

LIFE MEMBER QUESTIONS

(References are to the 2016-2020 WMS Constitution & Bylaws, pages 13-15)

1. What does the \$250 cover or is it just membership dues?

RESPONSE: At a minimum, the pin, certificate and stole are covered by the fee. (Article VIII - Section 5)

2. Does the Local Society pay the \$250.00 application fee or does the applicant pay the \$250.00 application fee?

RESPONSE: There is nothing in the WMS Constitution and Bylaws that stipulates who pays the fee. Ultimately, the missionary is responsible for payment of the fee to the WMS. Where the church or local society is financially able, one or both have paid the fee. (Section 6)

3. Can a Pastor recommend a missionary for Life Membership?

RESPONSE: According to the Constitution and Bylaws, the Local WMS recommends the missionary for Life Membership, thus the letter is written under the signature of the Local President?

NOTE: There is nothing that states that a Pastor cannot recommend to the local society that a missionary be **considered** for Life Membership; however, the Pastor cannot submit the Letter of Recommendation. (The process is still the same, review the checklist with the missionary, etc.)

4. Does Pastor have to sign letter of recommendation?

RESPONSE: The Pastor is not required to sign the Letter of Recommendation. There is nothing that will preclude the Pastor from signing the letter, but it is not a requirement. The letter comes from the Local President.

5. What are the benefits of Lifetime Membership?

RESPONSE: Life Members are members of the Conference and Episcopal District voting membership and member of the voting delegation of the WMS Quadrennial Convention (with sustentation from the WMS).

6. Who submits the letter if the Local President is the missionary seeking Life Membership?

(NOTE: this response represents the position of the SEDWMS effective immediately.)

RESPONSE: The President should yield to the First Vice President to:

#1-Present her name to the local society for recommendation.

#2-Submit the letter of recommendation, signing appropriately, upon approval by the local society for recommendation.

#3-Sign the Life Membership Application when a slot is available for the Local President.

NOTE: The same practice should occur on all levels:

- a. When the Conference Branch President is the missionary seeking Life Membership, the Conference Branch First VP will sign the application.
- b. When the Episcopal President is the missionary seeking Life Membership, the Episcopal First VP will sign the application.

7. What type of documentation is required for Life Membership meritorious service-a letter from pastor, copy of program facilitated??

RESPONSE: Criteria for eligibility is defined in the Life Membership section of the WMS Constitution and Bylaws. Documentation for this process is no different than documentation that would be included in a Letter of Intent when a missionary is seeking an office in any level of the WMS.

It is the responsibility of the missionary to keep track of offices held and leadership/participation in activities, etc. (program copies may be helpful). As Christian women, we would like to assume that accurate information is submitted, however, where there are questions from the local president and or local society, one should refer to meeting minutes. (Keep in mind that this is for validation purposes with the Local President, who must sign off on the missionary's service, etc.; programs, etc. should not be submitted with the Letter of Recommendation.)

You will use the Supporting Documentation forms to enter offices held, continuous meritorious service, etc.

8. What constitutes "eligibility" documentation? Who provides the proof at each level for 25 years?

RESPONSE: See #8.

9. What is the process of a pending LM person transferring to another Conference or District? Will person be listed as the last pending of the new?

RESPONSE: Two types of transfers are addressed in the 2016-2020 WMS Constitution & and Bylaws:

1. **Article IV - Membership Section 5: Transfer to another conference and**
2. **Article VIII – Life Memberships, Section 3c.**

Missionary transfers are from Conference Branch to Conference Branch, thus the missionary must be a member of the Conference Branch. There is no specific process for missionaries who are on the Conference Life Membership Pending Roster who transfer to another conference (whether within or outside the Episcopal District). The missionary transfers as a missionary and should make sure the Conference Branch President includes the **Letter of Recommendation** for Life Membership. Missionaries of the SED whose names are on the pending roster should ensure that the Conference Branch President attaches the Letter of Recommendation and the Supporting Documentation (since it is our practice) to the **Letter of Transfer**.

The purpose of transferring to the appropriate Conference Branch is to afford full membership benefits without interruption (**continuous service** - required for Life Membership).

Transferring within the SEDWMS: Upon receipt of the Letter of Transfer, the Letter or Recommendation with the Supporting Documentation attached, the name will be added to the existing list in the order that it was received.

Transferring to a Conference Branch in another Episcopal District: Since there is nothing in the WMS Constitution & Bylaws that speaks to prospective Life Member transfers, the process will be defined within each Episcopal District and it is up to the missionary transferring to understand the process for the Episcopal District.

Transferring from a Conference Branch in another Episcopal District to a Conference Branch in the SEDWMS: In keeping with the practices of the SEDWMS, Missionaries from other Episcopal Districts whose names have been on the Life Membership Pending Roster will be required to complete and submit the same supporting documentation that is required of all members of the SEDWMS who seek Life Membership. Using the same approval process, if all criteria are not met, the name will not be added to the respective Conference Branch roster.

- 10. Unfortunately, some on the pending list have been vetted and when it was time to make a new life member, those down on the list were given the go ahead and application to become a life member. Please address this situation. (i.e., persons have received Life Membership out of turn).**

RESPONSE: According to the 2016-2020 WMS Constitution & Bylaws, Letters of Recommendation submitted to the Episcopal Supervisor and Conference Branch President should be sent certified mail since they have a certified date/time stamp. In addition, letters are date/time-stamped upon receipt. This along with the fact that the 5 Conferences of the SEDWMS announce receipt of names that will be added to the

Conference WMS Life Membership Pending Roster. (It is our prayer that this would prevent Life Memberships being granted out of turn.)

11. Is there anything that we can do for those missionaries that may never get to become a life member but have met all of the requirements? Torch Lighters have been done in some districts.

(Although this question was not posed during the session, it was apparently asked after the presentation and before the session ended.)

RESPONSE: Hopefully, all who meet all of the criteria will become Life Members, however, all 5 Conference Branches in the SEDWMS have instituted a Conference recognition program for persons who have served for more than 25 years, but do not meet all of the criteria for Life Membership. With the inspection of all persons who desire to be recommended for Life Membership, the number of persons on the pending roster may possibly be reduced. Unfortunately, the only time that slots are available are after the WMS Quadrennial Convention (1 per Conference) and upon the death of a Life Member. (Please check with the Conference Branch leadership for additional information on Conference recognition.)

12. Will we be able to get a copy this presentation especially the check list?

RESPONSE: At the end of the series of conferences, the presentation and all updated forms will be forwarded to the Conference Branch Presidents for distribution.

13. Will the PP be made available to the local church WMS?

RESPONSE: See #13.

14. Are the 25 years cumulative across the Local, Area, Conference, Episcopal, and Connectional.

RESPONSE: The requirement is for more than 25 continuous years (no interruption). A missionary may serve in one position beyond the local level at the same time. Serving on any level requires an active status in the local society.