

## 2026 SYNOD CONVENTION — CERTIFICATION OF:

- VOTING DELEGATES AND ALTERNATES
- NONVOTING ADVISORY DELEGATES
- ADVISORY REPRESENTATIVES

### (A) VOTING DELEGATES/ALTERNATES

#### VOTING DELEGATES/ALTERNATES — CERTIFICATION

District circuit visitors are responsible for the proper conduct of electoral circuit forums (Bylaws 3.1.2) and for the use of proper procedure in the election of voting delegates to the Synod's national convention (Bylaw 3.1.2.1). **You, as district secretary, will receive delegate election report forms from your circuit visitors** through the LCMS Forms system. Your role is to **certify** that, to the best of your knowledge, the elections were conducted according to the Bylaws of the Synod and that the report forms you received are complete and accurate. Submission of these forms via the LCMS Forms system constitutes certification (Bylaw 3.1.3.2[b]).

As district secretary, you will receive an email notification to log into [forms.lcms.org](https://forms.lcms.org) to examine the election report forms you receive from your circuit visitors (**FORM I—OFFICIAL REGISTRATION—VOTING DELEGATES AND ALTERNATES**). Please take care that the following requirements have been met.

#### VOTING DELEGATES/ALTERNATES — REQUIREMENTS

##### Meets Deadline Date

The date of the circuit forum meeting must satisfy the Bylaw 3.1.2.1(a) requirement that electoral circuit forums meet to elect delegates no later than nine (9) months prior to the opening date of the convention (i.e., October 18, 2025). If an electoral circuit has failed to meet this deadline, it cannot have representation at the 2026 Synod convention.

##### Eligibility

All pastors of electoral circuits who are called and installed to a congregation of the circuit in other than an assisting capacity and not specific ministry (SMP) pastors (Constitution Article IX; Bylaws 2.5.6 and 2.13.1) are eligible to be elected as pastoral voting delegates and alternates to the Synod convention (Bylaw 3.1.2.1[h]). Licensed lay deacons may serve as lay voting delegates and alternates. Commissioned ministers may not serve as lay or pastoral voting delegates or alternates.

##### Meets Different Congregation/Parish Requirement

All four persons elected shall come from different member congregations or multi-congregation parishes (Bylaw 3.1.2.1 [e]). If a circuit visitor's report shows two elections from the same congregation or parish — that is, two elections conflicting with the above rule — the first elected (according to the order required by Bylaw 3.1.2.1) may serve, and the other may not serve.



### Corrections Deadline

If an error is made by a circuit forum, the forum can meet again a second time to correct its error, so long as there is sufficient time to do so prior to the **October 18, 2025**, deadline for circuit forum delegate elections. If this is done, the circuit visitor must submit a corrected **FORM I** report, which will be forwarded to you for recertification. Do not attempt to make corrections indicating a new election by a circuit forum on **FORM IV—CHANGE IN REGISTRATION**.

### Submission

Forms for voting delegates and alternates must be submitted to the LCMS Office of the Secretary by October 25, 2025 (Bylaw 3.1.3.2). Submission of these forms via the LCMS Forms system constitutes certification (Bylaw 3.1.3.2[b]). Please be alert for circuit reports coming in at the end of the allowable period and make sure you can have them certified to us by the required date.

### Privacy Notice

2019 Resolution 9-04A, removed the printing of delegate addresses from the Convention Workbook. When collecting personal information for submission, circuit visitors should inform delegates and alternates that their mailing addresses will no longer be published in the *Workbook* but will still be important for official convention business mailings and will be required on registration forms. The email address provided by the delegate will be used only for official, convention-related business.

**Personal information gathered for the purpose of convention registration is not to be used or disseminated for any purpose other than official convention business, even by the district.**

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## VOTING DELEGATES/ALTERNATES — REGISTRATION CHANGES

As district secretary, your voting delegate certification responsibilities continue after you have processed and submitted the circuit visitors' report forms. You are also responsible for the certification when a registered voting delegate is no longer available to attend the convention. These changes will be reported on **FORM IV— CHANGE IN REGISTRATION**. There are three possible options to be used for and reflected on **FORM IV**. Details regarding each kind of change are outlined in the paragraphs following this bulleted list.

- This delegate will be replaced by the registered alternate listed (*in the space provided on Form IV*).
- The previously registered alternate voting delegate is not available to attend and will be replaced by a "Presidential Appointment" which is listed (*in the space provided on Form IV*). \*This option is only available to you IF the circuit forum elected an alternate for that position.
- This voting delegate will NOT be replaced.
- This voting delegate may be replaced by a "Presidential Appointment" at a later date.

### Elected Alternate to Replace Voting Delegate

When you are informed by a circuit visitor that a voting delegate vacancy has occurred and the elected alternate is available to serve, you will complete **FORM IV** to remove the delegate and replace with the alternate.



### Presidential Appointment to Replace Voting Delegate and Voting Alternate

When informed that the already-registered voting delegate and the already-registered voting alternate are both not available to serve, you must immediately inform your district president of his need to fill the vacancy by Presidential Appointment. Then, complete and submit a copy of **FORM IV** to notify of the impending appointment. If the president provides you with the name of the appointee, you can enter this information into FORM IV when completing it. If the president will appoint at a later date, you will use **FORM V—PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENT—VOTING DELEGATES ONLY** to report the change once the president informs you of the name of the appointee.

### No Alternate Elected to Replace Voting Delegate

When a vacancy occurs in a voting delegate position and the circuit forum failed to elect an alternate, the circuit will not be able to send a delegate to the convention. **District presidents may only appoint a substitute if the circuit initially filled both the delegate and alternate positions.** You will report the elected delegate's unavailability to serve using **FORM IV**, identifying the delegate who was elected and indicating that he/she will not be replaced.

### Change of Address — FORM XX

When a circuit visitor informs you of a change of address or contact information of one of his circuit's elected delegates, it will be your responsibility to report the change on **FORM XX—CHANGE OF ADDRESS**.

## (B) NONVOTING ADVISORY DELEGATES AND ALTERNATES

### NONVOTING ADVISORY DELEGATES AND ALTERNATES — CERTIFICATION

As district secretary, it is also your responsibility to **make certain that elections of nonvoting advisory delegates and alternates take place in your district** (Bylaw 3.1.3.1[a]). You should inform yourself of the bylaw expectations for such elections (Bylaw 3.1.3.1).

The email that provided you this memorandum also provided information regarding the numbers of advisory ordained and advisory commissioned ministers who are members of the Synod in your district — this will determine how many advisory delegates are to be elected by your district's advisory members according to the **formula provided in Bylaw 3.1.3.1. Specific ministry (SMP) pastors are to be included** in the count of advisory ordained ministers and may serve as advisory ordained minister delegates to the Synod convention. **Licensed lay deacons and associate or assistant pastors are not to be included** in the count and may not serve as advisory delegates, ordained or commissioned. Pastors who are serving **only in an assisting capacity** (Bylaw 2.5.6), however, would be included.

When determining the number of advisory delegates to be elected, you must also take into consideration Bylaw 3.1.3.1 (c), which requires that **advisory members of the Synod in your district who are eligible to be selected as advisory representatives in any of the categories of Bylaws 3.1.4–3.1.4.6 must not be counted.** Nor are they to participate in the meetings that elect the district's advisory delegates or be considered for election as an advisory delegate.



With those bylaw provisions in mind, note also the following:

### District Secretary Calls the Meeting

It is your responsibility as district secretary to call the meeting of your district's advisory ordained ministers and the meeting of your district's advisory commissioned ministers to elect their Synod convention nonvoting advisory delegates. Such meetings happen best at district-wide ordained minister and commissioned minister conferences or at district conventions.

### Meeting Deadline Is October 18, 2025

It is very important to make certain that these meetings to elect advisory delegates take place prior to the bylaw deadline of nine months before the convention of the Synod (i.e., October 18, 2025). The Bylaws of the Synod contain no provision for exceptions to this time requirement. If this deadline is not met, the opportunity for your district to send advisory delegates to the convention is lost.

### Alternates Should Be Elected

The Synod's Bylaws do not provide opportunity to fill vacancies by appointment when elected advisory delegates are not able to attend the convention. For this reason, a reasonable number of alternates should also be elected and listed in the order in which they are to be called upon to serve if/when vacancies occur.

### Submission

As district secretary, you are responsible for reporting the results of the nonvoting advisory delegate elections using the forms assigned to you in the LCMS Forms system:

- **FORM II—Nonvoting Advisory Delegates and Alternates—Ordained**; or
- **FORM III—Nonvoting Advisory Delegates and Alternates—Commissioned**.

Names of alternates should be listed on these forms in the order in which they are intended to be used when vacancies occur. **The deadline for submission of these forms is October 25, 2025.**

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## NONVOTING ADVISORY DELEGATE — SUBSTITUTIONS AND ADDRESS CHANGES

**Substitutions:** As district secretary, you are also responsible for the certification of *alternate* advisory delegates when it is necessary for them to serve. Vacancies in nonvoting advisory delegate positions are filled by using the information regarding alternates already reported on **FORM II** or **FORM III** as appropriate, contacting the individual next on the list of alternates, and verifying his/her availability to attend the convention. Once such availability is known, you will use **FORM IV** to report the necessary information to update the Synod's roster of convention delegates.

**Contact Information Changes:** Should you be informed of an address or contact information change for a nonvoting advisory delegate, it is your responsibility to report the change to the Office of the Secretary on **FORM XX**.



## (C) DISTRICT ADVISORY REPRESENTATIVES

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### DISTRICT ADVISORY REPRESENTATIVES — CERTIFICATION

#### District President and Others

According to Bylaw 3.1.3.2, you as district secretary are responsible for the certification of the advisory representatives attending the Synod convention from your district. This includes, according to Bylaw 3.1.4, district presidents. **Your district president's name and information** should be your first entry on **FORM VI—OFFICIAL REGISTRATION—ADVISORY REPRESENTATIVES**.

#### District Board of Directors

According to Bylaw 3.1.4.5, your district board of directors is **required** to be represented at Synod conventions by one representative member of the district board of directors and one member of the district executive staff (other than the district president). If your district has no staff, it may choose to send instead a second member of its board. When these selections have been made, you will continue to use the same **FORM VI** on which you have already listed your district president.

#### Youth Representatives

According to Bylaw 3.1.4.6, your district may also send two youth representatives to Synod conventions. If your district chooses to do so, you will continue to use the same **FORM VI** to register these youth representatives.

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### DISTRICT ADVISORY REPRESENTATIVES — SUBSTITUTIONS OR ADDRESS CHANGES

#### Vacancies

Should a vacancy occur in any of the above advisory representative positions, you will use **FORM VII—CHANGE IN REGISTRATION—ADVISORY REPRESENTATIVES** to report replacements or to report that no replacement will be made, thereby updating the Synod's roster of representatives attending the convention and certifying any changes made.

#### Address Changes

In the event of an address change, you will use **FORM XX—CHANGE OF ADDRESS** to update the Synod's records.



## (D) IMPORTANT DEADLINE REMINDERS FOR DISTRICT SECRETARIES

IMPORTANT DEADLINES TO REMEMBER:	
October 18, 2025	<b>DISTRICT VOTING DELEGATE MEETINGS DEADLINE:</b> By this date, your district's electoral circuit forums must have met to elect <b>voting delegates and alternates</b> to the Synod convention.
October 18, 2025	<b>DISTRICT NONVOTING ADVISORY DELEGATE ELECTION MEETINGS DEADLINE:</b> By this date, your district's ordained and commissioned minister advisory delegate meetings must have taken place to elect their nonvoting advisory delegates to the Synod convention.
October 25, 2025	<b>DELEGATE REGISTRATION FORMS DEADLINE:</b> By this date, you should have received from each electoral circuit of your district <b>FORM I</b> [see (A) above] and submitted it along with your <b>FORM II</b> and <b>FORM III</b> [see (B) above] to the Office of the Secretary of the Synod.
October 25, 2025	<b>ADVISORY REPRESENTATIVES REGISTRATION FORMS DEADLINE:</b> By this date, you should have gathered the convention registration information from your district [see (C) above] to submit using <b>FORM VI</b> to the Office of the Secretary of the Synod.

Thank you for the support for this certification process that you will be able to provide in your district.