

FAQs on Boundary Training for Authorized Ministers

What Is the Requirement? Starting January 1, 2013, all authorized ministers whose authorization is in the Minnesota Conference must complete boundary training **once every three years**. The training typically entails 6 contact hours in a group setting led by a professional in the field. Ministers who are newly ordained or transferring into the Minnesota Conference are required to complete such training within 24 months of being granted standing in the Minnesota Conference.

Why is this necessary? This is one of ways in which we maintain professional standards and reduce the risk of lawsuits. Having good professional and personal boundaries is important, as is staying abreast of changing cultural developments (like Facebook and Twitter) that impact our ministries and our understanding of boundaries.

How much does the Boundary Training cost? We try to keep it affordable by working collaboratively with our ecumenical partners. The current cost is \$50, which includes lunch.

How often is it offered, and where? We try to offer it twice a year, with a location in the Twin Cities metro area, and another in greater Minnesota, alternating between northwest and south of the Cities.

What does the training entail? 6 contact hours, done via lecture and small group discussion. The small groups permit participants to talk about boundary issues relevant to their particular situations, such as relationships to former churches, social media, dating, friendships, gift-giving, etc.

Can I get an exemption if I'm retired? Yes, but only if you are no longer engaged in any pastoral activity and state that you will not again take up any pastoral activity (such as supply preaching).

What are the consequences of not completing the training as required? Failure to complete the training may result in administrative termination of authorization for ministry.

I'm an authorized minister but I don't work in a church. Do I still need to do this? Yes. Most employers do not offer or require the same kind of boundary training. If yours does, or if you have recently completed boundary training that meets or exceeds what we require, you may request a waiver from the Subcommittee on Authorized Ministry of the Committee on Ministry. You will be required to provide a syllabus of the training and proof of completion every three years. Generally speaking, it is easier and more cost effective to simply complete the training offered by the Minnesota Conference.

I'm not an authorized minister, but I do a lot of work (paid or volunteer) in the church. Should I or can I take this training? Yes. Your church may even pay for it, because maintaining good boundaries and holding each other accountable to them is good for everyone.

Trainings in 2016 are scheduled for Thursday, April 21 at Bethlehem United Methodist Church in Hutchinson, MN and for Thursday May 5 at Parkview UCC in White Bear Lake . Register here:

<https://events.minnesotaumc.org>

What if I have other questions? Contact Marita Karlisch at maritak@uccmn.org.