

**Parish Ministry Associate Program, Nebraska Synod ELCA  
Assigned PMA Service Agreement**

**Between** \_\_\_\_\_, **PMA**  
**and** \_\_\_\_\_ **Church(es)**

In Holy Baptism we are called by the promise of God into a relationship of faith toward God and love toward one another. This relationship finds expression in our gathering as congregations of the church to hear God’s Word, eat and drink at the Lord’s Table, and minister to the needs of the community and God’s world.

As Lutheran congregations, we set apart and equip persons to lead and assist us in our ministry: to preach, teach, comfort, guide us in and with the love of God, and to oversee the events and activities of our life in Christ. Our Confessions identify those set apart for such service as ordained Ministers of Word and Sacrament. Our Church recognizes that in certain circumstances, leadership by an ordained pastor may not be a possibility. In such circumstances, it falls to the bishop to ensure that Word and Sacrament ministry is provided. Our church provides for the appointment and authorization of properly-prepared laypersons to provide this ministry as an extension of the bishop's office.

Certified Parish Ministry Associates have been identified, instructed and equipped for service in a congregation when full-time pastoral services are not available or where ministry needs exceed the resources of the present leadership. Assigned PMAs may be authorized for sacraments, funerals and weddings—for their congregation(s) only—according to the policies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Nebraska Synod. Sacramental authorization must be renewed annually.

As a Parish Ministry Associate, I promise before God

- To be under the direct supervision of an ordained pastor on the roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and meeting with this pastor at least monthly
- To assist where needed in the church
- To visit with members, prospective members, and non-members, as needed
- To visit people in hospitals, nursing homes, and the homebound, as needed
- To work with the church council and committees in pursuing the ministry of the parish
- To remain in consultation with synod staff throughout the ministry
- To be accountable to the Bishop in all matters of professional ethics and practice
- To abide by the policies of the PMA Program outlined in the *Certified PMA Handbook*
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

The goals of our shared ministry will be:

- To support ministry in daily life of the membership
- To carry out the mission of the congregation
- To address specific needs of the congregation/community where needed
- To proclaim God’s love and good news
- To strengthen our ties with Nebraska Synod
- To strengthen our ties with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

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The Congregation, Nebraska Synod, and Parish Ministry Associate acknowledge the following conditions:

1. The Parish Ministry Associate (PMA) will serve  part-time  full-time between these dates: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
Part-time work is anticipated to be \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week.

2. If housing is needed, describe the arrangement: \_\_\_\_\_

3. A monthly salary of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable on the \_\_\_\_\_ day(s) of each month.

OR

Worship services at the current Nebraska Synod pulpit supply rate, plus \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour for the following ministries (including travel time): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(The minimum wage for a new or less-experienced PMA is \$15 per hour.)*

OR \_\_\_\_\_

AND

Auto reimbursement at the prevailing IRS rate to be figured from \_\_\_\_\_

to \_\_\_\_\_

*(i.e. residence to place at which duties are fulfilled or office to place at which duties are fulfilled, etc.)*

4. \$ \_\_\_\_\_ annual donation to the PMA Program of Nebraska Synod  
*This helps the PMA Program respond to the growing need for PMAs. Have the treasurer include the donation on the remittance form sent to our Omaha office; on the last line of the form ("Other special Nebraska Synod giving") and after the word "describe," write in "PMA Program" and the amount. Thank you!*

5. **Benefits**

- a. For full-time service: Grant two days of vacation per month for every month of service. Vacation days shall include one Sunday for every three months served. For part-time service, vacation is prorated. Vacation time is scheduled in consultation with the congregation council.

- b. Reimbursement of ministry expenses incurred (*i.e. postage, cell phone, etc.*); specify:  
\_\_\_\_\_

- c. For full-time service: provide a continuing education allowance of \$70 per month served. For part-time service, the continuing education allowance is prorated. Continuing education time is scheduled in consultation with the church council.

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d. For full- and part-time service: the congregation pays registration, room, meal, and travel expenses for attending synod assembly on behalf this congregation, theological conference, and other official meetings at which attendance is required were a pastor serving the congregation.

e. Other benefits: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. The PMA will work under the supervision of (ELCA) Pastor \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_  
(congregation name and location)

7. The congregation council and PMA shall review this agreement and the PMA-congregation relationship every 12 months, with the PMA's supervising pastor present, and annually complete and return the PMA program's Mentor/Supervisor/Council Report on their PMA.

8. **Terminating, Amending, or Extending This Agreement**

This agreement terminates on the date specified on page one of this agreement or upon thirty days written notice from the council, the PMA, or the bishop of the synod. All financial obligations between the PMA and the congregation will be fulfilled by or on the date of termination.

This agreement may be amended or extended upon the mutual agreement of the congregation council and PMA, after consultation with the PMA Office, by written addendum attached hereto.

9. **Pastoral Ethics Upon Resigning or Retiring from an Assignment by the Bishop or a Staff Position:**

Since assigned PMAs serve in place of a pastor or function as deacons on larger congregational staffs, and parishioners view PMAs on a church staff as part of the pastoral team and a minister in that congregation, PMAs who leave their assignment or staff position commit to the same ethical boundaries as pastors and deacons. These ethical boundaries are included in the Pastoral Ethics documents that rostered ministers and congregations sign at the end of a call or time of transitional ministry.

It is important to allow the congregation you have served and loved the freedom and opportunity to develop a new vision for ministry and a trusting, loving relationship with their next minister. The continuing presence of the just-resigned or -retired minister hinders this.

While pastors and deacons must absent themselves from activities and participation in their former congregation for not less than one year after the installation of the next rostered minister, we recognize assigned and staff PMAs are in a unique situation

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because they are often from the area they serve or have been serving their home congregation. Accordingly, expectations for PMAs differ in that they are to absent themselves from activities and participation in the congregation from which they just retired or resigned for one year from the last day of ministry. If economic, family, or other reasons make this a serious challenge, please consult with the bishop before any firm decisions are made.

**Parish Ministry Associate**

**Council President**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Name, printed*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Name, printed*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

Reviewed by \_\_\_\_\_  
*Synod staff*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

**Return a signed copy of this agreement to:**

**PMA Office  
Nebraska Synod ELCA  
PO Box 1462  
North Platte, NE 69103-1462**

**PMA Program questions can be directed to:**

Assistant to the Bishop & PMA Program Director

Pr. Steve Meysing    [steve@nebraskasynod.org](mailto:steve@nebraskasynod.org)    308-530-5740

PMA Administrator

Pr. Carol Mapa    [pma@nebraskasynod.org](mailto:pma@nebraskasynod.org)    308-532-0250, option 4

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**Addendum 1  
Extension of the Agreement**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Congregation)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Location)

and

\_\_\_\_\_  
(PMA's Name)

agree that

the original agreement dated \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_ is hereby extended by this addendum to: \_\_\_\_\_.

Date

\_\_\_\_\_ is amended by this addendum as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We, the undersigned, accept the terms of this addendum:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Council President*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*PMA*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

Reviewed by \_\_\_\_\_  
*Synod staff*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

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