



Privilege of Call Process

The United Church of Christ in Southern California and Nevada

The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of the United Church of Christ.

“Those who hold ministerial standing in the UCC are entrusted with and accountable for the faithfulness and effectiveness of their lives and ministries on its behalf. The development and demonstration of such faithfulness and effectiveness are guided by the Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of the UCC (the Marks), a tool crated to expand UCC definitions of learnedness and leadership in authorized ministry and to emphasize excellence in ministerial formation. The Marks strive to highlight the complex combination of talents, understandings, and skills needed for ministerial leadership in the UCC. The Committee on Ministry (COM) is guided in its work of authorizing and overseeing Ordained Ministers by the Marks.” (Manual on Ministry pg 10.)

The Marks can be found beginning on page 11 of the Manual on Ministry (MOM), and at <https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/MOM-Sect3-Marks-of-Faithful-and-Effective-Ministers.pdf>

ACRONYMS used in this document:

COM	Committee on Ministry (in Southern Association, the COM is also called the Church and Ministry Committee)
EC	Ecclesiastical Council
LC	Local Church
LCDC	Local Church Discernment Committee
MOM	Manual on Ministry
POC	Privilege of Call
SCNC	Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ
UCC	United Church of Christ

Resources available for partners in the discernment process:

- *Manual on Ministry*, available online at <https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/ManualonMinistry-2018.pdf>
- The UCC Ministerial Code, found beginning on page 62ff of the Manual on Ministry and <https://uccfiles.com/pdf/MOM-Sect3-Mnisterial-Code.pdf>.
- Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers in the United Church of Christ, on pages 10ff of the Manual on Ministry and <https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/MOM-Sect3-Marks-of-Faithful-and-Effective-Ministers.pdf>.
- *Journaling the Journey*, the *Assessment Rubric for the Marks*, the Marks Mosaic cards, and *The Discernment Travelogue*, all available from UCC Resources <https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/justice-local-church-ministries/local-church/mesa-ministerial-excellence-support-and-authorization/manual-on-ministry/>.
- *Best Practices for Local Church Discernment Committees*, available from the Church and Ministry Committee or Section 3 of the Manual on Ministry.

This document is intended to be an abbreviated guide to the processes followed by individuals seeking Privilege of Call, Local Churches, and the Association Church and Ministry Committee. The full guide to the POC process is reflected in the Formal Guide to the Privilege of Call Process, a document based on the UCC’s Manual on Ministry (2018).

Candidate	Local Church	Association	Comments
<p>1. A person who is an active member of a local church in the UCC who wishes to explore authorized ministry in the UCC meets with their pastor to begin a discernment process.</p>			<p>See step 1 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, "Exploration of Call with Local Church."</p>
<p>2. The person works with the Conference Staff to request a letter of verification from their denomination of original authorization.</p>	<p>2. The pastor facilitates initial contact with the Conference Staff and COM Chairperson, ensures individual has the POC policy document, and helps the Local Church convene a Discernment Committee (LCDC).</p>	<p>2. The person works with the Conference Staff to request a letter of verification from their denomination of original authorization. The COM receives a copy of this letter.</p>	<p>See step 1 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, "Exploration of Call with Local Church."</p>

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<p>3. The person meets monthly with the Local Church Discernment Committee (LCDC), providing the LCDC with written materials and documents as outlined in “the Formal Guide to the POC Process.”</p> <p>The person and LCDC begin looking at the POC Application and working on material required for the application, including the steps to complete Appendix B, C, and D.</p> <p>Two (2) copies of official academic transcripts from each institution of higher learning should be requested. One should be sent directly to the Association Administrator. One should be sent to the LCDC and submitted alongside the POC Application (eventually a digital copy is also submitted in the Marks Portfolio).</p>	<p>3. The LCDC receives training and resources from the Conference Staff and COM. The LCDC meets monthly with the individual for discernment and work together.</p> <p>The person and LCDC begin looking at the POC Application and working on material required for the application, including the steps to complete Appendix B, C, and D.</p> <p>The LCDC reviews academic transcripts, background check, and submitted material.</p>		<p>See step 1 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, “Exploration of Call with Local Church.” Resources for Local Church Discernment Committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Practices for Local Church Discernment Committees. • The Manual on Ministry • Discernment Travelogue • The Marks of Faithful and Effective Ministers • The Marks Assessment Rubric • Journaling the Journey • The Marks Mosaic Cards • Engaging the Marks: Practical Examples <p>Resources are also located on the Conference website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.scncucc.org/paths/poc • www.scncucc.org/resources/discernment

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	<p>4. After a series of regular meetings with the person (at least 6 months), the LCDC discerns whether or not the person has the inherent gifts, character and potential to serve faithfully and effectively as a UCC minister. If yes, a recommendation is made to the LC’s governing board.</p>		<p>See step 1 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, “Decision Making by the Local Church.”</p>
	<p>5. The governing board makes a decision whether to recommend the person to the Church & Ministry Committee (COM) of the Association.</p>		<p>See step 1 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, “Decision Making by the Local Church.”</p>
<p>6. The person completes any remaining parts of the Privilege of Call Application and the essays that are described in the application. The person provides this to the LC Moderator to submit to the COM.</p>	<p>6. The Moderator (or other appointed leader) of the LC submits the person’s material (POC application, essays, and required materials) as a single package to COM.*</p>		<p>The Privilege of Call Application is available from the Southern California Nevada Conference office. Please download the form: www.scnucucc.org/paths/poc</p> <p>*Official transcripts should be sent directly from each school to the Association Administrator, and additional digital copy of each should be included in the POC application.</p>

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<p>7. The person schedules and completes their psychological and career assessment.</p>		<p>7. After receiving the POC application materials, details for scheduling a psychological and career assessment are provided.</p>	<p>See step 2 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, “Psychological and Career Assessment.”</p>
		<p>8. Once the psychological and career assessment report is sent to the COM from the testing center, the COM schedules a meeting with the person, their pastor, and representative(s) of the LCDC.</p>	
<p>9. The person meets with COM for their Initial Meeting.</p>	<p>9. A representative of the LCDC and the pastor attend this meeting.</p>	<p>9. COM meets with the person and guests to determine whether to accept the person as Seeking Privilege of Call.</p>	<p>See step 3 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, “Initial Meeting with the COM.”</p>
		<p>10. A POC Advisor is assigned to accompany the person through the process. The POC Advisor receives training and resources from the Conference Staff and COM.</p>	<p>See step 4 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, “Appointment of an POC Advisor.”</p>
<p>11. A Discernment Covenant is written by the individual, LC, LCDC, COM and Advisor, outlining expectations for the discernment process.</p>	<p>11. A Discernment Covenant is written by the individual, LC, LCDC, COM and Advisor, outlining expectations for the discernment process.</p>	<p>11. A Discernment Covenant is written by the individual, LC, LCDC, COM and Advisor, outlining expectations for the discernment process.</p>	<p>The COM will provide the template for the covenant.</p>

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<p>12. A Preparation and Formation Plan is developed by the individual and COM, with input from the LCDC.</p>	<p>12. A Preparation and Formation Plan is developed by the individual and COM, with input from the LCDC.</p>	<p>12. A Preparation and Formation Plan is developed by the individual and COM, with input from the LCDC.</p>	<p>See step 4 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, “Preparation and Formation Plan.”</p>
<p>13. Seeking POC, it is the responsibility of the candidate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain active in their congregation • Continue meeting for discernment with the LCDC • Meet with their POC Advisor monthly • Engage their Preparation and Formation Plan • Build a Marks Portfolio in consultation with the POC Advisor 	<p>13. The LCDC remains actively involved and meets at least quarterly with the individual for the duration of their process. Please refer to Best Practices for LCDC.</p>	<p>13. The Advisor remains actively involved and meets monthly with the individual for the duration of their process. Please refer to Best Practices for an Advisor.</p>	<p>See step 4 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, “Discernment Process and Partners After Granted Seeking Privilege of Call”</p> <p>For specific instructions about the Marks Portfolio, see “Developing a Marks Portfolio”</p>
<p>14. One month before the semi-annual Review, the individual ensures all needed materials, including working draft Marks Portfolio, are submitted to the COM.</p>	<p>14. One month before the Semi-Annual Review, the LC completes the LCDC Annual Review.</p>	<p>14. The COM receives the materials and prepares for the POC Semi-Annual Review</p>	<p>See step 4 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, “Semi-Annual Reviews with the COM”</p>

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<p>15. The candidate meets semi-annually with COM to continue to listen together to God’s call to review their progress with the formation and preparation plan, to make adjustments or changes to the plan that may be needed, and to determine next steps in the discernment process. This is an opportunity for both discernment and assessment.</p>	<p>15. The Local Church Pastor and members of the LCDC attend the POC Semi-Annual Review and are encouraged to reflect on the individual’s skills, gifts, and readiness for ministry as reflected by the Marks.</p>	<p>15. COM meets semi-annually with the individual and their POC Advisor and members of their LCDC to continue to listen together to God’s call to review their progress with the formation and preparation plan, to make adjustments or changes to the plan that may be needed, and to determine next steps in the discernment process. This is an opportunity for both discernment and assessment.</p>	<p>See step 4 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, “Semi-Annual Reviews with the COM”</p>
<p>Steps 13-15 continue until the COM, LC, and candidate determine the candidate is ready for the next step.</p>			
<p>16. Candidate submits a completed Marks Portfolio and the materials required for a Final Review.</p>	<p>16. LC and LCDC submit completed letters required for a Final Review.</p>	<p>16. When the COM assesses that an person Seeking POC has completed their preparation and formation plan and has developed their competencies related to the Marks satisfactorily, they communicate with the candidate and LCDC and request the materials needed for a Final Review.</p>	<p>See step 5 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, “Request for an Ordination Interview: Final Review”</p>

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		<p>17. The COM reviews the candidate's Marks portfolio, draft of the ministerial profile, and other materials. If COM believes the candidate is fit and ready for ministry and demonstrates integration of the Marks, the COM schedules the Privilege of Call interview with the candidate. Alternatively, the COM may request rewrites or additional formation opportunities.</p>	<p>See step 5 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, "Request for an Privilege of Call Interview: Final Review"</p>
<p>18. The candidate prepares a Portfolio Presentation and the COM engages them in an ordination interview.</p>	<p>18. The LCDC and pastor join the candidate for the Privilege of Call Final Interview.</p>	<p>18. COM meets with the candidate, their pastor, their POC Advisor, and the representatives from the LCDC for an Privilege of Call Final Interview.</p>	<p>See step 5 in the Formal Policy for the POC Process for more detail, "Privilege of Call Final Interview"</p> <p>Directions for preparing a Portfolio Presentation are available from http://www.scncucc.org/poc</p>
		<p>19. Following the interview, COM makes a decision about recommending the candidate Seeking Privilege of Call to the Association for an Ecclesiastical Council.</p>	<p>The COM will work with the Association's Executive Committee and the candidate to schedule the EC. The Association will distribute the necessary paperwork to churches and ministers in the Association.</p>

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		<p>20. At the recommendation of COM, the Association schedules an Ecclesiastical Council (EC) and distributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of Ecclesiastical Council • The Marks Portfolio presentation • EC delegate training materials, personalized for the candidate 	<p>Training materials will be distributed to churches and ministers prior to the EC. https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/MOM-Sect3-Best-Practices-for-Training-Delegates-for-Ecclesiastical-Councils.pdf</p>
<p>21. At the EC, the candidate for Privilege of Call makes a 10-15-minute presentation, offering their sense of call, theological grounding, and/or readiness for ministry using the Marks, and responds to any questions that members of the Association may pose.</p>		<p>21. Following the candidate's presentation and responses, the COM may respond to any further questions and provides its recommendation to the EC.</p> <p>A vote for or against granting Privilege of Call pending a call is taken.</p>	<p>Sample agenda for EC: https://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/MOM-Sect3-Ecclesiastical-Council-Agenda-POC-or-Ord.pdf</p>

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<p>22. The candidate approved for Privilege of Call circulates their profile.</p> <p>Once a call is received, the candidate submits the call agreement and/or job description to the COM. If the call meets the criteria for being an authorizable call, the Committee votes to grant the minister UCC Ordained Ministerial Standing.</p> <p>If the call is not deemed to be an authorizable call, the candidate may decide whether or not to continue the search for an authorizable call.</p> <p>Until a call is received, the individual approved for Privilege of Call will continue to meet annually with COM to renew status. Approved for Privilege of Call can renewed for up to four years.</p>		<p>22. Upon receipt of a call agreement or job description, the COM determines if this is an authorizable call. If so, the COM votes to grant the minister UCC Ordained Ministerial Standing.</p> <p>COM will meet annually with the individual approved for Privilege of Call. These meetings must include a vote by COM, acting on behalf of the Association, to renew the status of “Privilege of Call.” Annual renewal of such status permits ongoing updating and circulation of profile. “Approved” status may be renewed for up to four years.</p> <p>COM may terminate “Privilege of Call” status at any time, based on lack of an authorizable call and/or unsatisfactory demonstration of the Marks or the Ministerial Code.</p>	<p>The criteria for an Authorizable Call are listed in the Manual on Ministry.</p>

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<p>23. With UCC Ministerial Standing granted, the status of Privilege of Call ends. The minister notifies their denomination of origin, relinquishes their standing in any other denomination, and grants permission for transfer of their ministerial file.</p> <p>Ordained Ministerial Standing is now held exclusively in the United Church of Christ.</p>		<p>24. After minister is granted Ordained Ministerial Standing in the UCC, the COM request their clergy record and files be transferred from their denomination of original authorization to the UCC.</p>	<p>See step 6 in the Formal Policy for POC Process for more detail, “Transfer of Ministerial Standing to the UCC” and “Transfer of Ministerial Files to the UCC”</p>
<p>25. If the calling body/Local Church is located outside of the Association that granted Ordained Ministerial Standing, the minister now requests a transfer of Ordained Ministerial Standing to the Association where the calling body/ Local Church is located.</p>		<p>25. If the minister’s calling body/Local Church is located outside of the Association that granted Ordained Ministerial Standing, the COM receives the request for transfer of standing to the new Association and votes to transfer standing.</p>	