



Credentialing Handbook



8130 Oswego Rd. Liverpool, NY 13090 | 315-622-2700
www.nyministrynetwork.org

Credential Recognition with The Assemblies of God

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Introduction

Thank you for your inquiry regarding ministerial credentials through the New York Ministry Network. Your inquiry is welcomed, and we assure you of our best efforts on your behalf.

This manual has been prepared to assist you in making application. Please read it in its entirety and contact the Network Secretary/Treasurer's office for any clarification.

The Assemblies of God is founded on the principles of voluntary cooperation. Every applicant should feel a sense of belonging and oneness with the doctrines, principles, purposes, and practices of the Assemblies of God.

As part of the General Council Assemblies of God, the New York Ministry Network seeks to serve its members as defined in the following Vision Statement and Core Values.

New York Ministry Network Vision Statement

Gospel transformation in every community in New York.

New York Ministry Network Vision Statement

Strengthening a network of healthy leaders and healthy churches.

New York Ministry Network Core Values

Relationships Matter Collaboration Works Innovate and Invest

Basic Qualification

The following qualifications are required for all applicants for credential recognition:

Personal Experience

Salvation

A testimony of accepting Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, a confirmation of being “born-again”. (John 3:5).

Water Baptism

Affirmation of having been baptized in water by immersion. (Matthew 28:19)

Baptism in the Holy Spirit

A testimony as to having experienced the Baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues according to Acts 2:4.

Evidence of Divine Call

Clear evidence of a divine call to the ministry that is:

- Evidenced by a personal conviction
- Confirmed by the work of the Spirit
- Affirmed by the testimony of fellow ministers.

Christian Character

A blameless Christian life and a good report evidenced and witnessed by believers and unbelievers. (Titus 1:7; I Timothy 3:7).

Doctrinal Stance

An understanding and agreement with the Assemblies of God doctrinal position as defined in the Assembly of God Statement of 16 Fundamental Truths.

Commitment to the Fellowship

An active loyalty to our constitutional directives evidenced by a cooperative spirit to the section, Network, and national ministries.

Educational Requirements

A level of formal academic achievement evidenced by a diploma or degree shall not be the sole criteria for credentials.

However, credential applicants shall:

1. Successfully complete a standard General Council issued written exam for the level of credential applied for, affirming an understanding of the Assemblies of God doctrines and ministerial practices.

2. Meet one of the following academic criteria:

- **Post-Secondary School, College, or Seminary**

An official transcript showing completed courses from an endorsed Assemblies of God post-secondary school, college, seminary or from a school approved by the Network Credential Committee complying with established criteria of the General Council for specific level of credentials as follows:

	Theology/Ministry Credits	Total Credits
Certification	24	48
License	24	72
Ordination	24	96

- **Global University Correspondence Study**

An official transcript showing completion of courses endorsed by the General Presbytery and offered through correspondence study by Global University. *See pages 10-12 for list of required courses.*

- **New York District Schools of Ministry**

An official transcript showing completion of courses endorsed by the General Presbytery and offered by the New York District School of Ministry or a district approved Local Church School of Ministry. *See pages 10-12 for list of required courses.*

- **Life Experience**

Recognition of qualifying with "Life Experience" may be recommended by the Network Credential Committee based on self-study and ministerial experience having a proven

ministry of substantial duration. The General Council shall grant such recognition on a case-by-case basis.

All academic transcripts must include completion of the following two courses, with the exception of those from an endorsed Assemblies of God post-secondary school, college, or seminary:

1. *Assemblies of God History, Missions, and Governance*
2. *Spirit Empowered Churches*

Assemblies of God History and Governance

A comprehensive knowledge of the history and principles of the fellowship through an understanding of the General Council and Ministry Network Constitutions and Bylaws including successful completion of the course, *Assemblies of God History, Missions, and Governance*.

Spirit Empowered Churches

A Spirit empowered church points us to the heart of dynamic church growth: creating spirit-empowered disciples who are involved in five activities to change individuals, families, and communities with the love and power of God's mighty Spirit.

Any applicant who has been through the Acts 2 Journey would not need to take the additional course. When sending in the application for credentials, please include a signed statement verifying you have been through the Acts 2 Journey.

Marital Status of Applicants

A General Council credential cannot be granted if the applicant or applicant's spouse has experienced divorce, except under the following circumstances:

1. Former spouse is deceased
2. Previous marriage ended in annulment
3. Previous divorce was "Pre-Conversion"
4. Previous divorce was due to "Abandonment by an Unbelieving Spouse"
5. Previous divorce was due to "Infidelity by a Spouse"

In the case of exceptions 2-5, General Council applications are available to seek approved recognition regarding a previous divorce. Approval will qualify candidate to continue application for an Assemblies of God credential.

Contact the New York Ministry Network Secretary/Treasurer's office for additional information and applications.

Residence Requirements

- An applicant must reside in the New York Ministry Network at the time of their application unless their principle position of ministry is in New York. Final determination to be made after consultation with the district of residence.
- An applicant transferring from another district desiring to upgrade to Ordained Minister must reside in New York a minimum of one year before such recognition.
- An exception to the one-year residency requirement may be granted in the event an applicant has been qualified for ordination by their former district and is approved for public recognition by the New York Ministry Network.

Application Steps

1. REQUEST

A written request (letter or email) must be sent to the Network Secretary/Treasurer's office requesting an application for credentials.

2. EDUCATION REVIEW

The applicant is responsible to request transcripts from schools and colleges attended be sent to the Network Secretary/Treasurer's office

3. PHONE APPOINTMENT WITH THE SECRETARY/TREASURER

A phone appointment will be scheduled with the Network Secretary/Treasurer to discuss the candidate's completed education, future ministry, and any additional requirements.

4. APPLICATION

Once the education has been verified, an application and additional documentation, will be emailed to the applicant. (Hardcopy can be sent out by request)

5. INITIAL INTERVIEW

The applicant will schedule an appointment with their Sectional Presbyter for an initial interview at the Presbyter's office.

- At the time of the interview, the completed application, required release forms, copy of the applicant's Social Security card, and the initial background check fee of \$150 will be given to Presbyter
- The Presbyter will forward a report of the interview along with the submitted material to the Network Secretary/Treasurer's office for processing

6. APPLICATION PROCESSING

On receipt of the documentation, the Network will process the mandatory background check (felony and credit check). Forms will be sent to the references the applicant submits on the application

7. WRITTEN EXAMS

When preliminary requirements are completed, the written General Council issued exams will be scheduled at the Sectional Presbyter's office.

- A synopsis of the exams will be sent to the applicant
- The exams will be sent to the Presbyter

There are two written exams required for a Certified Level Credential:

1. Bible Knowledge
2. Doctrine

If the applicant qualifies for bypassing the certified level and is eligible to apply for a license level credential, then all three written exams must be taken:

1. Bible Knowledge
2. Doctrine
3. Polity

Exams may be taken one after the other at separate appointments, or at the same appointment with your presbyter.

- The applicant is responsible to schedule the exams appointment with the Presbyter **as soon as possible and prior to established deadlines**
- The Regional Executive Presbyter will correct the exam and forward results to the Network Secretary/Treasurer

8. CREDENTIAL COMMITTEE INTERVIEW

The Network Secretary/Treasurer's office will schedule all final credential interviews at a regional location. Interviews are scheduled in the months of January, May, and September.

- The General Council application fee will be due at the time of the interview
- The Credential Committee submits their recommendation to the Network Executive Presbytery

9. NETWORK APPROVAL

Network Executive Presbytery submits their recommendation to General Council for recognition

- The Network Secretary will notify the applicant of the Executive Presbytery's recommendation

10. CREDENTIAL ORIENTATION

New credential holders will be invited to a day of orientation hosted by the Ministry Network Center to fellowship with our Network staff and receive information regarding important information regarding use of your new ministry credential.

IMPORTANT: Applications which take longer than 2 years to process will need to be updated, which could incur an additional \$150 fee for an updated background check.

Qualifications for Specific Credential Levels

Certified Minister

Final Interview Application Fee

\$50

General requirements

They shall show promise of usefulness in the ministry and devote a part of their time to Christian service. They shall be required to be actively engaged in some aspect of ministry except in the case of doctor certified physical disability.

General Council Course Requirements

- Synoptic Gospels: Life & Teachings of Christ*
- Prison Epistles*
- Acts: The Holy Spirit at Work in Believers*
- Introduction to Pentecostal Doctrine*
- Introduction to Hermeneutics*
- Evangelism: The Local Church Reaching Its Community*
- Assemblies of God History, Missions, and Governance*
- Relationships and Ethics in Ministry*
- Spirit Empowered Churches*
- Beginning Ministerial Internship*

*Pastoral requirements

In the event a Certified Minister is serving in a position as a pastor they shall be expected to upgrade to a License to Preach credential within two years of acceptance of the pastorate. Any exceptions shall be at the discretion of the Network Leadership Team.

Licensed Minister

Final Interview Application Fee

\$55

General Requirements

Clear evidence of a divine call with an evident purpose to devote one's time to preaching the Gospel. They shall be required to be actively engaged in some aspect of ministry except in the case of doctor certified physical disability.

General Council Course Requirements

- Old Testament Survey*
- New Testament Survey*
- Romans*
- Introduction to Theology*
- Introduction to Homiletics*
- Eschatology*
- Leadership Skills*
- Conflict Resolution*
- Introduction to Assemblies of God Missions*
- Intermediate Ministerial Internship*

Ordained Minister

Final Interview Application Fee

\$60

General Requirements

- Scriptural qualifications as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:7-9.
- Minimum age of applicant must be 23 years.
- Prior to applying one must have a recognized active ministry as a Licensed Minister for a minimum of two consecutive years.

General Council Course Requirements

- Prayer and Worship*
- The Corinthian Correspondence*
- The Pentateuch*
- The Poetic Books*
- Preaching in the Contemporary World*
- Church Administration, Finance, and Law*
- Pastoral Ministry*
- Advanced Ministerial Internship*

Please note that Ordained Ministry Candidates will not receive their upgraded credential card and certificate until hands are laid on them at our annual Network Conference each May.

Special Application Considerations

Recognition of Ordination from Organized Denominations

If a minister from another reputable fellowship desires to affiliate with the Assemblies of God, the following criteria and procedure is required.

1. Be in compliance with Assemblies of God doctrine and policies
2. Ministers who receive Assemblies of God recognition shall relinquish their ministerial credentials with any other organization, unless an exception is granted by the General Council Credentials Committee
3. Submit standard application for ministerial recognition
 - a. Submit two letters of recommendation from neighboring Assemblies of God ministers or applicant's Sectional Presbyter
 - b. Submit a recommendation from the body with which the minister is currently affiliated. If this is not available, letters of recommendation should be sought from three reputable ordained ministers who are familiar with the applicant's ministry, two of whom should be with the applicant's former credentialing body.
 - c. Submit copy of letter resigning previous Ordination
 - d. Complete the two courses required by General Council:
 - *Assemblies of God History, Missions, and Governance*
 - *Spirit Empower Churches*
4. Complete the General Council issued written exams:
 - a. Bible Knowledge
 - b. Doctrine
 - c. Polity

Exams may be taken one after the other at separate appointments, or at the same appointment with your presbyter.

5. Meet with the Network Credentials Committee for required interview
6. Receive recommendation from the Network Executive Presbytery to the General Council for approval
7. All previously ordained ministers so approved shall receive recognition as ordained Assemblies of God ministers at the next scheduled Network Conference

Transfers from World Assemblies of God Fellowship

1. Submit the standard application for ministerial recognition.
2. Complete the two courses required by General Council:
 - *Assemblies of God History, Missions, and Governance*
 - *Spirit Empower Churches*
3. Provide a letter of recommendation from the Executive Committee of the national church or World Fellowship superintendent
4. No written exams shall be required
5. Meet with the Network Leadership Team for required interview
6. Transfers from World AG Fellowships are invited to participate in our annual ordination ceremony each May.

Financial Commitments of Credential Holders

To the General Council

The work of the General Council of the Assemblies of God incurs considerable expense in its program of developing the spirit of cooperation and fellowship in United States and World Missions. Ordained, Licensed and Certified ministers shall recognize their obligation to contribute monthly from their tithes or as an offering, according to the amounts stated in the General Council Constitution and Bylaws. All who can are urged to give more than the required amount, either personally or through the assembly they pastor.

To the New York Ministry Network

As a standard of proper practice, it is required that each credential holder contribute minimally a percentage of their 10% tithe computed from all wages and salaries as follows:

Certified Ministers	50%
Licensed Ministers	85%
Ordained Ministers	85%
*Ministers working outside Network	40%
*World Missionaries on the field	\$10/month
*World Missionaries at home	\$25/month
*Evangelists	

*These are the only exceptions. Evangelists working among us leave part of their tithes to the Network.

Contributions should be sent to the Network Treasurer once a month.

Accountability

- Any minister who has not complied with the financial policy of the General Council shall be notified by the General Secretary at the time of credential renewal
- The New York Ministry Network Presbytery shall carefully analyze the annual report of each minister and, in their knowledge of local situations, determine if the ministry has been voluntarily cooperating with Ministry Network policy
- When anyone shall make application to upgrade credentials or renew credentials, there shall be a review of their financial record by the Credentials Committee
- Ministers seeking recommendation to churches for pastorates may jeopardize that recommendation if they have been delinquent in their financial obligations to the Network
- When a minister of the Network desires a transfer to another district, their tithing record shall be noted to the new district as per General Council transfer form

Renewal of Credentials

Credentials are to be renewed each year on the form provided. Renewal questionnaires for all credential holders are provided by the General Council. They are mailed (or emailed) in November of each year and are to be completed and sent to the Ministry Network Center by **December 31**. The credential holder is responsible to be certain they receive the questionnaire and return it on time. The Leadership Team validates the renewal applications as per authorization afforded them by the Network Executive Presbytery.

Compliance with New York Ministry Network standards will be expected for renewal. Requirements are defined in the New York Ministry Network and General Council Bylaws.

Reinstatement of Credentials

Applicants for reinstatement must request the required form from the Network Secretary/Treasurer's office. After completing the form, it must be returned to the Network Secretary/Treasurer's office for further processing.

All levels of credential reinstatement must meet the following criteria if the termination has been more than *SEVEN YEARS*:

1. Submit \$100 Reinstatement fee
2. Provide three references recommending reinstatement
3. Complete the written exams for the credential relinquished
4. Authorize the mandated background check (with accompanying \$150 fee)
4. Meet with the Network Credentials Committee for an interview for reinstatement
 - a. Reinstatement for an **Ordained** Minister requires an interview before the Executive Presbytery
 - b. Reinstatement for a **Certified** Minister or **Licensed** Minister requires an interview with the Network Presbytery Regional Committee

Transfer of Credentials

When ministers move out of the New York Ministry Network, they should request a transfer to be initiated from the Ministry Network Center. The fee to transfer credentials is \$25 per minister.

The Network Secretary shall issue a transfer unless there are definite charges pending against the minister or if financial obligations have not been met.

Ministers coming from another district to the New York Ministry Network are expected to transfer within 60 days of taking up residence in the district.

Exceptions are stated in the General Council Bylaws, Article VII, Section 9a.



Network Secretary/Treasurer: Rev. Robert Reeves
Fax: 315-622-0275
aholliday@nyministrynetwork.org