

This document maps out the paths to:

1. [Being Ordained in the American Baptist Churches of Michigan](#)
2. [Attaining Privilege of Call](#)
3. [Receiving Recognition of a non-American Baptist Churches Ordination](#)

Where do I begin when seeking ordination through the American Baptist Churches of Michigan?

1. [Start here](#), if you are seeking information only.
2. [Go here](#), if you are just beginning the journey toward ministry and ordination.
3. [Go here](#), if you have completed your theological education and are now seeking ordination.

If you are seeking information only,

1. Request a copy of the Procedures for Licensing and Ordination Booklet. Call 800.632.2953 or send [email](#).
2. If you have further questions, contact the chairperson of the Commission on Ordination and Standing. The name and address of this person can be obtained by calling the Region office at 800.632-2953.

If you are just beginning the journey toward ministry and ordination, take the following steps:

1. Request a copy of the Procedures for Licensing and Ordination Booklet. Call 800.632.2953 or send [email](#).
2. Join an American Baptist Church if you are not already a member of a local ABC congregation. The local church is where the process begins and ends.
3. Begin or continue your education for ministry. The American Baptist Churches/USA standard for ordination is four years of college (bachelor's degree) and three years of seminary (master of divinity degree).
4. Establish a relationship with a mentoring pastor. Your own pastor is the obvious choice in most cases. Meet periodically to talk about your call, the progress of your education, and your journey toward ordination.
5. Obtain a pre-ordination license from your local church. A pre-ordination license is an affirmation by your local church that they see in you the gifts and call to ministry. The procedure is outlined in the Procedures document referred to above. Have your church notify the chairperson of the Commission on Ordination and Standing so your name can be included in Category III of the Professional Registry. The name and address of the

Commission chairperson can be obtained by calling the Region office at 800.632.2953.

6. Participate in American Baptist life. Attend the Region Annual Gathering, your Area annual events, and Area leadership workshops. Become familiar with ABC life from the inside. [top](#)

If you have completed your theological education and are now seeking ordination, take the following steps.

1. Make sure you have completed steps 1-6 in the section of this document "[Beginning the Journey Toward Ministry and Ordination.](#)"
2. Contact the chairperson of the Commission on Ordination and Standing to review the items you will need to submit to the Commission. The name and address of the Commission chairperson can be obtained by calling the Region office at 800.632.2953.
3. Meet with the Commission on Ordination and Standing. When the chairperson of the Commission is satisfied that all the requirements for ordination have been met, the chairperson will schedule a meeting with the Commission. The Commission meets only three times each year: January, May, and September. The purpose of the interview is to certify that you have met the standards for ordination in the American Baptist Churches of Michigan.
4. Your church will call an ordination council. The Commission will notify your church that they may proceed with an ordination council. The council consists of representatives from the American Baptist Churches in your area or association. The details of this procedure are in the Procedures document. The Associate Region Minister for your area will be helpful in working with you and your church in establishing the council.
5. Your church will hold an ordination service. The setting of a date for the ordination service should occur only after the ordination council meets and advises your church to proceed.
6. Once you have completed all these steps, both the American Baptist Churches of Michigan and the American Baptist Churches/USA will recognize your ordination. [top](#)

Procedures for attaining privilege of call in the American Baptist Churches of Michigan

1. [Definition of Privilege of Call](#)
2. [Privilege of Call for Those Awaiting Placement](#)
3. [Privilege of Call for Non-American Baptist Professional Church Leaders](#)

Definition

Privilege of call signifies that, in the judgment of the Commission on Ordination and Standing, the applicant is a fit candidate for positions of professional leadership within the

American Baptist Churches/USA, and that his/her name may be circulated to churches and agencies within the denomination which may be seeking professional leadership. Privilege of call, when granted to an applicant, signifies that the applicant has or will have, upon receiving a call to a position of professional church leadership within the American Baptist Churches/USA, the qualifications to receive ministerial standing within the denomination. [top](#)

Steps toward privilege of call for those awaiting placement

Because ordination is contingent upon an opportunity to assume a position of professional church leadership and because churches and agencies may wish the assurance that a prospective professional church leader has the proper credentials in hand, the Commission may issue a letter signifying privilege of call for a person who has met all of the requirements for American Baptist ordination with the exception of the opportunity to serve.

1. Request a copy of the Procedures for Licensing and Ordination Booklet. Call 800.632.2953 or send [email](#).
2. Apply in writing to the Commission on Ordination and Standing. Any person who has met with an Ordination Council as stipulated in the Procedure Document, and whose ordination has been approved contingent on a call to a position of professional service, may apply in writing to the Commission on Ordination and Standing for Privilege of Call. The name and address of the Commission chairperson can be obtained by calling the Region office at 800.632.2953.
3. The Commission will determine if Privilege of Call is warranted upon review of the pertinent records. The Commission meets only three times each year: January, May, and September. [top](#)

Steps toward privilege of call for non-American Baptist professional church leaders

Privilege of call may be granted to a professional church leader in good ministerial standing with another Christian denomination. When privilege of call is granted and the applicant assumes a position of leadership in an American Baptist Churches/USA related ministry, it confers full recognition of the applicant's non-ABC ordination.

1. Request a copy of the Procedures for Licensing and Ordination Booklet. Call 800.632.2953 or send [email](#).
2. Apply in writing to the Commission on Ordination and Standing. The name and address of the Commission chairperson can be obtained by calling the Region office at 800.632.2953.
3. Contact the Commission chairperson. The requirements for Privilege of Call are outlined in the Procedures Document. When you have read these, and after you have applied in writing for Privilege of Call, contact the Commission chairperson to

determine what documents and requirements will be necessary in order to proceed with a Commission interview.

4. Meet with the Commission on Ordination and Standing. When the chairperson of the Commission is satisfied that all the requirements have been met, the chairperson will schedule a meeting with the Commission. The Commission meets only three times each year: January, May, and September.
5. The Commission will determine if Privilege of Call is warranted. [top](#)

Procedure for recognition of non-American Baptist ordination in the American Baptist Churches of Michigan.

1. [Definition of Recognition](#)
2. [Steps toward Recognition of Ordination](#)

Definition

The normal route for professional church leaders seeking placement in the American Baptist Churches/USA is to seek Privilege of Call. However, a professional church leader, who serves in an ABC-related ministry and whose ordination is in a denomination or convention other than ABC/USA, may apply for recognition of their ordination. When granted, recognition confers full standing within the professional ministry of the American Baptist Churches/USA. [top](#)

Steps toward recognition of non-American Baptist ordination.

1. Request a copy of the Procedures for Licensing and Ordination Booklet. Call 800.632.2953 or send [email](#).
2. Apply in writing to the Commission on Ordination and Standing. The name and address of the Commission chairperson can be obtained by calling the Region office at 800.632.2953.
3. Contact the Commission chairperson. The requirements for recognition are outlined in the Procedures Document. When you have read these, and after you have applied in writing for recognition of non-American Baptist ordination, contact the Commission chairperson to determine what documents and requirements will be necessary to proceed with a Commission interview.
4. Meet with the Commission on Ordination and Standing. When the chairperson of the Commission is satisfied that all the requirements have been met, the chairperson will schedule a meeting with the Commission. The Commission meets only three times each year: January, May, and September.
5. The Commission will determine if recognition is warranted. [top](#)