

ADMINISTRATION OF PAROCHIAL FEES AND PAYMENTS TO OFFICIATING MINISTERS

Following recommendations from a working group including representatives from all interested parties, the Bishop's Council has approved the following policy, which replaces all previous arrangements in the Portsmouth Diocese.

THIS AMENDED POLICY TAKES EFFECT FROM 1 JANUARY 2024.

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 has decided that there should be parity between retired stipendiary ministers, retired self-supporting ministers and other retired ministers.

Ministers eligible to receive an honorarium for occasional offices.

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

Such payments for occasional offices 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 has retired from stipendiary ministry and is:
 - in receipt of the state pension **and**
 - holds the Bishop's Permission to Officiate (PTO), or if still licensed, receives neither a stipend nor a house for duty.

OR

- 2. The minister is a self-supporting minister (i.e. SSM/NSM or Reader) who is:
 - retired from secular employment **and**
 - in receipt of state pension **and**
 - holds the Bishop's PTO, or, if licensed, does not occupy a house for duty.

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

Honoraria payable from the DBF fee portion to eligible ministers for occasional offices.

Weddings

- Payment for conducting a wedding including all preparation and any follow-up pastoral care will be 80% of the DBF fee for a funeral service in church (rounded up to the nearest 50p).

Funerals

- The 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 be 80% of the DBF fee for a funeral service in church. (rounded up to the nearest 50p).
- If interment is undertaken by a DIFFERENT **eligible** minister on a separate occasion, the amount payable to them will be £40.00.

Waiving of Parochial Fees

- No fee is payable for the funeral of a child under 16 years.
- Waiving of fees in other cases should only be exercised in cases of clear financial hardship.
- The incumbent has a right to waive the DBF fee and/or the PCC fee, after consulting the churchwardens "in a particular case".
- Any case where the incumbent decides to waive a fee should be discussed in advance with the Archdeacon.
- No fee is payable to any eligible minister when the DBF parochial fee has been waived.

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 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.

Honoraria 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 honoraria 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.**
- Honoraria 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 honorarium, 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.

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 honoraria 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. State retirement pension receipt: it is recognised that this currently varies according to date of birth during what is a transition phase.
3. 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.