

## EXPLANATION – LOCAL MINISTER’S LICENSE STATUS

### **\*\*The “First-time” Local Minister’s License**

*The following explanation pertains primarily to a first-time Local Minister’s License request. This process is intended to be entered into by those who believe they are called to lifetime ministry service and is an exploratory step in that journey. See below for information of Renewal of Local Minister’s License.*

A [first-time] Local Minister’s License is granted by the church board where you are a member, upon recommendation of the pastor. This level of licensing normally comes after your pastor and local church leadership have had opportunity to observe your life and ministry involvement. Such observation most often happens informally as these leaders get to know you and serve alongside you. The licensing process begins by completing an Application for Local Minister’s License. You must also undergo a background check as part of the church's commitment to child safety (see comment on Nazarene Safe below).

**Note:** your pastor will also submit a **Request for Verification of Credential History** as part of the application process. A Local License may not be issued until this verification of credential history has been cleared by the General Secretary’s Office. The District Office will receive the final determination and contact the Local Church Pastor. Florida District Website – [Floridanaz.com/Board of Ministry/Ministry Preparation](http://Floridanaz.com/Board of Ministry/Ministry Preparation)

**Nazarene Safe** = The Church of the Nazarene has a zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual abuse or misconduct with minors. Every local church must create and implement a process for screening volunteers and staff who work with minors and have a policy in place for protecting minors. This policy should follow guidelines found on [NazareneSafe.org](http://NazareneSafe.org). **All licensed ministers must be screened and trained in ministry safety procedures whether or not they work with children.** This will include a criminal background check. Submitting a background check is part of the licensing process.

Once the credential clearance has been received, you may submit your application to the pastor. Consideration of your application will be added to the agenda of an upcoming church board meeting. At the time of the church board meeting approaches, you will be invited to interview with the church board. If you are married, they may ask your spouse to also participate in the interview. During the interview, you will be asked to present your testimony with special emphasis on your call. They may ask further questions as well. Most likely you will be excused from the board meeting at the time they discuss and vote on whether or not to approve your application.

**Note:** If the church board grants you a [first-time] Local Minister’s License, the Pastor may then order an official Local License Form from Clergy Development website. This is the only official form permitted for this purpose. The Local Church may not create their own form for this purpose. Florida District Website – [Floridanaz.com/Board of Ministry/Ministry Preparation](http://Floridanaz.com/Board of Ministry/Ministry Preparation)

When the church board grants you a [first-time] Local Minister’s License, it is hoped your pastor will present the license to you in a public church service, and perhaps invite you to share a few words of testimony about your relationship with the Lord and your calling to ministry. Members of the board and/or congregation may gather around you to pray for you as you embark on your journey of preparation for ministry in answer to God's calling.

**Note:** It should be understood that a Local Minister’s License does not grant ministerial authority. You remain a lay member of the Church of the Nazarene. It is a first step in a longer process. Therefore, the title of “Reverend” or “Pastor” is reserved for only those who are ordained or who hold a District Minister's License and are serving in a ministry assignment.

Having received a [first-time] Local Minister's License, continue being actively involved in the ministry of your local church. You are encouraged to put into writing a covenant of what you hope to accomplish in your ministerial development and education as you embark on this journey, and to share this with your pastor. Keep a copy of this covenant and update it periodically as you gain understanding, experience, and perspective from the education you receive and from your conversations with your pastor and other mentors. Tracking and reflecting on your progress can be a great source of encouragement and prepare you for the renewal of your Local Minister's License or for receiving a District Minister's License.

Once you have been granted a [first-time] Local Minister's License, your pastor will guide you as to how to enroll with the District Board of Ministry. One of the responsibilities of this board is to oversee your progress in completing the Course of Study. Of course, you will need to let this board know the educational path you plan to pursue. Should you move your local church membership to another Nazarene church, your journey will continue in partnership with your new local church and the Board of Ministry of its district.

*Additional information regarding this Local License process may be obtained at the Florida District Website – [Floridanaz.com/Board of Ministry/Ministry Preparation](http://Floridanaz.com/Board_of_Ministry/Ministry_Preparation).*

### **\*\*Renewing your Local Minister's License**

A Local Minister's License must be renewed annually. This means you will need to apply for renewal of your license before the current license expires. The process for renewal is slightly different to the process when you are first granted a [first-time] Local Minister's License. During the renewal interview, you should be prepared to discuss the progress and growth of your spiritual walk, your call to ministry, your ministry involvement, and the status of your educational preparation.

**Please take note:** *After holding a local license for two years, you may seek renewal of your license only if you have completed at least two courses in a validated Course of Study program (see 2017-2021 Nazarene Manual 529.4).*