



**Thank you for your interest in licensure  
in the Evangelical Covenant Church!**

The Covenant Church grants a ministerial license to persons who are called to serve in Covenant churches and other approved ministries. Licensure is reserved for those who, by demonstration of character and gifts and by virtue of place of service, require credentials in order to perform pastoral ministry.

This brochure outlines the requirements for receiving a ministerial license in the Covenant and explains the steps involved in receiving a first-time license. For information on receiving a permanent credential, such as ordination, commissioning, or consecration, please contact the Ordered Ministry. There are three license types in the Covenant: Ministry License (ML), Bivocational Ministry License (BVL), and Global Service License (GSL).



Ministerial licensing in the Covenant begins at the conference level. The conference office staff in each of the Covenant's eleven regions, as well as Serve Globally, are equipped to help you navigate the process.

Visit [covchurch.org/conferences](http://covchurch.org/conferences) for your conference office contact information.

**For more information...**

**Ordered Ministry of the Covenant**

8303 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago, IL 60631

Call: 773-583-3211

Email: [ministry@covchurch.org](mailto:ministry@covchurch.org)

Web: [covchurch.org/vocational-ministry](http://covchurch.org/vocational-ministry)



The Evangelical Covenant Church

# A Brief Guide to Ministerial Licensing



# Six Steps to Becoming Licensed

1. In order to receive a license in the Evangelical Covenant Church, you must:
  - Be a member of a Covenant church
  - Have a call to a Covenant church or approved ministry (such as military or institutional chaplaincy, parachurch ministry, etc.)
  - Contact your conference office to verify which license you qualify for and request that a pre-screening packet be sent to you
2. Complete all the items in the pre-screening packet and return them to your conference office with all applicable fees. The Ordered Ministry office will email you a link to complete the online psychological assessment, the criminal record screening, and a self-disclosure background check form.
3. Upon completion and evaluation, the license packet will be sent. Read all of the resources in the license packet and return the following items to your conference:
  - Covenant Orientation application (if applicable)
  - Minister's Profile Form (CovConnect)
  - Signed policy on baptism
  - Licensing paper
  - Completed and signed license application
  - Guidestone 403(b) enrollment forms

4. You will be interviewed by your conference committee on ministerial standing. Receiving your license is contingent upon its recommendation. You may be asked to rewrite a portion of your licensing paper.
5. The conference office will send all of your license paperwork to the Ordered Ministry, where it is kept on file. You will then be sent an interim license certificate, which allows you to perform ministerial functions in the interim period before your license is approved at the Covenant Annual Meeting.
6. The final approval of your license will be voted on for recommendation by:
  - Your conference ministerial association
  - Your conference annual meeting
  - The Board of the Ordered Ministry
  - The Covenant Ministerium
  - The Covenant Annual Meeting

**If approved, you will receive your first-time license certificate in July, following the Covenant Annual Meeting. The license will remain in effect through June 30 of the following year. Expect to receive a license renewal application from your conference office in the spring.**

## Benefits of Licensure

- Holding a license in the Covenant connects you to the wider community of Covenant pastors and provides you with a structure of accountability, care, and support.
- When you receive a license in the Covenant, your call is authenticated by the broader church.
- Holding a license may allow you to take advantage of the clergy tax benefit. Consult a tax professional for details.
- Licensed ministers may take full advantage of the resources made available through the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence initiative.

## Which License Is Right for You?

### MINISTRY LICENSE (ML)

- Applicant must be paid for at least 20 hours per week.
- Applicant must demonstrate completion of four theological courses within eight years.
- Applicants who have not earned a theological degree from North Park Theological Seminary or Centro Hispano de Estudios Teológicos must enroll in Covenant Orientation.
- Appropriate license for those in process toward a permanent credential such as Ordination to Word and Sacrament, Ordination to Word and Service, or Commissioning.
- May be renewed indefinitely.
- Requires enrollment in mandatory 403(b) plan.
- Requires maintenance of elements of good standing (including payment of annual dues).

### BIVOCATIONAL MINISTRY LICENSE (BVL)

- For those in ministry who are volunteers, part-time, or serving full-time but whose main source of income is from secular employment.
- Requires an annual report on readings chosen from the Bivocational Ministers' Reading List.
- Requires completion of Covenant Orientation's Vocational Excellence class within two years.
- May be renewed indefinitely.
- Requires maintenance of elements of good standing (including payment of annual dues).

### GLOBAL SERVICE LICENSE (GSL)

- For those called to serve as global personnel who are not commissioned or ordained.
- Contact Serve Globally for more information: [serve.globally@covchurch.org](mailto:serve.globally@covchurch.org).
- Requires maintenance of elements of good standing (including payment of annual dues).