

ADMINISTRATION OF PAROCHIAL FEES AND PAYMENTS TO OFFICIATING MINISTERS

The following document was approved by Bishops Council in Dec 2025
Policy with effect from 1 January 2026

Pastoral Ministry

It is essential that the Church of England is able to provide occasional offices (baptisms, weddings and funerals) and the pastoral care associated with those offices. With a decrease nationally in the number of stipendiary clergy available, the Church will become more reliant on licensed or authorised volunteers in the future. Recognising this, the Bishop's Council decided in 2018 that there should be parity between retired stipendiary ministers, retired self-supporting ministers and other retired ministers.

Funerals

The Bishop's Council also notes the need for some non-retired Self-Supporting Ministers to help with officiating at Funerals and their additional time and support of this area of ministry needs to be recognised.

Ministers eligible to receive a fee for Funerals

All retired stipendiary and self-supporting, lay readers and ministers who have served in secular chaplaincies who meet the following criteria may receive a fee and are referred to here as '**eligible ministers**'.

Such payments for Funerals may only be made where:

- a parochial fee due to the Diocesan Board of Finance has actually been paid for the service i.e. not waived;

AND

1. The minister:

- holds the Bishop's Permission to Officiate (PTO)

OR

2. The minister:

- If licensed, receives neither a stipend nor a house for duty

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NB for the avoidance of doubt, current serving chaplains in the forces, prisons, hospitals and hospices are not eligible ministers and should not receive a fee payment for taking occasional offices.

Fee payable from the DBF fee portion to eligible ministers for Funerals

- Payment for conducting a funeral service, wherever held, including all preparation, follow-up pastoral care and any subsequent attendance at a burial or interment of ashes, will, in 2026, be £106.00 (note 1)
- If interment is undertaken by a DIFFERENT eligible minister on a separate occasion, the amount payable to them will be £40.00.

Weddings

Fee payable from the DBF fee portion to eligible ministers for Weddings

Such payments for Weddings may only be made where:

- a parochial fee due to the Diocesan Board of Finance has actually been paid for the service i.e. not waived;

AND

The ordained minister:

- has attained state pension age
- holds the Bishop's Permission to Officiate (PTO)

Fees payable for Weddings

Payment for conducting a wedding including all preparation and any follow-up pastoral care, in 2026, will be £106.00 (note 1)

Sunday and Weekday Service Cover

Fee payable to eligible ministers for Casual Duty

[The following apply except during a vacancy (when there are different rules – see the vacancy pack sent to Churchwardens or contact the Diocesan Office for information), or, with agreement of the DBF, if an incumbent is absent due to long term sickness]:

- The fees paid for casual duty are to be paid from the funds of the relevant PCC and not from the DBF part of any parochial fees received for weddings and funerals.

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- Fees for conducting other services will only be payable when an eligible minister officiates outside of the benefice where they reside or where they normally minister/worship. [Note: Normal working expenses, including travel, should be reimbursed where casual duty is undertaken other than in the minister's home parish.]
- The fee, when payable, for casual duty will be £40.00 for the first Sunday service in a benefice; -
- £20.00 for any additional services in the same benefice on the same Sunday; and - £40.00 for each midweek service.

Such payments for services may only be paid if:

The minister has retired from stipendiary ministry and:

- has attained state pension age
- holds the Bishop's Permission to Officiate (PTO), or if still licensed, receives neither a stipend nor a house for duty.

OR

The minister is a self-supporting minister (i.e. SSM or LLM) who:

- has retired from secular employment
- has attained state pension age
- holds the Bishop's PTO, or, if licensed, does not occupy a house for duty and they are ministering outside of their agreed home benefice

Summary Table of Fees Payable Checklist 2026

| | Funerals | Weddings | Sunday and Mid-Week Services |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| PTO Clergy of State Pension Age | Yes | Yes | Yes if outside home benefice |
| PTO SSM Clergy of State Pension Age | Yes | Yes | Yes if outside home benefice |
| SSM Clergy who are not House for Duty | Yes | | |
| LLM / Readers | Yes | | |
| PTO LLM / Readers of State Pension Age | Yes | | Yes if outside home benefice |

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Waiving of Fees

- No fee is payable for the funeral of a child under 16 years.
- Waiving of fees is generally only exercised in cases of clear financial hardship; other reasons should be referred to the Archdeacon for approval.
- The incumbent has a right to waive the PCC fee, after consulting the churchwardens, “in a particular case”
- The incumbent has a right to waive the DBF fee, after consulting the Archdeacon, who should be consulted in advance.
- No fee is payable to any eligible minister when the DBF parochial fee has been waived.
- If an eligible minister waives their fee, this may be deducted from the DBF fee payable if approved by the Archdeacon.

In every case where a fee is waived the incumbent is required to complete a ‘fee waiver notification’ and ensure that this is submitted to the DBF with the normal quarterly parochial fees return so that a full audit trail is available to support the DBF statutory accounts.

Travel Expenses

Travel Expenses for Funerals

Valid travel and other related expenses should continue to be reimbursed to all ministers. If a funeral is in church, any reimbursement to the officiating minister for travel expenses to the church should normally be paid by the PCC [an exception to this would be where a minister is specifically requested by name by a family who does not normally minister at that church] .

Travel expenses to a crematorium or public cemetery are over and above any set fees and are payable by the arranger of the office in question **not out of the DBF or PCC fee.**

Travel Expenses for Weddings

Travel and other related expenses should be reimbursed to the Minister from the funds of the relevant PCC.

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Payment of Parochial Fees

- All fees for the DBF and the PCC should be paid to the PCC at or before the time of the occasional office. The PCC are responsible for the correct disbursement of funds to the DBF and to any eligible minister.
- Precise records must be kept in each parish of fees received and DBF fees should be paid to the Diocesan Office on a quarterly basis.
- The form for parochial fee payments and of any fee waived in a particular case is available on the diocesan website at www.portsmouth.anglican.org/fees -
- The Diocesan Office makes periodic cross checks with PCC treasurers on the total fees received in a particular period.

Notes:

1. The fee payable under this policy to eligible ministers will be reviewed periodically by the DBF in the light of, but not irrevocably tied to, any proposed general uplift in clergy stipends.
2. The Fees for weddings and funerals are calculated to be 80% of the DBF fee for a funeral service in church. (rounded up to the nearest 50p).
3. State retirement pension receipt: it is recognised that this currently varies according to date of birth during what is a transition phase.
4. The fees that had in the past been due to the incumbent (though the majority of these were in fact assigned to the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF)) now **legally belong to the DBF**

Parochial Fees – Diocesan Administrative Process

Parochial fee returns should be submitted on a quarterly basis by all PCCs. Where no fees have been collected and no payments for officiants are due to be claimed, a nil return should be submitted to confirm that this is the case.

1. Fee form received from PCC – send to accounts@portsmouth.anglican.org or posted FAO finance. The form should be on the standard template detailing all the relevant information.
2. Finance await receipt of funds and share form with Parish support administrator and confirm once the funds have been received. The parish support administrator logs the forms on the parochial fees working doc.
3. Parish support administrator will check:
 - a. That the correct fees have been charged for the service

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- b. That any payments to officiants have been paid at the correct value and that the officiant is eligible to receive the fee

Where any payments are not considered appropriate, this should be referred to the Area Dean or Archdeacon to raise with the parish.

4. We would expect the quarterly returns to be submitted within the month following the quarter end. Where the form has not been received, the parish support administrator should request the form from the PCC. A repeat request should be sent after 2 months if still not received. If the form is still not sent (or confirmation of nil return), the area dean and archdeacon should be informed.
5. Finance will perform a reconciliation between the parochial fees log maintained by the parish support officer and the amounts banked and reported on Xledger. Where a form has been received but no money, the above process of following up with the PCC should be followed and after 2 attempts if the funds have not been received, this should be referred to the area dean or archdeacon.
6. Once the statistics for mission are reported each year, the parish support administrator will review the numbers against the services reported on the fee forms and follow up on any differences. Where this results in more fees being due to the diocese, finance should be alerted and the same process for following up as above.

Monthly in vacancy list to be received from Bishopsgrove to confirm where we would expect any in vacancy fees to be payable, and to ensure that movements resulting from appointments and resignations are picked up.

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