

## Responsibilities

**UMEA:** Once endorsed, UMEA continues its relationship with the endorsee through ongoing nurture, support, advocacy and denominational connectedness. This includes:

- The provision of onsite visits; cluster gatherings, continuing education opportunities sponsored in connection with UMC associated colleges, universities and seminaries
- The provision of pastoral care in response to specific identified need

**Endorsed Clergy:** UMC clergy are always under Episcopal appointment, and therefore, each clergy member must maintain one's connection to the church. By UMC polity they are required to:

- Attend their annual conference; and
- Submit an annual report describing their ministry with a copy of their annual evaluation.
- Be faithful to one's ordination vows and maintain their essential covenant with the UMC.

**Employer:** If there is a need for an employer to dialogue with the church about a specific issue/concern(s) related to a UMC endorsed employee, the employer should initiate the dialogue with UMEA's Director of Endorsement.

Endorsed UMC clergy are highly trained professionals accountable to both the employer and church. They are an outstanding resource for employers able to respond to challenging populations. The UMC hopes that employers recognize, appreciate and support our endorsed clergy serving in their organization.



**United Methodist Endorsing Agency**  
*General Board of Higher Education  
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**Information for  
Employers  
of "Endorsed"  
United Methodist  
Chaplains**

## Endorsement



**Endorsement** is the process established by the church to ensure clergy possess the skills, capabilities, and are appropriate representatives of the denomination to serve in specialized ministries. Both employers and professional certifying bodies look to religious certifying bodies for this endorsement because:

- It attests to one's **suitability** for ministry in a particular setting;
- It gains the denomination's **support** for one's ministry beyond church walls;
- It provides an **assurance** the clergyperson is in good standing and appointable by the Bishop; and
- It renders an **affirmation** the clergyperson will accommodate the religious rights of all persons within the institution or organization's scope of care.

## Expectations and History

United Methodist clergy are members of a connectional system, annually appointed by their respective Bishop to whatever church or ministry they serve. Because of this relationship, they are always under supervision and accountability to the church. The United Methodist Endorsing Agency (UMEA) serves as the point of contact for clergy serving in ministries where "endorsement" is required by the church.

The church's endorsing agency came into existence in response to pressing U.S. needs for spiritual care and religious accommodation of military service personnel during World War II. After the war, other government agencies (e.g., Veterans, Prisons, and Mental Health) expanded the employment of endorsed clergy to meet the spiritual needs of their specialized populations. A key outgrowth of these ministries has been a professionalization of spiritual care, most readily evident through diverse chaplaincy and pastoral counseling vocations. With professionalization came the development of standards, ethics, and certification within the profession.

The United Methodist Church takes the endorsement process very seriously because each endorsed clergy person is a representative of the denomination. As such, the established standards to receive endorsement are amongst the **highest** of any religious organization granting endorsement.

## Demonstrated Evidence

Each UMC endorsed clergy member has:

- Presented evidence of the appropriate specialized training (i.e., academic, clinical) and expertise for professional ministry within their vocational interest;
- Received ecclesiastical and personal reference checks validating one's ordination; ecclesiastical training and capabilities for ministry;
- Submitted written documentation of formation and pastoral experience to UMEA
- Presented themselves before an interviewing committee of UMEA
- Established or agreed to attain credentials with a professional credentialing organization (e.g., Association of Professional Chaplains)

