

**COM GUIDELINES ON
DUTIES AND PRIVILEGES OF COMMISSIONED LAY PASTORS
Presbytery of Cincinnati**

PLACEMENT

CLPs shall be placed in churches deemed appropriate for lay pastoral leadership by the Committee on Ministry.

Ordinarily, a CLP will serve for a maximum of half-time (24 hours/week) in the first year. Any expansion of hours must be approved by COM and be implemented after the person has been commissioned for one year.

No person shall be commissioned by the presbytery for a staff position in a congregation served by a Minister of the Word and Sacrament.

Assuming a CLP will maintain his or her pre-commission church membership, a CLP will not be commissioned to serve a congregation in which he or she is a member.

FUNCTIONS

Moderator Duties

Ordinarily, COM shall recommend that a CLP be granted the authority to moderate *meetings* of the session of the congregation under the supervision of and when invited by the Moderator of the session appointed by the presbytery (G-14.0801c(3)). Before such authority is granted, the CLP will have received instructions and demonstrated a working knowledge of PCUSA polity.

After a period of one year, with the concurrence of the mentor, COM and the session of the congregation of the church the CLP is serving, the CLP may be appointed as the moderator of session of the church (G-10.0103, G-14.0801e).

Sacraments

G-14.0801c(1) Ordinarily, COM will recommend that a CLP be granted authority to administer the **Lord's Supper** within the boundaries of the ministry needs of the congregation to which he or she is commissioned. We note that it is only to the congregation or validated ministry to which he or she is commissioned. The CLP shall follow the same guidelines that instruct a Minister of Word and Sacrament and secure Session approval before administering the Lord's Supper.

G-14.0801c(2) Ordinarily, COM will recommend that a CLP be granted authority to administer the **Sacrament of Baptism**. We note that it is only to the congregation or validated ministry to which he or she is commissioned. The CLP shall follow the same guidelines that instruct a Minister of Word and Sacrament and secure Session approval before administering the Sacrament of Baptism.

Marriage

Marriage is not a Sacrament in the PCUSA. G-14.0801c(6) does allow for a CLP to perform marriages if allowed by the state, invited by the Session and authorized by the presbytery. COM shall recommend that CLP's not be given this privilege *carte blanc*. Permission to perform marriages will be governed by the following stipulations:

- Prior to conducting the pre-marital counseling, the CLP shall review with the mentor all materials that are to be used, and shall discuss with the mentor the counseling process. After the mentor is satisfied with the CLP's competence in this area, the mentor should report to COM and this requirement may be removed.
- CLP may preside only at the marriage of a member of the congregation to which he or she is commissioned or of immediate family members of that congregation.

CLP'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE PRESBYTERY OF CINCINNATI

Voice and Vote

Ordinarily, the Committee on Ministry shall recommend that the presbytery give a CLP voice (G-14.0801c(4)) and vote (G-14.0801c(5)) at presbytery meetings.

Amended to include vote: March 1, 2005

Mentor

G-14.0801(d) states: The commissioned lay pastor shall work under the supervision of the presbytery through the moderator of the session of the church being served or through the committee on ministry. A minister of the Word and Sacrament shall be assigned as a mentor and supervisor.

Commissioning

G-14.0801(g) delineates the questions to be asked during the commissioning process which shall take place during a regularly scheduled meeting of the Presbytery. The moderator of the Presbytery shall comply with the formulae found in G-14.0801(h).

Review of CLP

- Initial review of the relationship between the CLP and the congregation will occur at 6 months. The review committee will include the mentor and a representative from COM.
- First yearly review will include a separate interview with the CLP by the mentor and COM representative. An interview with the representative(s) of the congregation, mentor and COM representative should occur judiciously in tandem with the review of the CLP.
- 2nd and 3rd year review should model the Presbytery's policy on triennial visits.
- All CLP contracts should be for one year only. Contracts can be renewed.

REVIEW OF THESE GUIDELINES

COM shall review these guidelines one year from the date of their adoption.

ADOPTED by COM on July 2, 2002

Reviewed December 2, 2003

Subsequent revisions are noted in body of text.