



# Anti-Racism Requirement for Authorized Ministers and Members in Discernment

**Background:** Responding to the 2017 General Synod Resolution calling for anti-racism and racial justice training for clergy, and seeking to carry forward decisions previously made by associations within the RMC to require this training, in September 2022 the Conference-wide Committee on Ministry (CWCOW) voted to require anti-racism training for all Authorized Ministers (AMs) and Members in Discernment (MIDs) in the Rocky Mountain Conference. Only those retired clergy who have officially been granted exempt status are excused from this requirement.

**Intention:** Racial justice, decentering Whiteness, awareness of personal and systemic implicit biases, ethnic histories and heritages “hidden” from the dominant White cultural education are all hugely complex topics and yet are also rising to a new imperative for clergy awareness. When it comes to education around anti-racism and racial justice, RMC clergy have vastly different experiences and needs. The intention for this requirement is to ensure that all Authorized Ministers and Members in Discernment have a workable self-awareness and understanding of these dynamics and how they impact our respective churches and ministry settings, while also recognizing that personal and institutional work must be ongoing.

## Overview of Curriculum

Appropriate educational experiences encompass:

- personal awakening and transformation
- relearning history
- understanding complicity in the White supremacist culture and heritage of the United States
- understanding how Euro-centric churches have been and continue to be complicit
- awareness of racism present and influential in social justice issues and efforts
- advancing from a basic understanding of racism to more advanced practices of interruption, advocacy, and activism.
- recognizing and addressing the very different experiences of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) clergy functioning and ministering in a White supremacist culture and church.

✓ For those new to these concepts, our training requirement aims to provide basics and open the door for new awarenesses, enabling the pursuit of greater understanding.

✓ For those who are already well-versed in the basics, our hope is that this training requirement will afford an opportunity to be educated in deeper ways and explore more

intricacies and specialties relevant and applicable to your context and interest.

✓ For BIPOC clergy, our intention is that this training requirement will allow you to find an experience that provides nurture and support of your ministry in a White-centered culture, thus freeing you from unwittingly functioning as a teacher or racial interpreter (unless you make the conscious choice to accept this role).

## Meeting the Requirements

**Foundational Course:** Our expectation is that no later than December 2025 all RMC Authorized Ministers and Members in Discernment will have participated in a foundational course of a minimum of 6 (six) hours.

The following courses meet this requirement.

- \*Sacred Conversations to End Racism
- \*Soul to Soul Sisters
- \*MDA Anti Racism Course with Rev. Dr. Phil Campbell
- \*Anti Racism Training with Rev. Dr. Diane Weibel

(If you participated in one of the above classes as recently as 2020 and would like it to satisfy your foundational course requirement, please contact [cochairsos@rmcucc.org](mailto:cochairsos@rmcucc.org). If you have taken or are planning to take a course that is not listed above and wish to request that it meet this requirement, please contact [cochairsos@rmcucc.org](mailto:cochairsos@rmcucc.org) to initiate the approval process.)

**Continued Learning and Awareness:** Our expectation is that following the completion of a foundational course, every RMC Authorized Minister and Member in Discernment will participate in a group, class, or other appropriate opportunity at least once every 2 (two) years. This group, class, or course must be conducted by someone other than yourself who has received training for this. It is essential that you be a participant in this offering, and not a leader.

Criteria for these ongoing educational opportunities should feature the following:

- Has an intentional spiritual or ecclesiastical component (that is, it does not have an exclusively secular orientation)
- Is sponsored or supported by a religious institution or denomination (seminary, judicatory, national denomination, interfaith organization, etc.)
- Includes an element of active engagement (i.e. reading, discussion, written reflection - not simply lecture, presentation, or webinar)
- Offers an emphasis that is relevant to you (i.e. Race and Housing, Race and the Environment, Race and Health Care, etc.). This educational opportunity may center on a specific racial group or may focus on systemic racism and racial justice in general.

- BIPOC clergy are encouraged to consider participating in a group or class that is more healing and supportive in nature rather than one largely directed to individuals of Euro-descent.

### **Requirement Completion**

- If the training is sponsored by a UCC conference or national office, or is publicized by CW-COM as an event that meets the anti-racism training requirement, it may be taken without review. Other trainings must be approved in advance by the Supportive Oversight Committee in consultation with the Anti-Racism Ministry Team. Email [cochairsos@rmcucc.org](mailto:cochairsos@rmcucc.org) to secure pre-approval. • Upon completion of your training, please notify [cochairsos@rmcucc.org](mailto:cochairsos@rmcucc.org) to ensure that your ministerial file is updated. For trainings NOT sponsored by the RMC, you must provide verification of enrollment and participation by the trainer/s. (This can be a certificate or letter.)

**Sources for Continued Learning and Awareness Experiences:** Below are organizations that occasionally provide trainings that authorized ministers and MIDs may use to meet the on-going anti-racism requirement:

- [National UCC: Sacred Conversations to End Racism](#)
- [Center for Racial Justice \(affiliated with the Episcopal Dioceses of Atlanta\)](#)
- [Anti-Racism Study Dialogue Circles](#)
- [The School of Global Citizenry](#)
- [Robin Wright Institute](#)
- Other UCC conferences and other denominations' judicatories often open opportunities to authorized ministers and MIDs from other settings and denominations. Special seminary courses or trainings are regularly offered by regional theological education programs such as [Pathways Theological Education](#) and the [New York School of Ministry](#)
- [Soul2Soul Sisters](#)
- New, appropriate offerings will be publicized in the RMC Newsletter. (If you become aware of other resources, please share them with the Supportive Oversight Committee so that, if appropriate, they can be publicized.)

**Funding:** The CWCOCOM will encourage congregations to add funding for this requirement to clergy call agreements and continuing education budgets. If a church or ministry setting is unable to meet the cost for this requirement, the Anti-Racism Ministry Team may make partial scholarships available on a first-come, first-served basis. You are also encouraged to approach your association leadership about possible underwriting.

**Remember:** To maintain your active standing, you must complete your foundational antiracism/racial

justice course no later than December 2025. Those seeking deferment of or exemption from this requirement must contact the Supportive Oversight Committee co-chairs at [cochairsos@rmcucc.org](mailto:cochairsos@rmcucc.org) to complete a formal request.

Note: This document was most recently revised November 15, 2023.