

871—23.27(96) Exempt employment in the employ of a church, association of churches or an organization that is operated primarily for religious purposes.

23.27(1) The word “church” is used in its limited sense and is synonymous with an individual house of worship maintained by a particular congregation. Any service by an individual for a church, convention or association of churches is excluded from coverage. However, the exclusion does not apply to service performed for an organization that may be religious in orientation unless it is operated primarily for religious purposes and is operated, supervised, controlled or principally supported by a church (or a convention or association of churches). Thus, the service of the janitor of a church is excluded, but the service of a janitor for a separately incorporated college, although it may be church-related, is covered.

23.27(2) Service for a college devoted primarily to the preparation of students for the ministry is exempt, as is service for a novitiate or a house of study, training candidates to become members of religious orders. However, this chapter does not consider a church-related (separately incorporated) charitable organization (such as an orphanage or a home for the aged) to be operated primarily for religious purposes.

23.27(3) The exclusion of service performed by ministers in the exercise of their ministry and by members of a religious order in performing the duties required by such order applies only when such service is performed for nonprofit organizations ordinarily required to be covered by the Iowa employment security law.

23.27(4) A minister is ordained, commissioned, or licensed if such minister has been vested with ministerial status in accordance with the procedure followed by the particular church denomination. Such minister does not have to be connected with a congregation. Ministerial authority continues until revoked by the church.

23.27(5) The term “exercise of the ministry” includes the conduct of religious worship and the ministration of sacerdotal functions; service performed in the control, conduct, and maintenance of a religious organization under the authority of a religious body constituting a church or church denomination or an organization operated as an integral agency of such a religious organization or of a church or church denomination; service performed for any organization under an assignment or designation by a church (not including cases in which a church merely helps a minister by recommending such minister for a position involving nonministerial services for an organization not connected with the church); and missionary service or administrative work in the employ of a missionary organization. Control, conduct, and maintenance of an organization does not include services such as operating an elevator, or being a janitor, but refers to services performed in the directing, management, or promotion of the activities of the organization.

23.27(6) Accordingly, service of clergy as a chaplain in an orphanage or in an old-age home is excluded since such service is in the exercise of a ministry as is the service of members of a teaching or nursing order who are engaged in teaching or nursing. In the case of a member of a religious order, the criterion is whether the order requires the performance of such service.

23.27(7) School coverage.

a. Schools that are not separately incorporated and are affiliated with a church are exempt from insured employment because their employees are in the direct employ of a church or convention or association of churches.

b. Schools that are separately incorporated and are affiliated with a church are exempt from insured employment if such schools are operated primarily for religious purposes.

c. Schools that are not affiliated with a church are covered employers with covered employment.

“*Affiliated*” as used in this rule means operated, supervised, controlled, or principally supported by a church or convention or association of churches. A school that is operated primarily for religious purposes must have as its chief and principal purpose for operation a religious orientation. The school must have as its purpose of first or highest rank of importance the religious indoctrination of its students.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 96.1A(16) “a”(6)(a) and (c).

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