

Moving Toward Retirement
Guidelines for Ordained Ministers on the Roster
of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, ELCA
March 2014

“Ordained ministers may retire upon attainment of age 60, or after 30 years on the roster of ordained ministers of this church or one of its predecessor bodies, or upon disability, and continue to be listed on the roster of ordained ministers of this church, upon endorsement by the synodical bishop, by action of a Synod Council in the synod in which the ordained minister is listed on the roster . . . (bylaw 7.41.17. in the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America).

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From a constitutional and procedural perspective, retirement itself and remaining on the roster of the ELCA as a retired ordained minister are two different, albeit related, things.

When you retire, you will need to notify Portico by submitting some forms, one of which is to be signed by the bishop of the synod of which you are a rostered member. These forms will change your status with Portico (and, of course, the related benefits) to “retired.” **This form and process, however, is not the same as and is distinct from what is described in the bylaw quoted above.** In other words, this retirement with Portico does not automatically keep you on the roster of ordained ministers of the ELCA.

In order to continue to be listed on the rostered of ordained ministers of the ELCA and the Indiana-Kentucky Synod (or any other synod), and to engage the attendant rights and responsibilities of that status, you will need to request retired status from the Synod Council of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod. In order to make this request:

1. Review the two documents included with this memo:
 - a. Policy and Procedures Related to Retired Status
 - b. Guidelines for Retired Ordained Ministers
2. Notify the bishop of your desire to retire and invite conversation about that decision.
3. Write a letter (email will suffice) addressed to the bishop and the Synod Council. Include in that communication:
 - a. The request that you be granted retirement status and remain on the roster of ordained ministers of the ELCA;
 - b. The date upon which you plan to retire;
 - c. When and how you plan to inform (or have informed) the community or congregation you currently serve;
 - d. Your post-retirement plans, such as where you plan to live, congregational membership, openness to various forms of ministry, etc.
4. Provide opportunity for the bishop and staff to provide pastoral care for the community or congregation from which you are retiring.

As stipulated by constitution and bylaws, the bishop will then make a determination that the ordained minister is eligible and then recommend to the Synod Council whether such status be granted. You will receive notification of the Synod Council’s decision soon after the meeting at which your request is considered. The bishop’s office will also notify ELCA churchwide of change in your roster status, e.g. from “under call” to “retired.”