

## LLMS AND CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES

This document contains advice and regulations that should be consulted in times of change, such as the incumbent moving on, moving house, passing certain “age thresholds”, and other such circumstances. It also contains a section on Deployment, with advice on what to do if called to a different sector of ministry.

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### 1 MOVING PARISH

Clearly licensed lay ministers may move parish for one reason or another, either within this diocese, or moving in from another diocese. Finding a role in the new situation can sometimes happen very quickly, as the LLM’s gifts match an obvious need. At other times it can be a more difficult and slower process. Whatever the situation it will take some care, gentleness, and patience – accompanied by reflection and prayer.

As well as the questions of finding a new role and ministry, there are also some administrative tasks to be done. In particular, an LLM is not automatically licensed to minister wherever they end up living – their licence has to be given up, and a new one issued for the new parish or area of ministry. There is a process for this, and of course it requires the formal consent of the new incumbent and PCC.

Each area in this diocese has an archdeaconry adviser, whose role is outlined on another page on this site, but which includes dealing with such moves. There is also a list of these AAs, with their contact details, in the Who’s Who page. Each one is responsible for a few deaneries. The appropriate AA is contacted by the LLM, and will explain the process, and discuss any questions.

In particular, the AA will send (electronically) a transfer form. This is a very simple form, with a little bit to be filled in by the transferring LLM, another bit by the incumbent, and a record of the PCC meeting where it was agreed that they support the ministry of the LLM in the parish. The equivalent groups fill in the sections for other non-parish based types of ministry, such as chaplaincies.

There is a guideline that this formal application to transfer should wait till the LLM has been in the new parish for at least 4 months. However, there may be good reasons why this might be less. For example, sometimes an LLM is the spouse of the incumbent! Another reason might be that the LLM has been going to the new church for a while before actually moving house.

Once the form has been dealt with a new licence will be prepared, and approved by the area bishop. Dealing with the form can take a little while, as the important safeguarding checks need to be done, including obtaining another disclosure and barring service (DBS, formerly CRB) certificate. The licence will then be sent to the archdeaconry adviser, and they will formally present the licence to the transferred LLM in a service in the parish. There is a special mini-liturgy for this, which can be included in any type of service. At this point declarations are made by the re-licensed minister in regard to their new bishop, and they are formally proclaimed and welcomed as licensed lay ministers in their new parish or field of ministry.

If the transfer is from one parish to another within the same deanery, or within the jurisdiction of the same bishop, the process is simplified – the preparation of the new licence can happen more quickly, as all the material to do the checks is to hand, and no new declarations need to be made. The new licence may be sent directly to the LLM.

## Summary

This process can be summarised in these instructions to the transferring LLM:-

- I. Settle into your new congregation.
- II. Find and contact your archdeaconry adviser about the process of obtaining a new licence and they will help you with the next step – which involves filling in a transfer form, which they will provide.
- III. Show your licensing has the support of the incumbent and PCC (by the passing of a resolution), and send in the transfer form to the person named on it.
- IV. Develop a ministry agreement with your new incumbent.
- V. If you are moving from another diocese your good standing with them will be verified, and a new DBS check will need to be done. The new licence will be prepared, which is normally sent to your archdeaconry adviser, who formally presents it at a special service.

## 2 VACANCY IN A PARISH - INTERREGNUM

The period between the departure of the outgoing incumbent and the institution and induction of the new one is known as an “interregnum”. The church wardens and the area dean are responsible for maintaining the life and worship of the church and looking after church property during the interregnum. The bishop will have explained this to the church wardens and the PCC.

An LLM has no official responsibilities during an interregnum beyond those included in their ministry agreement. This agreement will now be between the LLM and the area dean, and it would be a good idea to review this as soon as possible after the start of the interregnum.

LLMs may be asked or offer to take on tasks for which their experience and expertise will be valuable, but it is important that they should not be taken for granted. In particular LLMs

should not be required to make arrangements for the timing, frequency and leadership of the services.

Probably the main point to emphasise is the importance of establishing a clear understanding from the start as to who is expected to do what, and who is answerable to who for the smooth running of the parish or benefice. LLMs will have a valuable part to play in encouragement, advice, and prayer, and will need to establish good working relationships with their church wardens and the area dean, which probably already exist.

It may be helpful to remember the support that can be given by LLMs in neighbouring parishes and the archdeaconry advisers.

During the appointment process of the new incumbent it is important that potential candidates are made fully aware of the ministry of LLMs in the parish/benefice, and they have the opportunity to meet LLM(s).

On the appointment of a new incumbent s/he will contact and meet the ay minister, if possible before the induction, but certainly soon afterwards. At this meeting a temporary ministry agreement is drawn up. After a period of six months, a permanent ministry agreement is negotiated and signed by both the LLM and incumbent.

## 5 DEPLOYMENT

Although deployment is nearly always in their local parish, because licensed lay ministers are licensed to their episcopal area they may be deployed beyond their local parish. Examples where LLMs might work outside their local parish include:

- Secondment to a parish with a need for licensed lay ministry. In this case the LLM keeps a spiritual base in parish A but gives time and service to parish B. This may be a long or short-term arrangement. One obvious example is service during a parish vacancy, but there will be other valuable opportunities.
- Sharing of expertise and gifts. For example, LLMs with skills in children's work, youth, evangelism, liturgy, teaching or taking funerals outside the local parish.
- Training other Christians, or LLMs in training.
- Implementing a mission policy. Groups of LLMs as a 'faith sharing' team, or baptism follow-up, contact visiting, or school work etc.
- Sector ministry. Hospital, prison and school chaplaincy; inter-faith dialogue; vocational development groups; spiritual direction; deanery or diocesan work.

The following principles apply to any change in the scope of a LLM's ministry beyond their local parish:

- There is a need to match resources to needs as well as possible, in order to address the mission and ministry of the Church (as with the deployment of any ministerial resources).
- The deployment is with the agreement of the LLM and their incumbent.
- In the case of sector ministry (within a particular establishment), deployment must be with the agreement of the minister-in-charge.

- In the case of any public ministry (particularly if it is to be ongoing), the incumbent or area dean of the parish where the LLM will be deployed must be aware.
- Any change in deployment should be recorded in an updated version of the LLM's ministry agreement.

#### **4 PERMISSION TO OFFICIATE (PTO)**

On reaching the age of 70 licensed lay ministers who wish to remain in active service should surrender their licence, and apply for the bishop's written 'permission to officiate'. This is another form of licence, but it is limited to renewal every two years on the recommendation of the incumbent.

#### **5 EMERITUS**

Licensed lay ministers, who decide to retire from active ministry (at any stage beyond the age of 70), may choose to be given the honorary title of Reader Emeritus. The conferring of Reader Emeritus does not constitute a licence for ministry, and an LLM in this category is not authorised to minister.

