

Process for ABC-MI Recognition of Ordination

The American Baptist Churches of Michigan welcomes persons called by God to pastoral or chaplain ministry and those ordained ministers from other traditions to serve within our Region. We offer a clear and supportive pathway to recognize your calling and to integrate you into the ABC family.

Step 1: Connect with ABC-MI Leadership

Begin by contacting the ABC-MI office to express your interest [Rev. Ed Owens, edo@abc-mi.org]. A regional staff member will walk alongside of you through the process.

Step 2: Submit qualifying preparation documents for ordination recognition:

1. Submit a transcript of MDiv or Equivalent Degree, or
 - a copy of the M-28 Certificate of Theology (or equivalent Region Recognized Training Program), or
 - a documentation of Pastoral service (7 years of pastoral experience (3 in the Region) at least 20 hours per week)
2. Submit a nonABC ordination certificate, or a statement from your ABC-MI church supporting your pursuit of ABC-MI recognized ordination

Step 3: Complete an assessment for healthy church leadership

1. Authorize and pay for a criminal background check (\$11)
2. Complete a mental health assessment through the Center for Career Development & Ministry in New Hampshire (\$100)

Step 4: Complete an ABC-MI orientation

An orientation meeting via Zoom can be arranged with a Region Associate Minister. It will cover Baptist History & polity, Baptist distinctive beliefs, ethical boundaries for ministers, and a review of ABC policy on human sexuality and marriage (including the signing of ABC-USA's Minister's Council Code of Ethics and the Policy on Human Sexuality).

Step 5: Meet with the Committee on Ordination and Standing

1. Prepare a paper outlining your conversion, call to ministry, and basic doctrinal understandings
2. The Commission will interact with your paper and suggest if there is needed work prior to an Ordination Council
3. The Commission may recommend to your local ABC-MI church to hold an Ordination Council or if previously ordained by another group, may approve a recognized ABC-MI status.

Step 6: Receive Recognition of Ordination

Once minutes of approval are received from the local Ordination Council, the candidate will be entered into the Region and ABC-USA Directory of Ordained Ministers.

Why This Path Matters:

Pursuing recognition of ordination with ABC-MI deepens your connection to a broader family of churches committed to biblical faithfulness, a missional engagement, and pastoral excellence. You will be readily received by churches and regional organizations throughout ABC-USA. We are excited to welcome and walk with you through this process.

**Building momentum for the Kingdom of God through new churches
And renewed churches on mission with Jesus Christ. Together.**