

Supervised Ministry Education An Overview

The United Church of Canada



L'Église Unie du Canada

Supervised Ministry Education: An Overview



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1. Introduction

The education and formation of members of the Order of Ministry is an important task of the church. One component of education and formation is the Supervised Ministry Education experience, which takes place in an internship. An internship is an opportunity for a candidate for ministry to engage in the practice of ministry and to reflect on this experience with others. The task of providing Supervised Ministry Education experiences has many partners: congregations, lay supervision teams, supervisors, and the people of God.

One of our convictions is that lifelong learning involves grace and forgiveness. We learn and grow together in our failures, pain, and disappointments, as well as in our successes, joys, and dreams. The church community offers us the opportunity to risk and grow in faith.

These guidelines provide a general overview of Supervised Ministry Education and the National Internship Program of The United Church of Canada. For details on the process, please refer to “Process for Supervised Ministry Education” (SME 223), available at www.united-church.ca/handbooks.

2. Requirements

A. Candidates for the Order of Ministry (refer to *The Manual, 2010*, section 722)

The internship requirement is the equivalent of eight months of full-time ministry.

Candidates for Order of Ministry: Diaconal

Candidates for commissioning fulfill their internship requirement as part of the community-based education program.

Candidates for Order of Ministry: Ordained

Candidates for ordained ministry may complete their internship requirement after the second year of study through one of the internship models offered through the internship program.

Native Ministry Programs

Candidates for the Order of Ministry studying at the Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre, the Francis Sandy Theological School, or the B.C. Native Ministries program fulfill their internship requirement as part of their community-based education program.

Ministry-Based Education Programs

Candidates for ordination, who are enrolled in a ministry-based ordination program such as the Summer/Distance M.Div. at the Atlantic School of Theology, fulfill their internship requirement as part of the Supervised Ministry Education portion of the program.

St. Andrew's College

Candidates at St. Andrew's College complete a 16-month half-time internship requirement after the second year of studies as part of the Master of Divinity degree.

B. Designated Lay Ministers (see section 5 of this handbook)

Three years of reflection and integration on the practice of ministry with an educational supervisor and Lay Supervision Team in a presbytery/district appointment that is an approved learning site. The appointment is at least half-time.

3. Internship Program Models

The National Internship Program recognizes four models:

1. eight-month pastoral charge internships
2. alternative internships (eight months)
3. student supply internships
4. global internships

Pastoral Charge Internships

Eight-month pastoral charge internships

- take place at a United Church pastoral charge that has applied and been approved by the presbytery/district and Conference to be a learning site
- must be approved by the candidate's home Presbytery/District Education and Students Committee
- begins in either September or January for eight consecutive months
- are assigned by the Conference Committee on Internship and Educational Supervision
- are an opportunity to be in ministry and work in a congregational setting on a full-time basis
- offer the full range of ministry activities
- enable the intern to discover what it means to be a minister, to reflect theologically on the practice of ministry, to develop healthy patterns for spirituality and self-care, and to enhance ministry skills

Alternative Internships (Eight Months)

Alternative internships

- must be approved by the candidate's home Presbytery/District Education and Students Committee
- provide special learning opportunities not available in the pastoral charge internship model
- include a minimum of half time in a pastoral charge learning site that has been approved as a learning site by the presbytery/district and Conference
- include a learning experience in a community ministry setting—hospital, prison, outreach ministry, special institution, education centre, chaplaincy, campus ministry, etc.—that has been approved by the presbytery/district and Conference as an alternative learning site
- takes place concurrently over eight consecutive months except when one portion is a clinical pastoral education unit
- are the responsibility of the candidate to arrange, with the approval of and in consultation with his/her Presbytery/District Education and Students Committee
- may result in a reduction in financial remuneration offered by the National Internship Program if the community ministry setting does not contribute financially

Student Supply Internships

Student supply internships

- must be approved by the candidate's home Presbytery/District Education and Students committee
- take place at a United Church pastoral charge that has been approved as a learning site by the presbytery/district and Conference
- are appointments to a pastoral charge approved by the Presbytery/District Pastoral Relations Committee
- are funded by the pastoral charge in accordance with the "Salary and Allowances Schedules for Ministry Personnel" of The United Church of Canada
- may be requested by a candidate who is currently working part-time in a pastoral charge while attending theological school
- may take place over a 16-month period on a half-time basis
- are the responsibility of the candidate to arrange, with the approval of and in consultation with her/his Presbytery/District Education and Students and Pastoral Relations committees

Global Internships

Global internships

- must be approved by the candidate's home Presbytery/District Education and Students Committee
- must be approved by the Justice, Global and Ecumenical Relations (JGER) Unit and the Ministry Vocations cluster of the General Council Office
- require at least 18 months' advance notice for approval and preparation
- take place at a learning site arranged with a global partner church in another country
- require attendance at a residential orientation event for overseas personnel
- require medical clearance
- require an initial financial contribution by the candidate of approximately \$500
- consist of the first four months full-time in a global internship site as approved by JGER and, upon return to Canada, four months full-time in a United Church pastoral charge that has been approved as a learning site by the presbytery/district and Conference
- are funded by JGER and the global partner for the global portion and by the National Internship Program for the pastoral charge portion

Travel to and from the global partner learning site is paid for by The United Church of Canada.

4. Information for Candidates

Planning Ahead

- Discuss your internship plans with your home Presbytery/District Education and Students Committee early in your candidacy process.
- You need to be received as a candidate by
 - April 1 of the year you are applying for a September start internship
 - October 1 for a January start
- You need to have completed two years of full-time courses before applying for an internship.
- Discuss your internship plans and possible learning goals with the director of field education or program director at your theological school.
- Normally you will not take courses at a theological school while completing an internship.
- Normally you will be returning to theological school for your final year of study following your internship.

Application Process

- Your application for internship must include
 - the endorsement of your home Presbytery/District Education and Students Committee
 - a reference from the director of field education at your theological school
 - a reference from your minister (or an individual who knows you well enough to provide the required information)
- If you are applying for an exemption of the internship requirement, contact your home Presbytery/District Education and Students Committee.
- Applications for September start eight-month internships, including references, need to be received by your home Presbytery/District E&S Committee
 - no later than February 1
 - October 1 for a January start

The Presbytery/District E&S Committee will forward your application to the General Council Office.

- You will be contacted by your home Conference Committee on Internship and Educational Supervision convenor to discuss your learning goals and limitations prior to the matching meeting held in April (or October).

For details on the application process, refer to “Process for Supervised Ministry Education” (SME 223) at www.united-church.ca/handbooks.

Funding

- For financial information related to eight-month pastoral charge and alternative internships, refer to SME 224: Financial Information for Supervised Ministry Education at www.united-church.ca/handbooks.
- For financial information related to student supply internships, refer to “Salary and Allowances Schedules for Ministry Personnel” at www.united-church.ca (search for “salary”), or speak to your Presbytery/District Pastoral Relations Committee convenor.

Group Insurance Eligibility and Enrollment

Intern Insurance Plan

Interns are automatically enrolled in the Intern Insurance Plan, which offers two benefits: Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) and Emergency Out-of-Province coverage.

Exceptions:

- If you have attained age 65 you are *not* eligible for coverage.
- See below for conditions for interns participating in global internships outside of Canada.
- See below for group insurance coverage for interns appointed as student supply.

Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D):

- AD&D amount: \$5,000
- Benefits for accidental dismemberment are payable to you, the insured member.
- In the case of death, payment will be made in a lump sum to the beneficiary or beneficiaries designated by you. You may change your designation at any time.

Emergency Out-of-Province coverage:

As an intern, you have the option to pay a premium to obtain Emergency Out-of-Province coverage for your eligible family members. The following family members are eligible for this optional coverage:

- **Your legal spouse/partner** by virtue of religious or civil ceremony, or common law provision. A spouse ceases to be an eligible family member after 1 year of separation, or earlier in the case of a judicial decree or divorce.
- **Your unmarried children** under 18 years of age or under age 25 if still in school full-time (age 26 in Quebec for drug coverage). Proof of student status is required.
- **Your unmarried children if they are unemployable** by reason of mental or physical handicap (that commenced while covered as an eligible child). Proof of incapacity is required.

Global Internships

To be eligible for benefits in Intern Insurance Plan, you must be a resident of Canada. If you are outside Canada for more than 90 consecutive days or more than 180 days in any 365-day period, you are not covered by these benefits.

If you are participating in a global internship that takes you outside of Canada, please contact People in Partnership (pip@united-church.ca) to discuss insurance coverage.

Student Supply

Interns appointed by presbytery/district as student supply are enrolled in the United Church's pension and group benefits plans; they do not, therefore, participate in the Intern Insurance Plan. Details of the pension and benefits plans made be found at www.united-church.ca/minstaff.

5. Information for Designated Lay Ministers

Planning Ahead

- A presbytery/district appointment is required to fulfill the Supervised Ministry Education component of the DLM education program.
- Discuss the type of appointment that would best suit your learning needs with your home Presbytery/District Education and Students Committee.
- You need to be received by presbytery/district as a designated lay minister ready for appointment prior to applying.
- Discuss your possible learning goals with the DLM program coordinator at Calling Lakes Centre.

Application Process

- Complete form **DLM 507: Application for Supervised Ministry Education for Designated Lay Ministers** and forward it to your home Presbytery/District Education and Students Committee for their endorsement.
- Discuss possible appointments with your home Presbytery/District E&S Committee and determine

Funding

- For financial information related to designated lay ministry appointments, refer to “Salary and Allowances Schedules for Ministry Personnel” at www.united-church.ca (search for “salary”), or speak to your Presbytery/District Pastoral Relations Committee convenor.

6. Information for Supervised Ministry Education Sites

The Teaching/Learning Community

Supervised Ministry Education is an opportunity for the people of God to form a teaching/learning community where all members can grow together in faith, theological understanding, and the practice of ministry. When people are open and willing to risk learning and growing together, surprising things can occur. We discern God's Spirit, we gain new insights, new vistas of ministry open up, and we recommit ourselves to a ministry of service, justice, and evangelism.

Supervised Ministry Education provides an opportunity for candidates for ordered ministry and designated lay ministers to practice ministry and reflect on their experiences. In doing so, they learn and grow in their pastoral identify, self-knowledge, and understanding of their response to God's call to ministry. Congregations have valuable resources to nurture individuals preparing for ministry leadership:

- a particular context for ministry
- pastoral needs
- people of faith open to teaching and learning
- a commitment to future leadership for the church
- a willingness to participate in the formation of leaders for the church

Becoming a Site

Congregations that wish to become a Supervised Ministry Education site may consider the following:

- How does the mission of our congregation relate to the training of persons called to ministry leadership?
- What is our understanding of the ministry of the whole people of God?
- How do we recognize and nurture our individual and community God-given gifts?
- Do we have "real" work of ministry to do?
- Are we willing to accompany a candidate for ordered ministry for an eight months full-time experience in our congregation?
- Are we open to learning and growing in faith?
- Is there a trained educational supervisor available?
- Is the congregation willing to contribute financially to the national internship fund or support a presbytery/district appointment?
- Are there five to seven members of the congregation who are willing to serve on a Lay Supervision Team?
- Candidates for ordained ministry enrolled in the ministry based education program at the Atlantic School of Theology are completing academic courses while in a presbytery/district

appointment. The program requires attendance at the theological school for six weeks in June and July in each of the five years of the program. Ministry personnel, including candidates, are entitled to three weeks of study leave each year. Congregations considering being a site for a ministry-based program candidate will need to discuss program requirements with the candidate.

- Designated lay ministers fulfilling the educational program to be recognized are required to attend two 10-day residential learning circles each year at Calling Lakes Centre.

Application Process

Congregations apply through their presbytery/district to become a site. With presbytery/district approval, the Conference Committee on Internship and Educational Supervision gives the final approval of the site and supervisor.

The decision to apply to be a site must be approved by a motion of the Official Board or council of the pastoral charge.

For details on the process of applying to be an internship site, refer to “Process for Supervised Ministry Education” (SME 223) at www.united-church.ca/handbooks.

The website also provides information on Lay Supervision Teams, financial details, and learning covenants.