

PRIVILEGE OF CALL INFORMATION SHEET

Application

1. Please be sure you review the form of Candidate's Letter of Request for Privilege of Call or Dual Standing for a checklist of documentation required in your application.
2. Be sure you have reviewed Section 4 of the Manual on Ministry. However, where there is a conflict between the Manual on Ministry and this Information Sheet, the instructions on this sheet control.
3. Your Paper should be no more than 25 double-spaced pages, 12-point TimesNewRoman font, plus a cover sheet that includes the candidate's name, home church, and date. Be sure there are page numbers on each page. Also, it is very important that you carefully proofread and edit your paper for grammar, spelling and punctuation. You might want to get someone else to look over it to proofread it as well. Papers full of technical errors will be returned for a rewrite and this may delay your meeting with the Committee or approval of Privilege of Call status.
4. Documentation typically is required to be submitted to the Chairperson of the Committee on Ministry (CoM) via email 3 weeks before the next CoM meeting. If any documents, such as transcripts, must be sent in hard copy, please contact the CoM Chairperson for the appropriate mailing address. The deadline for email and hard copy documentation is the same. This is a real deadline. If the required documentation is not received by the CoM Chairperson by the deadline you may not be on the agenda for the next CoM meeting.
5. Documents may be submitted one at a time, and do not need to be sent in one batch. PDF format is preferred.
6. Do not wait until the last minute to arrange for your UCC Background Check or Psychological Assessment. Each of these should be completed no later than 1 month before the date of your meeting with the CoM. There is a fee for these services that must be paid to the service providers. It is the responsibility of the Privilege of Call candidate to pay all of that fee. The processes are outlined in the Background Check and Psychological Evaluation Information Sheets on the NTA website.
7. You will receive an email within 1 week after the documentation deadline notifying you of the status of your application. If it is complete, you will be given an appointment time for the next CoM meeting.

Interview

8. At this interview you will be examined for approval for privilege of call. Be prepared to discuss your sense of calling to the UCC, your faith journey, your Privilege of Call paper and other aspects of your application, and to be evaluated based on the Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers. Information about the Marks is available on the UCC website. The members of the CoM will have received your Privilege of Call paper to read prior to the meeting.

9. Please arrive about 15 minutes early for your appointment and wait outside the room. There may be signs posted directing you where to wait.

10. The CoM works hard to keep to the schedule, but sometimes circumstances and the movement of the Spirit dictate otherwise. Be prepared to wait. The CoM apologizes in advance if the meeting is running behind. Regardless of whether the meeting is running on time or behind, the CoM will spend as much time with each candidate as needed.

11. After the interview, you will be asked to step outside the room so the CoM can discuss your application. Then you will be invited back to hear the results of the CoM's deliberations and to discuss next steps. The CoM will make one of the following decisions:

- *Yes.* The CoM commends the individual to the NTA for its approval and authorization for privilege of call (pending receipt of a call) at an Ecclesiastical Council.
- *Yes, but ...* The CoM continues the process of discernment and defines certain learning outcomes or behaviors that must be demonstrated and reassessed by a specific time.
- *No, but ...* The CoM does not recommend the individual for privilege of call at this time, but affirms the candidate's sense of call to authorized ministry in the UCC and offers constructive feedback for learning outcomes or behaviors that could be addressed and an application for privilege of call submitted at another time. Minister in Discernment status may be granted. [For more information about Minister in Discernment see Minister in Discernment Information Sheet on the NTA website.]
- *No.* The CoM does not recommend the individual for privilege of call in the UCC.

12. Later you will receive a confirmation in writing by email of the outcome of this meeting. If approved, you will be provided with information about the upcoming NTA meeting where your Ecclesiastical Council will be held.

Ecclesiastical Council

13. The NTA sits as an Ecclesiastical Council twice a year, at the Fall and Spring meetings of the Association.
14. Copies of the candidate's Privilege of Call paper is circulated to all ministers and churches in the NTA to be read by delegates prior to the NTA meeting.
15. Candidates should come to the Ecclesiastical Council prepared to make a brief statement (about 5-10 minutes) about their faith journey, sense of call to authorized ministry in the UCC and fundamental theology and be prepared to answer questions from the delegates.
16. When there are no further questions, the candidate will be escorted out of the room, so that the delegates may deliberate. If the Ecclesiastical Council's vote is *Yes*, the candidate is approved for privilege of call pending receipt of an authorizable call (except occasionally when a call has already been received). If the Ecclesiastical Council's vote is *No*, the candidates status is terminated, either with or without bias to reapply to the NTA.
17. Sometime after the approval of the Ecclesiastical Council you will receive a certificate of Privilege of Call.

Approved for Privilege of Call Pending Receipt of a Call/Search and Call Process

18. The status of "approved for privilege of call pending receipt of a call" must be renewed yearly by a written request to the CoM, explaining where you are in the search and call process. If more than 4 years pass, another meeting with the CoM is required, and approval for continued privilege of call may or may not be granted.
19. Becoming an authorized ordained minister in the UCC through privilege of call requires an "authorizable" call. Traditionally this has been a call to be a minister of a local church or to serve as chaplain in a staff position at an institution such as a hospital, hospice, police or fire department, or school which require the authorization to perform the sacraments.
20. The CoM recognizes the need to be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit and the new things God is doing in the church. Therefore, the CoM may be asked to consider approval of a ministerial setting that does not fit the traditional definition of an "authorizable" or "ordainable" call if it meets the following criteria:
 - *The Call is Covenantal.* The call demonstrates a clear connectedness with a local church as partners in ministry with an Association in the shared ministry of the UCC (as demonstrated by a 3- or 4-way covenant agreement, see below).

- *The Call Responds to the Needs of the Church.* The call, whether to a local church setting or a setting beyond the local church, shows intent, authenticity, and validity to serve the ongoing and expanding needs of the Church.
- *The Call Involves Mutuality of Ministry Between the Minister and the Community.* Whether a minister is serving in a local church or in a specialized setting while holding membership in a local church that supports the authorized minister and the ministry setting, it is expected that there are ongoing structures of both support and accountability in place to encourage the long-term well-being of the minister and on-going viability of the ministry being undertaken.

21. Once a call is received, a copy of the call agreement or call letter that includes details of the ministry to be undertaken should be submitted to the CoM for approval as an “authorizable call.” Where the call is to a local church setting, the call agreement or call letter is considered a 3-way covenant between the minister, the local church and the Association. If the call is to a setting beyond the local church, a 4-way covenant agreement is required between the minister, the local church of which the minister is a member and who supports this ministry, the Association, and the calling body (the institution or organization where the minister will serve).

22. When appropriate, approval by the CoM may be done by email vote of the CoM. However, the CoM reserves the right to require a meeting with the minister to discuss the call prior to approval for authorization.

Installation

23. Once a call is approved as authorizable, the minister’s status is changed to “authorized minister,” with standing in the NTA.

24. If the call is to a ministry setting in the NTA, a service of installation will be performed in conjunction with the local church. Where there is a 4-way covenant, a representative of the calling body should be invited to participate in the installation.

25. The responsibility for the worship service for installation falls on the local church hosting the service and the newly authorized minister. The CoM will provide the liturgy of installation to be included within that worship service.

26. Announcements of the installation service are also the responsibility of the local church and/or the newly authorized minister and should be made to the NTA and its clergy as a whole. The announcement or invitation should indicate whether clergy attending should robe and if so what color stole is preferred. If clergy robe, typically they process formally into the sanctuary (and out) and sit in a designated area.

27. The newly authorized minister should choose and indicate during the service or in the bulletin where the offering taken during the service will go. Traditionally it goes to support seminary education in some way. As the NTA is connected to the CUE seminaries (Chicago, United, Eden), that is always a good option for this offering.

28. If the call is to a ministry setting in another Association, after the call is approved you should apply to transfer your standing from the NTA to your new Association. Contact your new Association to see what processes they require. As part of the transfer, your file will be transferred from the NTA to your new Association.