

ELCA Fund for Leaders

for this church and for our future

Federal Chaplaincy Ministries Scholarship Guidelines 2026

Application Cycle February 9th, 2026 - March 13th, 2026

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be selected for an ELCA Fund for Leaders (FFL) Federal Chaplaincy Ministries Scholarship students must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Must be attending an ELCA seminary on what their seminary considers a full-time basis.
- Must be preparing for ministry as a military, Veterans Administration (VA) or federal prison chaplain and enrolling or enrolled as a MDiv/MA student at an ELCA seminary.
- Military applicants must be intending to pursue appointment as a Chaplain Candidate and a commissioned officer. VA hospital or prison chaplaincy applicants must have completed one unit of CPE.
- Must be pursuing a place on the ELCA roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament (pastors).

Eligibility criteria, cont.

- Must provide Fund for Leaders a Synod Verification Form signed by the synod bishop (document available in application).
- Must provide FCM Discernment Verification Form signed by Sr. Director of Federal Chaplaincy

The following types of students ARE eligible:

- Residential or non-residential
- Word and Sacrament (pastor) candidate and enrolled in MDiv/MA degree program
- Students applying for FFL full tuition scholarships may also apply for FCM scholarship – please reference FAQ to learn about receiving multiple FFL scholarships: <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Leadership/ELCA-Fund-for-Leaders/FAQs>

SELECTION PROCESS

- All eligible students may apply directly to the ELCA Fund for Leaders through ELCA GrantMaker.
- ELCA Federal Chaplaincy Ministries, in conversation with Fund for Leaders, convenes a selection committee to review application materials and make award decisions. Award amounts are based on number of scholarships awarded and amount available from endowments. ***All awards are meant to be additive to other scholarships and tuition assistance a student may already be receiving and can be used for non-tuition expenses associated with their studies.***
- Federal Chaplaincy Ministries Scholarships are one-year awards, but recipients are encouraged to reapply in subsequent years if they remain eligible.

2026-2027 SCHOLARSHIP TIMELINE

Feb. 9, 2026	Application process opens in ELCA GrantMaker (elca.fluxx.io).
Mar. 13, 2026	Application process closes in ELCA GrantMaker (all applications must now be complete)
Mar. 2026	Selection committee review and deliberation
Apr. 2026	Applicants informed of scholarship decisions by end of April.
May 2026	Synods informed of scholarship decisions
Sept. 2026	FFL makes fall payment to seminaries (1/2 of yearly award)
Jan. 2027	FFL makes spring payment to seminaries (1/2 of yearly award)

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Instructions for students applying through ELCA GrantMaker can be found at **[ELCA.org/fundforleaders](https://www.elca.org/fundforleaders)** and tips are available on the next page.
- Any questions? Please contact us, or have students contact us, at **fundforleaders@elca.org** or 773-380-2936.

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Instructions for Federal Chaplaincy Ministries applicants

APPLICANTS: You can apply for this scholarship through ELCA GrantMaker (elca.fluxx.io). **Your window for applying is Feb 9, 2026 to Mar 13, 2026.** You will be informed of scholarship decisions no later than the end of April 2026. If you are chosen as a recipient, you will receive half of the total amount for your fall semester, and the remaining half for spring semester. Fund for Leaders automatically sends payment to your seminary in your name.

TIPS FOR APPLYING FOR YOUR SCHOLARSHIP

1. Applying is a multi-step process! Give yourself enough time!

- a. First, go to elca.fluxx.io to create a new account and register.
 - i. Select Domestically for receiving FFL funds
 - ii. Which ELCA grant class - select Fund for Leaders
 - iii. Select the scholarship type **"Federal Chaplaincy Ministries Scholarship."** There will be a drop-down menu – select the name of the specific synod scholarship for which you are nominated.
 - iv. When the application asks, "Are you applying as an individual or on behalf of an organization?" you should select **"Individual."**
 - v. Submit your registration.
- b. When your registration is approved (generally within two days – please be patient!), you should receive an email from ELCA GrantMaker with the subject "New User Information."
- c. Set your password by clicking the URL in that email and following the instructions. (*Be sure to use the same email address – and check it regularly!*). You will immediately receive a **password reset** email with a unique link to finalize your password.
- d. After you set your password, you can log in to the portal using your username (found in the "New User Information" email) and new password. Using Chrome or Microsoft Edge, access the portal at <https://elca.fluxx.io>.

2. Now you can complete the application.

- a. Read the instructions first! Then in the menu at the left, click on "Applications." Go to **"ELCA Scholarships: ELCA Fund for Leaders"** and choose **Federal Chaplaincy Ministries Scholarship**.
- b. Required documents – Discernment Verification Form (sent to the Rev. Christopher Otten, Sr. Director of Federal Chaplaincy and returned directly to FFL) this document will be emailed to you directly from the FFL team when you register for FCM scholarship & Applicant's Statement of Intent. Please submit Approval Chaplain Candidate Form (if you have *previously* received one).
- c. When you complete the application, ***remember to save and submit!***

Please contact FundforLeaders@elca.org or 773-380-2936 with any questions. We are happy to help!