

# **Clergy Compensation Guidelines**

November, 2020

Orthodox Church in America  
Office of Pastoral Life



Blessed by the Holy Synod of Bishops  
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## Clergy Compensation Guidelines

Clergy who work full time in a parish shall receive compensation and benefits as outlined here:

### 1) Salary

Clergy who work full-time within a parish shall be paid a salary which would permit a pastor and family to live at the same general level-of-living as families of the community as a whole.

The amount is determined by the Median Family Income for the area in which the parish community is located.

The housing allowance (discussed below) is included in the salary when calculating Median Family Income.

Whether a parish priest is or is not married, does or does not have children at home, and whether or not the parish priest has a spouse that does or does not work is immaterial in setting the salary for the job of the pastor. The salary must be comparable to the area standards, which is the Median Family Income for the area.

Median Family Income is the minimum salary for a full time priest, but the parish may give additional raises above that amount based on other factors such as seniority of the rector or to attract experienced clergy in the future when pastoral transitions occur.

### 2) Housing Allowance

The total salary is comprised of two parts – cash salary *plus* housing allowance. If the parish provides a residence, the fair market rental value of that residence counts as part of the total salary.

### 3) Non-salary Necessities

a) Medical Insurance: The parish pays the entire cost of medical insurance for the priest and his family.

b) OCA Pension Plan: the parish is responsible for paying its contribution to the OCA Pension Plan for assigned clergy.

c) Vehicle: A parish-owned car with insurance and upkeep shall be provided, *or* a per mile reimbursement for ministry-related driving if clergy use their own vehicle. The IRS determines the standard mileage rates for each year.

d) Upkeep of Parish-owned Property: The parish is responsible for the upkeep of a parish-owned residence, including insurance and utilities.

e) Moving Expenses: When a new priest is assigned, the receiving community pays all reasonable moving expenses.

f) State Worker's compensation Insurance: The parish is responsible for paying worker compensation for all church employees.

#### 4) Vacation

The parish pays the priest his normal salary during vacation time, figured according to clergy seniority as follows:

a) 15 days (2 Sundays) for a priest ordained 1 to 5 years

b) 21 days (2 Sundays) for a priest ordained 6 to 15 years

c) After that, 28 days (3 Sundays).

This is the minimum. It is fine to exceed this with the Diocesan Hierarch's approval.

#### 5) Church-related Activities and Travel

For Deanery, Diocesan and Church-wide meetings, Clergy retreats, etc., the parish pays all reasonable expenses for travel, meals and lodging.

#### 6) On-going Education

Rectors shall be encouraged to pursue ongoing education by attending workshops, seminars, and appropriate trainings in ministry and service to the Church. Such trainings are not vacation days. The parish should pay for these trainings when possible and if approved in advance.

#### 7) Ruling Hierarch Approval

As always, the Diocesan Hierarch has final say in approving clergy compensation and benefits in each situation. The Hierarch has authority to modify compensation and approve situations of special circumstances not covered in these guidelines.