

As the Church of God in Mississippi, we want to reaffirm our commitment to the Ministerial Internship Program and the guidelines provided through the Department of Education & School of Ministry. It is imperative that we ensure compliance with the procedures specified in the Minutes of the Church of God for licensure and advancement in ministry.

The Calling and Ministry Studies (CAMS) and the Ministerial Internship Program (MIP) were developed to provide training, both scriptural and practical, for beginning ministers through seminars, course work, and ministry experiences. Decisions regarding acceptance and/or exemption for these programs is based on information provided on the licensure applications, any supplemental information requested and submitted, and the results of the national background check.

The Ministerial Development Board is charged with the implementation of the MIP program, as well as the candidate's program placement. Upon completion of the required program, the State Licensure Board ensures appropriate procedures are implemented in the testing and interview process for all candidates pursuing license.

In order to ensure smooth implementation of the program, we will strictly adhere to the deadlines established for submission of applications and all relevant data. Due to the time required for completion of the background check, May 1st will be the deadline for submission of applications for enrollment in the fall class for both CAMS and MIP. October 1st will be the deadline for submission of applications for the spring enrollment in CAMS. These dates will be published and enforced. Please do not request special favors or short-cuts.

1. What is the purpose of the Ministerial Internship Program (MIP)?

Answer: "To more adequately ensure the formation of proper ministerial attitudes, and to offer a structured approach to practical ministerial training, each state or territory, where possible, shall provide beginning ministers with the opportunity to serve an internship under an experienced and competent pastor." Minutes of the 75th International General Assembly, p. 94.

"The Church of God developed the Ministerial Internship Program (MIP) in order to provide training that is both scriptural and practical for the beginning minister. The training in the MIP is built upon the vision and mission of the Church of God." State MIP Coordinator's Notebook, p. 7.

The basic purpose of MIP is to give the beginning minister and his/her spouse a practical training experience at the local church level under the supervision of a skilled pastor. This training is intended to supplement and not to take the place of more formal college and seminary training.

A second purpose requires the candidate to develop scriptural submission to those in authority. Ministers are to submit themselves to the pastor with whom they work and also to the task of completing the spiritual, academic, and physical requirements of the program.

A third purpose is to cultivate the commitment between the Church of God and the minister. The Church pledges to provide training experiences and materials and to offer

opportunities for service. The ministers, in turn, pledge to commit themselves to the work of the Church and to take advantage of the opportunities for service offered them. It is assumed that all individuals (being otherwise qualified) who enter the program will be ready to fully commit themselves to the ministry when the internship is completed.

A fourth purpose is to develop within the ministers proper attitudes toward the church, the work of the ministry, their fellow ministers, and the people whom they will serve.

A fifth purpose is to assist the new ministers in discovering their own specific talents and styles for evangelistic outreach, pastoral responsibilities, and other areas of ministry, as well as determining further training needs.

A sixth purpose is the development of a firm commitment to the Pentecostal faith and to the tenets of holiness as demonstrated in their personal lives.

2. What is the purpose of Supervising Pastors?

Answer: The supervised practicum follows biblical illustrations for developing ministers. Discipling is a significant relationship illustrated in several biblical passages: Jesus discipled His apostles for three years before He released them into full-time ministry, Barnabus discipled Paul, Paul discipled Timothy and several other ministers, and Priscilla and Aquilla discipled Apollos. "Supervising Pastors are accountable for imparting knowledge and skills about ministry. MIP candidates are responsible for learning the knowledge and skills from the supervising pastors. This relationship between supervising pastors and candidates during the supervised practicum endeavors to empower the candidates to fulfill the ministry to which they are called." State MIP Coordinators Notebook, p. 31.

Supervising Pastor's Role in MIP:

The Supervising Pastor serves as a **mentor** and aids the MIP candidate in a) developing relationships with others, b) developing a better understanding of oneself, and c) developing a better understanding of the relational aspects of ministry. The Supervising Pastor also serves as a **coach** and assists the candidates in acquiring ministerial skills in five (5) areas: 1) vision for ministry, 2) organization of the ministry, 3) involvement of people in ministry, 4) caring for people, and 5) evangelizing people. State MIP Coordinator's Notebook, p. 33-34.

3. Who can serve as a Supervising Pastor?

Answer: The Characteristics of a Supervising Pastor are delineated in the State MIP Coordinator's Notebook, p. 32.

1. Has acknowledged calling, spiritual gifts, and skills in ministry.
2. Is capable of transferring attitude, knowledge, and skills to the candidate.
3. Is adept at leading.
4. Has ability to see potential in a candidate.
5. Is tolerant of the candidate's mistakes.
6. Possesses flexibility that allows the candidate to attempt ministry activities.

7. Has ability to see steps candidate needs to take to develop attitudes, knowledge, and skills
8. Able to relate to candidate
9. Senses that God brought the Supervising Pastor and MIP candidate together for the supervised practicum.

Ministers who have achieved the rank of Ordained Bishop; who have demonstrated competencies in ministry, leadership, and mentoring skills; and who are willing to fulfill the responsibilities of the program, are principle candidates for this role.

4. How are Supervising Pastors chosen?

Answer: There are specific criteria established by the State Board of Ministerial Development for selecting Supervising Pastors:

1. Supervising Pastors must be proven competent pastors who have demonstrated mentoring, leadership, and administrative skills.
2. Supervising Pastors must demonstrate commitment to the state programs of the church.
3. Supervising Pastors must be willing to dedicate their time to training/mentoring interns as a positive role model.
4. Supervising Pastors must have served as pastor for a minimum of five (5) years.
5. Supervising Pastors must have served at their current church for a minimum of two (2) years.
6. Supervising Pastors are chosen based on their location (close proximity to the interns).

5. What is the process for selecting Supervising Pastors?

Answer: The Ministerial Development Board will review all applications for the MIP. Upon reviewing the applications, board members will consider the current location of the interns, prospective churches in the area, Ordained Bishops who are serving as pastors in the area, and all criteria relevant to qualifications for Supervising Pastors. Board members will contact the prospective ministers to ascertain their willingness to serve as Supervising Pastors for the intern in their area. If the minister is willing to serve, the Board members discuss the prospective placement and make recommendations to the Administrative Bishop concerning placement. The Administrative Bishop has final authority in placement decisions. The Division of Education, Office Ministerial Development of the International Office, does not become involved in assignment decisions.

6. How do you determine whether an intern can remain at their home church for the program?

“From the beginning of MIP, the Administrative Bishop has been instructed to avoid allowing candidates to complete MIP in their home church unless they are a member of the paid staff and are officially recognized by the Administrative Bishop as a member of the pastoral staff of their local church. The state MIP coordinator and State Board of Ministerial Development make recommendations to the Administrative Bishop who has sole authority

to appoint all candidates to supervising churches.” State MIP Coordinator’s Notebook, p. 11.

“Placement of candidates is vital to the credibility of the Ministerial Internship Program. A basic purpose of the program is to help candidates made a commitment to full-time ministry; therefore, a fundamental assumption is that candidates will not return to their previous roles as local members. The objective of the placement aspect of MIP is for all candidates to be ready to make a commitment to full-time ministry and placement by the time of graduation. Candidates will be assisted with their decisions throughout the program through seminar classes and interviews with the Administrative Bishop and Ministerial Development Board.” State MIP Coordinator’s Notebook, p. 23.

Answer: There are specific criteria established by the State Board of Ministerial Development for determining whether an intern may remain at their home church:

1. The intern must be a paid staff member who receives a significant portion of his/her income from that position (i.e., salary, housing or housing allowance, utilities & benefits, etc.).
2. The intern has been a paid staff member for a minimum of six (6) months.
3. The current pastor has been there less than a year.
4. The intern attended the church for less than a year.
5. The current pastor is not a close relative of the intern.