



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WEST VIRGINIA

Compensation, Benefits, and Expectations Between Parishes and Clergy Employed in the Diocese of West Virginia

Christ states in the Gospel of Luke that the “laborers are due their wages (Luke 10:7). As one who works in the mission fields and tends the flocks entrusted to them by their Bishop, and by God, the labors of the clergy are worthy of compensation.

Compensation Guidelines for All Clergy Engaged in Parish Ministry

- Fifty percent (50%) of the amount of SECA is to be paid by the congregation, which is 7.65% of the stipend and housing combined.
- The canonically required pension of 18% of all compensation above \$200 per month will be covered by the congregation
- The cost of cell phone, amount of mileage reimbursement, and other related church business costs will be negotiated as part of the Letter of Agreement.
- The cost of health insurance premiums for coverage from the Church Medical Trust will be covered by the congregation. This may be negotiated if the clergy person is covered under a spouse’s health insurance policy or under a retirement policy. It is expected, if medical coverage is not needed, that an agreed upon amount will be offered in a 403(b) account for the clergy person.

Compensation Guidelines for Full Time Clergy

- Minimum Full-time Stipend for clergy newly ordained is \$55,000, with an annual automatic increase of \$500 in recognition of each year of service. This figure is inclusive of the housing allowance.
 - An annual Cost of Living increase should be considered, based on the suggested rate from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics
 - Additional merit raises are encouraged, but optional, at the discretion of the Vestry and as the congregational budget can afford
- A minimum of \$2000 for Continuing Education be set aside each year.
- The cost of cell phone, amount of mileage reimbursement, and other related church business costs are to be negotiated as part of the Letter of Agreement.
- The vestry agrees to place aside each year the sum of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) to fund the rector’s sabbatical needs.
 - This money is only for the rector’s sabbatical and cannot be used for any other purpose or transferred with her should she leave the parish.
 - It is understood that this money is not to be used for operational costs or normal operating budget items for the parish but solely for the use of the rector’s travel or educational needs for sabbatical.

Compensation Guidelines for Part-Time Clergy

- Compensation for Part-time clergy varies depending on the commitment of time and the extent of duties. However, the cost of the compensation will not exceed more than 40% and be not less than 10% of the projected income of the congregation.
- A minimum of \$1000 for Continuing Education be set aside each year.
- The cost of cell phone, amount of mileage reimbursement, and other related church business costs are to be negotiated as part of the Letter of Agreement.

Housing and Housing Allowances

- The clergy person shall be provided housing or a housing allowance.
 - All members of the clergy serving in the Diocese of West Virginia, not residing in church owned housing, are entitled to a housing allowance to be designated from their stipend and to be set commensurate with the local average rental plus utilities. This figure is to be set annually, in the Vestry minutes prior to January 1 for the coming year or immediately before the clergyperson begins their cure at a parish. Vestries are encouraged to approve the Housing Allowance in November of each year.
 - Should the parish provide housing in the form of a rectory, utilities shall be contracted for and paid directly by the Vestry, and expenses for repair, remodeling, and major appliances shall be paid by the Vestry in accordance to an annual plan and budget mutually agreed to by the Rector and Vestry. The Fair Market Value of the provided housing is to be subtracted from the total payment of the stipend. This Fair Market Value is to be no less than \$15,000 and no more than 40% of the total stipend for Full-time ministry. The value of the housing is to be included in calculations for pension and SECA reimbursement.

Compensation for Supply Clergy

Supply clergy are those who are available to celebrate or administer the sacraments in a parish when their rector or priest-in-charge is unavailable. These individuals, whether they be Deacons or Priests, spend time and effort crafting a sermon and preparing to officiate and should be duly compensated for their time and energy. The following compensation guidelines are expected to be followed by parishes in the Diocese of West Virginia.

- Supply clergy are to be compensated \$150 for officiating at a service.
- If there are more than one service on a Sunday, each additional service requires compensation of \$50.
- If the supply clergy is coming from another diocese they shall be compensated at the minimum rate of their home diocese or the Diocese of West Virginia, whichever is higher.
- Reimbursement shall be made for mileage from the supply clergyperson's home to the parish and back at the standard IRS mileage rate.
- Hotel accommodations may be reimbursed by prior agreement between the wardens of the parish and the supply clergy who requests it.
- For midweek services without full sermon, such as healing services or prayer services, compensation will be negotiated between the clergy, to include mileage reimbursement.

Compensation for Deacons

Deacons are those individuals called to ordained ministry to, "...interpret to the Church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world," and, "...to assist the bishop and priests in public worship and in the ministration of God's Word and Sacraments." Deacons are assigned to parishes by the Bishop, in consultation with the rector or priest-in-charge and the Vestry, for the exercise of this ministry.

Parishes served by a deacon are to compensate these members of the clergy in an amount equivalent or greater than the Church Pension Group (CPG) minimum qualifying rate, currently established at Twenty-Five dollars (\$25) per month. These parishes shall make the corresponding contribution to the Church Pension Fund of eighteen percent (18%) to ensure that they receive the benefits afforded those to participating in the CPG program. Those deacons over the mandatory retirement age of 72 are exempt from the requirement of CPG participation.

This remuneration is subject to the Letter of Agreement (LOA) signed with the Diocesan Bishop and is in addition to the reimbursement of expenses incurred by the deacon in ministry, travel, continuing education, and professional organizations appropriate to the function of the deacon in their ministry.

A deacon may, at their sole discretion, request the Vestry of a parish or governing body of a faith community to which they serve to designate said remuneration as a "Housing Allowance" in accordance with current tax codes;

Parental Leave After the Birth or Adoption of a Child

Children are an inheritance from the Lord. Scripture teaches us that "whoever receives a little child in the name of Christ receives Christ himself." Therefore, it is a right and honorable thing for the church to ensure that new parents have the time and opportunity to bond and hold holy the birth or adoption of a child. Therefore, it is the policy of this Diocese for new parents to receive two months, understood to include eight Sundays, paid leave and an additional month of part-time leave, understood that Sundays would be working days.

Moving Expenses for Clergy

Clergy who are coming in to a new position in the Diocese of West Virginia are entitled to up to \$10,000 of reimbursement for costs incurred in moving. This amount may be negotiated higher between the congregation and the clergy if costs are significantly larger than the allotted amount.

Clergy Leaving a Congregation but Remaining in the Area

Clergy who resign or retire from a cure in the Diocese of West Virginia, but remain in the community they served, or within close proximity, are expected to maintain responsible and healthy boundaries between themselves and their former congregation. These members of the clergy will sign a Memorandum of Understanding, with the Bishop, to clearly define those boundaries and what expectations the Diocese may have for them.

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