

## **SECTION 4: GENERAL REGULATIONS REGARDING RECOGNIZED LAY LEADERS**

### **4.1 The Role of the Local Church, Association and the Licensing Committee**

- A.** The issuing of a License for Lay Ministry is an expression of confidence in a person's call to lay leadership, their academic progress, and their suitability for lay ministry. It is important that the local church and the Association's representatives on the Licensing Committee exercise the utmost care and be thoroughly satisfied as to the qualities of mind, character, and Christian experience which would qualify the person for the important work of a Recognized Lay Leader. (See Section 5.1)

An individual may make a request to their local church to initiate the process for a License for Lay Ministry. It is the responsibility of the local church to discern and as appropriate affirm the candidate's gifts and calling to lay ministry. As well, it is the responsibility of the local church to initiate a meeting with the Association Licensing Committee, where it exists (see Section 4.1 B) to interview the candidate.

The Licensing Committee is comprised of up to three (3) appointed representatives from the local CBAC church where the Candidate is a member and at least four (4) and no more than five (5) representatives from the Association's Licensing Committee (where it exists) or Accredited Ordained ministers, Recognized Convention Lay Pastors and lay leaders (who are knowledgeable in Baptist polity, practices and beliefs; and are believers baptized by immersion\* (except where precluded by medical condition) from other, preferably neighbouring CBAC churches.

#### **4.2 The Role of the Board of Ministerial Standards and Education (“the Board”)**

**A.** The Board of Ministerial Standards and Education interviews only those prospective Candidates who are experiencing a call to become a *Recognized Lay Leader* and who are intending to have their name listed on the Lay Leadership Registry upon completion of the Certificate in Lay Leadership. Prospective Candidates must hold a *License for Lay Ministry* from a Licensing Committee within the CBAC prior to meeting with the Board. The Initial Interview is usually held prior to the commencement of studies, and the

Recognition Interview usually takes place once the Candidate has graduated from the Certificate in Lay Leadership.

**B.** In the Initial Interview, the Board will determine if the individual is to be accepted as a *Candidate for Lay Leadership* based upon their fitness for lay leadership including conversion, baptism by immersion\* (except where precluded by medical condition), call to lay leadership, life and ministry experience, theology, overall suitability for lay leadership in the CBAC, and alignment with the CBAC’s core values (see Section 5.3).

**C.** In the Recognition Interview, the Board will examine the Candidate to determine if the individual is to be accepted as a Recognized Lay Leader based upon the completion of the academic requirements, their concept of ministry, their statement of faith, and their giftedness and suitability for lay leadership (see Section 5.4).

**D.** The Board will respond to allegations of professional misconduct (see Ministerial Standards Document, Sections 5-6). Decisions of the Board relating to professional misconduct may be appealed (see Ministerial Standards Document, Section 7).

**E.** The Board may receive and process letters requesting the renewal of lapsed recognition (see Section 5.4 G).

## **SECTION 5: CANDIDATE'S PROCESS TOWARD APPROVAL AS A RECOGNIZED LAY LEADER**

### **5.1 License for Lay Ministry for Persons Preparing for Lay Leadership**

- A.** The first step on the part of persons desiring to be considered as a Recognized Lay Leader is to secure a License for Lay Ministry from a Licensing Committee.
- B.** A License for Lay Ministry should not be granted until the person has been a member of a CBAC church for at least one year.
- C.** The License for Lay Ministry is in effect both an affirmation and a recommendation. It is required that a person being considered:
  - 1. tell of their conversion, their call to lay ministry, their faith and life in Jesus Christ, their view of Christian doctrine with reference to the Bible, and their understanding and substantial agreement with the 1905/06 Basis of
  - 2. Union, the foundational statement of agreed doctrine and church polity for the CBAC;
  - 3. give evidence of biblical knowledge and spiritual growth;
  - 4. have given leadership in the ministries of the church to determine their gifts for ministry;
  - 5. demonstrate an ethical lifestyle appropriate to a lay leader, including family relationships;
  - 6. give an account of their ministries in the church, how they have related to people, and how they have honoured their commitments; and
  - 7. articulate their understanding of lay leadership and basic Baptist beliefs.
- D.** The Licensing Committee will examine all applicants for a License for Lay Ministry according to the standards and requirements above, as well as their commitment to the aims, core values and activities of the Association and the CBAC.
- E.** A License for Lay Ministry may be granted on the following conditions:
  - 1. the applicant is a member baptized by immersion\* (except where precluded by a medical condition) of a church in fellowship with Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada;
  - 2. the applicant has given evidence of satisfactory lay leadership; and
  - 3. has given satisfactory answers to the questions from the Licensing Committee.

**F.** A License for Lay Ministry must be renewed bi-annually until the applicant has been approved and registered as a Recognized Lay Leader. It remains valid as long as the Licensing Committee that grants it considers it valid, but may be rescinded by the Licensing Committee for just cause. Failure to renew the License for Lay Ministry will require that the person secure a letter of commendation from the deacons/elders/leadership team of the church where they are a member. This letter must be presented to the Licensing Committee before an interview for reinstatement is granted.

A License for Lay Ministry may be renewed as long as:

1. the applicant's license was not rescinded;
  2. the applicant continues to be a member of a CBAC church;
  3. the applicant has given evidence of satisfactory lay ministry; and
- the applicant is making progress toward the completion of the academic requirements required for Recognized Lay Leader.

At the renewal interview, the Licensing Committee should ask the Candidate additional questions regarding progress towards educational requirements as well as any changes to their theology, philosophy of ministry, etc. since their last meeting with the Licensing Committee.

**G.** Each License for Lay Ministry that is granted or renewed by the Licensing Committee shall be countersigned by an Association representative as well as a local church representative on the Licensing Committee.

**H.** In the event that the candidate moves to another Association, they may request a transfer of license from the original Licensing Committee to the church where they are ministering.

## **5.2 Educational Standards for Acceptance as a Recognized Lay Leader**

Those wishing to become a Recognized Lay Leader shall successfully complete the requirements for the Certificate in Lay Leadership.

## **5.3 Acceptance as a Candidate for Recognized Lay Leadership**

**A.** A person proceeding toward becoming a Recognized Lay Leader shall normally apply to appear before the Board of Ministerial Standards and Education for an Initial Interview prior to the commencement of studies. (For application forms, please contact the Executive Minister's office.)

**B.** In order to appear before the Board of Ministerial Standards and Education for an Initial Interview, the applicant shall have a current License for Lay Ministry from a Licensing Committee within the CBAC.

#### 5.4 Becoming a Recognized Lay Leader

- A. A person within the CBAC who has been accepted by the Board of Ministerial Standards and Education as a Candidate for Lay Leadership may seek approval by the CBAC through the Board as a Recognized Lay Leader.
- B. In order to appear before the Board for a Recognition Interview, the Candidate shall have a current License for Lay Ministry.
- C. Both male and female Candidates will be eligible to become a Recognized Lay Leader.
- D. Heterosexuals engaging in sexual activity outside of marriage (as defined in the resolution "Statement Affirming a Christian View of Marriage" adopted by Assembly in 1999) and practicing homosexuals (including lesbians), shall not be eligible to become a Recognized Lay Leader.
- E. Following the Recognition Interview the Board will determine whether or not the Candidate qualifies to become a Recognized Lay Leader. The decision of the Board shall be sent to the Candidate in an official letter from the Executive Minister.
- F. The names of those whom the Board approves shall appear on the CBAC's registry of *Recognized Lay Leaders*.
- G. Recognized Lay Leaders will be registered for a period of five years. After five years, listing on the registry will lapse unless the Recognized Lay Leader contacts the CBAC office requesting extension, which will be granted based on continued leadership in a CBAC church.
- H. A *Recognized Lay Leader* will be held accountable to comply with the *Ministerial Professional Standards* adopted by Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada (see *Ministerial Professional Standards* within *The Regulations Concerning the Ministry*).
- I. An allegation of professional misconduct against a *Recognized Lay Leader* will be dealt with by the Board in accordance with *Section 5: Protocol for Cases of Alleged Professional Misconduct* found in its Ministerial Standards Document.

**\*All individuals seeking ordination/lay recognition must be baptized by immersion (except where precluded by medical condition).**