

**Evangelical Free Church of America: Ministerial Credentials**  
**Policy on Spiritual and Character Qualifications**  
*Questionnaire for Candidate*

Dear Candidate:

The Evangelical Free Church of America is committed to the biblical standards of life and conduct spelled out in the New Testament for pastors and elders (and, by implication, other ministry leaders). The purpose of this questionnaire is to remind you of some of the basic personal qualifications for receiving a ministerial credential in the EFCA and to help the family of Free Churches uphold the biblical standards that are implied in the credential.

This step in the credentialing process grows out of a serious and comprehensive policy approved by the EFCA Conference: Policy on Spiritual and Character Qualifications related to the granting of Ministerial Credentials within the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA). That policy is included with this questionnaire for your perusal.

This questionnaire will review several areas of your life and ministry. The aim of your district leaders is to support you as you continue to aim at the biblical standards for church leaders. We are confident of many good character qualities and ministry competencies in you! We also recognize that all of us are fallen in the sight of God and not one of us arrives at the point of being ready to be credentialed without sin and without some degree of brokenness. Our ultimate goal in asking these questions is not to disqualify a person but to provide the opportunity to proceed in a healthy manner. We stand ready to assist you in your credentialing path, giving encouragement, counsel, and resources as may be helpful.

There are three options for proceeding with this review of your qualifications. If you are married, we ask that you and your spouse complete the forms. If you are single, we ask that you and a close friend complete them. (1) You and your spouse/friend can complete the written questionnaires and submit them. (2) You and your spouse/friend can interact with your district superintendent (or his representative) in a personal interview that explores the questions in the questionnaires. (3) If you are an associate pastoral staff member, you and your spouse/friend can hold a personal interview with your senior or executive pastor.

The EFCA Board of Ministerial Standing understands that many of these questions are deeply personal and may be difficult to answer. Moreover, depending on one's personality and temperament, some individuals will tend to be overly sensitive to these matters, while other individuals will tend to be insufficiently sensitive. Understand that answering "yes" to any question does not necessarily mean that you will be refused ministerial credentials. You also have the freedom not to answer any particular question in writing. This does not mean, however, that you will not be expected to discuss those questions in a follow-up interview.

If you choose the written option, your district superintendent and/or district credentialing committee will read your questionnaire and follow up with you if necessary. Our aim—through these questions, through supportive encouragement, and through practical resources for healing and change—is to help you be fully qualified for an EFCA credential.

Please return this form to your district office. It will be reviewed only by your district superintendent (or district credentialing representative) and/or the appropriate district credentialing committee. This step must be completed before you meet with the district credentialing committee for your oral credentialing examination. The affirmation of your qualifications for an EFCA credential will be included in your credentialing examination and sent with your file to the EFCA Board of Ministerial Standing. After your credential is issued, this questionnaire (both electronic and any hard-copy versions, along with those supplied by your spouse and your church leaders) will be destroyed.

We warmly invite you to contact your district superintendent or a member of your district credentialing committee so that we can answer questions, clarify uncertainties, and assure you of our support in this part of your credentialing process.

Your district superintendent, district credentialing board, and  
the EFCA Board of Ministerial Standing

*Note: if you answer Yes to any of the Yes/No questions in this questionnaire, please explain briefly on a separate page.*

### **General Character**

1. Biblical qualifications for church leaders include a vital spiritual walk with Christ, fruitfulness of life, a good reputation with outsiders, and relational skills and health. Writing a maximum of two pages, please comment on these qualifications in your own life and ministry.

### **Ethical Issues**

The EFCA requires its credentialed leaders to be above reproach and exhibiting the full-orbed mature character described by the Biblical qualifications for elders. This includes purity of both heart and actions in matters of relationship, of self-control, of sexual purity, and beyond.

2. Is there any area or issue in your life, past or present, which, if it became known publicly, would bring disrepute on the Lord or the Church because it has not been dealt with responsibly and adequately? (Depending on the circumstances, are there one or two mature believers who can attest to this responsible and adequate addressing of the issue?) This would include things in the following list:

- addictions
- child abuse, child molestation, sexual misconduct with a minor, indecent liberties with a minor
- drunkenness/abuse of alcohol or drugs
- felony
- gambling
- marital abuse
- plagiarism
- pornography/sexually explicit material
- racism or prejudice
- sexual sin: premarital, extramarital, homosexual, harassment, other
- use of illegal substances
- other “things like these” (Gal. 5:19-21)

Yes / No

### **Financial Stewardship**

3. Are financial issues such as spending habits, indebtedness, chronic shortfall, or differing perspectives causing undue distress to you (or your spouse if you are married)? Yes / No

### **Marriage and Family Relationships**

(If you are single, answer only the questions appropriate to your circumstances.)

#### *Current Marital and Family Health*

4. Are you in any way concerned that the integrity and health of your marriage or family is not a good example to your congregation, or that there are aspects of your marriage or family that may not be consistent with the qualifications for an EFCA credential? Yes / No

*Pre-Marital and Marital History*

5. Have you ever been in a sexual relationship of cohabitation outside of marriage, and/or do you or your spouse have a divorce in your backgrounds? Yes / No (If yes, we would like to explore with you how this was resolved and how it has shaped your life and ministry.)

*Singleness*

6. Are you in any way concerned that the integrity and health of your singleness is not a good example to your congregation or that there are aspects of your relational and sexual ethics that may not be consistent with the qualifications for an EFCA credential? Yes / No
7. Do you have one or more friends who have genuine access to your heart and your life? Yes / No

**General Ministerial and Personal Circumstances**

8. Have you been licensed, ordained, commissioned, or otherwise credentialed as a minister or ministry leader by any religious body other than the EFCA? Yes / No

If yes, explain fully on a separate sheet (identify each denomination or religious body with which you have been licensed, ordained, commissioned, or otherwise credentialed as a minister or ministry leader, and explain the reason for each change).

9. Do you have any other concerns about your personal spiritual and character qualifications for receiving an EFCA ministerial credential? Yes / No

I understand that EFCA ministers and leaders are to exemplify the biblical standards for church leaders and I agree with those standards. I have filled out this questionnaire honestly and I give permission to the appropriate district and national EFCA credentialing representatives to review this questionnaire and discuss it as needed in processing my application for a credential.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

January 2018