

Guidelines Regarding Granting of Permission to Perform Marriages

These are the guidelines regarding the granting of permanent and temporary marriage permissions within Atlantic Canada for CBAC pastors. Also outlined below is the process for CBAC pastors to request temporary marriage permissions in another province outside Atlantic Canada. All requests are made through the Executive Minister's office.

Permanent:

1. **Accredited Ordained Ministers** (serving in churches, in chaplaincy, on staff, retired or not currently serving a church) are registered to perform marriages upon request by the CBAC through the Executive Minister while on our list of accredited ordained ministers.
2. **Ordained pastors whose credentials are not held by the CBAC (but who are accredited and are in good standing with another denomination)** may be registered upon request while serving one of our Baptist churches if they are not already registered under another denomination. Chaplains of the Canadian Armed Forces who are ordained and credentialed by a Canadian Baptist partner denomination are eligible for marriage permission while posted in Atlantic Canada. Before granting this request, the following is required: a copy of their ordination certificate and a letter of current good standing from their denomination. Also, we will send them a copy of our ministerial ethics and standards; they must sign off that they will abide by these while serving in a CBAC church/ministry. Any breach of the ministerial ethics and standards may result in the cancellation of marriage permissions and reporting the breach to their credentialing body.
3. **Non-ordained pastors in the ordination track:** Pastors in full-time service who have held a license towards ordination (License to Minister/Association License to Minister) for two years, have concurrently served two years in full-time pastorates*, have met with the Board of Ministerial Standards and Education, and have been approved as a Candidate for Ordained Pastoral Ministry, can be granted a license to perform marriage ceremonies. Full-time is to be interpreted as 25 hours per week or more.* This privilege is to be accorded upon request and on a year-to-year basis. *[Based on a motion passed at the 2011 Board of Ministerial Standards and Education meeting, motion passed at the 1988 Convention Assembly, which amended a motion passed at the 1970 Convention Assembly.]*
(Notes: The Candidacy requirement is not retroactive. This registration is "permanent" only so long as Candidacy, a License to Minister/Association License, and a ministry placement remain current; this privilege may be withdrawn if these requirements are not maintained.)
4. **Non-ordained pastors who are ready to begin the year of Internship** may be registered to perform marriages once their Internship is arranged with the Supervisor, upon request to the Executive Minister's office. In some cases, the Candidate may already be registered under #3 above.

5. **Recognized Convention Lay Pastors:** In June 2004 and October 2011, the Board of Ministerial Standards and Education passed motions to allow Pastors to be registered after being approved by the Board of Ministerial Standards and Education as a Recognized Convention Lay Pastor (RCLP) *and* after receiving a pastoral ministry placement in a local church. Both requirements must be met before permission is granted. This privilege is to be accorded upon request for any current RCLP. (Note: no new RCLPs are being approved since the program closed in 2019.)

Because of provincial government regulations, permission to perform marriages is automatically revoked when a pastor moves from the province in which he/she is registered. If a pastor moves to another Atlantic Canadian province, he/she will be registered in that province upon request to the Executive Minister's office.

Registration for marriage permission is on a permanent basis and based on permanent residency within the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland & Labrador until a pastor moves to another province. Ordained ministers not accredited by the CBAC will cease to be registered when they are no longer serving a CBAC church. It is the responsibility of the pastor to ensure that he/she is properly registered to perform marriages before performing a wedding and should contact the Executive Minister's office to ensure that these arrangements are made. It is also the pastor's responsibility to ensure they are following legislation under the provincial Marriage Act where they are granted permissions. Processing time with the provincial Vital Statistics departments can take 4-6 weeks. Those not registered may assist a pastor who is registered in performing a wedding ceremony, as arranged with the registered pastor. When a pastor moves within their province, they are responsible for providing updated contact information to Vital Statistics in their province. The pastor may request the cancellation of marriage permissions should they no longer wish to have this responsibility.

Temporary:

Temporary marriage permissions in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland & Labrador can be requested by eligible CBAC pastors and eligible non-CBAC pastors. Eligible CBAC pastors refer to those eligible under the permanent permissions listed above. Eligible non-CBAC pastors are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and should normally be ordained, be able to provide a letter of good standing from their denomination and be eligible for marriage permissions where they permanently reside. Not all pastors will meet the eligibility requirements for temporary permissions.

All requests are to be made through the CBAC's Executive Minister's office. The following information is required:

- Date of the Wedding;
- Specific Location/Address of the Wedding;

- Full Name of the Bride (first, middle, last); Full Name of the Groom (first, middle, last);
- Full Name and mailing address of Cleric; Email Address and phone/cell number(s) of Cleric.

If approved by the CBAC office, typical government processing time can be 4-6 weeks. Please make the request with as much lead time as possible.

All provincial government regulations and CBAC Ministerial Standards and Ethics, as outlined in the Regulations Concerning the Ministry, must be followed for permission to be granted. Complete transparency is expected, and any violations will be investigated by the Board of Ministerial Standards and Education.

Normally, temporary permissions are not granted from the same province where the pastor resides. Most government legislation states that the clergy/officiant must not be a permanent resident of the province for which they are applying for temporary permission. Either the pastor is eligible for permanent permissions in the province where they reside, or they are not eligible for marriage permissions.

For eligible CBAC Pastors:

- **Requiring a temporary license in another Atlantic Province** - Current eligible CBAC pastors can request a temporary license in another Atlantic Province by submitting a request to the CBAC office. We apply to the government on their behalf.
- **Requiring a temporary license in another Canadian Province or Territory** – the CBAC office receives the request from the eligible pastor. Then, the CBAC office drafts a letter asking that the CBOQ or CBWC apply to the province/territory on our behalf.

For non-CBAC Pastors ordained and credentialed with a member of the Canadian Baptist family (FBU, CBOQ or CCBWC):

- Eligible pastors are required to request temporary marriage permissions through their denominational office which will then send a letter to the CBAC office containing information about the pastor's good standing, a request for temporary marriage permissions, contact information, and details about the wedding, the bride and the groom.

For non-CBAC pastors outside of the Canadian Baptist family and outside of Canada:

- For the CBAC to consider granting marriage permission, the pastor must be ordained and credentialed by another body. Proof is required (ordination certificate and letter of good standing and accountability). Where possible, a local CBAC church must be able to act as a sponsor for the pastor. These are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Approved by the Board of Ministerial Standards and Education, March 2025.

[NOTE: No philosophical changes were made from the version approved in 2011. The changes made include:

- Adding “Permanent” and “Temporary” to delineate the two types of permissions available. Previously, only “Permanent” was listed in these guidelines.*
- Under “Permanent”: updating some of the language to be consistent with current CBAC practices and with the respective government agencies. In recent years, the process for Marriage Permissions in Newfoundland and Labrador has changed, aligning with the process used in the other Atlantic provinces.*
- Under “Temporary”: this was not previously included in the guidelines, but there was always a CBAC internal practice in how these requests are made by pastors, what criteria is used to determine eligibility, and the process for applying to respective government agencies in Atlantic Canada, as well as other provinces across Canada through our Canadian Baptist family.]*

Approved by the Board of Ministerial Standards and Education in the March 2025 meeting.