

**GENERAL COUNCIL ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

Section:
Policy #:
Adopted: 11/29/2012
Revised: 8/18/2017

**Professional Standards, Training, and Certification
of United Methodist Church Administrators**

Policy

“Certified United Methodist Church Administrator” (CUMCA) signifies recognition by the denomination of the certified person as having a special degree of professional attainment and commitment to the ministry of administration within The United Methodist Church.

GCFA is the certifying agency for United Methodist Church Administrators. GCFA establishes the professional standards, training, and certification in partnership with The Church Network powered by The National Association of Church Business Administration. The General Secretary of GCFA shall assign a staff executive to serve as the certifying officer. The certifying officer shall:

- Receive all application materials for certification;
- Grant certification upon satisfactory completion of certification requirements;
- Issue a certificate to that effect to the applicant;
- Notify the local church, district, and annual conference or other ministry location as appropriate; and
- Report annually to GCFA the names of all those certified.

Professional Standards

1. The applicant shall be a committed Christian who practices the basic principles of Christian stewardship and demonstrates competence and leadership ability in church finance and administration.
2. The applicant must meet the minimum educational requirement of a high school diploma.
3. The applicant must have completed the academic requirements through one of the approved certification centers.
4. The applicant must be a professing member of The United Methodist Church or serve as a church administrator in a United Methodist Church.
5. The applicant must maintain active affiliation with other church administrators through participation in annual conferences and/or monthly meetings of organizations such as the United Methodist Network of Practice of The Church Network or local chapters of The Church Network.

6. The applicant must have primary responsibility in at least one of the key areas in church finance and administration, such as: personnel/human resource management, staff development, congregational leadership, theology of stewardship, office management, information management, property management, communication and marketing, strategic planning, financial management, stewardship of self, and legal and tax matters.

Professional Training

First-time CUMCA candidates must complete these educational requirements within five years of the completion of the first seminar session taken (these are not required to be taken in order):

- All certification requirements as established from time to time by The Church Network; and
- A course on United Methodist Polity, offered either during the Academy of Church Business Administration or at The United Methodist Network of Practice Annual Meeting during The Church Network national conference.

All of the academic requirements can be fulfilled through the Academy of Church Business Administration offered by GCFA, and The Church Network CEU program.

Alternatively, the certification seminars and project can be completed through any of the certification centers recognized by The Church Network, plus completing either:

- A United Methodist polity module offered for church administrators and church secretaries; or
- Seminary course work in United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity that fulfills requirements to be ordained as a deacon or elder; or
- Advanced Course of Study work that includes United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity.

Retention Requirements

To retain the designation of CUMCA, persons are required to demonstrate their commitment to excellence in the ministry of administration through:

- Continued life-long learning in the field of church administration in order to retain the designation of CUMCA. This is demonstrated by earning 4.0 CEUs¹ (40 contact hours) in any of the fourteen areas of study during the four year period of certification. Up to 1.0 CEU may be earned through a reading program. Up to 1.0 CEU may be earned by teaching

¹ CEU - One "Continuing Education Unit" (CEU) is defined as ten contact hours (50 minutes of instruction) in an organized education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction. The following are authorized providers of continuing education: The Southeast Church Network, The South Central Jurisdiction Large Church Administrators, The Church Network or its chapters, any general agency of The United Methodist Church, or the Leadership Institute offered by the Church of the Resurrection UMC. Events from other providers will be accepted at the discretion of the certifying officer based upon the instruction appropriately enhancing the fourteen areas of study.

classes in any of the fourteen areas of study, provided listings of the individual's name includes the designation of CUMCA.

- Affiliation with other church administrators through participation in annual and/or monthly meetings of organizations such as The Church Network or local affiliated chapters.

Professional Certification

Certification as a United Methodist Church Administrator is for four (4) years. Individuals must meet the retention requirements in order to continue use of the CUMCA designation. An individual who holds the CUMCA and no longer works in a local congregation or denominational or ministry setting may retain their CUMCA provided they continue to meet the retention requirements. Those who do not meet the requirement will receive a letter of instruction to cease using the designation.

Lapsed certifications may be reinstated within two years following the lapse by completing the continuing education requirements and applying for retention. Certification that has lapsed for longer than two years will require the individual to re-enter and complete the certification seminars as if he or she had never completed certification with the exception of completing another project.

First-time applicants, upon completion of all academic requirements, shall submit the following to the certifying officer:

- Application for Certification;
- Current job description demonstrating primary responsibility in appropriate fields;
- Certification of completion of all academic requirements; and
- Evaluation forms from the senior pastor or immediate supervisor and a lay officer of the church currently being served or appropriate equivalent positions within the ministry setting.

Retention applicants shall submit an Application for Certification and documentation of Continuing Education to the certifying officer.

CUMCAs who have been granted retirement from their place of employment will be granted "Lifetime Certified United Methodist Church Administrator" (LCUMCA) upon application to the certifying officer, with no additional requirements. For the purposes of this policy, "retirement" means that the applicant is not engaged in any full-time Church administrator employment.

Procedures

None.

Responsibility

The General Secretary shall be responsible for implementing and overseeing this policy.

Originating Committee

Connectional Outreach