

Welcome

Welcome to the credentialing site of the Midwest District of the Evangelical Free Church of America. These pages contain explanations, requirements and other pertinent information necessary for people in various levels of ministry within the Free Church who desire to obtain a ministerial credential with the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA).

The Purpose of a Credential in the EFCA

A credential in the Free Church is acknowledgment of a person's call by God into ministry and service of the body of Christ, the church, and recognition that he/she is a good theological fit with the EFCA. It also provides for legal status when it comes to taxes and the carrying out of official duties as a minister of the Gospel.

What does credentialing say about a person in our denomination? First of all it says that a local body of believers has agreed with the candidate that he or she has indeed been called by God to a certain ministry within that local congregation and/or the larger body of the EFCA. It says that they recognize that God has gifted the candidate for that call and that the candidate's life is above reproach and fit for ministry. Secondly, the credentialed individual is viewed as being a good fit for ministry in the EFCA. We hold that a person may in fact be called by God to full time ministry, but that does not necessarily mean that the person is a good fit with the goals, objectives, and theological beliefs of the EFCA. Obtaining a credential in the EFCA tells others that the person is not only called, but is in line with and qualified to minister in the EFCA.

The credentialing process goes through three basic phases. A candidate must first be recognized and recommended for credentialing by a local Free Church in which the members have had ample time to observe and sit under their ministry. Secondly, the candidate must write a paper defending the doctrinal statement of the EFCA and successfully defend it orally at the District level to a committee known as the District Board of Ministerial Standing. Finally, the candidate's theological defense must be approved by the national Board of Ministerial Standing. Once approved, the candidate is given a certificate which remains the property of the EFCA. Thus, all credentialed ministers in the EFCA are held accountable to the entire denomination.

Types of Credentials

There are four different credentials available in the EFCA.

1. **Ministry License:**

- This credential is open to both males and females.
- It is a temporary credential which is good for three years. After that period the license holder must complete the work required to gain a permanent credential. Those who have not attended Trinity Evangelical Divinity School will also have to complete either a history and polity class or do some required reading on EFCA history.
- The license provides all necessary legal status for ministry as far as State and National laws are concerned.
- It is required for those seeking a permanent ministry credential in the EFCA, unless one is entering with a previous ordination from another church or denomination.

2. **Certificate of Christian Ministry: (CCM)**

- This is a permanent credential that may be held by males and females in various ministry settings (such as associate pastors, music ministers, Christian Education ministers, directors of children's or women's ministries and others.)
- The requirements for this credential are a little less stringent than for ordination, and it is achieved after the candidate completes further requirements for the CCM and has successfully completed the 3 year licensing period.

3. ***Certificate of Ordination:*** (COO)
 - Ordination is reserved in the EFCA for those who are male in gender.
 - This credential is obtained only after completing a 3-year licensing period and the additional work for an ordination (another paper and defense of theology) is completed.
 - Ordination is desirable for those in full time ministry as pastors of local congregations.

4. ***Transfer of Ordination:*** (TOO)
 - This is a permanent credential open only to males in the Evangelical Free Church.
 - It can be obtained by all those men who meet the qualifications and who desire to join in ministry with the EFCA. This track is open to men coming to a Free Church with an existing ordination from another denomination or church group. The requirements for obtaining the credential are outlined on this website.

How Does a Person Obtain a Credential in the Free Church?

On this Midwest District Website you will find the necessary forms and directions that you need to begin the credentialing process. You will also find links to the National Website for the items you must have in the process. Follow the link to the appropriate credentialing track you need.

Credentialing and Divorce:

The EFCA does not normally credential divorced persons. However, there are some situations in which a person who has been divorced may be granted a Divorce Policy Exception (DPE). It is always better to contact the District Superintendent before you begin the process if either you or your spouse has undergone a divorce. No one will be credentialed if he/she has been divorced and does not first obtain a DPE.

How Do I Proceed at This Time?

Please see "To the Candidate" section in the next letter. If you have any questions or need assistance you may contact Nancy at 308.234.5400 at the District Office. We will be happy to assist you in any way we can. If you have any further questions, please contact the Midwest District Director of Theology and Credentialing, Rev. Greg H. Hubbard at 785-282-3924 or at his email address at greg@efcamidwest.org.

Mentor

It is highly recommended that every person in the credentialing process obtain a mentor to help them. Contact the Director of Theology and Credentialing for help in finding a credentialing mentor near you. They can be invaluable in helping you achieve your goal of being credentialed in the EFCA.

Sincerely in Christ,



Rev. Greg H. Hubbard
MWD Director of Theology and Credentialing

To: All Credentialing Candidates - Midwest District EFCA churches and ministries
From: Greg H. Hubbard, Director of Theology and Credentialing, greg@efcamidwest.org

To the candidate:

On behalf of the staff and leadership of the Midwest District of the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA), I commend you for your desire to pursue an EFCA credential. The purpose of such a credential is to affirm God's call upon your life, to verify that you meet the qualifications and standards for ministry, approve you for ministerial service in the EFCA and to provide legal status in the exercise of your ministry.

Below is a brief guideline for the process.

1. Complete the Midwest District preliminary application; write your letter of request; remit the appropriate processing fee. Send all to the Midwest District EFCA, 218 W 18 St., Kearney, NE 68845.
2. Upon receipt of the above items, you will be directed to the National website where you will get all the applications and information needed to pursue a credential. If you or your spouse has been divorced, a separate procedure is required to determine if you are eligible for credentialing. Please contact the district office for details. 308-234-5400 or mwd@efcamidwest.org
3. You will be required to write a doctrinal thesis. You will be directed to the National website where clear guidelines on how to write the paper/thesis are given.
4. If you would like help with your thesis or have it reviewed when completed, please contact me. A review is designed to help you clarify your beliefs and prepare you for the credentialing council interview.
5. Your Regional council chairman will lead a small group of pastors and laymen who will interview you for the purpose of examining your doctrinal beliefs and ministry. The credentialing council interview takes 90 minutes for licensing and for permanent credential candidates the process runs about 3 hours (for the Certificate of Christian Ministry) and 4 to 5 hours for the Transfer of Ordination and the Ordination.
6. The credentialing process and rules are outlined in [Steps Toward Credentialing](#) which can be found on the National website.
7. Please note: there are a number of steps and requirements for each type of credential. Everyone must start with the license unless he already has an ordination from another Denomination or Church group. The requirements for each credential are clearly laid out under the particular credential you are working toward.

To the church:

Your pastor or staff member is applying for an EFCA credential. This benefits not only him (or her in some cases) but the church as well, and is one assurance of the doctrinal integrity of your spiritual leader and his/her fit with the Free Church. Please encourage him/her in this endeavor, giving him/her the necessary time to complete the various requirements. The church will be asked to provide a written recommendation for your pastor or staff minister. Also, because there is both time and expense involved, the Midwest District EFCA office charges a processing fee. Please provide your pastor with a check made payable to "Midwest District EFCA" in the amount of \$100 for a 3 year license or \$150 for a permanent credential. The fee covers only a portion of the processing expense and payment does not guarantee approval for an EFCA credential. The fee can be reduced for church planters or others for whom the cost is prohibitive. Please contact me at 785-282-3924 to request a reduced fee. I, as well as the District Superintendent, am happy to answer any questions you may have as a church concerning this process. There are helps for you in writing a character reference and recommendation for your pastor on the National EFCA website.

Midwest District EFCA *Preliminary Application* for Ministerial Credential
The Evangelical Free Church of America

Date: _____
Name: _____ E-mail address: _____
Spouse's Name: _____
Home Address: _____ Phone: _____
City: _____ State/Zip: _____
Current qualifying Midwest District EFCA church membership: (name of church, city, state) _____

Currently called to/serving (church or institution): _____
Address: _____
Position: _____

This position is () paid () volunteer

How long have you been in this position? _____

Do you serve in this position 30 hours or more per week? _____

¹ Which credential are you applying for*? (Please check one.)

- ___ Ministerial License (3-Year)
- ___ Certificate of Ordination (3-year license is a prerequisite)
- ___ Certificate of Christian Ministry (3-year license is a prerequisite)
- ___ Transfer of Ordination: please list current ordination credentials (ordaining agency and date of ordination)

What is your educational background or what training have you received for the credential for which you are applying? _____

Have either you or your spouse been divorced? _____ If yes, a separate procedure is required to determine if you are eligible for credentialing. Please contact our office for additional information. 308-234-5400 or mwd@efcamidwest.org

Have you ever been formally charged/accused of inappropriate sexual behavior with a minor? _____

** Two items must accompany this application:*

Mail this form to:

Credentials
Midwest District EFCA
218 W 18 St
Kearney, NE 68845

1. A letter from you stating your desire and reasons for wanting an EFCA credential. It should be written on church stationery, addressed to the Board of Ministerial Standing and sent to the Midwest District EFCA office.

2. The processing fee is \$100 (for a temporary 3-year license) and \$150 (for a permanent credential). It is expected that your church will cover this cost. Make check payable to *Midwest District EFCA*. This fee can be reduced for church planters or others for whom the cost may be prohibitive.

¹ See the "Steps Toward Credentialing" document for a full description of the licenses granted by the Evangelical Free Church of America. **Please note: "Each credential is the property of the Evangelical Free Church of America and is given to the candidate 'in trust'."**

Once you have completed the requirements above, click the continue button to proceed thru the EFCA credentialing process.

