

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA



Lay Ministry - Serving God, Serving You

LAY MINISTRY

HANDBOOK

2010



Lutheran Church of Australia

The logo for the Board for Lay Ministry features two hands raised in prayer. The hands are in different colours representing lay workers working hand in hand with pastors in ministry. The cross in the palms of the ministry teams' hands emanates from the shape of the church underneath. The curve represents the Holy Spirit moving through the church out into the world.



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HANDBOOK

2010

This handbook is published by the Board for Lay Ministry (the Board) and contains information about the policies and regulations on the supply, training and service of Lay Workers within the Lutheran Church of Australia. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the Handbook at the time of printing. Please contact the Director for Lay Ministry for more information.

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LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

BOARD FOR LAY MINISTRY

All Christians are in fellowship through Christ and together form the body of Christ, the Church. They are called to use their gifts in service to God, which results in service to each other and the whole world. All God's people are called to mission and participate in the ministry of bringing the gospel to all people who come into their lives. Some are called to proclaim the word publicly and to administer the sacraments. Others are called to service as lay workers in bringing the gospel to people in word and deed. This may include such positions as: Spiritual Life Coordinator, Pastoral Assistant, Director of Small Groups, Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator, Music/Worship Coordinator, Aboriginal Ministry Worker, Camp Ministry Director, Outreach Worker, School/Tertiary Lay Chaplain, Parish Nurse Hospital/Prison Lay Chaplain or any other position as the need arises.

Definition of a Lay Worker

The term 'Lay Worker' refers to a non ordained person who is employed by a congregation, parish, district or Board of the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA). The office of lay worker is an auxiliary office of the church established to assist in expanding the mission and ministry of the church.

Board for Lay Ministry Mission Statement

The Board for Lay Ministry (the Board) exists to encourage, support and assist lay workers and employers in their ministry so people follow Jesus.

Function of the Board for Lay Ministry

In addition to the general duties of a Board of the Church as laid down in Section VIII.G of the By-laws of the Church, the duties of the Board shall be to:

- provide encouragement and support to lay workers employed in the Church;
- promote a deeper understanding of the role of lay workers in the Church;
- ensure appropriate training programs are available to and undertaken by lay workers employed in the Church;
- support and assist congregations, parishes Boards, departments and auxiliaries of the Church in the employment of lay workers;
- show support for the general welfare of lay workers working in the Church by keeping in touch with them through correspondence, visitation, and by encouraging them in their ministry;
- promote the use of lay workers in the work of the Church, both on a full-time and part-time basis, and to assist the employing body in the employment of suitable lay-workers;
- assist congregations, parishes, Boards, departments, districts and auxiliaries of the Church to employ and utilise the services of suitable lay workers for ministry;
- work collegially with Presidents, Pastors and Principals in caring for lay workers within their jurisdiction;
- meet regularly with the faculty of Australian Lutheran College so that appropriate training is provided for lay workers;
- determine the minimum requirements for the accreditation of lay workers working in ministry positions within the Church;
- receive applications for financial support from congregations, parishes, Boards, departments and auxiliaries, as recommended annually by each of the District Church Councils;
- approve the distribution of funds from the LCA Lay Ministry Fund, the Lutheran Laypeople's League and any other source;
- arrange conferences and seminars for the edification of lay workers working in the Church;
- maintain a register of lay workers working in paid positions within the Church;
- be aware of the trends associated with the role of lay workers in other churches;
- provide support and encouragement for the Executive Director for Lay Ministry; and
- utilise the services of consultants and advisers as required.

Executive

The Board shall appoint an Executive Committee comprising the Chairperson, the Secretary, and one other member. The Executive shall carry out such duties as the Board may decide from time to time.

Meetings

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held at least twice a year. Any additional meetings shall be subject to the provisions of Section VIII.G.7 of the By-laws of the Church.

Director for Lay Ministry

The Board shall appoint an Executive Officer who shall be known as the Director for Lay Ministry who will at all times work under the direction of the Board.

The Director shall:

- be responsible for ensuring the implementation of the policy and decisions of the Board;
- develop and provide support for both lay workers and their employers;
- develop relevant resources for lay workers and employing congregations;
- assist in the development of training programs and provide information on training opportunities;
- increase awareness of the ministry provided by lay workers to all levels of the Church; and
- carry out such duties as prescribed by the Board from time to time.

Roll of Lay Workers

The Board shall maintain a Roll of all Lay Workers currently employed in the LCA.

The Roll contains the names of all lay workers who are currently employed in the LCA whether they are accredited or non-accredited, full-time or part-time.

The Director for Lay Ministry shall maintain a personal file on each lay worker on the Roll. The file shall contain:

- a copy of the enrolment form (if applicable)
- evaluation and progress reports
- place and length of service
- job descriptions
- annual reports (only for lay workers receiving a subsidy from the LCA Lay Ministry Fund)

Prerequisites for listing on the Roll of Lay Workers

A lay worker shall be included on the Roll providing he/she:

- is a practicing member of the Lutheran Church of Australia. Any deviation from this to be worked through with the relevant district president.
- has been accepted for intended service, either full-time or part-time, in the church.
- undertake theological study within the first twelve months of employment (if they haven't already done so)

The position of a lay worker shall:

- be one involving a level of responsibility determined by the church
- be established by the church, a Board or board of the church, by a district of the church, or a committee of a district, by an auxiliary of the church, or by a congregation or parish of the church;

The Board shall determine that the person filling any such position is eligible for inclusion on the Roll.

The keeping of personal information shall comply with the current Privacy Act stipulations and the LCA Privacy policy.

Removal from the Roll

A lay worker may be removed from the Roll of Lay Workers in certain circumstances.

Removal from the Roll may occur when the lay worker:

- requests removal;
- is no longer employed as a lay worker in the LCA;
- is doctrinally unsound, professionally incompetent or morally unfit.

Employers' Responsibilities to the Church

A congregation, parish or Board that wishes to employ a lay worker are required to notify their intention to the respective district president and the Director for Lay Ministry before an appointment is made.

The 1997 LCA General Synod resolved that any congregation, parish or Board of a district that wishes to employ a lay worker on a full-time or part-time basis, consult with the district president, and district lay ministry committee, and the Board for Lay Ministry prior to the appointment, giving full details of the position, terms and conditions of employment.

The reason for the resolution is that it is desirable for the district president to be informed that a congregation wishes to employ a lay worker and the type of work to be carried out, as the employment of a lay worker could have financial implications for the district and the employing body.

It is also advisable to inform the Director for Lay Ministry of the desire to employ a lay worker to obtain full details of salaries and allowances as well as employment conditions, suggested job descriptions and support structures for the lay worker.

The employer may apply to the Board for financial assistance, if required, from the LCA Lay Ministry Fund to employ a lay worker.

When an appointment has been made the employer shall notify the respective district President and the Director for Lay Ministry of the date of the installation service.

Funds for assisting employers to employ a lay worker are:

For congregations, parishes, districts and Boards of the church: the LCA Lay Ministry Fund. Application forms are available from the Director.

Employers' Responsibilities to the Lay Worker

A congregation, parish, district or Board of the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) employing a lay worker has the responsibility for setting the terms and conditions of employment in keeping with the relevant requirements of the LCA and ensuring there are appropriate human resource management practices in place, e.g. professional development, appraisal.

The employer shall:

- issue a 'Letter of Call' to the lay worker
- provide the lay worker with an employment agreement
- provide a written job description
- prepare and administer personnel policies and practice
- assist in the establishment of a support group ministry team and member for the lay worker

The employer shall prepare and administer personnel policies and practices with respect to:

- Job description
- Employment contract
- Salary and allowances
- Superannuation
- Workers compensation
- Annual leave
- Sick leave
- Long service leave
- Parental leave
- Compassionate leave
- Authorised paid/unpaid leave
- Annual review
- Staff development procedures
- Safe working place
- Privacy policy
- Grievance procedures

The employer shall ensure that staff entitlements are in accordance with policies of the Lutheran Church of Australia and in line with government regulations. The schedule of salaries and allowances can be obtained from the Director for Lay Ministry.

In matters of spiritual direction the lay worker shall at all times work under the supervision of the parish pastor, LCA/district committee or district director/president.

In terms of employment, accountability and appraisal of work, this is the responsibility of the employing body and pastor.

Development of a Job Description for a Lay Worker

Basic Function

The lay worker is a member of a team ministry to carry out, under direction, such duties as he/she is experienced, qualified or trained to perform. These are mainly the tasks of recruiting, equipping, supervising, motivating, leading and enthusing members of the parish in the exercise of their faith.

Major Responsibilities

The specific duties of the lay worker will be determined by the needs of the employer and the talents and preparation of the lay worker. It is therefore desirable that:

- there is a clear picture of the needs and directions of the ministry to be undertaken;
- a clear job description is prepared;
- the lay worker engaged has the personality, professional or vocation qualifications and level of experience that best fit the requirements.

It is important that the job description is not so vague and generalised that it is unclear what is required, or so specific and extensive as to be unrealistic in expectations.

A job description should explain why the position exists and what the expected outcomes are.

Overview

On focusing on outcomes the job description is not concerned primarily with the manner in which the job is done, but rather with making something specific happen. Different people will bring different skills to the position.

Focusing on outcomes allows people the freedom to carry out their work using their specific God-given talents to achieve the desired outcomes. The job description should not be concerned with readily identifying all things that are to be done but should include details of what is to be achieved.

Summary

The job summary is a concise statement that indicates the overall objectives of the position. It should answer the questions - What is the position expected to accomplish and why?

Nature and Scope

In a responsive mission structure it is necessary to identify, build and consolidate network interrelationships. It is a set of statements which describes the nature, requirements and challenge of the total environment in which the position must function, and the organisational freedom to act which has been conferred upon the position. It should describe interrelationships with peers and others within and outside the position.

Principles and Responsibilities

These describe the key end results of the position, which taken together, go to make up the overall job summary. Principle responsibilities infer action. They relate to making something happen and are ongoing requirements of the position. They ideally should be capable of measurement. They should not be restricted by time limitations and should emphasise results as opposed to activities. Typically, responsibilities would include planning, development, training and equipping.

Specific Responsibilities

There are usually some specific tasks, which need to be included in the job description. These would be responsibilities relating to formal reporting, attendance at meetings, procedures and administration.

Authorities

The job description should specify the level of authority granted to the lay worker and to whom the lay worker is answerable.

Job Descriptions

Copies of suggested job descriptions can be obtained by contacting The Board for Lay Ministry.

Position Classification and Training Framework

Obligation of Employers to Classify Lay Workers Positions

Employers must by reference to the criteria listed below and the lay worker position descriptions, classify their lay work positions at the relevant level:

- Trainee lay worker
- Lay worker Level 1
- Lay worker Level 2
- Lay worker Level 3

General Criteria

The General Criteria described below shall apply to all levels of Lay Worker.

Lay Worker Purpose

To serve God's mission through His people in and around a Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) community

Vision

Through the effective training of all lay workers serving in the LCA and united in God's purpose and through the power of the Holy Spirit we will see people:

- coming to know Jesus
- worshipping Him in all of life
- experiencing community together
- growing in maturity in Christ
- being released for and engaged in ministry
- living and sharing the good news

Values and Commitments

Lay workers employed in the LCA ascribe to the following values and commitments:

- growing daily through Word and Prayer
- naturally seeking out God's purposes in a life of service
- exemplifying integrity
- demonstrating a commitment to Gospel priorities
- thinking and serving Biblically and theologically
- being used by God to effect real and sustained changes in people's lives
- consistently displaying a Christlike love for others
- growing in Christ to be able to train and equip others to disciple new Christians
- displaying an attitude of humility and teachability
- continuing self initiated spiritual, professional and personal development

Christian Character

For lay workers to be effective in ministry, Christian character development in the following areas will be greatly valued and intentionally supported in available training programs:

- ability to model grace, patience and wisdom when dealing with people or situations
- consistently displaying compassion and understanding when ministering to people
- a willingness to regularly reassess the health status of their physical, emotional, relational and spiritual life
- demonstrating a Spirit open to learning and a commitment to growth in leadership, wisdom and practical ministry skills
- ability to relate with warmth and personal interest and provide honest and timely feedback
- ability to create a united motivating environment that empowers and affirms people with different gifts and approaches to ministry
- ability to be and remain confident and resilient through faith, regardless of circumstances, and to instill the same confidence in others

Personal Attributes

For lay workers to be effective in ministry they need to be able to demonstrate that they possess, or are capable of developing, the following personal attributes, which will be enhanced through training:

- self-awareness, self-confidence and resilience;
- good relationship-building skills;
- empathy and sensitivity towards others;
- ability to work well with others in a team;
- energy, drive, and willingness to take initiative.
- responsibility and accountability

Individual Learning and Professional Development

Each lay worker will be appointed a learning consultant. Learning consultants will be accredited by Board for Lay Ministry (BLM) to fulfil the role of:

- being the first point of contact for individuals interested in developing a learning pathway
- assisting individuals to determine their gifting; including their learning, ministry, spiritual, and vocational pathway.
- developing a learning plan that reflects the above.
- facilitating discussions between the learner, learning providers and others involved in the learning process on an ongoing basis.
- reviewing the learning plan to determine its ongoing appropriateness.

Employer Commitment to Lay Worker Development

It will be important for employers to demonstrate their commitment to their lay worker and their development by:

- engaging BLM in the determination of the most appropriate learning pathway
- making time available to undertake development as part of their lay worker's workload
- having a supervisor whom they meet with regularly
- providing regular ongoing support, reviews and feedback
- establishing clear goals and parameters for their lay worker's role

Lay workers are expected to commit to continuing professional development.

Accreditation of a Lay Worker

The Board for Lay Ministry (BLM) will appoint a Learning Consultant who will work with all lay workers to ensure they meet the minimum requirements for accreditation. The Learning Consultant will work with the lay worker and their employer to identify gaps in prior learning and skills development, and determine an appropriate training plan to resolve these gaps.

Lay Worker Position Classification Levels

Trainee Lay Worker

Trainee lay workers are non-accredited lay workers who are working toward accreditation through a holistic discipleship program. There will be three types:

- Student Trainees who complete a traineeship over a one or two year program, including practical placement in an LCA institution on a volunteer basis.
- Student Trainees who complete a traineeship over a one or two program, including practical placement in an LCA institution on a paid LCA trainee salary.
- Existing lay workers who complete a traineeship over a one or two year part time program whilst completing their practical placement component through their LCA employer. The salary for these lay workers would remain at the same level as it had been before they started the traineeship using the existing lay worker salary and allowance structure.

A trainee would work with supervision to help carry out, review and maintain a 3 month position plan that serves the LCA community. The position would include organising and overseeing programs and activities, coordinating volunteers, and helping with recruiting and training of volunteers. The trainee would plan week to week activities in conjunction with the 3-month position plan and its goals.

Lay Worker Level 1

Lay workers at this level will be capable of working under supervision to prepare, implement, review and maintain a 6-12 month ministry plan aligned to their position description and to the mission and vision statements of the LCA community being served.

The area for which the lay worker is responsible may be part of a larger, longer-term community strategy. The lay worker will be moving away from activity planning towards 12 month intentional ministry planning that recognises the future need to develop empowered teams, and identifies resources necessary to move in that direction.

Lay workers at this level are responsible and accountable for their own work within established routines, methods and procedures. They are expected to exercise judgment and initiative within the range of the skills and knowledge required of the position. They will have had sufficient experience and/or training to enable them to carry out their assigned duties under general direction, with additional instruction and guidance when moving into new areas or work. They will be able to seek out and enthuse helpers with the potential to become trainees. However, their leadership skills will still be under development.

With supervision they will be able to arrange a personal professional development program and assist in providing intentional training opportunities for trainees and helpers.

Prior training and ongoing development

A Level 1 lay worker will have qualified for accreditation as an LCA Lay Worker through a combination of prior studies and ministry-related work experience, or will agree to and successfully undertake the necessary training to achieve this during the first two years in the position. A BLM Learning Consultant will work with the lay worker and their employer/supervisor to identify gaps and determine an appropriate traineeship or alternative training plan to resolve these gaps.

Lay Worker Level 2

A Level 2 lay worker is a fully fledged team leader capable of inspiring, resourcing and mentoring teams of volunteers or other lay workers.

They are expected to have the knowledge, skills and experience required to take responsibility for formulating and achieving shorter-term goals/outcomes within an overarching long-term ministry plan.

They will be capable of exercising initiative, discretion and judgment in carrying out their assigned duties, and will be able to perform specialised or non-routine tasks or features of their role.

They will be able to deliver desired outcomes under broad direction and guidance, with significant day-to-day autonomy.

In some LCA communities Level 2 lay workers may be required to help supervise trainee and/or Level 1 lay workers by allocating duties, providing guidance in relation to quality of work, and assisting in their training through personal instruction and demonstration.

Depending on the requirements of the position, responsibilities of a Level 2 lay worker could include:

- Preparing, reviewing and maintaining a 1 year ministry plan for a key community ministry that intentionally structures, prepares and equips ministries, ministry teams and team leaders for its implementation through empowerment.
- Teaching others to prepare and use ministry plans aligned to their position description and to the mission and vision statements of the LCA community being served.
- Leading and empowering a team that prepares and engages other teams and team leaders.
- Leading and equipping team members to achieve predetermined goals and create an environment in which developing leaders and their team members can reach their full potential for God's mission.
- Recruiting Team Leaders to be developed as volunteers or Level 1 lay workers
- Supervising, mentoring and disciplining the above leaders.
- Maintaining a personal professional development program and identifying training needs of others by way of personal and ministry reviews

Prior Training and Ongoing Development

Level 2 lay workers will generally have a Diploma, degree or equivalent qualification or experience that meets the requirements of their particular position plus LCA Lay Worker accreditation. A Diploma in Theology or a Diploma in their area of specialty work (e.g., youth work, aged care) or an approved equivalent would normally satisfy these requirements. A BLM Learning Consultant will work with the lay worker and their employer/supervisor to identify gaps in prior learning and determine an appropriate training plan to resolve these gaps.

Lay Worker Level 3

A Level 3 lay worker will typically have worked or studied in a relevant professional field. As experienced professionals, level 3 lay workers will be fully responsible and accountable for their work and self-directed in the application of their knowledge and skills. They will exercise significant professional judgment based on extensive experience and an advanced level of expertise within their area of employment.

They are likely to have qualifications, knowledge and experience that has fitted them to manage significant resources (people and budget) and/or to carry out a pastoral ministry with significant independence and autonomy. They will ensure that their program delivers the desired outcomes, and may answer to a board that meets only once or twice a year.

Depending on their role, they may delegate day-to-day responsibility to staff and or volunteers under their supervision, in terms of managing workloads, resolving operations problems, monitoring the quality of work produced, and counseling staff for performance and other work related matters. They would be able to train and supervise lay workers in lower Levels by means of personal instruction and demonstration. They would also be able to assist in the delivery of training courses.

Depending on the requirements of the position, responsibilities of a level 3 lay worker could include:

- Preparing, reviewing and maintaining a 2-3 year ministry plan for a key community ministry that intentionally structures, prepares and equips ministries, ministry teams and team leaders for its implementation through empowerment.
- Teaching others to prepare and use ministry plans aligned to their position description and to the mission and vision statements of the LCA community being served.
- Leading and empowering a team that prepares and engages other teams and team leaders.
- Leading and equipping team members to achieve predetermined goals and create an environment in which developing leaders and their team members can reach their full potential for God's mission.
- Recruiting Team Leaders to be developed as volunteers or Level 1 or 2 lay workers
- Supervising, mentoring and disciplining the above leaders.
- Maintaining a personal professional development program and identifying training needs of others by way of personal and ministry reviews

They may be required to develop ministry policy and procedures for use by other professionals and staff.

Prior Training and Ongoing Professional Development

Level 3 lay workers will generally have a Bachelor degree or equivalent qualification or experience that meets the requirements of their particular position, plus LCA Lay Worker accreditation. A BLM Learning Consultant will work with the lay worker and their employer/supervisor to identify gaps in prior learning and determine an appropriate training plan to resolve these gaps.

Curriculum Outline for Lay Worker Training/ Professional Development

Trainee Lay Worker

The training program is based on the Board for Lay Ministry recommendations for minimum accreditation, although it far exceeds these. It covers development of knowledge and practical skills under four headings:

- Theological understanding/spiritual development
- Generic and ministry-specific work skills
- Leadership development
- Character development

Theological Understanding/Spiritual Development

Whilst the program focuses on practical skills, trainees will also be required to acquire a basic understanding of the Bible as our foundation of faith, and of the beliefs of the LCA. These two aspects of training will be a compulsory part of working towards accreditation as a lay worker of the LCA.

The spiritual development training component will include:

- a Lutheran Confessions study.
- a Bible Overview course.

Personal spiritual development potentially encompassing things like:

- Daily bible reading plan
- Spending allocated time with God in prayer
- Prayer/sharing time with fellow employees
- Seeking/listening for the Lord's leading

Generic & Ministry Specific Skills

This practical training component will aim to develop skills such as:

- Training in leading a Bible study
- Basic skills in developing step-by-step effective ministry plans and beginning to learn the skills to implement them
- Workshops in the following areas:
 - Team building & Leadership
 - Ministry visioning and strategic planning
 - Mentoring
 - Time and self management
 - Communication & relationship skills
 - Counselling

Leadership Development

During this component the trainee will:

- Explore the unique challenges associated with leadership in a Christian environment such as leading volunteers, and the pastor/lay worker interaction.
- Study Jesus servant leadership model and the difference between a 'call and a job'.
- Develop an understanding of the leadership change from an administration, organisational or maintenance model, to a vision led management model.
- Develop/improve skills in organisation and time management

Lay Worker Level 1

In addition to covering any gaps in prior learning required to achieve LCA lay worker accreditation, those who wish to qualify as Level 1 lay worker will be working towards a qualification expectation of Diploma or equivalent that meets the requirements of the position. This will be done either in their area of specialty or in theology encompassing the following areas:

Theological Understanding/Spiritual Development

- A comprehensive course in Christian doctrine showing how the Bible and the gospel provide the basis and the framework for sharing theology from a Lutheran understanding.
- A study of selected books of the Bible looking at the contents and themes, frequently probing more deeply in order to tackle difficult portions, as it applies the text to the world of today.

Diploma in Theology studies enable students to:

- gain an integrated introduction to theology in general, and Lutheran theology in particular, and to become familiar with the literature, language and concepts of theology;
- develop the personal and academic skills to reflect theologically on, and to apply theological insights to, issues and challenges in church and society;
- explore the relationship between theology and the practice of ministry and to investigate specific aspects of theology relevant to special areas of ministry;
- develop a theological framework for future self-directed or formal study.
- undertake studies in a specialised area of interest relevant to the particular needs of the student.

Generic & Ministry Specific Work Skills

This component includes practical training aimed at assisting the lay worker to become fully competent in:

- developing a vision for the ministry that is aligned to the vision and values of the church
- developing and implementing realistic, step by step effective 12 month ministry plans
- setting realistic goals to grow ministries
- recruiting new leaders as the ministry grows

Leadership Development

This component will:

- Develop some basic training strategies and resources to teach people the skills necessary to carry out their ministry roles
- provide a basic understanding of operating systems and procedures that reduce workloads and improve efficiencies in ministry
- develop the lay worker's to prepare a budget for the role
- develop the lay worker's skills in resourcing relevant and challenging materials for their ministry .

Lay Worker Level 2

In addition to covering any gaps in prior learning required to achieve LCA lay worker accreditation, Level 2 lay workers will have a qualification expectation of Diploma or equivalent that meets the requirements of the position.

If their prior learning and experience has not already equipped them with the required level of generic and ministry-specific work-related and leadership skills, they will be advised to undertake training designed to develop additional competencies in the following areas:

Generic & Ministry Specific Skills

- Ability to set realistic goals to grow ministries and people to the next levels
- Ability to develop long term vision for ministry that is aligned to the vision and values of the church
- Developing and implementing a realistic, step by step effective 2 year ministry plan
- Ability to recruit new leaders as the ministry grows

Leadership Skills

- Ability to use effective training strategies and resources to teach people the skills necessary to carry out their ministry roles
- Ability to develop operating systems and procedures that reduce workloads and improve efficiencies in ministry
- Ability to appoint and empower a team to direct the process of change
- Ability to plan and use a structural system to effectively implement ministry plans
- Ability to create an environment in which potential leaders can reach their full potential for God's mission
- Ability to prepare a budget for a team ministry
- Ability to resource teaching material for ministry leaders that is relevant and challenging

Lay Worker Level 3

In addition to covering any gaps in prior learning required to achieve LCA lay worker accreditation, Level 3 lay workers will have a qualification expectation of a Bachelor or equivalent that meets the requirements of the position.

A level 3 lay worker will normally be expected to be able to demonstrate appropriate levels of theological and spiritual understanding and professional knowledge and skills before being appointed to their position.

This level of study will have enabled the students to have:

- acquired a broad, integrated introduction to theology in general, and Lutheran theology in particular, and to become familiar with the literature, language and concepts of theology;
- developed the academic skills and attributes necessary to research, comprehend, interpret and evaluate theology from a range of sources and to apply that theology to the issues and challenges of church and society;

- developed a foundation in theology for self-directed and lifelong learning and the basis for advanced study in theology;
- developed interpersonal and teamwork skills appropriate for ministry in the church and for further study.
- developed the ability to review, consolidate, extend and apply the knowledge and techniques learnt to the practice of ministry, also through an extended period of supervised field experience;

They will be expected to be able to demonstrate competencies at the following levels:

Generic & Ministry Specific Skills

- Ability to set realistic goals to grow ministries and people to next levels
- Ability to develop long term vision for ministry that is aligned to the vision and values of the LCA community in which they are working
- Developing and implementing a realistic, step by step effective 3 year ministry plan
- Ability to recruit new leaders as the ministry grows

Leadership Skills

- Ability to use effective training strategies and resources to teach people the skills necessary to carry out their ministry roles
- Ability to develop operating systems and procedures that reduce workloads and improve efficiencies in ministry
- Ability to appoint and empower a team to direct the process of change
- Ability to plan and use a structural system to effectively implement ministry plans
- Ability to create an environment in which potential leaders can reach their full potential for God's mission
- Ability to prepare and manage a budget for a team ministry
- Ability to develop or resource teaching material for ministry leaders that is relevant and challenging

Procedures for Calling and Employing a Lay Worker

Either of the following procedures shall be followed in the calling and employing of a lay worker:

1. 'Call' a lay person without advertising

- The employer shall notify the respective District President, and the Director for Lay Ministry of its intentions to call a lay worker.
- The employer researches possible candidates, provides a job description, and may interview them for a call either in person or by telephone.
- The name of the candidate shall be put forward at a duly convened meeting of the employing body.
- The meeting may accept or decline the nomination.
- The employing body contacts the lay worker immediately by phone, notifying them that they have been called.
- The employing body sends signed letter of call, employment agreement and job description to candidate.
- The lay worker shall immediately notify their employer, if they are currently employed within the LCA, that they have received a call.
- The lay worker shall prayerfully consider the call and forward a definite answer within fourteen days after its receipt.
- If the candidate subsequently declines the call, one of the above procedures can be repeated.

2. Advertise the position, interview and then 'Call' a lay person

The employer shall notify the respective District President, and the Director for Lay Ministry of its intentions to call a lay worker.

Advertising

Methods of advertising may include:

- internal notice in the parish bulletin
- external notices to other parishes
- notice in 'The Lutheran'
- mass media
- Board for Lay Ministry website

Selection Panel

The employer shall establish a selection panel to:

- rank applicants against the selection criteria
- undertake a process of short listing the applicants
- conduct interviews
- advise applicants of their success or otherwise

Assessing Applicants

Assessment of applicants may be based on any of the following:

- a written application and resume
- informal interview (phone/in person)
- formal interview

Conducting an Interview

If a formal interview is to be conducted, the selection panel will predetermine questions which relate to the selection criteria and/or issues arising from the application and resume.

Recommendation

The selection panel will make a recommendation to the employer as soon as possible after the interviews have been completed.

Calling the lay worker

- The name of the candidate shall be put forward at a duly convened meeting of the employing body.
- The meeting may accept or decline the nomination.
- The employing body contacts the lay worker immediately by phone, notifying them that they have been called.
- The employing body sends signed letter of call, employment agreement and job description to candidate.
- The lay worker shall immediately notify their employer, if they are currently employed within the LCA, that they have received a call.
- The lay worker shall prayerfully consider the call and forward a definite answer within fourteen days after its receipt.
- If the candidate subsequently declines the call, one of the above procedures can be repeated.

Advising Unsuccessful Applicants

Unsuccessful applicants must be notified immediately after the successful applicant has accepted the call.

Record Keeping

A copy of the letter of call and all supporting evidence should be kept for five years.

Documentation should be kept in a secure place, in a sealed envelope and marked 'Confidential'. The date of its disposal is to be recorded on the envelope.

Advising the Board for Lay Ministry and respective District

When the call has been accepted, the employer is to notify the respective District President, and the Director for Lay Ministry of the name of the successful applicant, including any changes to the position originally advertised, and advise details of the installation service.

Calling and Employing a Lay Worker

Any congregation, parish or Board of the church that wishes to employ a lay worker full-time or part-time, must consult with the respective District President, District Lay Ministry/Missions Committee, and the Director for Lay Ministry, prior to the appointment, giving full details of the position, terms and conditions of employment. This is a General Synod requirement. (1997 General Synod resolution)

The employer shall develop and issue a job description in accordance with *Development of a job description for a lay worker* (page 6).

The employer shall develop an employment agreement for the lay worker.

Copies of suggested employment agreements and job descriptions can be obtained by contacting The Board for Lay Ministry.

Letter of Call

The Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) wishes to affirm lay people in their calling as lay workers since all who work in Lutheran institutions in whatever position contribute to the mission of the LCA as they live out their vocation in their specific appointment.

It is therefore encouraged that a congregation, parish, district or Board employing a lay worker full-time or part-time, issue a 'Call' to the lay worker. *The mechanisms for actually issuing a call will vary from organization to organisation, but typically in a congregational setting they will require a "special meeting" to be called.*

The 'Letter of Call' shall be signed by the chairperson of the congregation, parish or Board and the respective district president.

The 'Letter of Call' document is available from your respective district office.

Pastoral Care of the Lay Worker

In the pastoral care of lay workers, the following areas should be addressed:

- identity formation
- pastoral work
- spirituality

Identity Formation

There is a need to ensure that new lay workers make a smooth transition from their former parish/employer/profession to lay ministry. This transition may be complicated by other transitions being made at the same time, e.g., from single to married, from spouse to parent, from dependant to bread winner.

The focus needs to be on wholistic development of the lay worker: physically, mentally, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

Three internal issues may impede this development.

- inappropriate use of anger or the inability to deal with conflict
- inappropriate handling of one's sexuality
- inappropriate dependency inability to say 'no' or an exaggerated need to be liked.

The role of lay workers in relation to that of pastors needs to be clearly understood. The ideal is a team ministry where lay workers are involved in a ministry for which the congregation, LCA/district committee or district director/president is finally accountable. Coping with unrealistic expectations of the employer may also need to be addressed.

Pastoral Work

It is important that lay workers use their time so that there is a good balance between contact with people and personal preparation. Administration and organisational functions are important in furthering person-centred ministry, but they should never be so time consuming that they allow an escape from people.

Discussion needs to take place with the lay worker to ensure that the lay worker's God-given talents are encouraged and developed.

The employer needs to ensure that undue demands are not placed on the lay worker so that inadequate time is available for personal work and study. Time considerations relating to family and personal health are also important issues to take into account.

Spirituality

The employing body should ensure that the lay worker's faith in the living Christ is nourished. When Christ is a living reality in the life of the lay worker, changing situations will provide opportunities for ministry. Personal study of Scripture and private prayer are a foundation for the development of spirituality of the lay worker.

Support Team for Lay Workers

The Board strongly recommends that a support team be established for the lay worker.

The Purpose

- to provide pastoral care and prayer support for the lay worker
- to provide a support base for the lay worker and their family so that they may begin their work effectively and fit smoothly into the position;
- to serve as a means of feed back for the lay worker regarding their ministry;
- to share with the lay worker concerns of the people so that sound mutual relationships may be developed;
- to provide opportunities for helpful discussion on matters of a variety of issues as they arise;
- to help and support the lay worker in their family life. The lay worker needs to feel that there is a special supportive team around them whose members are 'on their side' and to whom they can freely turn for guidance, counsel and support at any time. A close relationship of the team with the lay worker's spouse and children is highly desirable;
- to liaise with the pastor and employer on behalf of the lay worker.

Members of the Support Team should

- be strongly committed to the work of lay ministry and the lay worker;
- be prepared to support and show a friendly interest in the lay worker and their family;
- maintain confidentiality at all times;
- contribute in meetings and be positive-minded to growth and new ideas;
- consist of 3 to 6 people;
- be chosen in consultation with the lay worker.

Function of the Support Team

- Regularly attend meetings of the team with the lay worker. If the lay worker is married, their spouse should also be included in these meetings so they too can give and receive feedback. The team may occasionally meet without the lay worker being present. In such cases, the lay worker should be well informed of the support team's discussions.
- A convener should be chosen to chair the team. This person should provide support for the lay worker in situations that may seem threatening.
- It would be in keeping with the more informal nature of these meetings if they were held in the homes of members.

Relationship of the Support Team with the Lay Worker

- A mutual respect and commitment to Christ should undergird all dealings between the lay worker and the support team so that the common aim is a more effective ministry under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- A supportive, gracious and honest relationship should be developed so that the lay worker looks to the team for genuine and caring support and guidance.
- The support team needs to bear in mind that the lay worker may be testing new models of ministry, developing skills and their own particular style of ministry. The lay worker needs to be free to serve in a way that suits their personality and style, and not feel pressured to adopt a style which is not natural for them. Support team members should treat the lay worker's judgments with respect, and in everything try to be constructive in their dealings with the lay worker.
- In discussions with the lay worker and in making comments, team members should:
 - be descriptive rather than judgmental;
 - be specific rather than general;
 - ensure the feedback is appropriate, helpful and timely;
 - be aware of how the lay worker responds to comments from the support team and try to develop a healthy relationship which is honest without being defensive and negative.

It is not the role of the support team to require professional accountability of the lay worker. The lay worker is accountable for their own professional performance to the employing body through Boards and other personnel. Rather, the team will provide the necessary support for the lay worker as they seek to use their God-given talents in His service.

Appraisal process for a Lay Worker

The appraisal process is to provide opportunities for the lay worker and their employer to engage in ongoing reflection and to help the lay worker to plan for personal development of their ministry in order to serve the Lord and church more effectively. Everyone has different gifts; therefore the appraisal should not be an exercise in comparing one lay worker with another. Rather the process is designed to support and encourage the lay worker to carry out their work in the most effective way. God blesses all work done in His name despite personal limitations.

The purpose of appraisal

- provide encouragement to the lay worker in their work
- facilitate dialogue between the lay worker, their employer and ministry teams
- provide a foundation for development and growth of the lay worker
- identify and diagnose potential issues emerging between lay worker and employer
- encourage ongoing self-evaluation on the part of the lay worker and employer.

Principles

A fundamental issue is that the lay worker and employer operate in partnership during all aspects of the appraisal process. The appraisal will therefore be consultative and cooperative. To ensure its integrity, the appraisal will be based on procedures and criteria known and agreed by the lay worker and employer. The process should be confidential and ensure natural justice, equity and validity.

Key Features

The appraisal will:

- be a regular part of the activities of the employer
- be the result of collaborative planning by lay worker, employer
- involve feedback from a cross section of the community in which the lay worker works.

Outcomes

The normal outcomes of the appraisal process will be the identification of the lay workers strengths and areas for development, together with an action plan for improvement. The reporting mechanism by which the appraisal is presented to that person, and discussed with employer is through the appraisal facilitator. It is suggested that a committee consisting of one person nominated by the employer, one nominated by the lay worker and one mutually agreed upon person be used in the implementation of the appraisal findings.

Employers need to be aware that action for the development of the lay worker may have resource implications and that they will need to budget accordingly. It is encouraged that employer meet regularly for reflection, support and encouragement of the lay worker in their role, so that both parties are aware of any potential areas that need addressing before the appraisal takes place.

Appraisal Forms

Copies of appraisal forms can be obtained from The Board for Lay Ministry.

Procedure for Grievances

Resolution of grievance should in the first instance be handled by the employer on the local level through the appropriate personnel or committee. Advice may be sought from the Board for Lay Ministry.

If the matter cannot be resolved locally, the matter should be referred to the appropriate district president.

For information regarding the procedures of discipline, adjudication and appeals, refer to the Handbook of the LCA, Section X, Disciplines, Adjudication and Appeals.

Closure of Employment

Closure of employment may occur when a lay worker retires, is not re-employed, or moves on to accept a position in another place.

Some official announcement should be made, appropriate to the community in which the lay worker has served, and with adequate notice.

A Farewell Function should be organized by, and be appropriate for, the community. If it is part of the Worship Service, and the lay worker is on the LCA lay worker roll, then the Farewell Rite page 24 of CHURCH RITES LUTHERAN CHURCH of Australia, with Prayers of Thanksgiving, is appropriate. If part of a school function then choose some other suitable procedure. Members of school (including students) or church community could be invited to take part.

Some written form of acknowledgement that the lay worker can take to the next position or just keep is appropriate. This is not to be seen as a reference but more a personal resume of activities carried out, and specific skills demonstrated. A Book Voucher offers a most suitable and lasting gift for all ages.

An exit/transfer interview is to be conducted for all employees transferring or leaving the organization.

Wherever practicable this interview should be carried out as close to the ceasing date of employment or date of transfer with the organization.

The exit/transfer interview should be conducted by a person nominated by the employee and should not be a member the employee's employing body.

Upon completion a report shall be forwarded to the employing body, pastor and the Director for Lay Ministry.

Contact the Director for Lay Ministry for more information on this.

Employers are also encouraged to use the 'Parish in Transition' papers developed by the 'Board of Support for Pastoral Ministry'.

These papers are available from the Director for Lay Ministry.

Transfer in Employment

Transfer in employment may be in response to a call or an offer of appointment.

Transfer costs shall be negotiated between the employer and the lay worker.

Training of Lay Workers

The LCA is rightly concerned that those who would serve as lay workers in the LCA are fully equipped to carry out the service for which they are engaged. The training of lay workers based on a blend of theoretical and practical competency-based learning, covering the following four knowledge and skills areas:

- Theological/spiritual development
- Leadership development
- Character development
- Generic and Ministry specific skills

Theological understanding / spiritual development

The ministry of the lay worker must be underpinned by key theological foundations. Importantly the learning process is not simply an academic exercise but rather a spiritual journey. Learners need to be encouraged in this journey by suitable mentors.

Character development

To be effective in ministry, lay workers need to develop such attributes as; interpersonal sensitivity, a concern for personal impact, relationship building skills, ability to show initiative, self confidence, a team orientation, tenacity and resilience. They also need to be trained in self awareness and be able to recognize and seek help in dealing with their own issues.

Generic and Ministry-specific skills development

Generic ministry skills include ministry planning, goal setting, administration, time management and other organizational skills. Other skills will need to be developed that are specific to the ministry role being performed, eg those related to being a youth worker, a contemporary worship leader, a spiritual life coordinator, a counselor, a school chaplain.

Leadership development

This area includes the ability to develop and mentor others, manage conflict, direct or influence others, facilitate ministry teams, engage, inspire and gain others' commitment. For more specific senior lay work positions it may also include strategic thinking and planning, and advanced people and resource management skills.

It is the responsibility of the employing body to ensure that lay workers are properly equipped for the area in which they serve, and where appropriate, the employer may be required to allow time off to engage in studies.

The Board shall support the training of lay workers through Australian Lutheran College (ALC), Delta Ministries and other approved institutions. The Director for Lay Ministry shall liaise with ALC and Delta Ministries in regard to curricula. The Board shall review annually the appropriateness for education and training requirements for lay workers.

School of Theological Studies at Australian Lutheran College (ALC)

Australian Lutheran College offers a wide range of subjects for lay people to study to strengthen their faith and enhance their knowledge of Christianity.

A person wishing to undertake these studies to become an accredited lay worker can make application for enrolment to ALC.

Applications forms are available from Australian Lutheran College 104 Jeffcott Street North Adelaide SA 5006
Tel: 08 8267 7400 Fax: 08 8267 7350 E-mail: alc@alc.edu.au Enrolments may be completed on line at www.alc.edu.au

Evaluation and Monitoring

The teaching staff at ALC, shall be responsible for evaluating students undertaking lay ministry studies at ALC.

The evaluation is undertaken during the first and the final year of studies.

The evaluation and monitoring of the student's progress shall be made by ALC in the following ways:

- faith life interviews based on written statements by the student during the first and final years of their course
- field work reports from supervisors and students
- any other instruments providing the students with feed back about themselves and their abilities.

The Directory for Lay Ministry is involved in the evaluation process.

Graduation

Upon satisfactory completion of the required course, Australian Lutheran College will issue the relevant academic award, together with the vocational certificate, which will be presented to the student at a graduation service arranged by ALC.

Delta Ministries

Delta Ministries offers accredited vocational courses designed specifically with Lutheran lay workers in mind.

These courses are often delivered in the form of two day workshops and are offered throughout every LCA/NZ District. Every course requires some form of pre-work in readiness for the workshop, attendance and engagement in the workshop and then some application of what has been learned in the lay worker's ministry context. This is assessed through a variety of creative means by the accredited staff at Delta.

The workshops are delivered by practicing professionals in the specific topic area. As at the beginning of 2009, Delta has over 40 practicing professionals delivering courses throughout Australia and New Zealand.

There are a number of topic areas but at least 5 of these have been identified by the Board as being requirements for layworker accreditation.

Delta's workshops can be combined with meeting locally in a ministry peer group into a Delta Traineeship. The traineeship is designed to be taken over one or two years. Generally one year trainees are younger people who are looking to enter into lay ministry. Existing lay workers who are looking to compliment their paid work with practical training often complete the program over two years. A Delta traineeship meets the requirements of a Certificate IV in Christian Ministry and Theology.

Registration forms may be completed on line at: <http://www.deltaministries.net>

Accreditation as a Lay Worker

The Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) is rightly concerned that those who would serve as lay workers in the LCA are fully equipped to carry out the service for which they are engaged. They should also have sufficient theological understanding to uphold and promote the teachings of the LCA.

It is a requirement that people employed as lay workers who are not already accredited, work towards accreditation within the first two years of employment.

Accreditation will not be driven by qualifications, but rather will be based on a blend of theoretical and practical competency-based learning, covering the following four knowledge and skills areas:

- Theological/spiritual development
- Leadership development
- Character development
- Generic and Ministry specific skills

Baseline requirements for Accreditation

The baseline requirements for accreditation will be the satisfactory completion of a combination of courses and extra Board requirements as follows:

Theological subjects through Australian Lutheran College or their equivalent:

- The Christian Faith
- The Bible Today

Vocational education workshops through Delta Ministries or their equivalent:

- Teamwork and Leadership
- Ministry Planning
- Mentoring
- Communication and Relationships
- Time, Self & Project Management

Other Board requirements which may include:

- Safe Place training
- Child Safe training
- Police checks

Development of individual learning and professional development pathways

The Board will appoint a Learning Consultant who will work with all lay workers to ensure they meet the minimum requirements for accreditation. The Learning Consultant will work with the lay worker and their employer to identify gaps in prior learning and skills development, and determine an appropriate training plan to resolve these gaps if they exist. The Learning Consultant will be accredited by Board to:

- Be the first point of contact for individuals in developing a learning pathway
- Assist individuals to determine their gifting; including their learning, ministry, spiritual, and vocational pathway.
- Develop a learning plan that reflects the above.
- Facilitate discussions between the learner, the employer, the learning providers and others involved in the learning process on an ongoing basis.
- Periodically reviewing the learning plan to determine its ongoing appropriateness.

Action based learning

There will be less emphasis on classroom learning delivery, and more emphasis on learning within their context. Wherever possible, assessment will be based on workplace based events/activities, with an emphasis on demonstration of behaviours rather than just on presenting theoretical concepts or academic information. Life experience can be used to demonstrate some behaviours.

Lifelong learning

Learning shouldn't stop with achievement of the required studies. Continuing professional, personal and spiritual development will be important.

Employer commitment to lay worker development

It will be important for employers to demonstrate their commitment to their lay worker and their development by:

- engaging Board in the determination of the most appropriate learning pathway
- making time available to undertake development as part of their lay worker's workload
- providing regular ongoing support and feedback
- establishing clear goals and parameters for their lay worker's role

Application for accreditation shall be made to the Director for Lay Ministry on the form obtained from The Director.

When accreditation is granted the Board shall issue a certificate of Accreditation.

Scholarship Fund Policy

Purpose

The purposes of the scholarship fund are to equip, resource and empower lay workers to achieve accreditation status and provide lay people with professional development for work within the Lutheran Church of Australia, through courses conducted by Australian Lutheran College, Delta Ministries or other Christian institutions so that through this, the people they interact with may know and follow Jesus and live a life of Christian witness and service.

Vision

Through the effective training of all lay workers serving in the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) and united in God's purpose and through the power of the Holy Spirit we will see people:

- coming to know Jesus
- worshipping Him in all of life
- experiencing community together
- growing in maturity in Christ
- being released for and engaged in ministry
- living and sharing the good news
- growing in the Word and in their daily life

Scholarship Funding is available for the purpose of:

1. Achieving Accreditation Status

The recipients

Will be listed as a lay worker on the Board for Lay Ministry register.

Will exhibit a strong desire to remain in a paid ministry position within the Lutheran Church of Australia.

Will exhibit an ability for the work in which they are engaged.

Value of each scholarship

The value of each scholarship will be one third of the cost of the course or as determined by the Board for the lay worker to achieve accreditation status. The grant will be made on the understanding that the other two thirds are to be paid by the lay worker and/or the employer.

2. Professional development of Accredited Lay Workers

In recognition of the growing number of accredited lay workers, and in order to support their professional development, accredited lay workers will be able to access scholarship funding.

The recipients

Will be listed as an accredited lay worker on the Board for Lay Ministry register.

Will exhibit a strong desire to remain in a paid ministry position within the Lutheran Church of Australia.

Will exhibit an ability for the work in which they are engaged.

Will demonstrate that the course, conference or training event will significantly improve their ability to work in their current ministry.

Value of each scholarship

The annual amount allocated for the purpose of scholarships is at the discretion of the Board. *The maximum grant is \$300 per lay worker.*

3. Lay Ministry Training for Volunteers

In recognition of the substantial amount of lay ministry which is currently undertaken purely on a volunteer basis, and of the substantial benefits of training, the Board for Lay Ministry is making available a limited amount of scholarship funding to enable volunteers in lay ministry to access training events which will significantly contribute to their effectiveness in their role, but which would otherwise be cost-prohibitive. Applications can be made by individuals within a congregation, or a congregation (on behalf of specified volunteers). In either case, the application must be signed by the pastor or chairperson of the congregation.

Funding will only be provided where the application demonstrates that the course, conference or training event will significantly improve the volunteer's ability to work in their current ministry and will significantly contribute to the congregation's ministry and mission.

The recipients

Will be volunteers in congregations where there is a lay person listed on the official LCA lay workers list. They will be people who contribute regularly to the ministry and mission of their congregation and who exhibit a strong desire to remain active in contributing to the ministry and mission of the LCA.

Examples might include:

- Lay people who volunteer regular, significant amounts of time in support of a ministry of the Lutheran Church of Australia.
- People involved along side of lay workers who are listed on the official LCA lay workers list (congregational chair, volunteer ministry people)

Value of each scholarship

The annual amount allocated for the purpose of scholarships is at the discretion of the Board for Lay Ministry. *The maximum grant is \$200 per individual or up to a \$1,000 per congregation/lay worker employed.*

Administration of the Scholarship Fund

The Director for Lay Ministry will be responsible for administering the fund within the rules and subject to availability of funding.

In-Service Training

Lay Workers are encouraged to undergo at least two weeks in two years professional development and in-service training.

District committees shall normally provide in-service training where available.

The Board for Lay Ministry shall conduct a biennial conference for lay workers as part of their in-service training.

The LCA Lay Ministry Fund Policy

The Purpose

The purpose of the Fund shall be to assist congregations, parishes, Boards and districts of the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) in the training and equipping of lay workers, and, as funds permit, the employment of Lutheran lay workers and the support of lay ministry initiatives that will be ultimately directed toward the transformation of people's lives in Christ.

Eligibility for Funding

Applications can only be received from congregations, parishes, Boards and districts of the Lutheran Church of Australia.

Applications may be submitted for the following training opportunities:

- Study for lay workers wishing to become accredited in the LCA
- Ongoing professional development for accredited lay workers employed in the LCA
- In-service training in lay ministry (includes volunteers in a congregation who already employ a lay worker)

If sufficient funds are available, applications for the following ministries will also be considered:

- Employment of a Lutheran lay worker on a full or part-time basis
- New and ongoing lay ministry programs within the LCA
- Grants to specific lay ministry projects within the LCA

Source of Funding Income

- Income is derived from:
- direct donations
- the Koch/Dolling Mission Lay Helper Fund which forms part of the Permanent Funds of The Lutheran Laypeople's League of Australia Inc.
- insurance commission received on business through the "LLL Agency" with Westfarmers/Federation Insurance
- legacies
- LLL grants

Administration

Applications will be assessed on a needs basis taking into account the availability of funds and any advice received from the respective District. No guarantee can be given that the amount applied for will be approved for funding.

Application procedure for assistance

For study, ongoing professional development and in-service training:

- Application forms are available from the Director for Lay Ministry.
- The Director for Lay Ministry will confer with the Board and notify applicants of the outcome of their application by email during the month following that in which the application is received.
- Applications must meet the criteria as set down in the Board for Lay Ministry Scholarship Fund rules, as detailed in the LCA Lay Ministry Handbook.
- If the approved training is not undertaken in accordance with the application, it may be forfeited and allocated to other applicants.

Applications for employing a Lutheran lay worker, new and ongoing lay ministry programs and grants to specific lay ministry projects in the LCA:

- Application forms are available from the Director for Lay Ministry and employers wishing to apply should speak with the Director for Lay Ministry concerning the Board's ability to provide funding before making application.
- Employers are required to submit a detailed "Mission and Vision" statement for the position including a full job description.
- Employers are required to submit a projected budget for five years as evidence that they are able to provide funds for the duration of the project.
- The Director for Lay Ministry will confer with the Board and notify the successful and unsuccessful applicants by mail during the month of November for the following year's subsidies

- For full application procedure please contact the Director for Lay Ministry.

Payments

- Payments for study scholarships will be made in time for enrolments to be undertaken
- Payments for other grants will be paid at the beginning of each quarter during the year for which they have been approved.

Applications are to be sent to The Director.

Long Service Leave

The Board for Lay Ministry has established a Long Service Leave Fund for all lay workers who are called/appointed to serve in a congregation, parish, district or Board of the Lutheran Church of Australia. The fund was established on 1st January 1995 and is administered by the Board.

The object of the fund is to make long service leave payments to people employed as lay workers of the LCA. The fund is financed through an annual levy applied to each body employing a lay worker at a rate determined by the Board.

Employers shall provide to the Board all details requested for record keeping and funding determination for each lay worker seeking admission to the fund.

The long service leave levy is to be paid to the Board for Lay Ministry by 31st December each year. A form will be sent to the employer to calculate the required levy.

If the lay worker is employed for 18.75 hours (half time) or more per week, the long service leave levy must be paid into the Long Service Leave Fund for Lay Workers administered by the Board for Lay Ministry, unless other arrangements have been made with the Board.

If the lay worker is employed for less than 18.75 hours per week, employers are still required to make long service leave provisions for their lay worker on a pro rata basis and have the option of paying the levy into the Long Service Leave Fund.

Long service leave provisions shall be included in the lay worker's conditions of employment.

Long service leave is the responsibility of the employing body - that is, it is not to be deducted from the lay worker's normal earnings.

Long service leave provisions shall be made at the rate of 1.3 week's salary per year.

Lay workers employed full-time are eligible for thirteen (13) weeks long service leave after ten (10) years of continuous service (pro rata for part-time)

Long service leave may be taken after seven (7) years of continuous service on a pro rata basis by a lay worker who resigns or is stood down from lay work prior to ten (10) years service.

A lay worker who after completing ten (10) years of continuous service, and continues in full time service in any congregation, parish, district or Board of the Lutheran Church of Australia, is entitled to additional long service leave on a pro rata basis.

Everyday occurring after the commencement of a period of long service leave (including public holidays and days on which the worker would not normally have been required to work) will be counted as a day of that leave.

Service is deemed to have commenced on 01/01/1995 with any congregation, parish, district or Board of the Lutheran Church of Australia. Any long service leave entitlements prior to this date are the responsibility of the employer (or previous employer).

Portability of Entitlements

Portability of entitlements will be granted to a lay worker transferring from one paid position in the LCA to another paid position in the LCA.

In certain situations the lay worker may be covered under separate long service leave provisions of the employing body, e.g., district director for youth ministry, district welfare officer.

Portability of Entitlements between the LCA and Lutheran Schools

The Board for Lutheran Education and Board for Lay Ministry agree to portability of all long service leave entitlements for staff who move between schools and other positions of employment within the LCA.

When a person moves from employment in the LCA to a school setting, the Board for Lay Ministry or employer responsible for making provision for LSL will pay the school an amount equal to the weeks of entitlement at the church worker salary weekly rate.

When a person moves from a school setting to a position of employment within the LCA, the school will pay the Board for Lay Ministry an amount equal to the weeks of entitlement at the church worker salary weekly rate.

Retrospective Entitlements

There are no entitlements to long service leave payments under the provisions of this fund for services prior to 1st January 1995.

Long service leave entitlements accrued prior to 1st January 1995 are the responsibility of previous employing bodies.

A lay worker whose service is terminated, whether by the employing body or by the lay worker, on completion of seven (7) years or more of continuous service after 1st January 1995 for any reason other than serious misconduct or ecclesiastical discipline, is entitled to pro rata payment on the basis of thirteen (13) weeks long service leave for ten (10) years of service.

A lay worker, who after 1st January 1995, has completed the first or subsequent period of ten (10) years service, and having taken leave in accordance with the conditions hereof, is entitled on termination for any reason other than serious misconduct or ecclesiastical discipline, to pro rata payment on the basis of thirteen (13) weeks long service leave for ten (10) years service.

Payment of eligible pro rata entitlements will be made from the fund as soon as practicable after termination of service or after death to the lay worker or his/her legal representative or legatee. Entitlements will be forfeited if the Director for Lay Ministry does not receive notification of termination within one (1) year of such termination.

Continuity of Service

For long service leave purposes continuity of service is deemed not to be broken by any of the following:

- Termination of service by the employing body of the lay worker for reasons of illness or injury provided that the lay worker is called/appointed to the same or another full-time or at least half-time position (minimum 18.75 hours per week) within the Lutheran Church of Australia, and has not engaged in any calling on his/her account or as an employee in the intervening period.
- Termination or stand down for any reason not exceeding three (3) months if the lay worker is reinstated by the same employing body.
- Transferring from one paid position in the LCA to another paid position in the LCA within twelve (12) months of termination of the previous service.
- Absence from service for leave granted by the employing body, including study leave, maternity/paternity leave and leave granted for illness and injury.

Notice of any absence of leave granted, termination of services or stand down is to be forwarded to The Director for Lay Ministry.

Continuity of service will be deemed to have been broken when:

- A lay worker has not been employed for a period of twelve (12) months on a full-time or part-time basis from the time of cessation of the previous position.

- A lay worker has been dismissed by the employing body for reason of misconduct or ecclesiastical discipline. In these circumstances, all entitlements to long service leave will be forfeited. (SA Long Service Leave Act 1987 5.4).

Taking Leave

All records relating to long service leave for lay workers shall be kept by the Director for Lay Ministry

Lay workers may take long service leave when their entitlement has reached thirteen (13) weeks. This shall normally be taken within twelve (12) months of becoming eligible for such leave.

The time when long service leave is taken is a matter for agreement between the lay worker and the employing body:

- Normally long service leave is taken at one time.
- By agreement between the lay worker and the employing body, long service leave may be taken in more than one segment with a minimum of four (4) weeks in any one segment.

Part-time Lay Workers

Part-time lay workers will be admitted to benefits and conditions of the long service leave fund.

If the lay worker is employed for 18.75 hours (half time) or more per week the long service leave levy must be paid into the Long Service Leave Fund administered by the Board for Lay Ministry, unless other arrangements have been made with the Board.

If the lay worker is employed for less than 18.75 hours per week, employers are still required to make long service leave provisions for their lay worker on a pro rata basis and have the option of paying the levy into the Long Service Leave Fund.

The amount of long service leave to which the part-time lay worker is entitled shall be on a pro rata basis to that of a full-time lay worker.

All other conditions and benefits which apply to a full-time lay worker shall apply to a part-time lay worker.

Payment of Entitlements

Long service leave entitlements shall be calculated on the basis of the average hours worked per week over the previous three years multiplied by the current weekly salary at the time of leave being taken or termination of employment.

Payment to the lay worker or his legal representative in lieu of long service leave will not be made except in the case of termination of service (or death of the lay worker), and provided that the lay worker has been in continuous service for more than seven (7) years.

The payment of long service leave entitlements will be made to the employing body. The amount is to be included on the lay worker's tax group certificate.

Application forms for long service leave entitlements shall be obtained The Director.

Superannuation

Employers are required to make a contribution equivalent to 9% of employee ordinary time earnings to a complying superannuation fund on behalf of their lay worker. These contributions are in addition to the salary paid to the lay worker. These payments should be made monthly.

Employers will be aware that the Federal Government's choice of fund legislation became effective from 1 July 2005.

As part of the arrangements for choice you should be aware that not all employees may be eligible for choice so you should take care when providing a choice form to a lay worker.

Employees who are exempt from choice are those whose contributions are required to be paid to a particular fund under any of the following:

- State award or certain State agreement;
- an Australian Workplace agreement;
- a certified agreement under the Workplace Relations Act 1996;
- a certified agreement under the Industrial Relations Act 1988.

Employers need to determine whether Lay workers fall under the above exemption and, if they do not, provide a choice form when they commence employment.

With effect from 1 July 2005 you are also required to have a default fund selected for any new employee who does not advise you which fund contributions should be allocated to.

The preferred default fund for the LCA is the existing Lutheran Super Fund (the LCA Fund). The LCA Fund meets all the requirements of the choice legislation.

Superannuation contributions are in addition to the lay worker's salary, ie, it is not to be deducted from the lay worker's salary.

Additional information on superannuation can be obtained from:

*Executive Officer
Lutheran Super
197 Archer Street
North Adelaide SA 5006
Ph: 08 8267 7300 Fax: 08 8267 7310
Email: enquiries@lutheransuper.com.au*

or from: Mercer Ph 1800 635 796 (Lutheran Super administrators)

Workers Compensation

Employers must ensure that their lay worker is insured with the respective state workers compensation authority.

Contact the relevant workers compensation authority in your state.

A Safe Place

Sexual abuse by people in positions of trust has destructive impact on the lives of many people. Such abuse is totally unacceptable to the church and society as a whole.

Those who hold positions of trust in the church are called to guard with great care the trust placed in them. They have an absolute responsibility to avoid all forms of sexual harassment and abuse.

Sexual abuse (which includes any form of harassment or exploitation) occurs when any person in a position of trust uses his or her power in that position to satisfy a sexual need or desire.

Sexual abuse can include physical contact from a person in a position of trust, e.g., pastor, lay worker, teacher or other church worker.

Sexual abuse can also include verbal behaviour initiated by a person in a position of trust when such behaviour sexualises a relationship.

Reporting Abuse

Ring the LCA's toll free number **1800 644 628** or write to:

The Supervisor
PO Box 519
Marden SA 5070
Email: report.abuse@safeplace.lca.org.au

You will be put in touch with a person trained to listen to your confusion, fear or anxiety. That person will acquaint you with the LCA's procedures for dealing with alleged misconduct by any person holding a position of trust within the LCA.

If you suspect that a child has been abused by someone in a position of trust, it is essential that you report such abuse to the local welfare authorities or the police.

The above information has been taken from the booklet 'A Safe Place For All' and is available from the LCA National Office and all district offices.

Police Checks

The Lutheran Church is committed to providing safe places where all people are cared for, kept safe and protected from harm. The careful selection of people (both paid and voluntary) involved in the ministry of the Lutheran Church is integral in ensuring a safe place for all.

It cannot be assumed that all people involved in ministry share this commitment to a 'safe place for all'. The National Safe Place Committee of the LCA has developed a policy for screening people involved in ministry in any way. It encourages districts of the church to be proactive in implementing procedures to obtain police checks for all people involved in ministry with people under the name of the LCA as a key strategy in the screening process.

For the purpose of this policy 'involved ministry' includes people who have regular programmed ministry involvement either paid or voluntary. People involved in ministry for less than 8 hours per week are not required to have a police check.

A police check reveals any relevant criminal record. This policy has a particular focus on the right of children to experience a safe place free from any danger and calls for a mandate that all people involved in child related ministries undergo a police check.

The policy for police checks is effective as of 1st January 2002. This means that all people commencing their ministry after this date will be required to have a police check. It is expected that all employers of lay workers will put in place a procedure to ensure that police checks are carried out on all lay workers commencing after 1st January 2002.

As legislation may vary between states please check the legal requirements applicable to your state by contacting your district office.

Standard Collection Notice

The church collects personal information, including sensitive information, about you before and during the course of your membership of the church.

We may include your contact details in membership lists or other church publications. If you do not agree to this you must advise us immediately.

Some of the information we collect is to satisfy the church's legal obligations, and thereby enable it to discharge its duty of care.

The Privacy Act

The Privacy Amendment Act 2000 (Commonwealth) amends the Privacy Act 1988 to include the regulation of private sector organisations and the systems used by these organisations to handle 'personal information'.

The Act details how businesses and organisations must manage personal information of customers. It regulates what personal information can be kept, in addition to how businesses collect, use, secure and disclose that information.

Individuals will have the right to know **why** an organisation is collecting their personal information, **what** information it holds about them, how it will **use** the information, and who else will **get** the information.

Individuals will also have the right to verify that personal information held by an organisation is accurate and may complain to the Privacy Officer and/or Privacy Commissioner if they think their information is not being handled correctly.

The Privacy Act and the LCA

Under the Privacy Act, a company that is related to another company will be able to share and transfer personal information. However, the related companies must still comply with the National Privacy Principles (NPP) in relation to the shared personal information. This means that **all congregations must comply with the Privacy Act from 21 December 2001, in order that movement of information within the LCA can take place. This is particularly important for movement of membership details and for the release of pastors' details in the call process.**

Information held by the Lutheran Church of Australia

Personal information which is held by the Lutheran Church of Australia includes personal and sensitive information about:

- members of congregations,
- pastors, staff, job applicants, volunteers and contractors.

Personal and sensitive information may be gathered by way of forms, email, telephone, face to face meetings and interviews.

What is Personal and Sensitive Information?

Personal information is basically information or an opinion that allows someone to identify the individual that the information or opinion is about. Within the Church, *personal information* is likely to be collected on members, employees, volunteers, and Board and committee members. This information could include:

- name
- address
- date of birth and age
- country of birth and nationality
- telephone numbers and email addresses
- details of next of kin
- emergency contact numbers

The use of personal information refers to the handling of personal information within an organization including 'the inclusion of information in a publication'.

Sensitive Information is personal information about an individual's race or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs or affiliations, philosophical beliefs, membership of a professional or trade association, membership of a trade union, sexual preferences, criminal record or health information.

Sensitive information must be treated with additional care. Within the Church, sensitive information relates to information such as personal crises of members, illnesses, baptismal, wedding and funeral details. This information is to be treated with care. It may be advisable to obtain permission from the appropriate person prior to publishing or announcing information about them in prayer lists, church bulletins and newsletters etc.

Sensitive information is used only for the purpose for which it is provided, unless the disclosure of such information is allowed by law.

Use of Information

The Church uses personal information it collects for the primary purpose for which it is collected, and for secondary purposes reasonably expected to be related to the primary purpose. The information may also be used for purposes for which consent has been gained.

The primary purposes for the collection of information are that:

- the Church may contact people, interact with them, and provide spiritual guidance and support;
- appropriate administrative sections within the Church (Boards and Committees) can be contacted;
- the Church can effectively and efficiently administer its human resources (call processes and appraisals).

Information which is collected about volunteers assists the Church to coordinate volunteers and staff and to help it to meet duty of care requirements. Personal information which is obtained in relation to pastors, staff, job applicants, and contractors is used to:

- satisfy legal requirements;
- administer contracts;
- provide insurance cover.

Disclosure of personal information

Personal information may be disclosed to:

- Boards and Committees of the Church;
- congregations;
- recipients of Church publications;
- anyone the provider authorises to receive it
- government departments eg marriage details required by law.

The Privacy Officer

The Privacy Officer will be the Administrator of each District and the LCA Privacy Officer will be the LCA Secretary. This person is the first point of contact in the District or LCA when privacy issues arise. The Privacy Officer is responsible for ensuring the Church's privacy policy and procedures are fully implemented and working effectively.

The duties of the Privacy Officer are to:

- promote the privacy plan to all relevant parties within the Church;
- familiarise members of the Church with the NPP;
- coordinate and implement the privacy policy; and
- ensure a privacy audit is conducted in all bodies within the Church;

Update of Personal Information

The Church endeavours to maintain personal information so that it is kept up-to-date, complete and accurate. A person may update personal information by contacting the body of the Lutheran Church of Australia which holds the information, during office hours.

Complaints Process

The Privacy Officer will:

- identify (and address) any systemic or ongoing compliance problems;
- increase consumer confidence in the organisation's privacy procedures;
- build a good reputation of the organisation; and
- address complaints quickly and effectively.

Any member of the Church who believes their personal information has been inappropriately handled by the Church may lodge a complaint with the Privacy Officer. This complaint must be in written form and clearly identify the circumstances surrounding the alleged inappropriate handling and any remedy sought. There is no prescribed form for this purpose.

If that member is dissatisfied with the handling of the complaint by the Privacy Officer or if, due to the sensitive nature of the complaint, it is inappropriate to submit the complaint to the Privacy Officer in the first instance, the matter may be referred directly to the Privacy Commissioner. The Privacy Commissioner may then investigate the complaint.

The Privacy Commissioner has discretion to instigate an investigation into any interference with privacy even if no complaint has been lodged by any party involved.

The Privacy Commissioner is empowered to order that the Church redress any loss or damages to the aggrieved member. As a legal process, failure to comply with these directions may result in the matter being referred to the Federal Courts.

Although court action may be an end result, the complaints process emphasises a preference to resolution through mediation and conciliation.

Accessing personal information

Members are entitled to access and examine personal information relating to them that is held by the Church. Requests to access personal information must be addressed to the Privacy Officer, or in the local situation, the chairperson of the congregation.

If, upon examination of the personal information, any member identifies information that is inaccurate, incomplete or out-of-date, that member should contact the Privacy Officer with a request that the information be corrected. If the inaccuracy is established, the Church must take reasonable steps to correct and/or update that information.

If the member or the Church disagrees as to the accuracy of the personal information, the member can request that a statement outlining the perceived discrepancies be associated and kept with the relevant information. The Church must take reasonable steps to comply with any such request.

Security of Personal Information

The LCA has put in place measures to protect personal information held by the Church from modification, loss, unauthorised access and misuse or disclosure to unauthorised persons. Personal information is stored in locked filing cabinets and computers require password access.

Training

Staff are trained in the correct methods of dealing with personal information to ensure privacy/confidentiality. Knowledge of this policy is a critical element of that training.

Further Information

If you would like further information about the way the Church manages personal information, please contact the Administrator of your District or the LCA Secretary.

More Details

For more details on Lay Ministry in the LCA and the employment of lay workers contact The Board for Lay Ministry.