

Northeast Oklahoma District License (Ministers In Training) Instruction Letter

Welcome to 2026. This year's MIT Instruction Letter contains many updates that will help you prepare for the upcoming MIT District License/Ordination interviews. As you read through this, we encourage you to work closely with your MIT Mentor, Education Evaluator and Jim Thornton (District Secretary) as we all want to be as prepared as possible for your interview.

- **All First-Time District License and Ordination interviews will be conducted In-Person.**
- **District License Renewal interviews are In-Person unless otherwise approved for Zoom.** Contact Jim Thornton for more information regarding an interview using Zoom.

Please note the following dates:

MIT Interview Days - Spanish

- Licensing Interviews will take place on Monday, March 9, 2026, 5:00 – 8:00 pm, Fuente de Vida Church, 13131 E. 21st Street, Tulsa, OK 74134
- Ordination interviews for both Hispanic and English speaking ordination candidates will take place on the evening of March 24 at Tulsa Hills Church, 840 W 81st Tulsa, 74132.
- Interview timeslots will be assigned after you submit your completed forms. The interview schedule will be posted on the <https://www.neokdistrict.org/resources/credentialing/district-licensing/> site and also sent out by Monday, February 23.
- All information regarding Removal of Divorce as Barrier that has not previously been approved must be submitted by February 19.

MIT Interview Day - English

- Licensing interview will take place Tuesday, March 24, 12:00 to 4:30pm, Tulsa Hills Church, 840 W 81st Tulsa, 74132
- Ordination interviews for both Hispanic and English speaking ordination candidates will take place on the evening of March 24 at Tulsa Hills Church, 840 W 81st Tulsa, 74132.
- Interview timeslots will be assigned after you submit your completed forms. The interview schedule will be posted on the <https://www.neokdistrict.org/resources/credentialing/district-licensing/> site and also sent out by Monday, February 23.
- All information regarding Removal of Divorce as Barrier that has not previously been approved must be submitted by February 19.

District Toolbox – each MIT needs a Toolbox account to access forms and education record

- **District Toolbox Account Holders.** All forms are located on the District Toolbox website (note that you access MIT records through the website, not the app used at District Assembly). If you created an account last year, please login at <http://app.neokdistrict.org> and be sure to click **Login with Password** at the bottom of the screen. **If you have forgotten your login information, please contact me at jthornton68@gmail.com.**
- **Create an account on the District Toolbox.** If you do not have a Toolbox account, go to <https://app.neokdistrict.org/create-account#googtrans> to create your account. Once created, you should be able to edit any of your contact information and upload a photo, as well as view your education record. If you have any questions or difficulty creating an account, feel free to contact me at jthornton68@gmail.com.

Course of Study/Academic Tracking

- **In-Person Academic Evaluation** - Due to the complexity of the transition to the new course of study program, each MIT (first time or returning) who has not completed the course of study will need to meet with Bret Metcalfe and the Ministerial Studies Team (Education Evaluators) on your interview

date for the next two years. This will allow you to discuss your educational progress and the best options for future academic success. We recognize there are a variety of educational options, degree and non-degree (NBC, NNU, SNU, etc.) and it can become confusing as to which classes are necessary for a specific track. Ministerial Studies members of the Board of Ministry will be working with you to ensure the approach that best suits your goals. If you have questions to be considered before the annual meeting, feel free to contact:

Jim Thornton – jthornton68@gmail.com (District Secretary)

Austin Troyer – austinjtroyer@gmail.com (East Region)

Bret Metcalfe – claremorenazpastor@gmail.com (chair)

Fabian Correa - ftcorrea1973@gmail.com (Hispanic Region)

Ronnie Baker – ronnielbaker@gmail.com (Tulsa Region)

Rod Thelander - rodthelander@gmail.com (West Region)

All transcript/tracking questions must be received or resolved before or by March 24.

- **If you are planning to take classes in the new Non-degree Course of Study through SNU, please take time to register.**
 - **Step 1:** Register with SNU by completing the New Course of Study Registration Form <https://www.snu.edu/pgs/snu-nazarene-course-of-study> This step only needs to be completed one time during your enrollment in the program. This one-time step will give you access to the SNU system
 - **Step 2:** Complete the appropriate session's Enrollment Form for the class you would like to take.
- **Academic Tracking** – Your Toolbox account is where you will find the most updated education record information that we have received. It is your responsibility to submit any new classes completed with accompanying verification (transcript or educational outlet confirmation) to jthornton68@gmail.com.

Responsibilities and Deadlines

- **It is the responsibility of the MIT** to communicate and coordinate all procedures called for with your local church leadership in preparation for the interview/renewal process. (Board evaluation, ministry agreement, etc.)
- **All required forms must be completed and submitted through Toolbox by Thursday, February 19.** If you have any questions that I can help you with, please email jthornton68@gmail.com or call me at [918-851-1178](tel:918-851-1178).

PLEASE IDENTIFY THE GROUP BELOW THAT APPLIES TO YOU:

Group 1: First-Time Application for District License OR New to the NEO District (Transferred since May 1, 2025) All First-Time interviews will be conducted In-Person.

1. The applicant must have a **Local Minister's License** for one year, have **completed one-fourth of a validated Course of Study**, usually including History and Polity of the Church of the Nazarene and Doctrine of Holiness, and **completed the General Secretary Screening** for license before he/she is eligible to apply for a District License. See Nazarene Manual paragraph 521-521.7 for further clarification.
2. **Background Check** - All MIT's must have a completed background check on file with the district office at the time of approval or renewal. This does not need to occur annually but must be no older than 5 years throughout the MIT process. You may send us a copy of a recent background check to meet this requirement.

3. **Communication on Special Issues including Divorce** – If you have been divorced, you need to have divorce removed as a barrier to ordination before you get your first district license. If you have ever been divorced or have other special issues that require further attention, please notify District Secretary, Jim Thornton or District Superintendent, Dr. McKellips.
4. **Complete the following required forms through your Toolbox account (see Toolbox info above).**
 - a. **District Minister License Application – Naz**
 - b. **First Time and Ordination Insights**
 - c. **First Time and Ordination - Biblical Principles**
5. **Communicate with your lead pastor about the completion and submission of these required forms (for those serving as lead pastor, contact Dr. McKellips):**
 - a. [First Time and Ordination - Church Board Evaluation](#) The lead pastor is to submit a summary of the church board evaluations along with a recommendation to the Assembly. Please use this link in the title.
 - b. [First Time/Renewal/Ordination - Recommendation to Assembly](#)
 - c. [Local Church Involvement](#) – review this document with your pastor. Ask for your Pastor’s counsel on how to best share this with the church board to make clear their responsibilities in the credentialing process.
 - d. [First Time/Renewal/Ordination - Formal Agreement between Minister in Training, Local Pastor and Church Board](#)
6. **See information above in Course of Study – Academic tracking**
7. **NEO – MIT Orientation** – All first-time and transfer MIT’s will meet with Dr. McKellips for a brief orientation on March 24.

Group 2: Renewal of District License for Current MIT’s on the NEO District

Renewal interviews via Zoom must be approved and arranged prior to February 27

1. **Complete the following required form through your Toolbox account (see Toolbox info above).**
 - a. **Renewal - Application Insights, 2026**
2. **Communicate with your lead pastor about the completion and submission of these required forms (for those serving as lead pastor, contact Dr. McKellips):**
 - a. [First Time/Renewal/Ordination - Recommendation to Assembly](#)
 - b. [First Time/Renewal/Ordination - Formal Agreement between Minister in Training, Local Pastor and Church Board](#)
3. **See information above in Course of Study – Academic tracking**
4. [Renewal - Mentoring Component](#) –It is the responsibility of each MIT to contact their assigned mentor throughout the year for input and review of ministerial progress. Be sure to send this form (link in title) to your mentor and have it completed **prior to February 19**. If you do not remember who your MIT Mentor is, contact Jim Thornton.

Group 3: Candidates Applying for Ordination or Recognition of Credentials

All Ordination interviews will be conducted In-Person.

1. **Complete the following required forms through your Toolbox account (see Toolbox info above).**
 - a. **First Time and Ordination Insights**
 - b. **Ordination-Recognition Questionnaire - Naz**

b. First Time and Ordination - Biblical Principles

2. **Communicate with your lead pastor about the completion and submission of these required forms (for those serving as lead pastor, contact Dr. McKellips):**
 - a. [First Time and Ordination - Church Board Evaluation](#) The lead pastor is to submit a summary of the church board evaluations along with a recommendation to the Assembly. Please use this link in the title.
 - b. [First Time/Renewal/Ordination - Recommendation to Assembly](#)
 - c. [First Time/Renewal/Ordination - Formal Agreement between Minister in Training, Local Pastor and Church Board](#)

3. **Completion of Course of Study**– All Course of Study requirements must be completed before the next District Assembly in order to be eligible for Ordination. Confirmation of completion must be submitted to the appropriate representative listed below. Your regional committee will confirm that you have completed the Course of Study. All transcript / course of study questions must be received or resolved before or on March 24 in order to be recommended for approval.
 - Jim Thornton – jthornton68@gmail.com (District Secretary)
 - Austin Troyer – austinjtroyer@gmail.com (East Region)
 - Bret Metcalfe – claremorenazpastor@gmail.com (chair)
 - Fabian Correa - ftcorrea1973@gmail.com (Hispanic Region)
 - Ronnie Baker – ronniebaker@gmail.com (Tulsa Region)
 - Rod Thelander - rodthelander@gmail.com (West Region)

4. **Renewal - Mentoring Component** –It is the responsibility of each MIT to contact their assigned mentor throughout the year for input and review of ministerial progress. Be sure to send this form (link in title) to your mentor and have it completed **prior to February 19**. If you do not remember who your MIT Mentor is, contact Jim Thornton.

5. **Please note that your spouse is expected to be present at your Ordination Interview.**
We recommend that you and your spouse wear business attire for this important occasion.

As I mentioned earlier, please contact me if I can answer any questions as we prepare for this important day.

Jim Thornton, NEO District Secretary

jthornton68@gmail.com

918-851-1178