

THE AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF MASSACHUSETTS

Commission on Ordained Ministry

REQUIREMENTS FOR PRIVILEGE OF CALL OR MINISTERIAL STANDING

The requirements for Recognition of Ordination are stipulated by the Commission on Ordained Ministry to meet the standards of ordination within the ABC USA. Educationally, the requirements are as follows:

- Track I:** Successful completion of an M.Div. degree from accredited seminary
- Track II:** Experiential Equivalency. (Maximum is 6 years of pastoral ministry equal to three years of higher education.)
- Track III:** Completed seminary or comparable equivalent for ordination in another country; **or** have completed a lay pastor program from a US seminary or in an ABC region; **or** completed seven years of pastoral ministry, at least three of those in the region.

Ministers seeking to have Privilege of Call or Ministerial Standing through The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts will be expected to complete or have completed the following process which has six components:

1) BAPTIST HISTORY AND AMERICAN BAPTIST POLITY

(TWO OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE)

- a) Credit course at any ATS-accredited seminary taught by an American Baptist If possible.
- b) An American Baptist Polity Course offered by the region.
there are extenuating circumstances, it may be possible to study Baptist History and American Baptist Polity with a tutor. This should be discussed with the Ministerial Standing Committee.

2) COURSE IN PROFESSIONAL ETHICS OFFERED BY A SEMINARY OR THE REGION.

3) EXPERIENCING THE UNIQUE ABC ETHOS (recommended)

A significant amount of ABC identity and style must be experienced by participation in events that widen a person's network of relationships.

Five such experiences are:

- a) Attend a New Ministers Orientation sponsored by The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts (offered annually)
- b) Attend a national American Baptist Orientation Conference offered biennially (or send a letter stating the intent to attend) optional
- c) Attend an Association meeting in Massachusetts
- d) Attend the Region's Annual Convention (The Annual Gathering-TAG)

4) MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH AN ABC MENTOR (STANDING will decide if this is needed)

This mentor, (mutually chosen by applicant and TABCOM staff), will assist and guide the candidate in understanding the American Baptist church in the areas of Christian Education, Evangelism, Church Growth, Stewardship, social justice and the resources available.

5) CAREER ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (STANDING will decide if this is needed)

This is conducted by the Center for Career Development and Ministry and results are shared with the Committee on Ministerial Standing.