



# Foursquare Licensing Process Overview

## Steps within the Licensing Process

- Step 1 – Online or phone inquiry:** Interested applicants are invited to submit an inquiry through the [interest webform](#) or by calling our bilingual helpdesk at 213.989.4380. The call center representative will use this information to create an application file and assign the inquiry to one of our credentials specialists for an initial consultation. The credentials specialist will follow up by phone or email according to the preference indicated by the applicant.
- Step 2 – Consultation and process orientation:** The assigned credentials specialist will contact the applicant with an invitation to participate in an orientation call or offer the option to watch an orientation video that explains the components of a completed application. As part of the orientation, the applicant will be given a link to complete a formal online application. This information may also be taken over the phone by the assigned specialist.
- Step 3 – References:** When filling out the application, the applicant will be asked to provide the names, contact information, and basic information for three people who will serve as references. These references include:
  - A Foursquare sponsor** – A licensed Foursquare minister with personal knowledge and direct experience working with the applicant in a ministry context. The sponsor will often be a leader under whom the applicant is expected to serve once their credentialing is complete. In most cases, the sponsor will be a senior pastor, chaplain endorser, global missions leader, supervisor, or another ministry leader who can attest to the applicant’s spiritual formation and preparedness.
  - A pastoral reference** – A licensed Foursquare minister with a personal connection to the applicant who can provide a second perspective concerning the applicant’s alignment to Foursquare doctrine and identity, as well as their personal and relational health.
  - A personal (character) reference** – A family member, colleague, or friend who has been in a relationship with the applicant for three or more years. This person will be asked for their perspective on the applicant’s personal and relational health.
- Step 4 – Application payment and background check:** After the application and references are complete, the applicant will be contacted by their assigned credentials specialist to collect the application fee, which includes the cost of a background check and licensing course materials. The specialist will provide the applicant with the materials needed to complete a comprehensive background check. These materials can be completed online or by mail. The application, references, background check, and application fee comprise a completed application packet.
- Step 5 – Application review:** Upon completion of the application packet, the credentials team will work with the applicant to assign a coach who will support the candidate through the remainder of the process. If needed, the credentials team will schedule a meeting (virtually or in-person) between the applicant and a small panel of trained coaches to review the application package and discuss any items identified in the background check that would require further inquiry (i.e., history of divorce,

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criminal offense, credit issues or doctrinal questions). This panel may recommend that the applicant engages in a growth pathway as a prerequisite for, or in tandem with, enrollment into the Foursquare licensing course.

6. **Step 6 – Licensing course:** The Foursquare licensing course was completely revised in 2021 to focus on five distinct components of Foursquare’s ethos: heritage, identity, doctrine, polity and ministry practice.
7. **Step 7 – Coach endorsement:** Throughout the licensing course, applicants will interact with their coach to prepare for the licensing panel interview. Once the applicant has demonstrated readiness to respond to interview questions on the topics covered in the licensing course, the coach will provide an endorsement which will initiate a calendar appointment for an interview with the licensing panel. In most cases, the applicant’s coach will also attend the interview.
8. **Step 8 – Licensing panel interview:** Interviews last approximately two hours, and the applicant will be asked questions concerning their knowledge of Foursquare’s heritage, identity, doctrine, polity, and ministry practice as covered in the licensing course and coaching process. Interview panels are comprised of seasoned Foursquare ministers who have received specialized training. A favorable endorsement from the interview panel is required for candidacy and board approval.
9. **Step 9 – Board approval & ministry appointment:** Foursquare bylaws require that all licensed ministers be approved by the executive committee of the Foursquare board of directors. This committee meets weekly to review and approve the ministerial appointments for candidates that have completed the licensing process and received an endorsement from the interview panel. Prior to board presentation, the candidate will be asked to pay their annual licensing fee. Upon approval, the credentialed minister will be officially appointed to a ministry assignment with a notification sent to the ministry sponsor.
10. **Step 10 – Two-year growth plan toward ordination:** The ultimate goal of the licensing process is to facilitate a life-long process of growth and learning and to see each minister’s calling and anointing confirmed by the eldership body of the church through the process of ordination. A newly licensed Foursquare minister will be eligible for ordination after two years of service in their ministry appointment and by maintaining their credential in good standing. During this two-year period, each minister will engage in a growth pathway as part of their commitment to life-long learning. Read more about the [significance of ordination](#).