

Adapted from the *Credentials Manual of the Church of God* (2007 Edition)

The Credentialing Process described here has been revised by the new PNA Credentials Committee and will apply to all Credential Applicants in the Pacific Northwest Association. The new Credentialing Process involves the following steps:

1. A **Letter of Intent** – You should write a letter to the Credentials Committee stating your desire to receive Church of God ministerial credentials.
2. A copy of the **Ministerial Credentialing Process** will be sent to you so you can get an overview of the entire process.
3. **Preliminary Screening** – You will receive a call from the Credentials Office to answer questions you may have about the process. At that time you will receive instructions toward your next step.
4. **Introductory Seminar** – In this meeting, you will explore your divine call and the nature of Church of God credentialing. Participation is essential to understand the Application process and how to proceed.
5. An **Application Packet** will be given to you at the Seminar; it will contain an Application Form and requests for information on your Christian Experience, Divine Call, Family life, Work history, and Church involvement. You will need an Ordained Church of God minister to sign your *Endorsement Form*, and you will be asked to provide the names of four persons who know you and your work.
6. A **Bible Discovery Tool** is available on the internet, and you will be given instructions on how to use it to determine if you need further studies in the Bible.
7. The **Initial Interview** (if you're married, your spouse should be present) will be conducted by a Team of two Credentials Committee members using a standardized set of questions; their written record of your answers, along with their impressions of you will be submitted to the Credentials Chairman, who will share them with the full Committee, and they will vote at their next meeting on whether or not to grant credentials; in most cases, this will be a Commission.
8. **Regional Clusters** – you will be introduced to other credential Applicants to form a group who will meet every-other-month meeting under the guidance of a trained coach. Your group will provide relational support, guidance through the credentialing process, and personal development with an intentional reading curriculum.
9. **Doctrinal Statement** -- as a Commissioned Minister, you will be required to write a statement of your personal beliefs on *Fourteen Theological Topics*; a *Doctrinal Workshop* will assist you in understanding the basic teachings of the Church of God prior to writing these paragraphs.
10. A **Second Interview** – This will be conducted by the entire Committee to review your *Doctrinal Statements*, and at that time you may be considered for a *Ministerial License*. Usually, you will be Licensed for at least two years, prior to Ordination, although moving to another congregation may extend that time.

11. **Life and Ministry Plan** – During your time as a Licensed Minister, you will be asked to consider your skills, knowledge, interests, personality traits, and apply these to your divine call.
12. A **Third Interview** will be conducted by the entire Committee to consider you for Ordination. Evaluation of your LAMP will be a major part of this Interview, and your spouse should be present for this Interview, since it affects the remainder of your life.

The entire Credentialing Process is based upon our mutual, prayerful determination of your suitability for, and divine call to, the Christian ministry.

The following criteria will be use in making these decisions (from the *Credentials Manual*):

2.12 The Moral and Ethical Qualification

Credentialing is for those whose character and reputation are worthy of Christian ministers and throughout the Credentialing Process the following qualifications should become evident:

The following scriptural passages should be used as a partial basis for evaluation of a candidate's fitness for vocational credentialing:

1. The spiritual test (Titus 1:8, i.e., "holy");
2. The ethical test (Titus 1:7, i.e., "blameless");
3. The self-discipline test (Titus 1:7, "not...arrogant or quick tempered or a drunkard or violent"; Titus 1:8, "master of oneself," "self-controlled"; and 1 Timothy 3:2, "temperate");
4. The confidence test (Titus 2:7, "a model of good deeds");
5. The integrity test (Romans 12:9, "love genuine...hold to the good");
6. The experience test (1 Timothy 3:6, "not a recent convert");
7. The humility test (Romans 12:3, "not think of oneself more highly than one ought to think");
8. The graciousness test (1 Corinthians 13, "patient and kind...not irritable or resentful");
9. The domestic test (1 Timothy 3:4, "must manage one's own household well");
10. The stewardship test (Malachi 3:10, "Bring the full tithe into the storehouse"; 1 Timothy 1:12, "I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service...").

2.13 The Theological and Biblical Qualification

After being Commissioned, the Applicant will write the fourteen doctrinal statements which deal with beliefs in theology and doctrine.

2.14 The Dispositional and Relational Qualifications

Questions regarding this qualification are asked on the Level 2 Reference Forms.

2.15 The Educational Qualification

The Applicant's educational background will determine which track to follow toward Ordination. This may not be determined, if the Applicant is not seeking Ordination.

2.16 The Vocational Qualification

Credentialing is for those who are peers in position and performance of those who are vocationally or bi-vocationally engaged in professional Christian ministry.

2.20 Conditions for Granting Vocational Credentialing

The Credentials Committee will want to consider the following paragraphs in making a decision on granting an Applicant's credentials:

2.21 Reasonable Doubt Is Removed

2.22 The Ministry is Overtly Religious in Nature

2.23 Candidate Is Gifted and Willing for Vocational Christian Ministry

2.24 Involvement Is Substantial; Ministry Is Professional