



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF OKLAHOMA: GUIDELINES FOR THE LICENSING OF WORSHIP LEADERS

Requirements for provisional license:

1. Throughout this process, the Office of the Canon to the Ordinary is the source for all forms and documents and monitors the process for formation, licensing, and renewals. Please feel free to contact Ms.. Diane Ellsworth (405-232-4820; dellsworth@epiok.org) for assistance.
2. If the Rector/Vicar/Priest-in-charge desires to support a given application, he or she solicits the consent of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee using the **VESTRY ENDORSEMENT FORM FOR LICENSING WORSHIP LEADERS**.
3. The Rector/Vicar/Priest-in-charge also writes a letter concerning the suitability of the applicant for the ministry of leading worship, responding to the questions in the **INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRIEST'S REFERENCE FOR LICENSING WORSHIP LEADERS**.
4. After securing this endorsement, the Rector/Vicar/Priest-in-charge provides the applicant with no fewer than four hours of instruction about how to conduct the principal services of the Book of Common Prayer that may be led by a layperson in accordance with the rubrics and any Diocesan Customary established by the Bishop.
5. The applicant completes Safeguarding God's People and Safeguarding God's Children.
6. The applicant completes Cultural Awareness Training.
7. Using the **APPLICATION FOR LICENSE AS A WORSHIP LEADER**, the applicant may then petition the Bishop for a provisional license as a worship leader.
8. A criminal background check is performed by Office of the Canon to the Ordinary in accordance with Diocesan policies.
9. At the Bishop's discretion, the applicant may then be invited for an interview and testing session on a given date.
10. In advance, the applicant prepares and prints 6 copies of a complete Morning Prayer bulletin that conforms to the rubrics, lectionary, and customary. This bulletin should include everything needed to conduct and participate in worship.
11. The applicant meets with the Bishop or his designee(s), passes a proctored exam on Prayer Book rubrics and any Diocesan Customary, leads Morning Prayer from the prepared bulletin, and is interviewed.
12. At this point, the Bishop may (at his sole discretion) choose to issue a provisional license, which expires after one year.

Requirements for renewal, removal of provisional status:

1. The provisional license may be renewed (at the discretion of the Bishop) on an annual basis, using the **APPLICATION FOR RENEWING A LICENSE AS A WORSHIP LEADER**. Renewals of provisional licenses are contingent on sufficient evidence of continuing education.
2. For the first three years, the worship leader provides evidence that he or she has attended all available sessions on Prayer Book and Liturgy at the Iona School for Ministry.

3. The worship leader also engages in other continuing education requested by the Bishop.
4. Once the Iona requirement is met, the license is no longer provisional but must still be renewed annually by petition to the Bishop using the **APPLICATION FOR RENEWING A LICENSE AS A WORSHIP LEADER**.

Additional Policies and Notes:

The license is not transferrable from congregation to congregation. A license for an additional congregation may be requested from the Bishop using the **APPLICATION BY A LICENSED WORSHIP LEADER TO LEAD WORSHIP IN AN ADDITIONAL CONGREGATION**.

The license is revocable by the Bishop at any time at his sole discretion. Clergy of the Diocese and lay leadership of congregations should report misconduct, misuse of licenses, or any other concerns to the Bishop, either directly or through the Canon to the Ordinary.

Note: This license is not needed for occasional leadership of the Daily Office either informally or in the presence of the clergy of the congregation where it occurs. It is intended for those persons who seek to be authorized to lead public worship regularly, either on Sundays or other occasions, especially in the absence of the clergy of the congregation.

Note also: No license is required to read the lessons. Separate licenses exist for Eucharistic Ministers (formerly known as Lay Eucharistic Ministers or chalice bearers), who assist with the administration of the chalice at public worship and for Eucharistic Visitors, who bring Holy Communion from the celebration of the Eucharist to the sick and homebound.



INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRIEST'S REFERENCE FOR LICENSING WORSHIP LEADERS

Dear sisters and brothers, members of the clergy,

Because of the fundamental importance of Christian worship for building up the Body of Christ and transforming lives in the love of Jesus, permission to lead public worship on a regular basis, especially in the absence of ordained clergy, requires permission of the Bishop, after a careful discernment on the part of the Bishop and his advisors, as well as a period of training and formation.

At a minimum, those making the endorsement should take great care to recommend only persons of good reputation who have demonstrated sound faith, active lay ministry and leadership, consistent participation in adult formation and worship, and involvement in the life of the local congregation.

Part of your responsibility as Rectors/Vicars/Priests-in-charge is to ensure that Vestries and Bishop's Committees understand the importance of endorsing only persons who meet these criteria. You also are charged with providing me with frank advice about the suitability and qualifications of those you propose licensing as worship leaders.

Your letter to me should certify that the applicant is a confirmed communicant in good standing and indicate how long they have been part of the congregation you serve. At a minimum, it should also address the following:

1. Your sense of why this person is applying for a license to lead worship at this time.
2. Your assessment of the applicant's faith, spiritual maturity, and moral character.
3. Evidence of faithful, regular participation in ministries of adult formation and worship.
4. How you would propose incorporating this person, should he or she be licensed, into the liturgical life of the congregation you serve.

Please send your letter to:

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Edward J. Konieczny
The Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma
924 N. Robinson
Oklahoma City, OK 73102

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "E. J. Konieczny", written over a circular stamp or seal.

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Edward J. Konieczny
Bishop of Oklahoma



VESTRY ENDORSEMENT FORM FOR LICENSING WORSHIP LEADERS

We endorse _____, a confirmed adult communicant in good standing of _____ Church, in _____, to be considered for a license to lead worship. Signed by the Clergy and a 2/3 majority of the whole Vestry or Bishop's Committee.

Date

Rector/Vicar/Priest-in-Charge

Signed:

I hereby certify that the foregoing certificate was signed at a meeting of the Vestry of _____ duly convened on _____, and that the names above are those of all or at least two-thirds of the Vestry.

Signed: _____, Clerk of the Vestry



APPLICATION FOR LICENSE AS A WORSHIP LEADER

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Telephone Number: _____ Cell Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Date and place of Baptism _____

Date and place of Confirmation _____

How long have you been attending the congregation where you desire to lead worship? _____

Attaching additional sheets of paper, please respond to the following:

1. Describe your reasons for requesting this license. Why do you feel called to lead worship?
2. Describe your life of prayer and habits of attending Christian worship.
3. Describe your participation in the Christian formation ministries of your congregation.

I, _____, hereby petition the Bishop of Oklahoma for a provisional license to lead worship at _____ Church in _____.

I will consent to a criminal background check. **(Please initial _____ . A separate form will be provided.)**

I agree that my ministry as a worship leader is at the direction of the Rector/Vicar/Priest-in-charge of the congregation named above and under the oversight of the Bishop of Oklahoma, who retains the right to revoke this license at any time. I specifically agree to conform to the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer and any Diocesan Customary. I agree to keep all trainings required by Canon Law or Diocesan Policy current and to fulfill such continuing education requirements as may be mandated by the Bishop. **I have attached copies of my most recent certificates for Safeguarding God’s Children, Safeguarding God’s People, and Cultural Awareness training.**

Signature of applicant

Date

Please print name

Signature of Rector/Vicar/Priest-in-charge