which will also be used as the first year's financial aid application. nominees should also seek other sources of aid from seminaries as well as Episcopal and private sources.

Background Check

Prior to 2019, form F4 Oxford Documents Background Check

The Vocations Office will request a background check from Oxford Documents. The nominee must promptly provide information requested by Oxford Documents. The reports from Oxford Documents will be kept in the individual's confidential file.

Assessment of Application for Postulancy

P09 Interview with COM representative

A representative of the COM schedules an initial interview with the nominee. The COM representative submits their assessment.

Interview with the Bishop

Prior to 2019, form P10

The nominee will be prompted to schedule an interview with the Bishop, who will evaluate the suitability and qualifications of the applicant to seek Holy Orders.

Invitation to Vocations Conference

Prior to 2019, form P11

After fitness is established and with the approval of the Bishop, the nominee will be formally invited to the Vocations Conference.

P12 COM Recommendation Regarding Postulancy

Prior to 2019, form P12 Vocations Conference Recommendation

At the Vocations Conference, the nominee will be interviewed by members of the COM to further discern the nominee's call to holy orders. After the conference, the COM will submit its evaluation and recommendation to the Bishop for consideration.

Decisions Regarding Postulancy Application

Bishop's Decision Regarding Postulancy

Prior to 2019, form P13 Bishop's Decision Regarding Postulancy

The Bishop, after receiving the recommendation of the COM, will decide whether or not to approve the nominee for postulancy.

The nominee will be notified of the decision electronically in a timely manner by the Bishop or the vocations office.

If postulancy is not granted

If Postulancy is not granted, the Bishop may, at the Bishop's sole discretion, invite the nominee to reapply in one, two or three years. If more than three years elapse before a nominee reapplies for postulancy, the process must be undertaken from the beginning, with an LDC and new nomination.

If postulancy is granted > education plan

- If postulancy is granted, the postulant then needs to finalize an education plan for the Bishop's approval.
- Postulants with existing education or experience will refer to their education assessments and may reconvene their committee to formulate a plan.
 - If the prior formation meets or exceeds the requirements to apply for candidacy, the committee must recommend, and the Bishop approve, appropriate criteria for applying for candidacy, and, in the absence of formal academic training, an appropriate academic resource to assess the postulant's intellectual formation.

Bishop's Approval of Educational Plan

Prior to 2019, form P2 Approval of Educational Plan

Postulants must obtain the Bishop's approval of the seminary or other school which they hope to attend as described in their education plan, or as formulated with an assessment committee.

As a postulant

Postulancy is the time between nomination and candidacy and may initiate the formal preparation for ordination. Postulancy involves continued exploration of and decision about the postulant's call to the Vocational Diaconate or Priesthood.⁷

There is no prescribed duration of postulancy. It must be substantial enough to satisfy the requirements to apply for candidacy and to provide the Commission on Ministry and seminary, School of Deacons, or alternative formation program with sufficient experience and data to assess the postulant's suitability for candidacy.

Throughout this phase, the postulant must:

1. **Submit Ember Letters.** From postulancy through ordination, ember letters are submitted quarterly to the Bishop and logged by the vocations office. Ember letters allow for regular communication from the person in process to the Bishop reflecting on their spiritual, intellectual and personal growth. Visit <https://diocal.org/emberletter> to submit letters and see the liturgical schedule for Ember Weeks. Ember letters are due on Saturday of the Ember Week.
 - a. The Bishop reads, but does not necessarily reply, to Ember letters.
2. **Continue LDC Meetings:** The postulant will continue meeting with the LDC on a regular basis as determined appropriate by the clergy in charge, postulant and LDC.
3. **Participate in Spiritual Formation.** Postulants participate in regular spiritual formation groups as directed by the seminary or formation program. Postulants for the Vocational Diaconate must participate in a group facilitated by the School for Deacons.
4. **Arrange Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)**
 - a. Clinical Pastoral Education provides practical pastoral training for aspiring clergy in a multi-faith context to provide supervised pastoral care for people in crisis. CPE also provides structures for theological reflection and peer learning, equipping faith leaders to be self-aware in their future pastoral encounters.
 - b. Postulants should arrange their pastoral training as early as possible during their postulancy. The COM liaison and vocations office, as well as the seminary, can assist in finding a suitable program. Once a program has been identified, visit <https://diocal.org/ministryplacement> to formally request your site.
 - c. Postulants preparing for the priesthood are required to complete 300 hours of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).

⁷ Title III, Canon 6.3 and Canon 8.3.

- d. Postulants for the Vocational Diaconate are required to complete 120 hours of CPE or some other form of approved pastoral training.
5. **Participate in Field Education Placement:** Two years of field education are required. Guidelines may be set by the seminary. Field education should broaden and deepen the postulant's experience of the church and should not take place in the postulant's sponsoring congregation. The Commission on Ministry, vocations office and seminary or formation program can assist in find a suitable site and supervisor. Once a site has been identified, visit <https://diocal.org/ministryplacement> to make a formal request to the Bishop and vocations office.
 - a. **Intern Year Alternative:** One intern year may be substituted for the two-year field education requirement.
6. **Preparation for Candidacy.** Review the requirements during candidacy, especially mandated trainings, and begin to work on those and/or anticipate the need of scheduling them.

No Guarantee of Holy Orders: Postulancy is a period in which the individual and the Church are involved in mutual discernment of a vocation to Holy Orders. Postulancy does not automatically guarantee Candidacy for Holy Orders. Those moving into Candidacy must have clearly demonstrated gifts for ministry and the Church must have a clearly defined need for the skills and gifts offered by those seeking Orders.

Candidacy

Candidacy is a time of formation to prepare for ordination, established by a formal commitment between the Candidate, the Bishop, the Commission, the Standing Committee and the congregation or other community of faith. ⁸ Visit <https://diocal.org/candidacy>.

Eligibility for Application

The Application for Candidacy is the result and consensus of discernment with the local discernment committee, the clergy in charge of the sponsoring congregation, spiritual director, and COM liaison. The application follows the formation intended during postulancy, including:

1. Two years of required theological study or its equivalent;
2. One year of field education, or part of an intern year
3. Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)

If the applicant began postulancy having met these requirements, the applicant must meet the alternative requirements recommended by the assessment committee and approved by the Bishop along with the education plan at postulancy.

All application materials are submitted via online forms at <https://diocal.org/candidacy>. The list below is representative for ease, but comprehensive details are available in the form itself.

Postulant's Application for Candidacy

Prior to 2019, form C1

1. Dates of nomination and postulancy
2. A formal letter of 400+ words, addressed to the Bishop
 - a. Describing areas of intellectual and spiritual growth during postulancy, and
 - b. Outlining goals for continued growth during the remainder of the applicant's formation

Supporting Documentation

The postulant is responsible for coordinating this documentation. All of the information is submitted online at <https://diocal.org/candidacy>. Where signatures are canonically required, they are uploaded in common image formats (.pdf, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, etc.) in the form.

⁸ Title III, Canons III.6.4 and III.8.4.

C02 Formation Evaluation

Prior to 2019, form C2 Middler Seminary Evaluation

In traditional formation for the priesthood, this is the Middler Evaluation, prepared using the seminary's own guidelines and process.

Those who have an alternative path of formation for the priesthood, or those with local formation for the diaconate, must assure that the body responsible for formation provides an evaluation, demonstrating the academic record and/or intellectual formation, and assessing the postulant's progress and suitability for Holy Orders.⁹

C03 CPE Final Report

Prior to 2019, form C3 Final Report of the CPE Supervisor

The postulant must demonstrate successful completion of CPE or its approved equivalent. This includes a certificate of completion and the final report of the CPE Supervisor, and may include a verbatim or self-evaluation by the postulant for conversation in an interview with the Commission on Ministry.

C04 Field Education Final Report

The postulant is responsible for assuring that the final report of the Field Education Supervisor is submitted to the Vocations Office.

C05 Intern Year Interim Report

If an interim year is taken rather than two years of field education, the supervisor submits a progress report.

C06 Congregational Endorsement

The Vestry/Bishop's Committee will consider the recommendation of the LDC and other information put forth and, if in agreement, will sign and submit the Congregational Endorsement of Application for Candidacy.¹⁰

Assessment of Application for Candidacy

C07 Commission on Ministry Interview and Recommendation for Candidacy

The Commission on Ministry will interview the postulant for candidacy. Based on the interview, the CPE report, the field education report, other documentation submitted to the file and the

⁹ ⁹ See *2018 Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church*. Title III, Canon 8.3.j.

¹⁰ Title III, Canons 6.4.a and 8.4.a.

congregational endorsement, the COM will make its recommendation to the Standing Committee and the Bishop.¹¹

Standing Committee Interview

The Standing Committee will interview the postulant for candidacy. Based on the interview and a review of the documentation in the postulant's file, the Standing Committee will make a recommendation to the Bishop regarding candidacy.

Decision Regarding Candidacy

Bishop's Decision Regarding Candidacy

Prior to 2019, form C09

Following the recommendations of the Commission on Ministry and the Standing Committee, the Bishop will issue a decision regarding candidacy in writing.

During Candidacy

Candidacy is a time of education and formation in preparation for ordination, established by a formal commitment by the Candidate, the Bishop, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the congregation or other community of faith.¹² Candidates can gain greater clarity about their vocational goal, its demands and its opportunities. The Commission on Ministry can seek to assist Candidates in selecting individualized ways to prepare for ministry. The Candidate must complete the following:

- Required theological education,
- Second year of field education (or their intern year)
- Compilation and submission of the portfolio.

General Ordination Examination (GOE)

If seeking ordination to the priesthood, the Candidate must also take the General Ordination Examination (GOE), offered in the first week in January. The Diocese will pay the fee for the GOE for postulants or candidates in the process sponsored by the Diocese of California. Intent to prepare for and take the GOE's should be established in October.

Successful completion of the General Ordination Exam or an alternative authorized by the Bishop is required before ordination. Candidates who do not receive satisfactory evaluations in all areas by the National Board of Examining Chaplains may be referred by the Bishop for supervised research and/or writing.

¹¹ Title III, Canons 6.4.b and 8.4.b.

¹² Title III, Canons 6.4 and 8.4.b.

More details about the GOE's, including subject areas and prior year's examinations, are available at <https://www.episcopalgbec.org>.

Spiritual Formation Group for Candidates for the Vocational Diaconate

Candidates for the Vocational Diaconate will participate in Spiritual Formation Groups through the School for Deacons. Candidates receiving their education in a school other than the School for Deacons must make provision for participation in a School for Deacons Spiritual Formation Group.

Supervised Ministry

Candidates who have completed field education and/or graduated must be engaged actively in ministry in a congregation, institution, diocesan program or in an Area Ministry as attested to by the person in charge in a written report. Visit <https://diocal.org/ministryplacement> to formally request or notify the vocations office of a supervised ministry.

Fulfillment of Canonical and Diocesan Requirements

Language Requirement

Candidates must be able to demonstrate sufficient professional fluency in English and be able to perform certain liturgical functions in one other language spoken in the geographic region of the Diocese of California. Candidates for whom English is a native language must have at least two semesters of study of another language or the equivalent in an intensive and/or immersion learning situation.

Fulfillment of the language requirement is assessed in an in-person meeting with a lay or clergy leader who is proficient in the language. In the meeting, the candidate reads the required prayers aloud.

1. Candidates for the vocational diaconate must be able to say the Lord's Prayer and be able to perform an emergency baptism in English and one other language.
2. Candidates for the priesthood must be able to say the Lord's Prayer, a blessing, the absolution and the Eucharistic words of institution, and do an emergency baptism in English and one other language.

When applying for ordination to the diaconate, candidates will also be asked to provide a self-assessment of their language proficiency in the second language, as well as English if it is not a native language. The self-assessment is based on the International Language Roundtable, also used by the U.S. Foreign Service; this self-assessment helps identify a corps of future clergy with aptitude to serve in a multi-lingual context.

Self-Assessment Model for Language Proficiency

A quick Google search will turn up a complete version of this model. The stages below are redacted for ease:

S1 Elementary Proficiency

Able to satisfy routine travel needs and minimum courtesy requirements. Has a speaking vocabulary which is inadequate to express anything but the most elementary needs, with frequent grammatical and pronunciation errors. Can understand very basic statements and questions.

S2 Limited Working Proficiency

Can handle with confidence, but not with facility, most social situations including introductions and casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information. Can handle limited work requirements. Broadly intelligible accent and accuracy in basic grammar constructions.

S3 Professional Working Proficiency

Has sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. Can understand a normal rate of speech, and minor grammatical errors that do not cause distraction or misunderstanding.

S4 Full Professional Proficiency

Can understand and participate in any conversation with a high degree of fluency and precision of vocabulary. Would rarely be taken for a native speaker but can respond appropriately even in unfamiliar situations.

S5 Native or Bilingual Proficiency

Has complete fluency in the language, such that speech on all levels is fully accepted by educated native speakers in all of its features, including breadth of vocabulary and idiom, colloquialisms, and pertinent cultural references.

Ethnic Diversity Requirement

Site Visits

Candidates must arrange at least two visits to an Episcopal congregation in the Diocese of California which have a different ethnic identity than the candidate or the congregation from which the candidate comes. (Alternatively, the candidate may visit two different congregations once.)

The application for ordination to the diaconate will require a substantial (750-1000 word) reflection on these visits.

Cultural Immersion Experience

All candidates must participate in a cultural immersion experience. The application for ordination to the diaconate will require a substantial (750-1000 word) reflection on these visits. Cultural immersion experiences have taken many forms over time and are intended to enrich and diversify a postulant's experience of language, pastoral ministry and/or the enculturation of liturgical practice. The immersion experience should be imagined and planned in conversation with the vocations office and Commission

on Ministry. Once a program has been identified, visit <https://diocal.org/ministryplacement> to formally request your site.

Antiracism Training

The Diocese of California and neighboring dioceses offer annual or biannual training, typically in a 2-day format. The application for ordination to the diaconate will require a certificate of attendance, as well as the date and location of the program.

Right Relationship, Sexual Misconduct Prevention, and Reporting Requirements

Whole and Healthy Church

Visit <https://diocal.org/whole-and-healthy-church> to read the current policies and procedures in this Diocese, and submit the letter of acknowledgement according to the instructions.

Sexual Misconduct Training

Visit <https://diocal.org/whole-and-healthy-church> to see current training requirements, online training opportunities, and in-person training dates.

Constitution & Canons of The Episcopal Church

The Candidate must read and become familiar with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, particularly Title IV, the Disciplinary Canons.

Mid-Candidacy Interview

The Commission on Ministry may schedule a mid-candidacy interview after approximately six months.

No Guarantee of Holy Orders: Candidacy remains a time for critical evaluation and discernment and does not guarantee ordination.

Application for Ordination to the Diaconate

A person may be ordained to the Diaconate after a minimum of 18 months from the written acceptance of Nomination and upon attainment of at least twenty-four years of age.¹³ Visit <https://diocal.org/diaconate> to begin the application process. The list below is representative for ease, but comprehensive details are available online.

Candidate's Application for Ordination

Prior to 2019, forms D1-D3, D7 and X4, F10

1. **Letter of Application:** The Candidate must write a ~400-word letter of application addressed to the Bishop reflecting on growth during candidacy, outlining goals for ongoing growth, and requesting ordination to the diaconate.
2. **Fulfillment of Canonical and Diocesan Requirements:** The candidate will be asked to upload certificates, provide dates and other details for, and paste in the reflections for the canonical and diocesan trainings outlined above.
3. **Demonstration of Competency and Completion of Required Training.** After the application for Ordination to the Diaconate has been submitted, the applicant will be prompted to upload the results of the GOE's, if applicable, as well transcripts from the seminary or formation program.

Supporting Documentation

All supporting documentation is submitted online at <https://diocal.org/diaconate>. Where signatures are canonically required, they are uploaded in common image formats (.pdf, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, etc.) in the form.

D04 Congregational Endorsement of Application for Postulancy and Attestation

The sponsoring congregation provides its official endorsement of the candidate.

D05 Second Field Education Year Final Report Field Education

The second year of Field Education must be completed before the candidate can be approved for ordination to the Diaconate. *or*

¹³ Title III, Canon 6.6.a.

D06 Intern Year Final Report

If an Intern Year was undertaken, the final report must be submitted before the candidate can be approved for ordination to the Diaconate. *or*

D08 Supervised Ministry Final Report

If a supervised ministry (other than Field Education or the Intern Year) was undertaken during candidacy, before the candidate can be approved for ordination to the Diaconate.

Fitness for Ordained Ministry and Eligibility for Ordination

The background check, medical evaluation and psychological evaluation conducted during the application for postulancy must be current within 36 months of the anticipated dates of ordination to the diaconate or priesthood. If more than 30 months have elapsed since the original evaluations, follow up evaluations must take place.

Assessment of Application for Ordination

D09 Commission on Ministry Interview and Recommendation for Ordination

The Commission on Ministry will interview the Candidate for ordination. Based on the interview, the application and supporting documentation, the COM will make its recommendation to the Standing Committee and the Bishop.

D10 Standing Committee Recommendation for Ordination to the Diaconate

The Standing Committee will review the file of the Candidate to assure that all requirements for ordination have been met. The Standing Committee will make a recommendation to the Bishop regarding ordination.

Decision Regarding Ordination to the Diaconate

Bishop's Decision Regarding Ordination to the Diaconate

Prior to 2019, form D11

The Bishop will issue a decision in writing on the application for Candidacy following the recommendation of the Commission on Ministry and the Recommendation of the Standing Committee.

Preparation for Ordination to the Diaconate

Ministry Placement

Formerly D12-14

If approved for ordination, the ordinand proposes a placement and seeks the Bishop's approval of that placement. For ordinands to the Vocational Diaconate, this placement must be determined with the Archdeacons and the diocesan plan for deacons. For ordinands to the Transitional Diaconate,

conversations with the Transitions Officer, Archdeacons, Commission on Ministry and/or vocations office may inform placement. Visit <https://diocal.org/ministryplacement> to formally make a site request. The Bishop's office will respond either approving the request or suggesting an alternative.

Registration and Service Preparation

Once candidates have been approved for ordination, they submit all of the information that the Diocesan staff involved in benefits, transitions and other departments need to register the ordination. The same online form collects other information required for the ordination liturgy, including presenters (3), acolytes, and hymn requests. Visit <https://diocal.org/diaconate>

Ordination Retreat

All ordinands are required to participate in a day-long ordination retreat, typically the Tuesday prior to Ordination.

As a deacon

1. **Fresher Start.** Newly ordained clergy, along with clergy who are new to this diocese convene for regular formation and reflection for their first two years in that ministry. The Canon to the Ordinary or another representative of the Working Group for Congregational Development will contact the newly ordained about beginning Fresher Start.
2. **Clergy Benefits.** If eligible, the Deacon will receive information to enroll in the Diocesan Clergy Benefits Plan.
3. **Transitions Office.** It is the responsibility of every member of the clergy to keep the Transitions Office informed regarding personal and professional information.
4. **Annual Report to the Bishop.** Submitted according to diocesan guidelines announced annually.
5. **Ember Letters.** Transitional Deacons will continue to submit Ember Letters.
6. **Exploring placement options.** The Transitional Deacon must actively explore options for placement as priest, drawing on the resources of the Diocese. Propose your ministry site at <https://diocal.org/ministryplacement> for the Bishop's consideration
7. **Attendance at Clergy events.** Transitional deacons are required to attend clergy retreat, diocesan convention, Holy Tuesday, and other clergy events that may arise.

Application for Ordination to the Priesthood

Visit <https://diocal.org/priesthood> to begin the application process. The list below is representative for ease, but comprehensive details are available online.

Transitional Deacon's Application for Ordination to the Priesthood

Prior to 2019, form Pr1

Letter of Application: The Transitional Deacon writes a ~400-word letter of application addressed to the Bishop reflecting on growth as a transitional deacon and requesting ordination to the diaconate.

Supporting Documentation

All supporting documentation is submitted online at <https://diocal.org/priesthood>. Where signatures are canonically required, they are uploaded in common image formats (.pdf, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, etc.) in the form.¹⁴

PR02 Congregational Endorsement of Application for Priesthood and Attestation

The sponsoring congregation provides its official endorsement of the transitional deacon.

PR03 Diaconal Supervisor Evaluation

The clergy for whom the Transitional Deacon is working must submit a comprehensive evaluation of the Transitional Deacon's ministry.

Fitness for Ordained Ministry and Eligibility for Ordination

The background check, medical evaluation and psychological evaluation conducted during the application for postulancy must be current within 36 months of the anticipated dates of ordination to the diaconate or priesthood. If more than 30 months have elapsed since the original evaluations, follow up evaluations must take place.

Assessment of Application for Ordination

PR04 Commission on Ministry Interview and Recommendation for Ordination

The Commission on Ministry will interview the transitional deacon for ordination. Based on the interview, the application and supporting documentation, the COM will make its recommendation to the Standing Committee and the Bishop.

¹⁴ See *2018 Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church*. Title III, Canon 11.3.c

PR05 Standing Committee Recommendation for Ordination to the Priesthood

The Standing Committee will review the file of the Candidate to assure that all requirements for ordination have been met. The Standing Committee will make a recommendation to the Bishop regarding ordination.

Decision Regarding Ordination to the Priesthood

Bishop's Decision Regarding Ordination to the Priesthood

Formerly Form Pr6

The Bishop will issue a decision on the application for ordination following the recommendations of the Commission on Ministry and the Standing Committee.

Preparation for Ordination to the Priesthood

Ministry Placement

Prior to 2019, form Pr7

If approved for ordination, the transitional deacon proposes a placement and seeks the Bishop's approval of that placement. Conversations with the Transitions Officer and vocations office may inform placement. Visit <https://diocal.org/ministryplacement> to formally make a site request. The Bishop's office will respond either approving the request or suggesting an alternative.

Registration and Service Preparation

Once candidates have been approved for ordination, they submit all of the information that Diocesan staff involved in benefits, transitions and other departments need to register the ordination. The same online form collects other information required for the ordination liturgy, including presenters (3), acolytes, and hymn requests. Visit <https://diocal.org/priesthood>

Ordination Retreat

All ordinands are required to participate in a day-long ordination retreat, typically the Tuesday prior to Ordination.

As a priest

1. **Fresher Start.** Newly ordained clergy, along with clergy who are new to this diocese of to a call convene for regular formation and reflection for their first two years in that ministry. The Canon to the Ordinary or another representative of the Working Group for Congregational Development will contact the newly ordained about beginning Fresher Start.
2. **Clergy Benefits.** If eligible, the priest will receive information to enroll in the Diocesan Clergy Benefits Plan.

3. **Transitions Office.** It is the responsibility of every member of the clergy to keep the Transitions Office informed regarding personal and professional information.
4. **Annual Report to the Bishop.** Submitted according to diocesan guidelines announced annually.