

Prairie to Pine Regional Council
Licensed Lay Worship Leader/Pulpit Supply Policy

Manual:

1.1.11.5 Licensed Lay Worship Leaders

The regional council may license a person as a licensed lay worship leader. The following requirements apply:

- a) the person must be a member of a congregation in that regional council; and
- b) the licence must be for a specified term, which may be renewed.

A licensed lay worship leader serves under the direction of the regional council.

If a licensed lay worship leader becomes a member of a community of faith in another regional council, the person must be recognized by that other regional council in order to continue serving as a licensed lay worship leader.

Preparation and licensing

To be eligible for licensing, the applicant must provide evidence of completion of an educational program approved by the Prairie to Pine Regional Council as well as a level two police records check. Currently, the only program approved by Prairie to Pine Regional Council is the Online Licensed Lay Worship Leader Training course offered by United-in-Learning. Also required is the completion of the UCC's boundaries training workshop.

Through the processes of licensing and relicensing approved by the Committee on Lay Ministry/ Lay Leadership Support of the Prairie to Pine Regional Council, the Regional Council ensures the appropriate "Duty of Care" has been exercised and assumes responsibility for oversight of the LLWL.

Mandate

Licensed Lay Worship Leaders are trained and provide occasional worship leadership within the bounds of Prairie to Pine Regional Council.

- We define "occasional" as no more than 12 times per year, in any one location.
- For most of the pastoral year, this also includes no more than 3 consecutive services in any one location. During the seasons of Advent / Christmas and Lent / Easter, there can be worship leadership provided by the same LLWL for consistency.

- For those Communities of Faith who are served by a called or appointed minister, sufficient leeway is offered to cover infrequent absences such as "fifth Sundays", short-term illness, vacation and/or sabbatical.
- Communities of Faith who are not served by a called or appointed minister must take care to monitor not only the frequency a single LLWL provides service to the COF, but also the regularity. For those lay led congregations who require more than the LLWL mandate allows, please contact the Pastoral Relations Minister to discuss expanding the role to Congregational Designated Ministry position.

LLWLs who experience a call to fuller engagement in ministry beyond occasional Sunday worship or more frequent engagement as a worship leader in one location are encouraged to explore paid accountable ministry, i.e. Ordered Minister or Congregational Designated Minister-worship leader.

Limitations

Through licensing, the LLWL is endorsed only for occasional worship leadership within the bounds the Regional Council. The practice of other functions of ministry is not endorsed nor encouraged.

- LLWLs may not provide pastoral care in a COF not their own. Requests should be referred to the called or appointed minister or PC supervisor.
- For those LLWL's who are also Sacrament Elders:
 - Authority to preside at the sacraments is limited to the COF where United Church membership is held.
 - No remuneration is to be paid for services where LLWL both leads worship and presides at sacraments

Remuneration

Licensed lay worship leaders are not eligible for appointment to any paid accountable ministry position. At the discretion of the community of faith, they may receive an honorarium for conducting individual worship services (this income must be claimed as taxable revenue). Licensed lay worship leaders are not paid according to the daily rate for visiting ministry personnel published annually by the General Council Office because they are not ministry personnel.

Licensed Lay Worship Leaders' Handbook, pg 5

The Regional Council does not have the authority to mandate remuneration for lay people (that authority rests with the Community of Faith). However, we recommend a payment based on the

Visiting Ministry Personnel rate set annually by the General Council. It is the responsibility of the LLWL to clarify the rate of remuneration prior to any commitment.

Additionally, the LLWL should be reimbursed for all expenses, including mileage at the minimum rate set by the Executive of the General Council and meals, if applicable.

CRA Requirements:

For a T4A

Communities of Faith paying more than \$500 to anyone whose services they engage for worship leadership are required by law to file a T4A with CRA and provide that to the person no later than February 28 of each year. Please note it is not appropriate that your LLWLs need to ask you for their T4A. It must be supplied as an expression of CRA compliance.

Other

According to the CRA website, employment status directly affects workers' entitlement to EI benefits and how a worker is treated under legislation such as the Canada Pension Plan and the Income Tax Act. The facts of the working relationship as a whole decide the employment status. It is the responsibility of the COF to comply with payroll requirements that apply to persons they are paying for services. If you or the person working for you is not sure of the workers' employment status, either one of you can ask the CRA for a ruling. [Employers' Guide – Payroll Deductions and Remittances - Canada.ca](https://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/employment/employers-guide/Pages/employers-guide-payroll-deductions-and-remittances.aspx)

A Final Note

Pulpit supply is not intended to be an ongoing approach to sustaining ministry. Lay-led congregations should not rely upon a single LLWL, retired order of ministry/DLM or clergy from other denominations for leadership. There may be other options available to fill your ministry needs. Our Pastoral Relations Minister would be pleased to have a conversation with you about alternatives.

Revisions approved by the Committee on Lay Ministry/Lay Leadership Support on May 22, 2024.