

The Local Minister's License

A 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). In addition, your pastor will also submit a Request for Verification of Credential History to the General Secretary of the Church of the Nazarene as part of the application process.

Once you have submitted 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.

If the church board grants you a 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. It should be understood that with a Local Minister's License, you remain a lay member of the Church of the Nazarene. The title of "Reverend" or "Pastor" is reserved for those who are ordained or who hold a District Minister's License and are serving in a ministry assignment.

Having received a 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 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 church and the Board of Ministry of its district.

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