

Certification of Good Standing - Extern Clerics - Solicitation of Funds

(Rev. 11/2014)

In accord with the openness and transparency called for by the USCCB *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, #12 of the *Essential Norms*, and Canon 903 of the Code of Canon Law, various safeguards are in place to assure that clerics moving from one diocese to another have certification of their good standing.

"Extern Clergy": priests and deacons who are not incardinated in the Diocese of Beaumont or do not have a ministerial assignment from the Bishop of Beaumont

"Letter of Suitability": a verification of canonical status (good standing) sent from one bishop/superior to another. This is not a guarantee of quality pastoral care.

1. **Extern Clergy Proposed to the Bishop for a Ministerial Assignment in this Diocese:**

When an extern priest or deacon is proposed to the Bishop of Beaumont for a long-term ministry assignment in the diocese, a current Letter of Suitability (Good Standing) is requested from the sending diocesan bishop or religious superior, along with other background information, before a ministry assignment is considered.

2. **Visiting Extern Clergy:**

A. *For a Short Visit or a Funeral:*

An extern cleric who simply visits the diocese and wishes to con-celebrate Mass, even if only once, must present, at the time of his request, his *celebret* card which has been issued within the last 12 months. In addition, an extern cleric who is invited into the parish to conduct a funeral must present his *celebret* card which has been issued within the last 12 months. The *celebret* must be requested by the pastor or his delegate, even if the cleric is known to the pastor. A copy of the *celebret* card is retained for the parish files. If, after examining the *celebret*, there are questions, the pastor may call the office of the Vicar General or the diocese or religious community that issued the *celebret*.

B. *For a Planned Ministry or Event:*

An extern cleric who is invited by a pastor or diocesan department head to offer any planned public ministry (e.g. parish mission, retreat, workshop, wedding) within the Diocese, even if only once, must first request of his proper bishop/major superior that a Letter of Suitability be sent *far in advance* to the Bishop of Beaumont or the Vicar General. Once approval is given by the Bishop or Vicar General, a copy of the Letter of Suitability is forwarded to the pastor or department head, so that person can proceed with making final arrangements. A copy of the Letter of Suitability is retained in the parish or diocesan department files.

C. *To Cover the Parish While the Pastor is Away:*

If an extern priest is invited by the pastor to cover the parish while he is away (e.g. vacation, medical leave, religious community general chapter), the extern priest must first request of his bishop or major superior that a Letter of Suitability be sent *in advance* to the Bishop or Vicar General of Beaumont. Once approval is given by the Bishop or Vicar General, a copy of the Letter of Suitability is forwarded to the pastor, so he can proceed with making final arrangements. A copy of the Letter of Suitability is retained in the parish files.

D. *To Assist the Pastor on a Regular Basis or for an Extended Time:*

If an extern priest is invited by the pastor to assist him with part-time ministry (e.g. Reconciliation, Mass, retreats) on a regular basis or for a designated period of time, the extern priest must first request of his bishop or major superior that a Letter of Suitability be sent *in advance* to the Bishop or Vicar General of Beaumont. Once approval is given by the Bishop or Vicar General, a copy of the Letter of Suitability is forwarded to the pastor, so he can proceed with making final arrangements. A copy of the Letter of Suitability is retained in the parish files.

E. *Remuneration / Solicitation of Funds:*

An extern cleric who offers any type of pastoral care with remuneration is to receive only the agreed-upon stipend and travel expenses. The extern cleric may not take up a free will collection(s) from the faithful, solicit funds from the parishioners or by a door-to-door appeal, or enlist the assistance of parishioners to promote a personal fundraising project, such as a raffle. Only the Bishop of Beaumont can permit a special second collection for a project outside the parish or the diocese. [Parochial Special Collections are covered in the *Temporalities Manual*, Appendix G-4 & 5.]

An extern cleric or a missionary assigned to a parish by the diocesan office for the Missionary Co-op Appeal will have a free-will second collection at the Masses. The proceeds from the collection are not given to the extern cleric or missionary but forwarded to the Diocesan Pastoral Center which will submit the funds to the headquarters of the Missionary Society. The visiting cleric or missionary also may not distribute mission envelopes/materials to the parishioners for continued solicitation. [Other directives on the Missionary Co-op Appeal are found in the *Temporalities Manual*, Appendix G-3 & 4.]

F. *Inviting Extern Clerics into the Diocese:*


The lay faithful as individuals or groups may not invite a cleric (local or extern) to offer ministry of any type in a parish. Pastors should instruct the faithful that such requests must be submitted to the pastor who will then decide if he wishes to extend an invitation. The inviting pastor is responsible for due diligence. Pastors have the right to cancel unauthorized invitations made by the laity and are urged to do so.

3. **Diocese of Beaumont Clergy Invited to Another Diocese for Ministry:**

Beaumont Clergy who are invited to another diocese for a ministry event (e.g. wedding, baptism, retreat) must provide the Letter of Suitability to the Bishop of that diocese. Beaumont clergy are to request the letter from the Vicar General's office **at least three weeks in advance of the event** so the requested verification can be submitted to the Bishop of the other diocese for processing.

The foregoing is a revision of a policy that has been in place since March, 2002. Effective this date, the above revised protocols are implemented as policy for the Diocese of Beaumont.

11-13-14
Date



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Bishop of Beaumont