



2018 Application Guidelines

Receiving the Credentials of an
Ordained Minister
of Volunteers of America

2018 APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Receiving the Credentials of an Ordained Minister of Volunteers of America

Ordination is the highest level of commitment to Volunteers of America's ministry of service. In their special role of discipleship, ordained ministers demonstrate a superior knowledge of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and accept the responsibility of administering the Sacraments. One must be either a commissioned minister or a constituent minister of Volunteers of America in order to be eligible to receive ordination, or to have an existing ordination recognized.

Commissioned and constituent ministers called to become ordained ministers of Volunteers of America are asked to choose **one** of the two ordination processes based on their qualifications. Commissioned and constituent ministers must wait at least one year from the date of their commissioning or constituency before pursuing ordination through Volunteers of America (for example, commissioned or constituent ministers inducted into the ministry in June 2016 must wait until June 2017 before beginning the ordination process).

Requesting that an Existing Ordination be Recognized by Volunteers of America

This ordination process is for any commissioned or constituent minister who has been ordained by a Christian church with Doctrines that are in harmony with Volunteers of America's Cardinal Doctrines. Those ministers may request that Volunteers of America recognize their ordination. Instructions for the process of requesting recognition of an existing ordination can be found on pages 2-5 of these guidelines. Candidates who complete this ordination process to the satisfaction of the Volunteers of America Church Governing Board will have their ordination formally recognized by Volunteers of America as part of the Annual Worship Service, to be held Sunday, June 3, 2018 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Receiving Ordination through Volunteers of America

This ordination process is for any commissioned or constituent minister who feels called to become an ordained minister of Volunteers of America and who is not already ordained within another Christian church. Those ministers may pursue ordination through the application process set forth by the ordination committee of Volunteers of America's Church Governing Board. Instructions for the process of receiving ordination through Volunteers of America can be found on pages 6-10 of these guidelines. Candidates who complete this ordination process to the satisfaction of the Church Governing Board will be ordained during the Annual Worship Service, to be held Sunday June 3, 2018 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

QUESTIONS?

Any ordination candidate who has questions as they complete their application is encouraged to contact Ministry Development Staff, at ministry@voa.org or 703-341-5083.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Requesting that an Existing Ordination be Recognized by Volunteers of America

Each candidate must submit each of the required documents listed below through the online portal: <http://voaministrydevelopment.applicantstack.com/x/openings>

Once inside the portal, please select “2018 VOA Recognition of an Existing Ordination” and create a user account. All documents must be uploaded to the portal by the noted deadline. Documents submitted to ministry development staff by email or in hard copy will not be accepted. **Deadline extensions will not be granted.** If a candidate does not submit each part of the application by its deadline, that candidate will be withdrawn from the 2018 ordination process.

PART ONE – DECLARING INTENT

_____ Letter of Request and Supporting Documents

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

_____ Letter of Endorsement from Local CEO

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

_____ Letter of Endorsement from Local Lead Minister

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

_____ Individual Ministry Project Proposal

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

PART TWO – EXAMINATION

_____ Individual Ministry Project Progress Report

Deadline – Friday, November 17, 2017

_____ Oral Examination for Ordination

Monday December 4 through Friday, December 8, 2017. Held in conjunction with Spiritual Leadership Institute at Duke Divinity School, Durham, North Carolina.

_____ Individual Ministry Project – Final Deliverable

Deadline – Monday, March 5, 2018

PART ONE – DECLARING INTENT

Letter of Request

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

The letter of request is a candidate's opportunity to express interest in becoming recognized as an ordained minister of Volunteers of America. Candidates **must** include in their letter 1) the name of the church that granted their ordination, 2) details on the course of study that they completed before being granted ordination and 3) offer a reference that ministry development staff or members of the ordination committee can contact should more information be needed in evaluating the request. Please note that the letter of request should be addressed to the Church Governing Board's ordination committee.

In addition, candidates **must** submit 4) a copy of their transcript(s) from seminary or divinity school, if applicable 5) course descriptions that support their course of study 6) a copy of the certificate or diploma issued at the time of their ordination, 7) a copy of the issuing church's Doctrines 8) any other documentation that would support the request.

Should the committee find that a candidate's coursework does not meet the expectations of ordination within Volunteers of America, the committee can require that the candidate instead complete the application process for receiving ordination through Volunteers of America.

PART ONE – DECLARING INTENT

Letters of Endorsement from Local CEO and Lead Minister

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

Ordination candidates must speak with their local CEOs and lead ministers regarding plans to have an existing ordination recognized by Volunteers of America. In their discussion(s) with their CEOs and lead ministers, candidates must outline their ideas for the individual ministry project and receive local CEO and lead minister support for that project.

Ministry development staff must receive letters of endorsement from both an ordination candidate's CEO and lead minister in order for that candidate to go forward with ordination. In the case that a CEO also serves as the lead minister of a candidate's local office, only one letter of endorsement will be necessary. In the case that a CEO is pursuing ordination, he or she must receive CEO endorsement from Mike King, national president & CEO of Volunteers of America. Please note that local CEO and lead minister letters of endorsement are to be addressed to the Church Governing Board's ordination committee.

PART ONE – DECLARING INTENT

Individual Ministry Project Proposal

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

Ordination candidates will be expected to undertake a ministry project of their own design. Projects must be focused on the expansion of a candidate's local office's ministry plan, and must receive the approval of a candidate's CEO and lead minister. Candidates are asked to submit a project proposal. The ordination committee will review candidates' proposals and give feedback. Candidates are asked to wait for committee approval and feedback prior to implementing their projects.

An acceptable ministry project is one that supports the mission and movement of Volunteers of America and its ministry of service. It should promote faith-filled discussion, fellowship and collaboration within the faith community. In addition, the project should give focus and direction relevant to a candidate's calling, and should establish an avenue for providing long-term spiritual leadership within the organization.

Individual ministry project proposals should include the following:

- The basic framework of a candidate's ministry project, to include the project's primary goal and the scope of impact
- Timeline over which the project will be implemented (must run September 2017 – March 2018)
- Description of the final deliverable that will be presented to the ordination committee

Once a candidate's letter of request and supporting documents, letters of endorsement from their local CEO and lead minister (of a Volunteers of America affiliate, national services location or the national office), and individual ministry project proposal are received and approved by the Church Governing Board's ordination committee, the candidate will be contacted by ministry development staff. Candidates can expect to receive notice of the committee's decision by Friday, September 15, 2017. While waiting for their notice, candidates are asked to continue working toward the application deadlines.

PART TWO – EXAMINATION

Individual Ministry Project Progress Report

Deadline – Friday, November 17, 2017

Ordination candidates are expected to implement their ministry projects after receiving feedback and approval from the ordination committee. Progress reports will serve to show the ordination committee that candidates' projects are on track and align with the proposals approved by the ordination committee. The committee will review progress reports as part of the candidate evaluation process and discuss reports with candidates during ordination oral examinations.

Progress reports must include the following:

- Measureable progress toward project goals stated in the approved ministry project proposal
- How the project is supporting the spiritual development of a local office's ministers, staff and clients
- How the project has enhanced a candidate's own spiritual growth
- Draft of the final deliverable, or components that will be included in the final deliverable

PART TWO – EXAMINATION

Oral Examinations

Monday, December 4 through Friday, December 8, 2017

Candidates requesting recognition of their existing ordination will be **required** to attend Spiritual Leadership Institute (SLI) at Duke Divinity School in Durham, N.C. **Ordination candidates unable to attend Spiritual Leadership Institute will not be able eligible to receive 2018 ordination.**

While at Spiritual Leadership Institute, candidates will be invited to participate in an oral exam administered by the members of the ordination committee. Oral exam study questions will be given to candidates in advance of exams. Oral exams typically last 30 to 45 minutes for each candidate and will be scheduled once a candidate registers for Spiritual Leadership Institute. During the oral exam, candidates will have the opportunity to explain their journey of spiritual development and their intent for becoming an ordained minister, and will be asked to describe the progress of their ministry projects in greater detail. Ordination candidates will be notified once registration for Spiritual Leadership Institute is opened.

PART TWO – EXAMINATION

Individual Ministry Project – Final Deliverable

Deadline – Monday, March 5, 2018

Ordination candidates must submit the final project deliverable outlined in their project proposal by the above mentioned deadline in order for their application to be considered complete. If the ordination committee is satisfied with a candidate's final deliverable, it will recommend the candidate to the Church Governing Board for approval for ordination. Upon approval by the Church Governing Board, the candidate will be invited to receive ordination at the Annual Worship Service, to be **June 3, 2018 in New Orleans, Louisiana** as part of Volunteers of America's national conference. Candidates can expect to receive notice of the Church Governing Board decision by Friday, March 16, 2018.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

2017 Application Guidelines – Receiving the Credentials of an Ordained Minister
of Volunteers of America

Receiving Ordination through Volunteers of America

Each candidate must submit each of the required documents listed below through the online portal: <http://voaministrydevelopment.applicantstack.com/x/openings>

Once inside the portal, please select “2018 Ordination Through VOA” and create a user account. All documents must be uploaded to the portal by the noted deadline. Documents submitted to ministry development staff by email or in hard copy will not be accepted. **Deadline extensions will not be granted.** If a candidate does not submit each part of the application by its deadline, that candidate will be withdrawn from the 2018 ordination process.

PART ONE – DECLARING INTENT

_____ **Letter of Intent (to include candidate’s choice for ordained minister mentor)**

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

_____ **Letter of Endorsement from Local CEO**

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

_____ **Letter of Endorsement from Local Lead Minister**

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

_____ **Individual Ministry Project Proposal**

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

PART TWO – EXAMINATION

_____ **Individual Ministry Project Progress Report**

Deadline – Friday, November 17, 2017

_____ **Oral Examination for Ordination**

Monday December 4 through Friday, December 8, 2017. Held in conjunction with Spiritual Leadership Institute at Duke Divinity School, Durham, North Carolina.

_____ **Written Examination for Ordination**

Deadline – Monday, March 5, 2018

_____ **Mentor Letter**

Deadline – Monday, March 5, 2018

_____ **Individual Ministry Project – Final Deliverable**

Deadline – Monday, March 5, 2018

PART ONE – DECLARING INTENT

Choose an Ordained Minister Mentor

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

Candidates are required to choose a Volunteers of America ordained minister to serve as a mentor. Candidates' ordained minister mentors will play a critical role in helping them successfully complete the ordination process.

Candidates should choose an ordained minister mentor with whom they will feel comfortable discussing their spiritual journey and development, and whom they believe is a strong model of the characteristics of a Volunteers of America ordained minister. Should any candidates need assistance in being matched with a mentor, they are encouraged to contact a member of the national office's ministry development staff.

PART ONE – DECLARING INTENT

Letter of Intent

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

The letter of intent is ordination candidates' opportunity to express their interest in becoming a minister of Volunteers of America. Also, candidates should include in their letter of intent the name of the person whom they have chosen to be their ordained minister mentor. Please note that each letter of intent should be addressed to the Church Governing Board ordination committee.

PART ONE – DECLARING INTENT

Letters of Endorsement from Local CEO and Lead Minister

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

Ordination candidates must speak with their local CEOs and lead ministers regarding their plans to pursue ordination through Volunteers of America. In their discussion(s) with their CEOs and lead ministers, candidates must outline their ideas for the individual ministry project and receive local CEO and lead minister support for that project.

Ministry development staff must receive letters of endorsement from both an ordination candidate's CEO and lead minister in order for that candidate to go forward with ordination. In the case that a CEO also serves as the lead minister of a candidate's local office, only one letter of endorsement will be necessary. In the case that a CEO is pursuing ordination, he or she must receive CEO endorsement from Mike King, national president & CEO of Volunteers of America. Please note that local CEO and lead minister letters of endorsement are to be addressed to the Church Governing Board's ordination committee.

PART ONE – DECLARING INTENT

Individual Ministry Project Proposal

Deadline – Monday, August 28, 2017

Ordination candidates will be expected to undertake a ministry project of their own design. Projects must be focused on the expansion of a candidate's local office's ministry plan, and must receive the approval of a candidate's CEO and lead minister. Candidates are asked to submit a brief project proposal. The ordination committee will review candidates' proposals and give feedback. Candidates are asked to wait for committee approval and feedback prior to implementing their projects.

An acceptable ministry project is one that supports the mission and movement of Volunteers of America and its ministry of service. It should promote faith-filled discussion, fellowship and collaboration within the faith community. In addition, the project should give focus and direction relevant to a candidate's calling, and should establish an avenue for providing long-term spiritual leadership within the organization.

Individual ministry project proposals should include the following:

- The basic framework of a candidate's ministry project, to include the project's primary goal and the scope of impact
- Timeline over which the project will be implemented (must run September 2017 – March 2018)
- Final deliverable that will be presented to the ordination committee

Once an ordination candidate's choice of ordained minister mentor, letter of intent, letters of endorsement from their local CEO and lead minister (of a Volunteers of America affiliate, national services location or the national office), and individual ministry project proposal are received and approved by the Church Governing Board's ordination committee, the candidate will be contacted by a member of ministry development staff. Candidates can expect to receive notice of the committee's decision by Friday, September 15, 2017. While waiting for their notice, candidates are asked to continue working toward the application deadlines.

PART TWO – EXAMINATION

Individual Ministry Project Progress Report

Deadline – Friday, November 17, 2017

Ordination candidates are expected to implement their ministry projects after receiving feedback and approval from the ordination committee. Progress reports will serve to show the ordination committee that candidates' projects are on track and align with the proposals approved by the ordination committee. The committee will review progress reports as part of the candidate evaluation process and discuss reports with candidates during ordination oral examinations.

Progress reports must include the following:

- Measureable progress toward project goals stated in the approved ministry project proposal
- How the project is supporting the spiritual development of a local office's ministers, staff and clients
- How the project has enhanced a candidate's own spiritual growth
- Draft of the final deliverable, or components that will be included in the final deliverable

PART TWO – EXAMINATION

Written Examination for Ordination

Deadline – Monday, March 5, 2018

Part 1

100 True or False questions. Candidates must answer at least 80 percent of the questions correctly in order to successfully complete the first section.

Part 2

221 Fill-in the blank questions. Candidates must answer at least 80 percent of the questions correctly in order to successfully complete this section.

Part 3

8 Essay questions. Successful completion of this section requires a majority approval from the ordination committee.

Candidates may use any resource information available to complete the written exam and are asked to review their work with their mentor prior to submitting the completed exam. The written exam can be completed through the online portal.

PART TWO – EXAMINATION

Mentor Letter

Deadline – Monday, March 5, 2018

The mentor letter is the ordained minister mentor's opportunity to endorse their candidate as a minister of Volunteers of America. This letter should also confirm that the mentor and candidate have communicated throughout the course of the application process, that the candidate has put his or her full effort into completing all requirements, and that the candidate fully understands the expectations of an ordained minister of Volunteers of America.

The mentor letter should be addressed to members of the Church Governing Board's ordination committee, with a copy to ministry development staff. Please note that this letter should be written after a candidate has written the final draft of the individual ministry project proposal and has completed the written exam.

PART TWO – EXAMINATION

Individual Ministry Project – Final Deliverable

Deadline – Monday, March 5, 2018

Ordination candidates must submit the final project deliverable outlined in their project proposal by the above mentioned deadline in order for their application to be considered complete. If the ordination committee is satisfied with a candidate's final deliverable, written exam results, and mentor letter, it will recommend the candidate to the Church Governing Board for approval for ordination.

Upon approval by the Church Governing Board, the candidate will be invited to receive ordination at the Annual Worship Service, to be **June 3, 2018 in New Orleans, Louisiana** as part of Volunteers of America's national conference. Candidates can expect to receive notice of the Church Governing Board decision by Friday, March 16, 2018.