

**Gulf Atlantic Diocese (GAD)**  
**Policies and Procedures**  
**Ordination, Transfer, Reception and Licensing of Clergy**

1. Title III of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) Constitution and Canons addresses “Ministers, their Recruitment, Preparation, Ordination, Office, Practice and Transfer.” See our diocesan website ([www.gulfatlanticdiocese.org](http://www.gulfatlanticdiocese.org)) to view both the ACNA and the GAD Constitution and Canons.

2. Any person sensing a call for ordination to Holy Orders or, if already ordained, seeking to serve as clergy in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese should contact the Bishop in accordance with the following policy and procedures.

3. In either case, the Bishop must be satisfied, by his personal knowledge or by sufficient testimony, that the individual has been met the following seven criteria:

- a. Baptized.
- b. Confirmed.
- c. Suitably called to serve in the ordained ministry.
- d. A wholesome example to the flock of Christ, to include not having been divorced and remarried, unless appropriate pastoral exception has been granted.
- e. Empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- f. Sufficiently examined in the knowledge of Holy Scripture.
- g. Sufficiently examined in the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the Anglican Church in North America and in any other matters that the Bishop may deem necessary.

**4. To be admitted via Ordination:**

a. Guidelines for the ordination process are also available on the diocesan website. If seeking ordination from within the diocese, individuals shall have completed a thorough parish and diocesan discernment process as outlined separately by the Ordination Preparation Team (OPT). This discernment will include enthusiastic endorsement from both rector and vestry, in addition to whatever additional procedures shall have been established by the Team, to include demonstrated suitability for ordained service as established by biblical standards for deacons and presbyters.

b. If seeking ordination from outside the diocese, individuals shall have submitted suitable documentation to the OPT describing their congregational and diocesan discernment process, in addition to submitting to whatever additional procedures shall have been established by the Team, to include demonstrated suitability for ordained service as established by biblical standards for deacons and presbyters.

c. The OPT shall establish the manner and standards of examination referenced.

d. Clergy persons having been **ordained in a jurisdiction not in the Historic Succession nor in communion with this Church**, e.g., the Baptist or Methodist Church, may apply to the Bishop for ordination to the diaconate and the priesthood (ACNA Canon III.5.1-2). The Bishop will determine whether such applicants will complete a thorough or modified discernment process under the guidance of the OPT or whether a tailored process as described in Section 6 below for those clergy being received will be followed.

e. All ordinands must receive the advice and consent of the Standing Committee before the Bishop can admit them as clergy of the Diocese.

**5. To be admitted via Transfer:**

a. Clergy persons in a jurisdiction or a diocese in communion with this Church may petition the Bishop for admittance to this Diocese.

b. Upon direction from the Bishop, the Canon to the Ordinary (CtO) will send applicants a Clergy Transfer Request. Applicants will submit the application to the Bishop with a copy to the CtO. When filling out the Transfer Application, applicants will indicate which diocesan congregation, if known, they hope to be affiliated with. If unknown, they should list the deanery closest to their geographical residence in the diocese.

c. The Bishop, having made appropriate inquiries to the transferring Bishop and having received appropriate testimonial from the same, may admit said clergy person if he is satisfied that all criteria enumerated above shall have been satisfied.

d. The CtO or the Bishop will request a letter of transfer and the most recent Oxford background check Final Report from the transferring Bishop. Additionally, since we are committed to creating a safe environment free from abuse of any kind in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese, we require all clergy to complete MinistrySafe's Sexual Abuse Awareness Training before being licensed by the Bishop for participating in our programs. All clergy who serve in our diocese, whether transferring in or seeking to minister in our diocese while remaining domiciled in another ACNA diocese, must receive a license from the Bishop prior to officially beginning ministry within the diocese.

#### **6. To be admitted via Reception:**

a. Clergy persons having been **ordained in a jurisdiction in the Historic Succession but not in communion with this Church**, e.g., TEC, may apply to the Bishop for reception in their current clergy order (ACNA Canon III.5.3).

b. Upon direction from the Bishop, the CtO will send applicants a Clergy Transfer Request. Applicants will submit the application to the Bishop with a copy to the CtO.

c. Applicants will submit to a thorough background check administered by Oxford Documents or provide evidence of a prior background check that meets the criteria established by the Gulf Atlantic Diocese and was performed within the past three years. Upon receipt of the transfer application, the Diocesan Administrator will request a background questionnaire for the applicant from Oxford Documents.

d. If the Bishop is satisfied that all criteria enumerated in ACNA Canon III.5.3 have been met, he shall then ensure by appropriate examination that the applicants have demonstrated sufficient knowledge on points of Doctrine, Discipline, Worship, and Polity in their ordaining jurisdictions which differ from this Church and on any other matters that the Bishop may deem necessary.

e. The CtO or the Bishop will send the Standing Committee the application for review and alert them that they will be notified of the results when the Oxford Reports, MinistrySafe examination, and required canonical examination are received and reviewed by the Bishop.

f. Having determined that the applicants have satisfactorily passed the examination, the MinistrySafe examination, and that the Oxford Background checks results are favorable, the Bishop or his CtO will so notify the Standing Committee.

g. At that point, the Bishop will request the advice and consent of the Standing Committee for reception of the applicant.

h. Upon satisfactory assurance from the Standing Committee that such clergy persons have satisfactorily fulfilled the above requirements, the Bishop may either

(1). Receive the person into the order already ordained, or

(2). Ordain the person conditionally as a deacon and later as a priest if ordained by a Bishop, whose authority to convey such orders has not been sufficiently established.

7. Under the guidance of the Bishop, each clergy person serving in this diocese, even if retired or called to a specialized ministry such as counseling or church planting, shall be affiliated with a diocesan congregation for fellowship with the body of Christ and for opportunity to exercise appropriate clerical ministries in

congregational worship. Such affiliation shall be with the approval of the rector of the local congregation, or in the absence of a rector, with the approval of the vestry or other appropriate leadership. Under special circumstances, the clergy person may be affiliated directly with a regional dean.

8. All clergy admitted to the diocese will be expected to attend a Clergy Orientation Seminar at the first opportunity after their admittance as well as periodic Clergy Conferences convened by the Bishop and the Annual Diocesan Synod in November of each year.

**9. To be licensed in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese:**

a. All clergy ordained, transferred or received into this diocese will receive a license to officiate upon completion of all requirements for admittance into the diocese.

b. Clergy from other ACNA dioceses or from other jurisdictions with which our diocese is in communion may wish to retain their current episcopal oversight while receiving a license to officiate in this diocese.

c. Clergy persons resident in another jurisdiction in communion with this Church or in another ACNA diocese may petition the Bishop for a license to officiate in this Diocese.

d. For those clergy remaining domiciled in another jurisdiction, upon direction from the Bishop, the Canon to the Ordinary (CtO) will send applicants a Clergy License Request. Applicants will submit the application to the Bishop with a copy to the CtO.

e. The CtO also will request a copy of the most recent Oxford background check Final Report from the Bishop having jurisdiction.

f. Upon review of the Application for License, receipt of the background check Final Report and successful completion of the MinistrySafe sexual abuse prevention training, a License to officiate will be issued.

*Revised September 15, 2015*