

# Congregational Designated Ministers

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October 2016



The United Church of Canada  
L'Église Unie du Canada

Congregational Designated Ministers (October 2016)



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L'Église Unie du Canada



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**About This Resource**

This resource expands on the policy found under Pastoral Relations, Section I.1.8 of *The Manual*. Please refer to the current edition.

There are some minor differences in wording from the August 2013 edition of this resource.

Further resources that are referenced in the text are available online at [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca).

# Living Out God’s Mission in the World

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The policy and procedures of The United Church of Canada exist to support the church in living out God’s mission in the world. The congregational designated minister policies and procedures aim to support congregations in developing positions that meet specific needs within the larger ministry context of the congregation.

## Definition

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“Congregational designated minister” means a baptized lay person employed by a pastoral charge in a specified ministry position designated by the presbytery as accountable to the governing body of the pastoral charge. This category does not include persons serving as candidate supply, intern supply, student intern, or student supply.

## Policy

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The policies about lay ministry may be found under Pastoral Relations, Section I.1.8 of *The Manual*. The policy about employment of a congregational designated minister can be found in Section I.1.8.4.

## Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice

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Congregational designated ministers (CDMs) are employees of a pastoral charge and are accountable to the pastoral charge as stipulated in the position description. For the purposes of disciplinary oversight, congregational designated ministers are subject to the same review process that applies to ministry personnel who are directly accountable to the presbytery (see Section J.9 of *The Manual*).

The policy that defines the effectiveness of congregational designated ministers and ministry personnel, known as the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice, was approved by the 38th General Council. Please familiarize yourself with these standards.

# Procedure

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## 1. Congregation Proposes CDM Position

Congregational designated ministry is community-based ministry that addresses a specific area of need within a congregation.

The congregation or its representatives, through either a Joint Needs Assessment process or a congregational assessment process, develop a position description that meets the identified needs. The Categorization Guidelines (Appendix A) and the Competencies for Congregational Designated Ministers (Appendix B) may be of assistance in this task.

The governing body then submits the position description to the presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee, using form PR 462 CA Request for Categorization (available on [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca)).

## 2. Presbytery Assesses Position Description

The presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee assesses the position description, referencing the Categorization Guidelines. The committee

- affirms the position as congregationally accountable (i.e., lay employee or congregational designated minister), or
- recommends that the position be a presbytery-accountable ministry position (i.e., ministry personnel)

The committee records its decision regarding position categorization on form PR 462 CA. The form is returned to the pastoral charge, with one copy to the Conference and one retained by the committee.

If the presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee categorizes the position as congregationally accountable, the congregation may proceed with a search process to fill the position.

If the Pastoral Relations Committee categorizes the position as presbytery accountable, the congregation may enter into a dialogue with the committee to determine

- whether the position description may be altered to fit within the scope of a congregational designated minister, or
- what process is needed to appoint or call ministry personnel to the pastoral charge. Filling a presbytery-accountable position either prompts a Joint Needs Assessment, if the congregation has not recently completed one, or requires the declaration of a vacancy followed by a Joint Search Process. A presbytery-accountable position may be filled by a designated lay minister.

## 3. Congregation Undertakes Search Process

If the search process proceeds to fill a congregational designated minister position, the search committee is responsible for ensuring that the successful applicant has, or is willing to acquire

through a continuing education plan, the core competencies required of a congregational designated minister (see Appendix B).

The governing body of the pastoral charge and the search committee are responsible to identify and test for competencies specific to the needs of their community, as reflected in the position description. For reference, competencies specific to youth ministry, parish nursing, pastoral care, education, outreach, worship, and music ministry may be found in Appendix B.

#### **4. Board Makes an Appointment**

Once the search committee has made a decision about an applicant, it brings a recommendation to the governing body for a decision. The board may choose to put the decision to the congregation at a congregational meeting. The congregational designated minister must be appointed for a specified period of time, to be determined by the board. The appointment may later be renewed.

Upon appointment, the applicant whose name is before the governing body of the pastoral charge is responsible to provide an original, current vulnerable sector (level 2) police records check (dated within the last six months), of which the governing body may retain a copy. A new police records check must be provided to the governing body every sixth year as the appointment is renewed.

#### **Terms of appointment**

- In negotiating terms, all federal and provincial employment standards must be met. For reference, please see *Employment Guidelines for Lay Employees* and *Faithful Footsteps: Screening Procedures for Positions of Trust and Authority in The United Church of Canada*.
- A congregational designated minister serving 14 hours a week or more must be enrolled in the United Church Pension and Benefits Plans.
- The congregation is responsible for determining a continuing education budget and time allotment for the congregational designated minister at the time of appointment. Congregational designated ministers meet very specific needs within faith communities. Effective and dynamic leadership requires continuous education and learning. The congregational designated minister, in collaboration with the Ministry and Personnel Committee of the pastoral charge, discerns the best use of the continuing education resources in the context of the congregational appointment.

#### **Accountability, supervision, and oversight**

- Congregational designated ministers are appointed by and accountable to the governing body of the pastoral charge. A congregational designated minister may only be appointed to a pastoral charge being served by a member of the order of ministry or a designated lay minister.
- The presbytery is the primary court of discipline for a congregational designated minister. For the purpose of oversight and discipline, the policies and procedures for ministry personnel are adapted as necessary (*The Manual*, J.9.1.).

# Appendix A: Categorization Guidelines

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These are guidelines for affirming that a congregational designated ministry position, prepared by a congregation in response to specific needs identified within the community, is congregationally accountable.

## Introduction

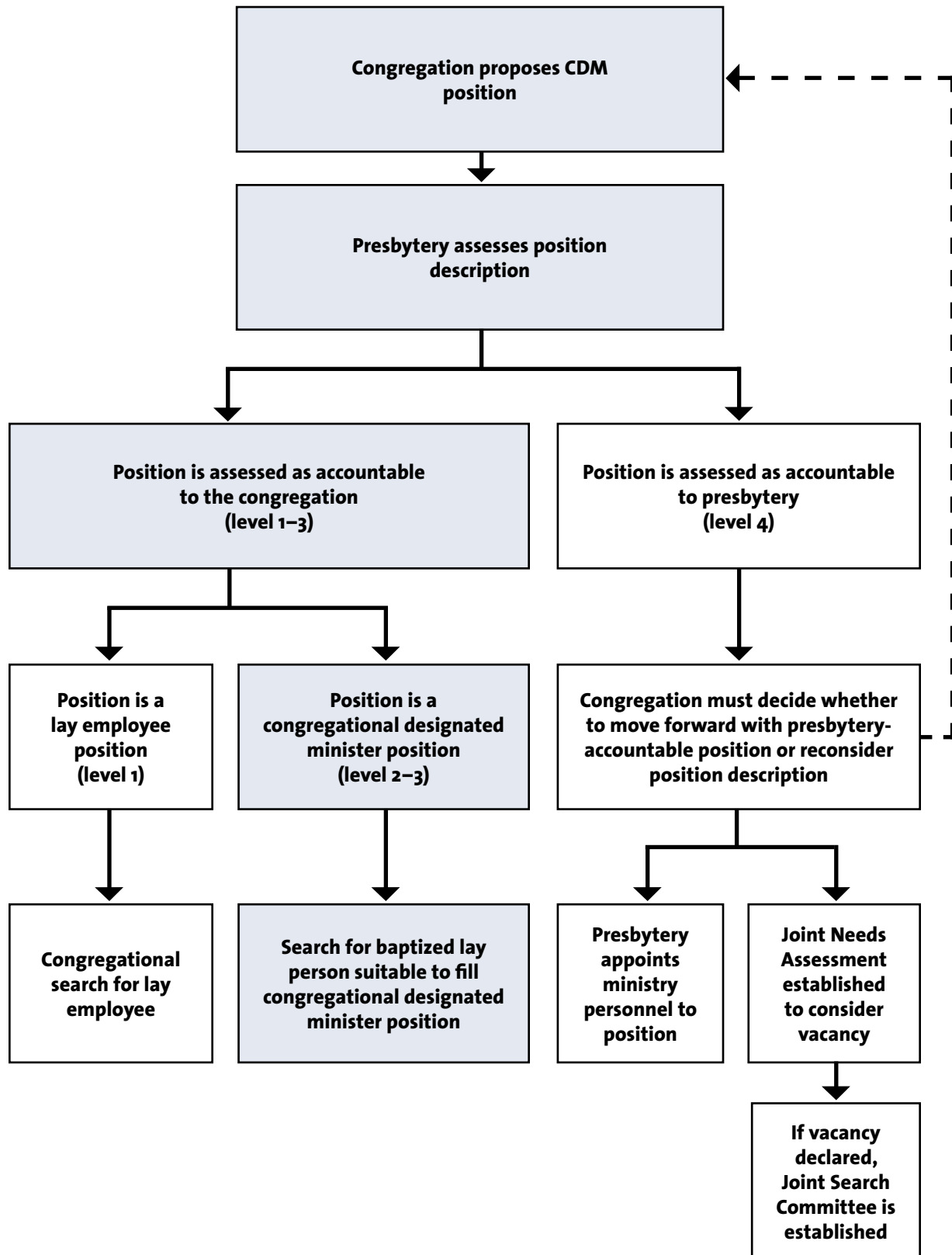
Each participant in a congregation brings gifts and skills that contribute to the congregation's well-being and to its capacity to be in mission. As the work of one and the same Spirit, each contribution counts toward equipping the saints for ministry. When a paid leadership position is involved, it is necessary, for the purposes of accountability, good order, stewardship, and justice, to make some determinations about the equitable relationship of one paid position to another in the context of mutuality in mission.

The following guidelines assist in determining whether a position is congregationally accountable or presbytery accountable. It is the role of the presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee to receive congregational designated ministry position descriptions from congregations and assess the positions to determine that they fit within the scope of a congregationally accountable appointment.

## Process of Categorization by the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee

1. Review the proposed position description for clarity by answering the following questions:
  - What are the roles and responsibilities of the position?
  - What is the purpose of the position?
  - What skills and education are needed to accomplish the role?
2. Review the categorization criteria and the definitions. It is possible that the level for the position can be determined simply on the basis of the definitions and the criteria. If so, complete part B on the Position Categorization Worksheet (p. 14) and part C on form PR 462 CA Request for Categorization (available on [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca)) and forward it to the presbytery/district for approval.
3. If the Detailed Rating Process is being used, read through the guiding principles in each section, determine the rating (1–4) that best fits the position, and record it on part C of the worksheet.
4. When all sections have been completed, total the points on the worksheet. The level of the position has now been determined. Positions in levels 1–3 are congregationally accountable, and positions in level 4 are presbytery accountable.
5. Record the level in Part C on the form PR 462 CA Request for Categorization and forward it to the presbytery/district for approval.

# Position Categorization Process





## Definitions

<b>Congregationally Accountable</b>		<b>Presbytery Accountable</b>
<b>Level 1: Lay Employee</b>	<b>Levels 2–3: Congregational Designated Minister (CDM)</b>	<b>Level 4: Ministry Personnel</b>
<p><b>Definition:</b> An individual carrying out one particular task related to the congregation’s ministry, e.g., coordinating a community meal once a week, organizing the church nursery.</p> <p>An individual working on a time-limited (a few weeks to 12 months) project of the congregation, e.g., a survey of seniors’ needs, a summer outreach program.</p>	<p><b>Definition:</b> A baptized lay person employed by a pastoral charge in a specified ministry position designated by the presbytery as accountable to the governing body of the pastoral charge.</p> <p>An individual whose work encompasses one or more specific areas of the congregation’s ministry/mission (e.g., youth worker, parish nurse, adult educator) and whose position responsibilities do not extend to the wider church.</p>	<p><b>Definition:</b> Those persons who are members of the order of ministry, those lay persons under appointment as a designated lay minister, candidates serving under appointment, and those persons from other denominations under appointment as a diaconal supply or ordained supply. Ministry personnel does not include those persons serving as congregational designated ministers.</p> <p>Presbytery-accountable positions require breadth and depth of knowledge and formal education. They involve a high degree of responsibility, entail overall congregational leadership, and are accountable to the wider church.</p>
<p><b>Qualifications:</b> Has experience and skills related to the particular requirements of the position description.</p>	<p><b>Qualifications:</b> Has gifts, competencies, and experience related to the specific areas of ministry work required in the position description.</p>	<p><b>Qualifications:</b> Is a member of the order of ministry or a lay person eligible to serve as a designated lay minister.</p>

## Criteria

Each position is a collection of tasks, duties, and responsibilities. It is sometimes difficult to make accurate and explicit comparisons of one complete position description to another. For this reason, the categorization process outlined below determines the weight of each position's contribution to the ministry of the congregation according to four criteria found in all positions.

- **Breadth and Depth of Experience/Knowledge Required:** every kind of knowledge and skill needed for acceptable performance
- **Accountability and Decision-Making:** the accountability for actions and their consequences, freedom to act, how and where decisions are made
- **Complexity of Focus:** the number of programs and areas of congregational life involved, problem solving, dealing with ambiguity and long-range considerations, analytical thinking, the ability to evaluate, create, and reason
- **Boundaries on Involvement:** impact of actions and sphere of influence/representation

## Detailed Rating Process

### Section I: Breadth and depth of experience/knowledge required

This criterion measures every kind of knowledge and skill needed for acceptable performance, e.g., specialized knowledge and skills, coordinating and integrating skills, and human relations skills.

Rating	Guiding Principles
<b>1</b>	<p>Basic knowledge of job fundamentals in a position that is very specific with regard to its purpose, who is being served, and how the work will be performed.</p> <p>The position requires experience in applying procedures that generally are well defined and straightforward, with occasional discretion required.</p> <p>Human relations skills: interactions are within a well-defined group, and maintaining courteous, healthy working relationships within the group is important; does not involve facilitating the leadership of others.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p>Experience in and knowledge of one particular area of the congregation's ministry/mission, such as youth group leadership, church school coordination, or pastoral visiting, with the ability to apply a similar program in a different context.</p> <p>Human relations skills: the ability to listen; the ability to interact appropriately with individuals and groups/committees connected to or interested in the activities undertaken; appropriate awareness of related activities in the congregation.</p> <p>Accomplished in planning and implementing activities and/or practical procedures that are moderately complex.</p>

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Guiding Principles</b>
<b>3</b>	<p>Knowledge and experience for oversight, planning, and implementing a key program of the congregation, such as Christian education for all ages, a youth program, or a community outreach program. Skills in several activities with basic understanding of underlying theology, theory, and principles.</p> <p>Human relations skills: the ability to function pastorally; the ability to interpret the program and to facilitate the involvement of others in leading, supporting, and developing the program.</p> <p>Ability to give leadership in a congregational program/process that involves varied activities and has an impact on other aspects of the congregation's ministry and mission.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p>Knowledge and experience needed for oversight of a major program (or several key programs) that incorporates most dimensions of congregational life (worship, pastoral care, education, outreach).</p> <p>Well-grounded in theology, biblical knowledge, theories, principles, and the complex techniques/activities involved in congregational leadership.</p> <p>Human relations skills: insight into how individuals are motivated; understanding of how to encourage growth in discipleship in order to fulfill the congregation's ministry; ability to deal constructively with conflict.</p> <p>Ability to plan, guide, and assess a major congregational program/process that has substantial functional diversity and requires involvement with the congregation's overall ministry and mission goals.</p>

## Section II: Accountability and decision-making

This criterion covers freedom to act, accountability for actions and their consequences, and where and how decisions are made.

<b>Guiding</b>	<b>Principles</b>
<b>1</b>	<p>Position has well-defined procedures related to an activity within one area of the congregation's ministry (e.g., coordinating the church nursery, leading a small group on a weekly basis), and is overseen by an individual or small committee.</p> <p>Ability to make decisions is determined by established procedures and by supervisor/liaison person or coordinating group.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p>Position has relatively well defined procedures, but latitude is given to deal with some ambiguous situations. Oversight of this position is provided by appropriate congregational committee(s).</p> <p>Most decisions about activities and procedures are made in consultation with ministry personnel, a congregational leader, and/or committee(s) within the pastoral charge. Decisions made without consultation are subject to precedents and well-defined policy. Accountability resides at the committee level.</p>

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Guiding Principles</b>
<b>3</b>	<p>Position responsibilities are defined within the broader context of the congregation's ministry and mission and may be changed, depending upon circumstances. Ability to deal with ambiguous situations will be part of this position, and there is considerable scope for freedom of action.</p> <p>Works closely with one or more committees to produce desired outcomes in one or more areas of congregational life. May work jointly with other ministry staff for coordination purposes. This position is accountable at the committee level (e.g., Christian Education Committee, Health Ministries Committee), but some decisions about this work may be made by the governing body of the pastoral charge and require the involvement of the incumbent.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p>Position is very broadly defined and dealing with ambiguity will be a large part of this position.</p> <p>Accountability is at the governing body level as well as with presbytery. Input about decisions and actions is required from various congregational committees, congregational leaders, and presbytery. Freedom to act, within the boundaries of ministry personnel, will rest with the incumbent.</p> <p>The incumbent for this position will act in a congregational capacity very similar to that of an order of ministry person.</p> <p>The position has responsibilities involving significant activities and resources of the congregation and is the sole paid position accountable for the outcomes of the work involved.</p>

### Section III: Complexity of focus

This criterion covers problem solving, dealing with ambiguity, difficulty of the thinking required, and the number of programs and areas of congregational life involved.

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Guiding Principles</b>
<b>1</b>	<p>Situation is consistent and problems are resolved by making decisions on fairly common issues, by simple choice among known options, with very little need to consider alternative ways of approach.</p> <p>Thinking within well-defined, somewhat diversified procedures; many precedents covering most situations and/or readily available assistance.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p>The situation has some variation requiring the search for solutions within an area of learned approaches. Having experience in dealing with similar situations will be very helpful. There is a need to deal with some degree of ambiguity, and life/work experience will come into play in thinking through situations.</p> <p>Precedents cover many but not all situations and there is access to assistance.</p>

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Guiding Principles</b>
<b>3</b>	<p>Situations are quite different, requiring a search for solutions mainly within the area of learned approaches. Some theological, analytical, and constructive thinking is required. Decisions take into account congregational policy, where <i>what</i> is stated, but not <i>how</i>.</p> <p>Thinking about one or more areas of the congregation's ministry within a frame of reference related to the congregation's overall mission, with considerable scope for making choices about how to carry out responsibilities.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p>Situations are varied, requiring analytical, interpretive, evaluative, and/or constructive thinking skills. Ability is needed to access biblical and theological perspectives, to develop new concepts, and to help people comprehend the larger picture.</p> <p>Thinking within concepts, principles, and broad guidelines related to the church's ministry and mission goals and objectives; many intangibles or unstructured aspects to the context.</p>

#### Section IV: Boundaries of involvement

This criterion measures impact of action, representative authority, and sphere of influence.

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Guiding Principles</b>
<b>1</b>	Work is done with a specific supervisory person and/or with a small group. Influence is limited to one specific activity within the congregation.
<b>2</b>	Work is done with one or more committees of the pastoral charge, and the position is understood as having authority in regard to a specific area of the congregation's ministry, such as pastoral visiting or coordination of the church school. Impact of actions taken is limited to one area of congregational life.
<b>3</b>	Work is done with congregational leaders, committees of the pastoral charge, and possibly with the governing body of the pastoral charge. The position may have authority to represent the congregation in certain circumstances. Impact of decision-making is broader and may affect more than one aspect of congregational life.
<b>4</b>	Work is done jointly with individuals, groups, and committees throughout the congregation, along with the governing body and presbytery involvement. Decisions made will impact the congregation and the larger church and community, and will affect the overall well-being of the congregation and its ministry. This position is seen as having representative authority for the congregation and at times for the larger church.

## Position Categorization Worksheet

### Part A

<b>Position Title:</b>	
<b>Pastoral Charge:</b>	
<b>Presbytery:</b>	

### Part B

The category for this position is \_\_\_\_\_ and has been determined on the basis of the definitions and criteria.

or

### Part C

Rating (1-4)	Guiding principles
	Section I: Breadth and depth of experience/knowledge required
	Section II: Accountability and decision-making
	Section III: Complexity of focus
	Section IV: Boundaries of involvement
	Total points

Determining accountability		
Total points	Level	Accountability
4-6 points (mainly ratings of 1)	Lay employee Level 1	Congregationally accountable; congregation is the primary court of oversight and discipline.  Salary is at the discretion of the congregation.
7-9 points (mainly ratings in the 2 range)  10-13 points (mainly ratings in the 3 range)	Congregational designated minister Level 2  Level 3	Congregationally accountable; presbytery is the primary court of oversight and discipline.  Remuneration must include salary, continuing education amount, and vacation time. Negotiated salary is at the discretion of the congregation, but should take into account the level of the CDM.
14-16 points (mainly ratings in the 4 range)	Ministry personnel Level 4	Presbytery accountable.  Salary and allowances in compliance with the minimums set for ministry personnel.

The category for this position is \_\_\_\_\_, with a level of \_\_\_\_\_.

# Appendix B: Competencies for Congregational Designated Ministers

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## Core Competencies

- Is a baptized person
- Understands and is willing to articulate the theology and polity of the United Church
- Has a basic understanding of scripture and of its authority within the United Church
- Can participate in the leadership of formal worship
- Can plan and lead informal worship
- Has the ability to draw on spiritual resources to sustain self and others
- Demonstrates knowledge and support of the justice-making policies of the United Church
- Understands the responsibilities of a ministry leader regarding duty of care, confidentiality, and authority/trust
- Possesses program planning skills
- Possesses basic administrative skills, e.g., budgeting, time management, report-writing
- Is able to exercise basic listening and empathetic skills
- Has communication skills related to team-building and conflict resolution

## Position-Specific Competencies

These gifts and experiences are requirements to work in a specific area as a congregational designated minister.

### Youth Ministry

In addition to the core CDM competencies:

- Understanding of youth culture and child/adolescent development, particularly faith development
- Educational and leadership skills in the areas of group facilitation and program planning/implementation/evaluation
- Ability to recruit, develop, and coordinate volunteers
- Familiarity with youth ministry resources of the United Church and from other appropriate sources

To fulfill these competencies, participation in a youth ministry program recognized by the United Church is strongly recommended.

### **Parish Nursing**

In addition to the core CDM competencies:

- The parish nurse core competencies as identified by the Canadian Association for Parish Nursing Ministry

To review the parish nurse core competencies, for more information on parish nursing, or for information on parish nursing education programs, please refer to the Canadian Association for Parish Nursing Ministry website: [www.capnm.ca](http://www.capnm.ca)

### **Pastoral Care**

In addition to the core CDM competencies:

- Ability to provide pastoral care to people in various stages of life
- Ability to listen and be empathetic as well as ability to discern when a referral to a counsellor/social agency is needed
- Knowledge of the spiritual issues involved in family relationships, life passages, aging, suffering and death, and of resources to support needs in such areas
- Ability to provide advocacy in pastoral issues
- Ability to draw on spiritual resources (e.g., spoken prayer, scripture) for use in pastoral care situations

### **Education**

In addition to the core CDM competencies:

- Knowledge of faith development theories
- Ability to use and to equip others to use different teaching/learning styles, teaching methodologies, and learning practices
- Ability to work with congregational leaders to determine overall educational goals and values for the congregation's educational program
- Ability to stimulate congregational participation in educational opportunities
- Ability to assess curriculum for various settings
- Skills in coordinating, developing, and recruiting volunteers
- Knowledge of educational resources of the United Church and other appropriate educational sources and institutions

### **Outreach**

In addition to the core CDM competencies:

- Awareness of the social context of a particular ministry
- Knowledge of the traditions of Christian social teachings and ability to speak with a prophetic voice
- Awareness of the United Church's social justice ministries and initiatives
- Understanding of social systems and ability to do social analysis



- Ability to access advocacy and mediation mechanisms for addressing legal, social, and economic needs
- Ability to access United Church financial resources and to network with other outreach initiatives and ecumenical initiatives in the community
- Ability to work with congregational leaders to determine the direction and priorities of the outreach ministry

### **Worship**

In addition to the core CDM competencies:

- An appropriately prayerful and integrated spirituality
- Ability to preside and preach effectively
- A working knowledge of theological themes, and of the history of the United Church and the wider church
- Ability to relate sensitively to a wide range of people
- Ability to share with others a faith informed by Christian hope and openness to the Spirit

### **Music**

Options for a level 2 or level 3 congregational designated minister of music are outlined in the resource “Making Music Together” (currently being revised; contact [worship@united-church.ca](mailto:worship@united-church.ca)).



[www.united-church.ca/handbooks](http://www.united-church.ca/handbooks)