

**AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS
LOS ANGELES CHAPTER, PLACEMENT SERVICE**

AUDITION GUIDELINES

1. A committee consisting of clergy and lay leaders and members of the choir should be established by the church to hear the auditions.
2. Each candidate for the position should be auditioned and interviewed individually.
3. The committee should obtain from each candidate for its files a complete resume. It may be desirable to require references (regarding both character and music proficiency) from each candidate.
4. Since the primary duties of the job entail service-playing ability, churches are cautioned against basing the audition on the ability of a candidate to perform only prepared literature. A prepared organ piece is not necessarily an indication of whether a person is also capable of playing a service. It is suggested that an audition include the following items:
 - a) Hymn and Psalm playing--the candidate may be given the opportunity to play a prepared hymn as well as one or more hymns at sight. The committee should be listening for singability of hymns and psalms in terms of tempo and registration.
 - b) Liturgical music--Liturgical churches may also wish to have a candidate play appropriate chants and other service music at this time.
 - c) Prepared organ music--the candidate should be prepared to play one or two organ compositions practical for Sunday morning use. These works need not be difficult, but should be played well, and give a good indication of the candidate's general facility and musicality at the organ.
 - d) The choirmaster candidate might appropriately be questioned about his/her philosophy of the music program in the church, development of choir membership, and principles of choral tone development, among other topics.
5. If the vacancy is for choirmaster/organist, a selected list of choirmaster candidates should be invited to return to audition individually before the choir. Candidates should prepare a rehearsal lasting about a half hour and should include a "warm-up" and several anthems from the church's choral library.
6. The AGO recommends that prior to the final decision by the committee, the candidate(s) selected by the committee be given the opportunity to play a service, if possible. The candidate(s) should be paid as if he/she were a substitute. This is an excellent way to determine whether a person has an understanding of service playing and of the flow of worship.