

Presbytery of Carlisle Committee on Preparation for Ministry
COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER TRAINING PROCESS REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

The requirements for Commissioned Ruling Elders (CREs) are found in the PC(USA) *Book of Order*, G-2.10. These requirements govern this policy and all guidelines and procedures established under it. Those who feel called by God to the ministry of being a CRE may have similar desires to serve Christ's church as do Ministers of Word and Sacrament. In the case of a CRE, various circumstances or limiting factors may necessitate a different preparation. Even so, their preparation must align with Ministers of Word and Sacrament, for they ultimately will have most of the same duties. While CREs are not required to complete advanced theological or divinity degrees, or complete PC(USA) ordination exams, they are a gift from God to the connectional church and deserve the presbytery's full support.

1. A Ruling Elder (RE) who senses being called by God to become a CRE must be endorsed by the Session of the particular congregation of which he/she is a member.
 - a. **REQUIRED:** Application Form CREP-1A, -1B, and -1C
 - b. **REQUIRED:** Session Endorsement Form CREP-3 and three personal references (Form CREP-2)
2. The RE will be interviewed by the presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) and Commission on Ministry (COM), which have oversight and authority over training and placement/commissioning, respectively. The RE's suitability for entrance into CRE training will be determined by the CPM.
 - a. **REQUIRED:** CPM's Interview Form (CREP-4) with candidate's agreement to share all transcripts and feedback with CPM.
3. The CPM will assign a Minister of Word and Sacrament (MWS) or Ruling Elder (RE) member of CPM to be a Liaison. The Liaison will make themselves available to answer questions and help the RE navigate the process through the duration of their training. Details of Liaison duties are on the COMMISSIONED RULING ELDER LIAISON BIENNIAL FEEDBACK FORM.
 - a. **REQUIRED:** Biannual (October and April) feedback form to CPM from Liaison.
4. The RE will register for and successfully complete coursework in these areas:
 - a. **REQUIRED:** Transcripts in the areas of
 - i. Old Testament Bible*
 - ii. New Testament Bible*
 - iii. Reformed Theology*
 - iv. Preaching*
 - v. Reformed Worship and Sacraments
 - vi. Presbyterian Polity
 - vii. Pastoral Care
 - viii. Teaching

Courses are available in person, online and/or in a hybrid format through various theological institutions and certified programs as approved by CPM including, but not limited to: Princeton, Pittsburgh, Dubuque, APCE's Certified Christian Educator Coursework, Redstone Presbytery's IPLF, or Northumberland's Commissioned Pastor Training. The specific education completed by REs who have been trained in other presbyteries will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis beginning with the Application for Transfer.

*After successful completion of OT, NT, Reformed Theology, and Preaching, individuals in the training program MAY apply through the Commission on Ministry to serve on the presbytery's **Pulpit Supply List**.

5. The RE will undergo a full psychological evaluation through an approved testing facility, such as Samaritan Counseling in Lancaster. The cost of this (approximately \$1,800) is shared: 1/3 by the candidate, 1/3 by the CPM, and 1/3 by the congregation.
 - a. **REQUIRED:** Psychological evaluation results

6. The RE will sign up for and complete Boundary Training, provided by the presbytery (usually offered in February) or another viable entity.
 - a. **REQUIRED:** Documentation signifying completion of Boundary Training

7. The RE will receive a field education / internship / practicum assignment from CPM that may be tailored to particular needs. The 8-month assignment will average 10-15 hours per week, under the supervision of a Pastor/Head of Staff or the already-assigned Liaison in the absence of a Pastor/Head of Staff. Components are listed on the of the Field Education / Internship / Practicum Checklist Form
 - i. Worship and Sacraments (prerequisite Polity AND Proclaiming the Word)
 - ii. Pastoral Care (prerequisite Pastoral Care)
 - iii. Preaching and Proclamation (prerequisite Proclaiming the Word)
 - iv. Church Administration (prerequisite Polity)

The congregation benefiting from the labors of the CRE-in-training is required to pay a fair wage, not less than \$1,000/month, totaling \$8,000. This payment may be shared between the congregation and the presbytery, as a fully trained and commissioned REs by design will serve the presbytery for many years. In order to avoid getting years down the road only to realize there's been no increase in this \$8,000 figure, this figure would automatically rise at the same Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) each year that is granted to MWS and Certified Christian Educators.

 - a. **REQUIRED:** Reflection papers from RE on each of the four internship/ practicum areas
 - b. **REQUIRED:** Letter from the Pastor/Head of Staff assessing gifts, skills, and reservations

8. Upon successful completion of coursework, psychological evaluation, boundary training, and field education/ internship /practicum, the CPM will examine the CRE-in-training and ascertain his or her readiness for commissioning. Upon approval, the CPM will report to the Commission on Ministry (COM) that the CRE candidate is "ready to be considered for commissioning."
 - a. **REQUIRED:** CPM examination results and CPM Endorsement Form for COM