

Presented by Beth Williams, Religious Education Credentialing Director

Request for Board approval

Criminal Background Checks and Offense Disclosure

The RECC would like to require criminal background checks from all current and future candidates, and to require disclosure of criminal offenses from all program applicants and candidates and all credentialed religious educators. It requests the following changes to RECC Rules 7 and 18 to be approved by the UUA Board in order to do so:

Proposed RECC Rule Changes for Background Checks

Additions in *bold italics*; deletions in [brackets]

7. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Application for religious education credentialing status shall be submitted to the Committee in writing in such form as the Committee shall determine. Before an application is filed, the Participant shall be furnished a copy of the Rules of the Religious Education Credentialing Committee, and as part of his/her application, s/he shall agree in writing to be bound by said Rules and amendments thereof. Upon the recommendation of the Office of Religious Education Credentialing, persons deemed to be unsuitable for religious education credentialing status will be, by vote of the Committee, ineligible to participate in the Religious Education Credentialing Program.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

All candidates for religious education credentialing status are required to undergo a background check before being permitted to interview with the Committee. Candidates are responsible for paying for the background check from an agency approved by the RECC and have the reports sent directly to the Committee. All reports will become property of the UUA. The RECC reserves the right to contact references, supervisors, and other individuals to clarify information supplied in the candidate's packet, and to share the findings of the background check with the candidate's current congregation or organization.

INTERVIEW

No Participant shall achieve Credentialed Religious Educator or Credentialed Religious Educator – Masters Level status unless s/he has been interviewed at least once by the Religious Education Credentialing Committee or has been transitioned into Credentialed Religious Educator – Masters Level religious education credentialing status from Credentialed Religious Educator status in the UUA Religious Education Leadership Landscape Options program. No Participant shall be considered for status in more than one Religious Education Credentialing program level at the same interview.....

18. [CONVICTION] CRIMINAL OFFENSE DISCLOSURE

Religious educators with religious education credentialing status shall inform the Religious Education Credentialing Committee of all ***criminal arrests*** and convictions that occur or have occurred except for minor traffic violations and those ***criminal offenses***

[convictions] which by law they need not disclose. ***Arrests and convictions related to substance use must be reported.***

Failure to disclose the arrests and convictions described above for reasons including but not limited to omission, intentional falsification or any failure to disclose, may result in the revocation of religious education credentialing status.

If at any time the RECC determines that religious education credentialing status was granted based on false representation or fraud, the RECC has the right to revoke the religious education credentialing status.

Applicants to ***and candidates*** in the Religious Education Credentialing Program of the Unitarian Universalist Association shall inform the Religious Education Credentialing Committee of all ***arrests*** and convictions except for minor traffic violations and those ***criminal offenses*** [convictions] which by law they need not disclose. ***Arrests and convictions related to substance use must be reported.***

Such disclosure is required for achieving religious education credentialing status.

Failure to disclose the arrests and convictions described above for reasons including but not limited to omission, intentional falsification or any failure to disclose, may result in the disqualification of an application or dismissal of a candidate from the Religious Education Credential Program.

Stages of Formation for Credentialed Religious Educators

The RECC developed the following scope and sequence document to articulate to religious educators and their congregations what the RECC sees as the formation process of the Religious Education Credentialing program and how it expects credentialed religious educators, at each level of credentialing, to function within their roles of religious education leaders:

Stages of Formation for Credentialed Religious Educators

Credentialed Level	Associate	Credentialed	Master's
Experience	Two years – at least quarter-time	Two years- at least half-time	Three years- at least half-time
Knowledge	See list of competencies in RE Credentialing Program Plan	See list of competencies in RE Credentialing Program Plan	See list of competencies in RE Credentialing Program Plan
Application of Knowledge	1. Uses information, ideas, and principles as learned. 2. Assesses situations to determine needed	1. Selects and adapts information and resources to effect change. 2. Evaluates situation	1. Uses information and theory to solve problems and create new resources and programs.

	<p>information or resources.</p> <p>3. Uses information, ideas, and principles effectively in dealing with a specific situation.</p>	<p>to determine strengths, weaknesses and possible areas of improvement.</p> <p>3. Articulates and explains reasoning behind a course of action.</p> <p>4. Engages in on-going assessment of outcomes and makes appropriate improvements.</p>	<p>2. Understands theory (e.g. educational, systems, learning) as it relates to congregations and systems and puts it into practice.</p> <p>3. Uses data, information, and theory to solve problems and create new ideas and resources.</p> <p>4. Chooses and justifies a course of action or decision based on appropriate theory, evaluates outcomes, and refines the decision or course of action.</p>
Skills Demonstrated	<p>1. Ability to administer an RE program.</p> <p>2. Ability to recruit, train, and work with volunteers</p> <p>3. Understanding and practice of safe congregation policies and procedures.</p> <p>4. Basic understanding of the concept of anti-racism and anti-oppression</p>	<p>1. Guides volunteer leaders with questions and recommendations about best practice policies, procedures, program delivery, curriculum, and teacher support and training.</p> <p>2. Identifies steps and resources needed to implement programs.</p> <p>3. Understands and is sensitive to individual values and cultural differences.</p> <p>4. Proposes plans and solutions and gets support from key people to move forward.</p> <p>5. Ability to prioritize and handle many tasks, delegating appropriately</p> <p>6. Represents the RE program, the congregation, and Unitarian</p>	<p>1. Develops new resources and programs within the congregation and for Unitarian Universalism.</p> <p>2. Demonstrates the knowledge, experience and judgment to prioritize and balance the sometimes conflicting demands of various constituencies within the congregation.</p> <p>3. Demonstrates basic cultural competency and understanding of personal social/cultural location and how it affects point of view.</p>

		<p>Universalism to parents, volunteers, seekers, and those who inquire about the program.</p> <p>7. Basic understanding of systems theory as it relates both to congregational systems and to systems of oppression.</p>	
Leadership Demonstrated	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follows LREDA Code of Ethics. 2. Models right relations. 3. Shows interest in new ideas and information and “enrolls” others to apply ideas/information. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understands one’s self as a religious leader and acts within appropriate boundaries. 2. Speaks and acts with appropriate authority in regard to those items within the scope of responsibility. 3. Is capable of functioning as a leader in extra-congregational settings 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supports the larger goals of the congregation through faith development and religious education programming. 2. Leader in extra-congregational, district, and associational settings. 3. Has a value system that controls their behavior which is pervasive, consistent, predictable, and characteristic of self. 4. Shows internalized commitment to ethical practice. 5. Supportive of and collaborative with ordained and lay leadership of the congregation.
Relationships with Staff/Leadership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding of “staff” role as opposed to “congregant” role 2. Willingness to be mentored- “coachable” 3. Works as part of a team 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Works collaboratively with staff and with lay leaders. 2. Embraces “staff” role and works well as part of a team. 3. Accountable to religious professionals 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Makes independent decisions within the scope of authority while working collaboratively with other professionals. 2. Works independently with

		within and outside the congregation. 4. Understands team dynamics and assumes appropriate authority within the team.	little need for day-to-day supervision. 3. Networks with religious professional colleagues within and outside the congregation.
--	--	---	--