Introduction to the Application

Welcome to your application for LLL leadership! Everything you need to know can be found in this handbook or by contacting your supporting Leader or your Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) representative. Don’t hesitate to ask if you have questions! We also appreciate any input you have about the application, and any suggestions to make the preparation more effective and efficient. You’ll find the resources and information online on the pages for Applicants on the LLL Alliance for Breastfeeding Education (formerly Eastern United States) Web site: http://www.llleus.org/Applicants.html

Following are some common questions:

What is required to be accredited as an LLL Leader?

☐ **Personal History**: This is discussion with the LAD representative about yourself and your understanding of LLL philosophy, and how each of the ten LLL concepts relates to your experiences. This is to satisfy the Criteria for Leader Accreditation that you have “demonstrated understanding of LLLI philosophy.” The *Personal History of Breastfeeding and Mothering* is available from your LAD representative, or online: http://www.llleus.org/Applicants/RPH07Feb.doc

☐ **Breastfeeding Resource Guide (BRG)**: This consists of several pages of self-directed learning about basic breastfeeding management and LLL resources. Completing the BRG is required to satisfy the Breastfeeding Management Criteria for Leader Accreditation. The BRG is available from your LAD representative, or online: http://www.llleus.org/Applicants/BRG_2011_Oct.doc

☐ **Checklist of Leadership Skills and Attitudes**: This lists the topics you will discuss with a Leader(s) to satisfy the Leadership Skills Criteria for Leader Accreditation. The *Checklist of Topics to Discuss in Preparation for LLL Leadership* is available from your LAD representative, or online: http://www.llleus.org/Applicants/LHchecklist2011.doc A previous version is also available in a slightly different format in *Leader’s Handbook*, pp. 150-52.

☐ **Preview of Mothers’ Questions/Problems and Group Dynamics/Management**: This is practice (with a Leader or Leaders) responding both to common questions that mothers ask about breastfeeding and to comments that are apt to come up at a Series Meeting. This can be done in person, by email, and/or by telephone, and relates to the Leadership Skills and Breastfeeding Management Criteria. The *Preview* is available from your LAD representative, or online: http://www.llleus.org/Applicants/PreviewLA.rtf You will also complete a Preview Evaluation, answering the questions on the front page of the *Preview*.

☐ **Background Reading/Learning**:  
  • Comprehensive childbirth book from the *LLLI Bibliography*, one that covers many delivery methods and their effect on the start of breastfeeding. You can fulfill this requirement by reading the LAD *Childbirth and Breastfeeding* booklet (online at http://www.llli.org/docs/lad/ChildbirthandBreastfeeding.pdf) or learning the information in another way. Ask your LAD representative about options. This helps fulfill the Leadership Skills and Breastfeeding Management Criteria.
Do I need to do the work in the order listed above?
Feel free to work on the various aspects in any order. You might also like to combine work on several aspects. For example, you might combine work on the BRG with Preview sessions. After learning about a topic in the BRG, you could practice responding to a mother who called with a question about that topic.

How long does an application take?
This varies among individuals, but many Applicants find they can complete the work in about six months. The time needed to work on leadership preparation corresponds closely to the time required to fulfill the responsibilities of leadership. Finding ways to weave application work into your other commitments will allow you to determine whether leadership will realistically fit into your life right now. Because of that, we expect that you will be working actively on your application at a pace that fits into your life.

Time management suggestions
Set a plan now for completing your application, and begin work right away. Your LAD representative can answer any questions you have about the requirements to meeting the Criteria for Leader Accreditation. You might need to drop or change some other commitments now that you've added leadership preparation. Setting priorities is a necessary skill for Leaders, and now is a great time to develop that skill. Your LAD representative can give you suggestions for fitting the work into your life, and hints that have worked for other Applicants. Included in this Introduction is a sample plan for completing application work in six months.

Applicant Workshops, online groups, etc.
Availability of these resources varies according to location. Your supporting Leader or LAD representative can tell you about what there is where you live. Jot down the information below for your later reference:

In-person Applicant meetings:__________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

On-line groups for Applicants:___________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Upcoming Leader/Applicant Workshops or Conferences:___________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

When you encounter a roadblock
Life happens, and there might be times when you need help getting around an obstacle. Let your LAD representative and/or Leader know if you are finding it challenging to accomplish leadership preparation work. She can help you brainstorm ideas.

If you move
Your application can move right along with you. You will want to take some time to get to know the Leaders in your new Group. However, you will probably not need to repeat work you have already done. The Leaders in your new Group may have suggestions for activities or learning that will round out your preparation, in addition to what you had planned to do before you moved.
The Leaders in your new Group will be interested to hear what things might have been done differently in your former Group. This “cross-pollination” is a good way for Groups to get fresh ideas. Keep in mind, though, that at the beginning, it’s a good idea to be sparing with your use of the phrase, “Well, in my old Group, we . . . .” After all, no one wants to feel like the methods that have been successful for her Group should all be changed immediately!

**If you have a conflict with Leader(s) in your Group**

Resolving co-Leader conflict is a vital skill for a Leader, so you can use this opportunity to learn how to handle that. Your LAD representative can support you if you are dealing with such a conflict.

Leaders have diverse personalities, which can be an asset since it enables LLL to appeal to a wider variety of mothers. This diversity can sometimes make working together a challenge, though. You need not be personal friends with future co-Leaders; but you do need to be able to work together professionally to help mothers. A good beginning point when there is conflict is to keep focused on the LLL mission. You are all working to the same end, even if you have different ideas of how to get there. Here are some general guidelines:

- Arrange a time to talk with the Leader you have a conflict with. Delays can intensify negative feelings.
- Confidentiality is crucial. Avoid the temptation to complain about the one Leader to other Leaders, Applicants, or Group members you are friends with.
- Present your concerns in respectful ways. Avoid accusations and describe your concern using “I” messages (“I feel . . . when . . .”).
- Listen carefully. Allow the other person time to think and respond. Be open to changing your mind if you receive new or different information.
- Together, find points of agreement and a way to proceed that allows both of you to reach your goals.
- When the conflict is resolved, put it behind you.

**If you don't receive a response from your LAD representative**

If she hasn’t answered your email or letter within two weeks, you or your Leader might telephone her. Sometimes email doesn’t arrive as expected. Email really can get lost on cyberspace, or it can be blocked by a spam filter. Or, your LAD representative may have changed her email address and you somehow missed that notification.

If you are still unable to contact her, or if she fails to follow through on responding in a timely way after you’ve talked, you or your supporting Leader can contact the LAD representative’s support person. An Associate Coordinator of Leader Accreditation (ACLA) is supported by the Coordinator of Leader Accreditation (CLA), and the CLA by a Regional/Administrator of Leader Accreditation (R/ALA). Your supporting Leader can find contact information for those Leaders in the Area Directory.

If none of those suggestions helps, contact the LLLI Leader Accreditation Department at: LeaderAccreditation@llli.org
A little dictionary of terms and abbreviations
Following are some of the terms you are most likely to hear during your application. This is by no means a comprehensive list of the “alphabet soup” you will encounter in LLL. Be sure to ask if you hear an unfamiliar term—no one expects you to have all of them memorized now. As you hear and use various acronyms often, they will become automatic to you. When you attend Area Conferences/Workshops and other enrichment opportunities, you will meet the people who hold various positions. That can enable you to “put a face to the title.” Learning what a Leader does in her Area can help you make sense of the titles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>Area Conference Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACf</td>
<td>Area Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACL</td>
<td>Area Coordinator of Leaders</td>
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<td>ACLA</td>
<td>Associate Coordinator of Leader Accreditation</td>
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<td>AFC</td>
<td>Area Financial Coordinator</td>
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<td>ALL</td>
<td>Area Leaders’ Letter</td>
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<td>AN</td>
<td>Area Network</td>
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<td>APC</td>
<td>Area Publications Coordinator</td>
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<td>APL</td>
<td>Area Professional Liaison</td>
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<td>AT</td>
<td>Area Treasurer</td>
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<tr>
<td>BAMS</td>
<td>Breastfeeding Answers Made Simple (book by Nancy Mohrbacher)</td>
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<td>BoD</td>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLA</td>
<td>Coordinator of Leader Accreditation</td>
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<td>CN</td>
<td>Community Network (LLLI online resources for Leaders)</td>
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<td>CSF</td>
<td>Communication Skills Facilitator</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSI</td>
<td>Communication Skills Instructor</td>
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<td>DA</td>
<td>District Advisor</td>
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<td>DC</td>
<td>District Coordinator</td>
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<td>IBCLC</td>
<td>International Board Certified Lactation Consultant</td>
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<td>LAD</td>
<td>Leader Accreditation Department</td>
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<td>LARK</td>
<td>Leader Applicant’s Resource Kit</td>
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<tr>
<td>LH</td>
<td>Leader’s Handbook (abbreviation used only in casual notes)</td>
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<td>WAB</td>
<td>The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding (abbreviation used only in casual notes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WBWC</td>
<td>World Breastfeeding Week Celebration</td>
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A Six-Month Application Plan
*Allow flexibility for when unexpected events intervene

Month 1:
Week 1: Read and think about the first letter from my LAD representative. Write her to ask for more information about each of the application parts, as needed. Read about the parts and set up a plan. Look over The Womanly Art, which I read before applying. This time I will think about how I would use the information to help others.
Week 2: Read Chapter 1, Leader’s Handbook (LH).
Week 3: Write about three concepts. Read five pages of the LAD booklet, Childbirth and Breastfeeding.
Week 4: Submit thoughts about three more concepts. Finish last five pages of the childbirth booklet.

Month 2:
Week 5: Submit thoughts about remaining four concepts. Read Chapter 2, LH.
Week 6: Read Part A of the BRG; organize my resources.
Week 7: Work through Part B of the BRG (one section on each of five days). Mark location of pertinent information in The Womanly Art for future reference when mothers call.

Month 3:
Weeks 8 & 9: Work through Part C of the BRG (one section on each of eight days) and mark pages in The Womanly Art.
Weeks 10, 11, 12: Work through Part D of the BRG (one section on each of 17 days), marking pages in The Womanly Art.

Month 4:
Week 13: Read through Part E of the BRG. Talk with Leader about resources available to us.
Week 14: Look over Part F of the BRG; read resources for problems common in my location, marking pages in The Womanly Art.
Week 15: Read half of Chapter 3, LH. Meet with Leader to cover “Helping Mothers” section of the “Checklist Organized by Leader Responsibilities.”
Week 16: Finish Chapter 3, LH. Meet with Leader to cover “Planning and Leading Series Meetings” section of the Checklist.

Month 5:
Week 17: Read Chapter 4, LH. Plan a meeting that my Leader will lead.
Week 18: Meet with Leader to cover “Supervising the management of the LLL Group” section of Checklist. Talk with women who hold Group jobs (e.g., Treasurer) about their work.
Week 19: Read Chapter 5, LH. Meet with Leader to cover “Helping other mothers find out about leadership and prepare to become LLL Leaders” section of Checklist.
Week 20: Practice “M. Interest in Becoming a Leader” from the Preview on the phone with a Leader. Meet with Leader to talk about “Keeping up-to-date” section of Checklist.

Month 6:
Week 21: Practice two Preview topics from the Mothers’ Questions section on the phone with Leader.
Week 22: Practice two more Preview topics. Read Chapter 6, LH.
Week 23: Discuss three situations from the Group Dynamics section of the Preview.
Week 24: Write my Preview Evaluation (questions on front page of Preview).