

A Policy on Licensing Sacraments Elders

POLICY NAME: Regional Council Sacraments Elders Policy	Date Approved: July 16, 2019
	Review date:
Purpose: This policy outlines the procedures for Sacraments Elders <i>The Manual 2019 1.2.4.</i>	

Preamble

This document outlines the Conseil régional Nakonha:ka Regional Council's Policy on Licensing Sacraments Elders within the Regional Council.

Policy

Individuals may be considered for a license as a Sacraments Elder if:

- a) there are no ministry personnel settled, called or appointed to the community of faith;
- b) there are no other ministry personnel available within a reasonable distance of the community of faith who are able and willing to administer the Sacraments;
- c) the person identified to function as a Sacraments Elder is suitable; and
- d) this person identified has successfully completed a course on the administration of the Sacraments.

Process

1. The community of faith identifies that:
 - a. there are no ministry personnel within a reasonable distance of the community of faith who are able and willing to administer the sacraments; and
 - b. there is a community of faith member whom it believes is suitable to perform this function.
2. The Pastoral Relations Leadership Team reviews the recommendations of the community of faith and, if it concurs, recommends to the Regional Council Executive.
3. The Regional Council Executive decides on the need for a Sacraments Elder and the suitability of the proposed person to be licensed.
4. The Pastoral Relations Leadership Team oversees a training program for the proposed Sacraments Elder.
5. The Regional Council, upon the receipt of confirmation that the training program has been successfully completed, licenses the person as a Sacraments Elder for a period that is the earlier of twelve months or the settlement, call or appointment of a member of the Order of Ministry or the appointment of a Designated Lay Minister to the community of faith.
6. The Regional Council appoints an ongoing mentor for the Sacraments Elder.

Background

Proposal GCE4, approved at the 39th General Council, stated that the lay presidency at the sacraments arises when two expectations are not met. They were that:

1. there are insufficient ministry personnel available and positioned to administer the sacraments to all congregations; and
2. That congregations shall according to need, i.e., regularly and frequently have access to the administration of the sacraments.

UCC Manual 2019 I.2.4 Licences to Administer Sacraments

The regional council may grant a licence to administer the sacraments to

(c) members of communities of faith without a called or appointed member of the order of ministry or designated lay minister. A member holding a licence to administer the sacraments is called a “sacraments elder.”

There are policies for the qualifications, assessment, and education of lay people to be sacraments elders. *See the Sacraments Elders resource available from the General Council Office.*

The Regional Council:

1. Recognizes that the office of Sacraments Elder was intended for exceptional circumstances. The absence of a settled, called or appointed minister on a community of faith does not, in itself, trigger the licensing of a Sacraments Elder.
2. The Pastoral Relations Leadership Team confirm the need for a Sacraments Elder and the suitability of the proposed person before the training takes place. The Regional Council Executive may not concur with the recommendations.
3. The *Sacraments Elders Workbook* will be the principal guide for instruction on the administration of the sacraments. The Pastoral Relations Minister shall be responsible to provide the training. The training is approximately 16 to 20 hours, timing to be divided between two to four modules with sufficient time between them for reflection.
4. The Pastoral Relations Leadership Team will recommend appointing an ongoing mentor, potentially the pastoral charge supervisor.
5. Upon completion of this process, the Pastoral Relations Leadership Team will bring a motion to the Regional Council Executive for action.