

# Archdiocese of Atlanta

## Office of the Permanent Diaconate

### CONTINUING EDUCATION GUIDELINES FOR PERMANENT DEACONS

#### I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- A. In order to enhance the life of faith and further the quality of their diaconal ministry, all permanent deacons are required to participate in a regular program of continuing education and spiritual formation.
- B. Each deacon is expected to earn a minimum of thirty-six (36) clock hours of continuing education (excluding time on retreat) in a two-year period, with at least eight (8) hours in any given year. Fifteen hours are required in each of Category 2 and 3 below and the other six (6) hours can be from either of the two Categories.
- C. Hours of continuing education shall be reported on a special Continuing Education data form supplied for this purpose and forwarded to the Office for the Permanent Diaconate within two weeks of completion of courses, or no later than December 31 of each year. An acknowledgment form will be returned to the deacon.
- D. The Director of Deacon Personnel will regularly provide information on available courses and spiritual growth programs and opportunities and will encourage deacons to attend. Spouses of deacons will also be encouraged to participate whenever possible.

#### II. CATEGORIES

##### A. CATEGORY 1 - Renewal/Spiritual Formation

- 1. Requirements: A minimum of one retreat each calendar year as required by Canon Law.
- 2. The cost of the annual retreat is to be paid by the deacon's place of ministry. The place of ministry is not obligated to provide more than the cost of the Archdiocesan sponsored retreat for the deacon himself.
- 3. The hours on retreat are not included in the education hours required.

4. This category includes days of reflection, spiritual direction and other retreats.

## **B. CATEGORY 2 - Studies**

1. Requirements: A minimum of fifteen hours within a two-year period.
2. Informal studies include auditing courses at any of the colleges and/or institutes as well as attendance at workshops, seminars and conferences that do not require anything from the participant beyond attendance.
3. To accommodate the deacons' schedules, and in order to promote attendance at Regional Meetings, each quarterly regional meeting will include a speaker on a topic of interest and importance to the deacon. Those presentations should last approximately 1 hour, and the deacon would be given 2 credit hours for attendance at that meeting. The Regional Representative would report the attendance to the Office for the Permanent Diaconate for compilation.
4. To allow for "long-range" planning, One-half (1/2) day sessions are offered at the St. Stephen's Center on seven (7) Saturdays during the year, and each deacon will have the option of attending one or more of those sessions. Each deacon attending will receive 4 credit hours for each session attended. These schedules will be distributed to each pastor as information. The instructor/presenter would be responsible for turning those hours into the Office for the Permanent Diaconate for compilation.
5. The deacon could attend other programs at his option, including, but not limited to, LIMEX, Spring Hill, Southern Catholic, programs from an Archdiocesan Office such as from Family Life Office, Pro-Life Office, etc. Distance learning programs such as those offered by Pontifical College Josephinum would also qualify in this category. The deacon himself would be responsible for reporting the hours to the Office for the Permanent Diaconate for compilation, with credits given as appropriate for the courses taken.
  - a. The deacon may not be absent from a significant portion of the program and still claim credit!
  - b. Studies in this category are reported on the Continuing Education Data Form.
  - c. Sessions at the St. Stephen's Center, and at Regional Meetings will be approved for credit by the Office of the Permanent Diaconate prior to offering to the diaconate community.

- d. Qualifying programs are those presented by a Catholic seminary operating under the Program for Priestly Formation, a Catholic Diaconate formation program operating under the National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, a Catholic college or university operating under the norms of Ex Corde Ecclesiae, or an instructor affiliated with one of the aforementioned institutions, or a program separately approved by the Director of Deacon Personnel

### **C. CATEGORY 3- Practicum**

1. Requirements: A minimum of fifteen hours within a two-year period.
2. This category includes:
  - a. Personal study of books, major articles or other reading materials, viewing video tapes or films, or listening to audio tapes that have a close relationship to one's ministry.
  - b. Preparation work for teaching a class, preparation for conducting a retreat, day of recollection, etc. and preparation for other related ministerial responsibilities.
  - c. Practicum in this category is reported on the continuing education data form.

### **III. ENFORCEMENT OF GUIDELINES:**

- A. The Director of Deacon Personnel is responsible for the following:
  1. Recording all credits completed and successful completion of the retreat requirement by each deacon.
  2. Notification of each deacon no later than November 30 of each calendar year of Credits received in the respective year; and any deficiency needed to complete the requirements.
  3. In February of each year, the Director of Deacon Personnel notifies the pastor of the deacon of the number of hours of continuing education completed in each of the three Categories along with the number of hours expected to complete. It is suggested the Pastor take corrective action such as requiring a schedule of Continuing Education for the upcoming calendar year.

**ARCHDIOCESE OF ATLANTA**  
**Office of the Permanent Diaconate**  
**Annual Report on Spiritual Development**  
**And Continuing Education**

This report is due on December 31st of each year.

**SPIRITUAL FORMATION:**

**Retreat:**

Date(s) of Retreat \_\_\_\_\_ Conducted by \_\_\_\_\_

Where? \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Deacons are required by canon law to make a retreat each year. The retreat must be at least 24 consecutive hours duration.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION**

**Category Two: Studies.**

1. Requirements: A minimum of fifteen (15) hours within a two-year period.
2. This category includes items listed under CATEGORY 2 of the Continuing Education Guidelines.

Course Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Hours \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Location of Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Hours \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Location of Institution \_\_\_\_\_

**CATEGORY 3 - Practicum**

1. Requirements: A minimum of fifteen (15) hours within a two-year period.
2. This category includes items listed under CATEGORY 3 of the Continuing Education Guidelines.

**Please use an additional sheet to describe activity in this category. Your description should include book title/publication, author, when the activity was performed and how it relates to your ministry and any other information you deem pertinent.**

Deacon Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name \_\_\_\_\_