

This Guide describes how the process of discerning the call of a local preacher normally works. It has been updated to reflect current Standing Orders and requirements for Safeguarding training. Please note that Standing Orders contain the definitive requirements and are available on the [Methodist Church website](http://www.methodistchurch.org.uk).

Please contact the Local Preachers' Office for any clarification by emailing localpreachers@methodistchurch.org.uk or phoning the Local Preachers' Office on 020 7467 3774.

	Description	Standing Order
	First Steps	
1	A person indicates to a minister that they wish to explore the call to become a local preacher.	564
2	The person has an interview with their Superintendent Minister who explains the duties and responsibilities of a preacher, the process of discernment and training, the demands it places on the person and the need to reassess their other commitments.	564
	On Note	
3	The Superintendent (or other according to SO 564) recommends the person to the Local Preachers' Meeting. The Local Preachers' Meeting discusses the recommendation. The paper Competencies for a person requesting a note to preach (available on the Methodist Church website) will be a helpful reference in this discussion.	564
4	If the meeting approves the recommendation, normally with the commendation of their Church Council, the person submits a DBS (Safeguarding) application and enrolls for both the Foundation and Advanced Modules of Safeguarding training at the earliest opportunity.	564A(1)
5	The person is given a written Note to Preach by the Circuit Superintendent, authorising them to assist a preacher in the conduct of services within the Circuit. The Note to Preach lasts for 3 months but can be renewed for further 3 month periods by agreement of the Local Preachers' Meeting.	564A(1)
6	The Local Preachers' Meeting appoints a Mentor for the new On Note preacher. The Mentor will be the preacher's accompanist throughout their training as they learn the skills of a preacher. In the initial stages, they will share their appointments with the new On Note preacher. See the Guide for Tutors and Mentors for more information about being a Mentor.	564A(5)
7	The Local Preachers' Meeting appoints a Tutor for the new On Note preacher. The Tutor will be the preacher's accompanist in their	564C(1)

	Description	Standing Order
	theological learning using the Worship: Leading & Preaching course. The tutor need not themselves be a local preacher, or resident in the circuit. See the Guide for Tutors and Mentors for more information about being a Tutor.	
8	At the earliest opportunity, the Local Preachers' Secretary informs the Local Preachers' Office of the new On Note preacher and their Tutor and Mentor using the Local Preachers' Return form . The Local Preachers' Office enrol the new student and their Tutor and Mentor onto the Worship: Leading & Preaching course and send them a copy of Worship: Foundations . Worship: Foundations can also be downloaded here .	
9	The person on note prepares and assists in leading worship with their mentor. They work through Worship: Foundations together as the on note preacher takes on more responsibility for preparation and leading of worship.	564A(5)
10	The person on note commences the Worship: Leading and Preaching course with the support of their Tutor and starts to collect material for their portfolio.	
11	The person on note conducts a full service in the presence of two preachers, one of whom may be the Mentor. A report is presented to the Local Preachers' Meeting. Feedback is recorded on the Worship & Preaching Feedback Form and discussed with the person on note prior to the meeting.	564A(7)
	On Trial	
12	If the service report, and a report from the Tutor, are agreed to be satisfactory, and the meeting agrees that it is appropriate, the person moves to the status of person On Trial. Note that the person will need to be on trial before they can complete Portfolio A at the end of Modules 1 to 4 of Worship: Leading & Preaching.	564A(7)
13	A period of not less than one year but not more than five years is spent on trial. During this time, the mentor will continue to support the person on trial, and be available for advice and guidance. For the first six months of being on trial, students should prepare their services and sermons in consultation with their mentor, who should also attend their services as they are able, and provide reports to the Local Preachers' meeting.	564B(1) 564B(5)
14	Whilst the preacher is on trial, a brief report on a service conducted by the person on trial will be presented to the Local Preachers'	564B(6)

	Description	Standing Order
	<p>Meeting each quarter. The local tutor should also be invited to present a report.</p> <p>Reports of services conducted by a person on trial should always be discussed with the person prior to being presented to the Local Preachers' Meeting. Discussion at the meeting should be conducted in a positive and affirming manner, and the person on trial should normally be present so that it can be a training opportunity for them.</p>	
15	<p>The person on trial continues with the Worship: Leading & Preaching course, completing Portfolio A. Portfolios are assessed by their Tutor and submitted for moderation by the regional Learning Network. More information on portfolios can be found in the Guide to Portfolios.</p> <p>Throughout this period, the Tutor will be asked to provide ongoing reports of progress to the Local Preachers' Meeting.</p> <p>Note that by the end of the 2nd year of training, both the Foundation and Advanced modules of Safeguarding training must have been completed.</p>	565(1)
	First Trial Service and Interview	
16	<p>At a suitable point after the person on trial has completed Portfolio A, they conduct a full service in the presence of two preachers and a church steward (who is not a local preacher) and a report is prepared for the Local Preachers' Meeting.</p>	566(1),(2)
17	<p>When the first Portfolio has been successfully completed, the Superintendent or another nominated preacher at the Local Preachers' Meeting conducts a first interview with the person on trial. The purpose of the interview and trial service is to assist the Local Preachers' Meeting in reaching a decision whether the person should continue on trial.</p> <p>The person on trial should have the opportunity to share the story of their Christian experience, their call to preach, and any insights, challenges or difficulties they have experienced during their training so far.</p> <p>More information on conducting this interview can be found in Circuit Interviews for Persons on Trial.</p>	566(3)
18	<p>The Local Preachers' Meeting makes a decision on the continuation (or not) of the person's on trial status. If the decision is positive, the person continues on trial, carries on with the study of Modules 5 to 8 and with building and submitting Portfolio B.</p>	566(1),(2)

	Description	Standing Order
	Second Trial Service and Interview	
19	When the person on trial has completed Portfolio B, they conduct a full service in the presence of two preachers (one of whom is normally a minister) and a church steward (who is not a local preacher) and a report is prepared for the Local Preachers' Meeting.	566(1),(2)
20	<p>When Portfolio B has been confirmed as meeting the required assessment criteria by the Local Preachers' office, the Superintendent or another nominated preacher at the Local Preachers' Meeting conducts a second interview with the person on trial.</p> <p>The purpose of this second interview and trial service is to assist the Local Preachers' Meeting in reaching a decision on whether the person on trial is ready and suitable for admission as a local preacher. In order to assist the Local Preachers' Meeting the person on trial:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) shall have the opportunity to speak of their growth in knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, and demonstrate a maturing of Christian experience; b) must satisfy the Meeting that they are faithful to the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith and to Methodist doctrinal standards (this will include a conversation relating to Wesley's Sermons); c) must assure the Meeting that they will accept and observe the duties of a local preacher as described in Standing Order 563 (1)-(4) which should be read at the meeting. <p>More information on conducting this interview can be found in Circuit Interviews for Persons on Trial.</p> <p>Note that by this point both the Foundation and Advanced modules of Safeguarding training must have been completed.</p>	566(1),(2)
21	<p>If after the second interview, the Meeting is satisfied that the person on trial should be admitted as a local preacher, it shall recommend to the Circuit Meeting that it approves the person on trial for admission as a Local Preacher. The paper Competencies for those to be received onto Full Plan as Local Preachers (available on the Methodist website) will be a helpful reference in this discussion.</p> <p>If the meeting determines that they cannot recommend the person on trial to the Circuit Meeting, appropriate pastoral support should be provided. Further guidance can be sought from the Local Preachers' Office.</p>	566(5)

	Description	Standing Order
	Admission and Recognition	
22	If a recommendation is made by the Local Preachers' Meeting, the Circuit Meeting is asked to approve the person on trial to be admitted as a Local Preacher.	566(5)
23	If the recommendation is approved, the Circuit Meeting arranges the Service for the Admission of Local Preachers. At this service a Bible (or other appropriate book) and a letter from the President of the Conference are presented. The Local Preachers' Secretary should request the nameplate for the Bible and the letter from the President from the Local Preachers' Office at least six weeks before they are required to allow for any delays. If approval is not granted, further advice should be sought from the Local Preachers' Office.	566(6)
24	All Local preachers are required to participate in Continuing Local Preacher Development and to share this with the Local Preachers' Meeting on a regular basis. They are also required to attend an annual Service of Reaffirmation of their call to be local preachers.	563(3)

As stated above, please don't hesitate to contact the Local Preachers' Office for any clarification by emailing localpreachers@methodistchurch.org.uk or phoning the Local Preachers' Office on 020 7467 3774.

Change Note:

Slight amendment to wording of item 4 effected April 2019.