



THE DIOCESE OF SHEFFIELD

CLERGY HANDBOOK

4 January 2024

Welcome to the Diocese of Sheffield's Clergy Handbook

We hope you will find this Handbook a useful and practical resource for your ministry in the diocese. It includes information, advice and guidance on working arrangements for all our licensed clergy appointed under Common Tenure arrangements and brings together the various national regulations, guidelines, policies and practices. The vast majority of this Handbook also applies to the small number of clergy in the Diocese who are still on Freehold. If unsure if a particular part of the Handbook is applicable to those on Freehold speak to the relevant Archdeacon or Bishop's Chaplain.

It is in electronic format, so that sections can be revised and updated when appropriate. Accessing the Handbook through the diocesan website will also help us ensure that the reader is referring to the most up to date version available.

Please do be in touch with our HR team if you have a comment or question about the content of this Handbook or you have any difficulties in accessing the sections or using the links: Ben Mays our HR Manager or Gemma Armstrong our HR Adviser are contactable [here](#). They will ensure your query is responded to; and, of course, for more information about the diocese generally please do sign up to our newsletters and bulletins, by visiting our website [here](#).

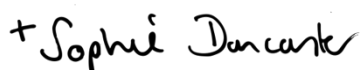
We are always keen to hear about people's experiences or where we could supply more information, advice and resources. We'd like to draw your attention under section nine and the appendix contributed by one of our curates in charge that draws a range of our wellbeing work together that has been used in her particular context that you might find helpful in your context.

Links to this handbook and its sections are signposted through our IME2 handbook. For more information on these please contact Tim Fletcher our Director of IME2 – you can email him [here](#). Please note that there is a separate range of policy and practice guidance for clergy with Permission to Officiate (PTO), and the information is available [here](#).

For clergy who are appointed under a contract of employment with a Bishop's License (for example this may be with the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) or with other organisations such as schools, colleges, university, health, prison etc.) your contractual provisions will apply, but there will be some link in with national Church of England provisions such and the opportunity to take part in clergy study days. There is also the opportunity to take part in Leadership Formation days and other events; contact Suzanna.Schofield@sheffield.anglican.org for details.



The Rt Revd Dr Pete Wilcox
The Bishop of Sheffield



The Rt Revd Sophie Jelley
Bishop of Doncaster

CONTENTS (click on required section below)

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Introduction to the Handbook by Bishop Pete and Bishop Sophie..... | 2 |
| 1. Appointment and office..... | 6 |
| 1.1 Introduction | |
| 1.2 Common Tenure | |
| 1.3 Grants | |
| 1.4 Loans for cars | |
| 2. Stipend payments and pension payments..... | 8 |
| 3. Parochial fees..... | 10 |
| 4. Expenses..... | 11 |
| 5. Housing..... | 12 |
| 5.1 Housing provision/provider | |
| 5.2 DBF responsibilities | |
| 5.3 Office holder responsibilities | |
| 5.4 Repairs and alterations | |
| 5.5 Use of the property | |
| 5.6 Leasehold property provision | |
| 5.7 Vacating the property | |
| 5.8 PCC considerations | |
| 5.9 Diocesan Property Team | |
| 5.10 Disputes | |
| 5.11 Veto of sale, right of representation | |
| 5.12 Emergency Works to a property | |
| 6. Retirement, retirement housing and remaining in office after retiring..... | 14 |
| 6.1 Introduction | |
| 6.2 Extending ministry beyond a 70 th birthday | |
| 6.3 Preparation for retirement | |
| 6.4 PTO clergy | |
| 7. Leave and time off..... | 16 |
| 7.1 Prioritising time off | |
| 7.2 Rest periods | |
| 7.3 Annual leave | |
| 7.4 Public/bank holidays | |
| 7.5 Spiritual leave including sabbaticals and retreats | |
| 7.6 Special leave | |
| 7.7 Time off for public duties | |
| 8. Family Friendly policies..... | 19 |
| 8.1 Maternity leave | |
| 8.2 Adoption leave | |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 8.3 Paternity leave | |
| 8.4 Shared parental | |
| 8.5 Unpaid parental | |
| 8.6 Time off to care for dependants | |
| 8.7 Request move from full time office to a part time office to care for a dependant | |
| 9. Wellbeing policies (dignity at work, menopause policy, support) | 31 |
| 9.1 Wellbeing and dignity at work | |
| 9.2 Wellbeing commitment | |
| 9.3 Diocesan resources | |
| 9.4 Clergy Menopause Policy | |
| 10. Sickness absence | 40 |
| 10.1 Supporting sickness absence | |
| 10.2 Stipend payments during sickness absence | |
| 10.3 Cover arrangements during sickness absence | |
| 10.4 Communications during sickness absence | |
| 10.5 Occupational health | |
| 10.6 Reporting sickness absence | |
| 10.7 When an individual is unable to return to work | |
| 11. Ministerial Development Review | 43 |
| 12. Continuing ministry support and development | 44 |
| 12.1 Lifelong learning | |
| 12.2 The Diocesan Conference and the Bishop's Annual Lecture | |
| 13. Safeguarding | 45 |
| 14. Capability procedures | 46 |
| 14.1 Principles underpinning the capability policy and procedures | |
| 14.2 The informal and formal processes | |
| 15. Grievance procedures | 49 |
| 15.1 Introduction and overview | |
| 15.2 Principles underpinning a grievance process | |
| 15.3 Informal and formal processes | |
| 16. Disciplinary procedures | 45 |
| 16.1 Introduction and overview | |
| 16.2 Process and informal following up of a complaint received | |
| 16.3 Process and formal disciplinary procedures | |
| 17. Resigning from office and termination of office | 52 |
| 17.1 Ending/termination of a post arrangements | |
| 17.2 Notice periods for resignation | |
| 17.3 Vacating a property | |

18. Compassionate leave/arrangements for bereavement in service..... 53

18.1 Introduction

18.2 Compassionate leave for an office holder

18.3 Arrangements for a widow/widower where their office holder partner dies in service

18.4 Things to do!

18.5 Finance and pension (for clergy under 70yrs old in active stipendiary service)

1. Appointment and Office

1.1 Introduction

Clergy are called as Priests and Deacons to serve and care for the people of God. In this task they work with the Bishops, their fellow clergy and other ministers.

The responsibilities of our offices are set out in:

- the Ordinal and The Canons;
- the Licence;
- the role description and Statement of Particulars for a post;
- the Code of Professional Conduct for the Clergy; and
- further responsibilities of parochial clergy are linked to particular appointment or tenure of office (Common Tenure) - this is the term for the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 2011 and the supporting Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations.

In addition, regardless of their form of tenure, all clergy are subject to the provisions contained within the Clergy Discipline Measure (CDM), the current law related to patronage and the appointments procedure; and anti-discrimination legislation (apart from the specific exemptions granted).

Just to note, that some clergy may hold roles that are designated as employees (of the DBF or possibly the bishop in his corporate capacity or a secular organisation eg a chaplain) and are not covered by common tenure as their appointments are bound by employment contractual arrangements).

There may be circumstances where someone may hold two or more roles, for instance, an employed role and a clergy appointment. In such circumstances each role is allocated the appropriate 'Contract' or 'Tenure' to cover the responsibilities/activities/time spent in relation to that role. The terms and conditions relating to the specific role will apply in each case, such as the ability to leave one and maintain another for example, and where any practical arrangements need to be agreed for practical reasons this will be stated in the relevant documents.

1.2 Common Tenure

The Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure and the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations afford clergy (stipendiary or self-supporting) a range of rights, support, responsibilities and accountabilities. Clergy receive a Statement of Particulars (SoP) issued by a nominated person/role which sets out the matters relating to the general day to day aspects of their appointment.

For ease of reference Common Tenure appointments are either:

- permanent (full or part time) and would be held until the individual reached the age of 70; or
- under specific designated time limited arrangements for example:
 - To cover another office holder's temporary absence from work.

- If the office holder is over 70.
- If the appointment is to a training post.
- If the appointment is subject to time limited sponsorship funding.
- If the appointment is designated as a probationary office.
- If the appointment is created by Bishop's Mission Order.
- If the appointment is designated as held in conjunction with another office or employment.
- If the office holder does not have the right of abode or unlimited leave to enter or remain, in the United Kingdom.
- If the appointment is designated as a Locally Supported Ministry Post (for example, where a parish has agreed with the diocese that it will take on responsibility for funding an additional curate's post).

1.3 Grants

Linked to all parochial stipendiary appointments the DBF provides a grant(s) appropriate to the post as below: each grant is 10% of the National Minimum Stipend.

- A first appointment grant: Grants to people taking up their first Archdeacon or incumbent-level appointment towards the cost of setting up home for the first time in a house of the size normally provided for an incumbent or someone of equivalent status; grants to people taking up their first appointment following ordination towards the cost of robes, theological books and any other equipment which they will need for their new appointment.
- A resettlement grant: payable to any priest moving to a new post within the diocese (either an internal move or for a priest moving into the diocese from elsewhere). Removal costs are covered by the DBF and information about this will be shared with you by the central team.
- Any member of clergy moving from one incumbency post to another simply receives the resettlement grant.

1.4 Loans for cars

The DBF doesn't provide loans for vehicles for clergy but there is information available and loan provisions through the churches mutual credit union that clergy may be interested to find out more about through their website, [here](#).

The Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure and the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations are available [here](#).

Guidelines for the professional code of conduct for Church of England clergy are available [here](#).

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

2. Stipend payments and pension payments

- 2.1 The Sheffield Diocesan Synod annually approve the budget and salaries and stipend uplifts which are then communicated to clergy and centrally employed staff. (There is no reduction of stipend for clergy in receipt of state retirement pension).
- 2.2 The Church Commissioners Payroll Services department (Clergy Team) act as the payroll bureau and process stipend payments to stipendiary clergy and licensed layworkers in parochial appointments. They don't `employ' the clergy, but are responsible for making statutory deductions in respect of PAYE tax and National Insurance.
- 2.3 For the purposes of National Insurance only, clergy are treated as being of employed type status. Therefore `employee contributions` are deducted from stipend payments each month alongside `pay as you earn' tax deductions. Employer's contributions are paid by the diocese or, when appropriate, the Cathedral Chapter.
- 2.4 The payroll national People System is available through the Church of England website, [here](#).
- 2.5 To log into the People System you will need your 'Personal Unique Number' (**PUN**). This is your **Username** for the system. (This replaces your unique ID number you may have used from the previous MyView system [here](#).)
- 2.6 The Clergy Payroll team ensure that HLC (see 2.7 below) annual returns are available on the People System and that P60s and P11d's for the annual tax year end are also available through the People System.
- 2.7 The HLC scheme is a unique scheme run by the Church of England in partnership with HMRC. It allows tax relief to be claimed on costs relating to heating, lighting, cleaning and garden upkeep for the property provided solely for the better purposes of your role. It is a 'reclassification' of part of the stipend which is paid before tax and National Insurance are deducted, it isn't an additional payment. It's viewed as a taxable service benefit because you can claim for your costs for the whole property, not just the 'work related portion'. An annual return must be submitted each year. Please click [here](#).
- 2.8 Clergy are responsible for their annual tax return and whilst many prefer to do this return themselves it can be advisable to consider seeking external professional advice for this. There are some firms that specialize in tax management for clergy.
- 2.9 For all clergy payroll questions and enquiries, please contact [here](#).

2.10 For all clergy pension questions and enquiries, please contact: [here](#).

2.11 Your tax affairs are dealt with by:

HM Revenue and Customs - West Yorkshire and Craven Area,
Centenary Court, 1 St Blaise Way, Bradford BD1 4YL

Tax ref: 073/C16 Tel: 01274 205714

3. Parochial Fees

- 3.1 Parochial fees are regulated by Ecclesiastical law. The DBF portion goes straight into paying the stipends of parish clergy. The DBF's fee income is a means by which the diocese can pay adequate stipends and pensions to clergy. It makes a significant contribution to keeping Parish Share levels down.
- 3.2 Parochial fees from funerals and weddings are payable to the DBF and the PCC. Fees are mainly collected by the PCC, and the DBF fee is to be remitted by the PCC on a regular basis to the Sheffield Diocesan Board of Finance (SDBF). Parochial Clergy are Trustees of the PCC, and part of the body responsible for ensuring that the fees are handled correctly.
- 3.3 The Diocesan Board of Finance has directed that ministers not in receipt of stipend, including Self Supporting and PTO, may retain two thirds of the parochial fee for conducting any occasional office that would otherwise be payable to the DBF. This is at the discretion of the DBF and notified annually.
- 3.4 During a vacancy, fees due to the DBF should continue to be remitted to the central diocesan Church House offices. An adequate record of fees should be kept, and a form to assist PCCs in keeping track of fees is available on the diocesan website (link?). The PCC should submit completed forms to the diocesan office at least once a quarter. A guide on statutory fees is available from Church House, or may be downloaded from the Church of England website [here](#).
- 3.5 Annual fees are statutory fees, they are set annually and the latest figures are available through the national and diocesan websites. Please contact the diocese centrally if you have any questions. The fees page is updated annually [here](#).
- 3.6 Funeral Directors should make payments to the PCC/benefice which should then be apportioned appropriately between the PCC and the DBF (and a Minister who holds Permission to Officiate, if applicable).

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

4. Expenses

- 4.1 Parishes are responsible for the reimbursement of the proper parochial expenses incurred on their behalf by their parochial clergy (stipendiary and self-supporting) and other licensed and accredited staff. Information is available [here](#).
- 4.2 Expenses do not form part of the stipend calculation but the level of diocesan stipend presupposes full reimbursement of these expenses. It is equally important that self-supporting clergy are properly and fully reimbursed.
- 4.3 The mileage rate is 45p per mile as set out under HMRC guidance.
- 4.4 It is essential that at the very start of taking up an appointment, clergy should discuss working expenses with the PCC by means of a consultation with the Churchwardens. It is suggested that agreement should be reached at such a meeting between the Churchwardens and the Minister (and the Incumbent too where an assistant is involved), on those expenses to be paid directly by the PCC and those to be reimbursed. Procedures for monthly reimbursement and the claim form to be used should also be discussed.
- 4.5 There is a national useful guide which covers matters such as: postage and stationery; telephone; secretarial assistance; office equipment; maintenance of robes; hospitality; travel - car and public transport; books; use of study - help with replacement furnishings. Further information is available [here](#).
- 4.6 Some parochial clergy bear at their own wish a proportion of parochial working expenses, and in fact allowance is made for this on the Church Commissioners' Income Return. Despite this, it is recommended that rather than forego some reimbursement, clergy should charge their expenses in full and then make a contribution to parochial funds so as to ensure that the parish is aware of the full extent of its liability. Furthermore, it will ensure that misunderstandings as to the correct level of expenses do not occur upon change of the Minister.

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

5. Housing

More information, including Housing Guidelines, is available on the Diocesan website [here](#).

- 5.1 Where office holders are provided with a house of residence for the better performance of their duties, a range of responsibilities and rights comes with this both for the DBF, and for the individual office holder.
- 5.2 The DBF will pay for the removals of clergy and accredited lay ministers on their taking up a full-time stipendiary post within the diocese. Details of this provision is sent at the time of the move.
- 5.3 The DBF responsibilities include the following:
 - Repair the structure and exterior of the buildings of the property, including windows, doors, drains, gutters and external pipes.
 - Repair all relevant walls, fences, gates, drives and drains of the property.
 - Repair and keep in proper working order installations related to; the supply of water, gas and electricity; sanitation; space heating or heating water, except where it is a tenant's duty.
 - Arrange for a qualified surveyor to inspect the property at least every five years and submit a report describing its state and condition.
 - Send the office holder a copy of this report and after consultation carry out within a reasonable time frame any appropriate repairs.
 - Pay the council tax (NB: our PCCs pay water rates).
 - Insure the property against all risks related to buildings.
 - Carry out such works of improvement, alteration or replacement as it considers necessary and within financial resources available. NB the DBF do not normally deal with carpets or decorating unless it is consequential on works that have been required to be undertaken for a property. As such office holders are asked to consider this in terms of budgeting and PCCs are asked to consider if they can help with costs. (Before an office holder moves the Property Team visit to ensure the home has been cleaned and is in good order).
- 5.4 The offices holder's responsibilities include the following:
 - Permit appropriate officers of the DBF to enter the property after giving reasonable notice; in order to inspect or carry out repairs or for another reasonable purpose consistent with its powers and obligations.
 - Exercise all duties equivalent to those of a tenant.
 - Keep the property and contents provided clean and free from deterioration.
 - Annually to arrange for all gutters and downpipes at the property to be cleared of obstructions.
 - Notify the Property Department of any repairs required as soon as possible.
 - Pay the whole or part of any repairs for which they are responsible.

- 5.5 The DBF recognise that garden upkeep can be a significant expense and recommend that the PCC are asked to support with finance and assistance. Where there are trees or other significant property issues such as garden walls – where planning permissions or others may need to be sought please contact the Property Team for clarity and/or advice.
- 5.6 Office holders are not permitted to make any repairs, alterations or additions to the property without the consent of the Property Department.
- 5.7 Office holders may use the property only as a private residence for their household and guests. Any other use for the property must be approved by the DBF (for example where this may be used as a registered office for a business) and advice should be sought from the Archdeacon and the Property Team. In particular advice must always be sought before any arrangement is made for offering accommodation that could have the possibility of a ‘tenancy’ e.g., housing for asylum seekers, lodgers, people with no other housing, etc., as these may bring a range of other legal requirements with them that require DBF approvals.
- 5.8 Where the property is held on a lease, to observe any binding term, condition, or covenant.
- 5.9 Office holders must vacate the property after retiring, resigning, or moving to a new post and ensure that all personal possessions are removed. The property must be returned to the DBF clean and tidy. (see also Section 6 retirement and retirement housing).
- 5.10 It should be noted that the DBF also encourages each parish to perform the following duties through its PCC and PCCs may need to confirm any requests or planned works with the Property Team and the Archdeacon:
- To assist with the decoration of the property (the DBF provides a grant of £50 per annum towards works).
 - To help the office holder with general small maintenance.
 - To support the office holder in keeping the property and garden(s) in good order.
- 5.11 Contact the Property Department at the diocesan Office for information on the Repair of Benefice Building Measure or other related information [here](#).
- 5.12 Any disputes or objections regarding housing that cannot be resolved informally may be dealt with by the grievance procedure.
- 5.13 Incumbents have the right of absolute veto over the sale of the benefice parsonage house. Priests in Charge on common tenure occupying parsonages or glebe team vicarages have a right of representation, with certain others, to the DBF, with ultimate appeal to the Church Commissioners, in the event of a proposed sale.

- 5.14 For all clergy property security is of concern. There are a variety of resources for advice and support for families, and those living alone. Lone working advice and guidance should always been considered. Further information is available [here](#) and [here](#).
- 5.15 All clergy are responsible for their contents insurance policy and provisions.

Emergency works:

Where works cannot be delayed until office hours for fear of risk to safety/welfare or where the damage poses a risk to serious disrepair to the property, or where there are emergency situations out of office hours - details for how to access out of office emergency information advice and guidance can be found [here](#).

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

6. Retirement, PTO clergy, retirement housing, and remaining in office past 70yrs of age

6.1 Introduction

6.1 Under Common Tenure arrangements, clergy are required to retire at 70.

6.2 Extending a post after a 70th birthday

6.2.1 There are some situations where it is agreed that an office holder may defer their retirement and remain in post beyond 70, for a period of time. The process for this is set out under Regulation 29A and can be done via a Bishop's Direction following consultation with the Churchwardens and the PCC, and the individual. The Bishop has the discretion to not agree to a request for a Direction.

6.2.2 Before agreeing to a Direction, or to a renewal if one wasn't requested at the outset of the original Direction, the Bishop may request an Occupational Health assessment for the individual which can be arranged through the central diocesan HR team, so that any adjustments or support can be agreed. A new statement of changes will be issued to the office holder confirming things, and at the end of the period of the Direction the Bishop can decide whether or not to renew the Direction for a further time.

6.2.3 Office holders remain entitled to resign their office at any stage during the Direction under the normal three months' notice required unless this has been waived by mutual agreement. (see also section 16 of this Handbook Resigning from office and Termination of office).

6.2.4 Clergy who are not yet 70 may still also apply for other offices and will not need a bishop's Direction to be appointed to the new role. They can be offered a post subject to an Occupational Health assessment; but will require a Bishop's Direction once they reach 70.

6.3 Preparing for retirement

6.3.1 All clergy are advised to take advice about their retirement pension provision both financially and for housing needs; and to contact the pensions board to obtain the most up to date information, available [here](#) and [here](#).

6.4 PTO (Permission to Officiate Clergy)

6.4.1 However in practice the expectation is that the majority of clergy will, by the time they are 70, have retired from office and where they have applied to do so, be exercising ministry on the basis of permission to officiate (PTO) which does not commit them to carry out any regular ministry. Further information is available [here](#) and [here](#).

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

7. Leave and time off

This section includes information about:

- 7.1 Introduction and prioritising time off
- 7.2 Rest periods
- 7.3 Annual leave
- 7.4 Bank Holidays
- 7.5 Spiritual leave
- 7.6 Special leave
- 7.7 Time off for public duties
- 7.8 Moving between posts
- 7.9 For sick leave see section 10 of this Handbook
- 7.10 For Family Friendly leave including the following, see Section 8 of this Handbook.

7.1 Introduction and prioritising time off

- 7.1.1 Regular and planned time away from ministry is a vital factor in the wellbeing of our clergy and their relationships with those close to them. Time for rest and recreation is a biblical principle which should be at the heart of a ministry which models for others self-respect and a healthy way of working.
- 7.1.2 Whatever their role, clergy should prioritise having adequate time off and ensuring they role model the importance of protecting quality time for `down time` for others.
- 7.1.3 Parishes and those who are responsible in the setting in which clergy minister (e.g. PCCs, churchwardens, training incumbents, the Chapter of the Cathedral) have a duty to encourage and enable clergy to take their time off, and leave.
- 7.1.4 Clergy should work with colleagues to ensure there is cover for public worship, occasional offices as appropriate, office time and administration. Payments for fees for those covering are the responsibility of the PCC.
- 7.1.5 Where cover cannot be found, clergy should inform the Area Dean or Archdeacon; the Bishop's permission may also be sought to possibly suspend a Sunday service or Holy Communion depending on the situation.
- 7.1.6 Local communication with colleagues is essential and Area Deans, clergy colleagues and Churchwardens etc should know when clergy are away. Funeral Directors should also be advised. It is sometimes possible to provide financial assistance with holidays; applications in the first instance should be made to your Archdeacon, or where appropriate, the Dean of the Cathedral.

7.2 Rest periods and additional day(s)

- 7.2.1 Parish clergy should take an uninterrupted period of at least 24 hours in every seven days. Preferably a regular day in the week should be chosen, which should be known to parishioners.
- 7.2.2 In addition in a month when no annual leave is being taken, an additional consecutive day off should be taken for a longer break.

7.3 Annual leave

- 7.3.1 All full-time clergy should take 6 full working weeks as annual leave, inclusive of 6 Sundays.
- 7.3.2 The annual leave year runs from 1st January to 31st December. Unused annual leave may not be 'carried over' into the following year, unless this has been agreed with the Archdeacon or, where appropriate, the Dean of the Cathedral.
- 7.3.3 Where it is helpful for calculations, leave usually accrues on a monthly basis.
- 7.3.4 Part time stipendiary clergy will have appropriately pro-rated annual leave which will be detailed in the Statement of Particulars for that office.
- 7.3.5 Please do let local colleagues and the Area Dean know about annual leave being taken and what cover arrangements have been planned so that local communications can be supported.
- 7.3.6 Incumbents, including all training incumbents, should make sure that curates, team, and other colleagues take appropriate leave, and that their associate and PTO clergy also take good breaks.

7.4 Bank/Public Holidays

- 7.4.1 In addition to annual leave, full time clergy are entitled to all public and bank holidays. (However, any days taken off after a bank holiday for example post-Christmas or Easter, should be taken out of ordinary annual leave).
- 7.4.2 When it is not possible to take the actual bank holiday off (for instance, because it is a major festival) a day in lieu should be taken.

7.5 Spiritual leave

- 7.5.1 Parish clergy are encouraged to take the inside of a week each year for spiritual refreshment, whether on retreat or at cell group meetings. Please do let your Area Dean or other appropriate colleagues know when you will be away and ensure that local communications are in place.

- 7.5.2 Centrally, the diocese provides an annual grant of £250 for clergy for training and/or retreats and PCCs may be asked to contribute towards costs. For more information see the relevant Diocesan webpage [here](#).
- 7.5.3 Centrally the diocese provides for clergy to have a sabbatical after a minimum of 10 years service in stipendiary ministry. Someone who has completed seven years after a three year curacy would also be eligible. For more information about what funding support may be available and to explore what might work for you, or for applications please contact the Director of Mission and Ministry. Incumbent status clergy must make cover arrangements for the period of their sabbatical and confirm this for the Area Dean and Archdeacon. Sabbaticals may be up to 12 weeks/3months and during this time full stipend and pension continues to be paid.

7.6 Special leave

- 7.6.1 The Bishops or Archdeacons may also grant an additional period of special leave. This will be entirely dependent on the situation and could be for a couple of days up to a week. More than one week of special leave will require the permission of a bishop.
- 7.6.2 Special leave is designed to support clergy when emergencies arise that cannot be managed through the flexibilities that clergy have in their day-to-day role. Clergy should contact the Archdeacon as soon as possible. The Archdeacon will keep HR informed so that any pattern of ongoing leave needs can be supported through any wider diocesan assistance that may be available.

7.7 Time off for public duties

- 7.7.1 Clergy may spend a reasonable time on public duties other than the duties of the office without any loss of stipend (if applicable). Clergy are requested to discuss the details of the public duty and the associated time off with the Bishop, the Dean or Archdeacon prior to commencement. Public duties will include work done for a public authority, a court, a tribunal, a charity or Trade Union.
- 7.7.2 If a member of clergy is called for jury service they are required to claim the attendance allowance. Please contact the Finance Department for further guidance.

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

8. Family Friendly policies and practices

These policies apply to all stipendiary clergy and curates regardless of time in the office they hold.

This section includes details of clergy policies for:

- 8.1 Maternity leave
- 8.2 Adoption leave
- 8.3 Paternity
- 8.4 Shared parental leave
- 8.5 Unpaid parental leave
- 8.6 Time off to care for dependants

Each section below includes the link to wider national Church of England information, available [here](#).

8.1 Maternity leave and arrangements:

- 8.1.1 Where appropriate clergy are asked to confidentially inform their appropriate senior member of clergy and the HR Manager as possible of their pregnancy in order to receive information/advice regarding their entitlement to maternity leave and pay. Every situation and context will be different, therefore, to ensure appropriate Health and Safety risk assessment support that might be helpful or other advice, please contact the diocesan HR team.
- 8.1.2 Clergy have the right to paid time-off for ante-natal care regardless of the length of service or the number of hours that they work.
- 8.1.3 Statutory maternity leave may last up to 52 weeks and is made up of two parts:
OML – Ordinary Maternity Leave (39 weeks)
AML - Additional and unpaid Maternity leave (13 weeks)
- 8.1.4 The SDBF pay full stipend for 39 weeks of OML no matter how long an individual has been in their post. Additional unpaid leave entitlement is the right of the individual.
- 8.1.5 The Clergy Pension Scheme ensures that individuals' contributions are paid during paid maternity leave absence. If an individual on her return to work wishes to pay contributions for the unpaid part of their maternity leave, they should contact the diocese's Finance Director at Church House.
- 8.1.6 Clergy will receive a MATBI form from their midwife (usually at 20weeks) and this will set out the expected week that the baby is due. The form should be forwarded to the HR Manager as soon as possible so that a) the Church Commissioners can process the stipend payments and appropriate statutory maternity pay within this; and b) that the Church Commissioners can also claim back appropriate SMP.

- 8.1.7 Maternity leave would not normally begin before the 11th week before the baby is expected. However, if an individual gives birth before the start of their maternity leave, then their maternity leave/pay will start the day after the birth. An individual may not work for two weeks immediately after the birth of a baby by law.
- 8.1.8 If an individual is absent from work, due to a pregnancy related illness, at the beginning of the 4th week before the expected week of childbirth, this absence will trigger the start of her maternity leave. In this case, her maternity leave will commence on the day after the first day of absence after the beginning of the 4th week before the expected week of childbirth.
- 8.1.9 Individuals should let their appropriate Archdeacon and HR Manager know if their baby arrives before they start their maternity leave. This is so adjustments to the date for their return from maternity leave and any other associated arrangements can be discussed.
- 8.1.10 It is likely that clergy will want to stay in touch with their parish(es) and key people but it is advisable that they are very clear to everyone that they are only available for limited times so they are able to manage their leave appropriately. The appropriate Archdeacon can be consulted if there are any problems. However, parishes and colleagues should be aware there is no obligation for the individual to attend their normal role/work during this time nor is there the obligation for parishes or senior staff to expect, or offer, such opportunities.
- 8.1.11 Keeping in Touch (KIT) days allows an individual to work up to 10 days during maternity leave without losing the right to maternity pay or bringing the leave to an end. KIT days are not an extension to ordinary or additional maternity i.e. they cannot be used at the end of maternity leave to extend the period.
- 8.1.12 If an individual wishes to return to work before their official return date, then they should discuss this with the appropriate Archdeacon so that arrangements can be made and any advice or other support can be given.
- 8.1.13 Annual leave accrues throughout maternity leave. If an individual does not return to work in the current leave year then they may carry over their annual leave and take this before they return to their post.
- 8.1.14 Applications for returning to work on a temporary or permanent change should be made to the Diocesan Bishop and copied to the HR Manager so that appropriate advice, and guidance, agreement/decision making can be sought/given.
- 8.1.15 Curates returning to work after maternity (and other) leave who wish to complete their training on a part time basis and have the length of their training curacy extended should use the national Church of England process for making a request for time off or adjusting their duties to care for a dependant – this should be made at least eight weeks before the expected return date so that there is time for considerations and plans. Information is available [here](#).

- 8.1.16 When it has been agreed that an individual can take parental leave immediately following the expiry of maternity leave, local arrangements must be discussed with the Archdeacon. (See Parental Leave policy within this section).
- 8.1.17 If an individual decides not to return to work after the maternity leave period, they should confirm their resignation to the Diocesan Bishop. The normal notice period/arrangements will apply.
- 8.1.18 A pregnant individual is given specific health and safety protection under the European Union “Pregnant Workers Directive” and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Working Time Regulations 1998. Whilst clergy are not employees, these do provide some sound advice and good practice, and the diocese recommends that individuals are mindful of these and take responsibility for familiarising themselves with their content (further advice can be sought from the HR Manager).
- 8.1.19 If an individual has any outstanding diocesan loans there are three options to discuss with the Director of Finance: either to freeze repayments until they are back at work; to continue the loan repayment during maternity leave; or to reduce payments until maternity leave has ended.
- 8.1.20 For incumbents, Reg 29 of Common Tenure arrangements affords the appointment of fixed term roles in a few very specific settings. Cover for maternity leave is one such provision. Such fixed term arrangements are made only with the express direction of the Diocesan Bishop and will be clearly set out within a Statement of Particulars which will be shared with the office holder for reassurance and clarity. The end date of any fixed term arrangement can be changed should the office holder return to work earlier than initially discussed.
- 8.1.21 All office holders on maternity leave remain `in office` while they are on leave – which means they retain the rights and responsibilities that go with the office, for example the right to remain in any accommodation provided for the better performance of their duties and the obligation to ensure that the duties of the office are carried out on their behalf where a Reg29 post is not being made.
- 8.1.22 Helpful questions to ask/reflect upon to help navigate maternity leave:
1. Are all the out of office messages/email/voicemail up to date and clear?
 2. What boundaries might I need to ensure are in place while I am off?
 3. Have all the cover arrangements been confirmed and passed on to the Churchwardens/Area Dean and Archdeacon?
 4. Do people know what to do with Baptism, Wedding or Funeral enquiries?
 5. Who/what/when is it ok for people to be in touch with me?
 6. Timing for catching up with Churchwardens or Training incumbent as appropriate?
 7. What are the key parish events/services I might want to go to?

8. If something significant in the life of the parish/benefice, diocese or wider country/world occurs – how will people let me know so I can decide what I can or can't be involved with/support?

8.1.23 To complete a maternity leave/pay form visit this link to download the forms (28 days before the start of the leave), [here](#).

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

8.2 Adoption leave and arrangements

- 8.2.1 As soon as is possible clergy should inform their appropriate senior member of clergy and/or the HR team of their intention to adopt in order to receive information/advice regarding their entitlement to adoption leave and pay. However, it is recognised that some clergy may not wish to let people know about their plans until things are clearer. Although joyful, this can be a very anxious and stressful time and the diocese would want to do all it can in terms of practical and pastoral support.
- 8.2.2 Clergy have the right to paid time-off for specific introduction meetings with appropriate social workers/children.
- 8.2.3 Leave arrangements can begin once a member of clergy can demonstrate that they have been matched with a child through an authorised adoption agency. Statutory adoption leave may last up to 52 weeks and is made up of two parts:
OAL – Ordinary Adoption Leave (39 weeks)
AAL - Additional and unpaid Adoption leave (13 weeks)
- 8.2.4 The SDBF pay full stipend for 39 weeks of OAL no matter how long an individual has been in their post. Additional unpaid leave entitlement is the right of the individual.
- 8.2.5 The Clergy Pension Scheme ensures that individuals' contributions are paid during paid adoption leave. If an individual on her return to work wishes to pay contributions for the unpaid part of their adoption leave, they should contact the Diocesan Finance Director.
- 8.2.6 Once an individual has decided the date on which they wish to commence their Ordinary Adoption leave, they should discuss this with the Archdeacon and HR Manager.
- 8.2.7 Ordinary Adoption Leave may commence from a predetermined date up to 14 days before the expected date of placement (within the UK for UK related adoptions). Where an overseas adoption is taking place leave may begin from the date of the child's entry into the UK or from a predetermined date up to 28 days after that.
- 8.2.8 It is likely that clergy will want to stay in touch with their parish(es) and key people but it is advisable that they are very clear to everyone that they are only available for limited times so they are able to manage their leave appropriately. The appropriate Archdeacon can be consulted if there are any problems. However, parishes and colleagues should be aware there is no obligation for the individual to attend their normal role/work during this time nor is there the obligation for parishes or senior staff to expect, or offer, such opportunities.
- 8.2.9 Keeping in Touch (KIT) days allows an individual to work up to 10 days during adoption leave without losing the right to adoption pay or bringing the leave to

an end. KIT days are not an extension to ordinary or additional adoption leave i.e. they cannot be used at the end of the leave to extend the period.

- 8.2.10 If an individual wishes to return to work before their official return date, then they should discuss this with the appropriate Archdeacon so that arrangements can be made and any advice or other support can be given.
- 8.2.11 Annual leave accrues throughout adoption leave. If an individual does not return to work in the current leave year then they may carry over their annual leave and take this before they return to their post
- 8.2.12 Applications for returning to work on a temporary or permanent change should be made to the Diocesan Bishop and copied to the HR Manager so that appropriate advice, and guidance, agreement/decision making can be sought/given.
- 8.2.13 Curates returning to work after adoption (and other) leave who wish to complete their training on a part time basis and have the length of their training curacy extended should use the process for making a request for time off or adjusting their duties to care for a dependant.
- 8.2.14 When it has been agreed that an individual can take parental leave immediately following the expiry of adoption leave, local arrangements must be discussed with the Archdeacon and HR Manager. (See Parental Leave policy within this section).
- 8.2.15 Annual leave accrues throughout adoption leave. If an individual does not return to work in the current leave year then they may carry over their untaken annual leave and take this before they return to their post.
- 8.2.16 If an individual decides not to return to work after the adoption leave period, they should confirm their resignation to the Diocesan Bishop. The normal notice period/arrangements will apply.
- 8.2.17 If an individual has any outstanding diocesan loans there are three options to discuss with the Director of Finance: either to freeze repayments until they are back at work; to continue the loan repayment during maternity leave; or to reduce payments until maternity leave has ended.
- 8.2.18 For incumbents, Reg 29 of Common Tenure arrangements affords the appointment of fixed term roles in a few very specific settings. Cover for adoption leave is one such provision. Such fixed term arrangements are made only with the express direction of the Diocesan Bishop and will be clearly set out within a Statement of Particulars which will be shared with the office holder for reassurance and clarity. The end date of any fixed term arrangement can be changed should the office holder return to work earlier than initially discussed.
- 8.2.19 All office holders on adoption leave remain `in office` while they are on leave – which means they retain the rights and responsibilities that go with the office, for

example the right to remain in any accommodation provided for the better performance of their duties and the obligation to ensure that the duties of the office are carried out on their behalf where a Reg29 post is not being made.

8.2.20 Helpful questions to ask/reflect upon to help navigate adoption leave:

1. Are all the out of office messages/email/voicemail up to date and clear?
2. What boundaries might I need to ensure are in place while I am off?
3. Have all the cover arrangements been confirmed and passed on to the Churchwardens/Area Dean and Archdeacon?
4. Do people know what to do with Baptism, Wedding or Funeral enquiries?
5. Who/what/when is it ok for people to be in touch with me?
6. Timing for catching up with Churchwardens or Training incumbent as appropriate?
7. What are the key parish events/services I might want to go to?
8. If something significant in the life of the parish/benefice, diocese or wider country/world occurs – how will people let me know so I can decide what I can or can't be involved with/support?

Remember that if you are adopting a toddler/school age child it is likely you'll want to be in touch with families and groups in order to establish new relationships and friendships. Being seen 'out and about' can be confusing for parishioners so having some clear communications and plans is a good idea!

8.2.21 If Adoption leave has started but you are then notified that either the placement will not take place, or if the adoption breaks down for whatever reason and the child is returned to the adoption agency during the adoption leave period, your entitlement to adoption leave and pay (if during Ordinary Adoption Pay), will continue for a further 8 weeks from the end of the week in which the disruption occurred, unless your leave and/or pay would have ended earlier in any event.

8.2.22 To complete an adoption leave/pay form visit this link (28 days before the start of the leave), [here](#).

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

8.3 Paternity leave

8.3.1 Stipendiary clergy (no matter how long they have been in the Diocese) will receive 2 weeks' paternity leave and statutory paternity pay (topped up to full stipend) on full stipend following the birth of their child.

8.3.2 Statutory Paternity Pay is payable to the new father, to enable him to support the mother in the first few weeks after the birth. It is also payable to the second member of a couple adopting a child.

8.3.3 Paternity leave can be taken in one two-week period or two separate weeks.

- 8.3.4 Subject to the qualifying requirements above, individuals continue to receive full pension entitlements throughout the period of leave.
- 8.3.5 In order for the diocese to send the required Church Commissioners paperwork for payroll purposes in order that they may reclaim Statutory Paternity Pay from the HMRC, clergy will need to complete one of these two forms as appropriate and return it to the HR Manager as soon as possible.

To make a claim for SPP use one of the following forms: (28 days before the start of the leave)

Form SC3 Becoming a parent

Form SC4 Becoming an adoptive parent

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

8.4 Shared Parental Leave

- 8.4.1 An eligible mother can choose to end her maternity leave early and, with her partner or the child's father, opt for Shared Parental Leave instead of Maternity Leave.
- 8.4.2 If both the mother and the father/partner meet the qualifying requirements, they will need to decide how they want to divide their Shared Parental Leave and Pay entitlement
- 8.4.3 Shared Parental Leave Pay is payable to eligible office holders to enable them to take parental leave in separate blocks, so they can return to work for part of the time and then continue leave at a later date.
- 8.4.4 This can be a complex process so please do contact the HR Manager and the Archdeacon to begin to explore any ideas you may have at an early stage!
- 8.4.5 Any period of shared parental leave is paid at full stipend up to 37 weeks in total (39 weeks excluding the first two weeks of compulsory maternity leave). A further period of 13 weeks unpaid statutory parental leave is available (see parental leave – unpaid – policy below)
- 8.4.6 Adopting parents have the same rights as other parents to Shared Parental leave and pay.
- 8.4.7 Overall the following applies:
- The mother must take at least 2 weeks maternity leave, the remaining 50 weeks of leave can then be shared between both parents.
 - Both parents can be off at the same time.
 - Leave can be taken in a maximum of 3 blocks and must be agreed at least 8 weeks in advance.
 - It also applies to adoptive parents, where up to 52 weeks can be shared (including 13 weeks of unpaid leave).
 - Maternity/Adoption leave may need to end earlier in order to start Shared Parental leave and pay.
- 8.4.8 To complete a maternity leave/pay form visit this link (28 days before the start of the leave), [here](#).

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

8.5 Unpaid parental leave

- 8.5.1 Office holders are entitled in law to a period(s) of time to assist in the arrangements for their child(ren)s welfare.
- 8.5.2 ALL parental leave is unpaid (whether for father/mother/other carer).
- 8.5.3 Parental leave is calculated based on the child not the role, so parents are only eligible for one set of leave and, if, for example, they have six weeks leave with one diocese they are only entitled to twelve weeks leave if they move to another diocese.
- 8.5.4 An office holder is entitled to take up to 18 weeks unpaid leave in respect of each child up to their 18th birthday.
- 8.5.5 Unpaid leave must be taken in one-week blocks, up to four weeks each year. The Bishop can agree some flexibility to this if the child has a disability.
- 8.5.6 Plans for parental leave should be requested via the Archdeacon, and arranged at a local level so cover, etc., can be arranged; the Archdeacon and Area Dean should be consulted and plans for such leave must be at least 21 days in advance - except in cases of adoption or for a child with a disability.
- 8.5.7 In exceptional circumstances leave may be postponed by the Diocese for up to six months from the date requested, and ending before the child's eighteenth birthday, where it is considered that an office holder's absence would be unduly disruptive.
- 8.5.8 Leave cannot be postponed where an office holder gives notice to take ordinary parental leave immediately after the time a child is placed with the family for adoption or the birth of a child.
- 8.5.9 The Diocese has the right to request sight of evidence that the office holder is the parent of a child or has parental responsibility for the child.
- 8.5.10 A confirming email agreed together by the office holder and the Archdeacon having consulted with the Area Dean and any others as appropriate should be forwarded to the HR Manager so that the Finance Payroll Officer can make the necessary arrangements for stipend to cease for that period of time. Confirmation will be required back to the individual via the HR Manager.
- 8.5.11 Full pension entitlement continues to accrue during any period of unpaid parental leave; and annual leave also continues to accrue in the normal way.

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

8.6 Temporary time off to care for dependants

- 8.6.1 An office holder may make a request to the Bishop for a period of time away from ministry to make adjustments to care for a dependant. A dependant is defined as: *A partner, child or parent, someone who lives with, as part of the family; or where care arrangements break down and a person relies on the office holder for significant assistance.*
- 8.6.2 The request may be made verbally but must always be followed up by email/letter and confirmation again received by email/letter.
- 8.6.3 Whilst there is no obligation to agree a request, the Bishop will always consider the request and may agree to all, some or different arrangements with the individual depending on the circumstances. (In specific situations a variation in stipend may be appropriate).
- 8.6.4 The HR Manager can be contacted for advice and guidance.
- 8.6.5 See also Section 8.7 for details of a more permanent arrangement to care for a dependant(s).

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

8.7 The request to move from a full to a part time role to care for a dependant.

- 8.7.1 Within the Common Tenure arrangements, office holders who may wish to vary their duties: for example reducing a post from full time to part time with a commensurate reduction in stipend have the right to request this and for this to be properly considered and responded to promptly.
- 8.7.2 This policy applies where an office holder is requesting a move from full time to part time working for a significant period of time. They should be aware that there is no automatic right to have the duties adjusted back to the original terms at a later point, unless this has been agreed in advance.
- NB** this policy does not apply to where arrangements/requests are for a very short time eg no more than 10 working days (and due to specific situations) or as covered in section 8.6, which can be agreed by office holders in consultation with the Archdeacon/Bishop.*
- 8.7.3 A request is made in writing to the Bishop who will follow this up as appropriate, and may consult with those who may be impacted by the request (eg a PCC, a training incumbent, team clergy, etc.).
- 8.7.4 Any formal agreement will be followed up with a letter, or a revised Statement of Particulars as appropriate, which will clearly state agreed terms. The HR Manager

will support the process and ensure that the Church Commissioners, payroll and pension, annual leave arrangements are all informed and recorded.

8.7.5 Where there may be a delay in the Bishop being able to make or agree to a decision within a reasonable period of time, a meeting will be arranged with the office holder to discuss or explain the reasons.

8.7.6 Usually within 14 days of meeting, the Bishop should inform the office holder of the decision. If they do not accept the request, they must give the reason in writing and give a reasonable time (normally 14 days) for the office holder to appeal against their decision.

8.7.7 Process stages include:

The Archbishops' Council has agreed that the procedure for making a formal request ([here](#)) should be as follows, and that the office holder should:

- make the request in writing;
- set out the date of the request;
- make no more than one request during a twelve-month period;
- state that the request is being made under the Ecclesiastical Offices Terms of Service) Directions 2010;
- set out the reasons for needing an adjustment to the duties of the office;
- set out the change requested;
- state whether they have made any previous requests in their current post;
- identify the effect the proposed change will have on the provision of ministry to the parish where appropriate;
- suggest how such an effect could be mitigated (the office holder may wish to consult colleagues about this first so that he or she is in a position to indicate that the proposed solution might have their support in principle);
- where a request being made is to potentially extend a curacy period, this will be assessed on an individual basis (e.g., a significant period of training may already have been completed);
- give a proposed start date;
- indicate whether the proposed adjustment is intended to be permanent, or, if not, for how long it might be expected to last.

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

9. Wellbeing, including Dignity at Work

9.1 Introduction and overview

9.1.1 Within the Diocese of Sheffield each parish is the Church visible in the midst of a community. It is important that the Church and the Diocese of Sheffield affirm that wellbeing is essential to our ministry and mission as the people of God. It is an integral part of that formation which enables us to grow into the full stature of Christ and be his vibrant presence in the world. It is through loving and caring for one another and ourselves that we witness to our love of God. It is with these deeply held beliefs that we offer a range of wellbeing resources, calling one another into renewed commitment to the life-long process of growing in wholeness of ministry.

Our diocesan wide view of wellbeing is one of on-going formation, expressed through the following diverse, far-reaching and interdependent areas: *my role* (professional development); *my relationships* (interacting with others); *myself* (self-awareness and care).

9.1.2 The diocesan senior clergy, central HR, and key posts within the diocesan central offices can be contacted confidentially to discuss any wellbeing matter.

9.2 Our practical wellbeing commitment seeks to respond to the above as follows:

- Modelling work life balance and honouring the integrity of the person in all areas of our common life.
- Making provision for the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs of our ministers.
- Developing a culture of care and support amongst colleagues with particular emphasis on the life of Chapters.
- Providing access to appropriate forms of confidential care and support.
- Providing the opportunity for sharing and exploring work and personal issues in the context of work-based learning groups.
- Offering both an OMD and MDR programme of events and opportunities which are nurturing and restorative, support wellbeing, as well as being educational and developmental.
- Having a culture of dignity and respect; aiming to provide a supportive environment in which the rights of individuals are respected, each person is treated with dignity and courtesy, and where abuse, harassment and bullying will simply not be tolerated.
- Ensuring that complaints are taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.

9.3 Pastoral and spiritual wellbeing support

- Supporting/encouraging/providing Spiritual Accompaniment (Spiritual Direction).
- Pastoral supervision groups.
- Clergy counselling.

- Partners Together. Further information is available [here](#).

9.4 The diocese has a variety of wellbeing support, resources and contacts including:

For information about all of our resources, support and activities visit [here](#) and [here](#).

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

9.4. Diocesan Menopause Policy

9.4.1 Background and introduction

- The purpose of this policy is to assist with creating open and honest spaces, where individuals can discuss any issues associated with the menopause.
- The SDBF recognises that the menopause can be a significant issue for those affected, and we seek to actively support and/or share information about the help and assistance that we can provide or signpost people to.
- In our responses to any menopause related needs, we are committed to exploring with you a wide range of flexible supportive options and arrangements in your ministry.
- In addition, the Equality Act 2010 outlines that individuals must not be discriminated against due to any form of disability and we recognise that it is possible that severe symptoms of the menopause may, for some, constitute a disability.
- Our aim is to build a culture of trust and confidence for clergy where they are able to talk openly and honestly about the impact of the menopause on them, and that they are listened to in supportive, positive and respectful ways.
- Seeking professional medical advice and support including our Occupational Health support via the central diocesan HR team will always be encouraged.

9.4.2 Speaking out – clergy responsibilities

The DBF encourages everyone to prioritise their personal health and wellbeing. If you find yourself struggling with any aspect of your role as a result of symptoms associated with the menopause (see appendix one for examples) please do always feel able to discuss these in confidence with the Dean of Women, your/an Archdeacon, or with the HR Manager, or an appropriate senior female colleague.

9.4.3 Definition

There are clear medical definitions of the menopause (see [NHS](#) for info and its associated stages – and it is important to note that stages can occur at different times for different people, such as post-surgery; or through other medical intervention; linked

to age, etc. Menopause, also referred to as 'the change of life', can cause a chain reaction of physical and psychological side effects to a woman's body. It is the time during a woman's life when menstruation permanently stops. It is defined as occurring when the individual has experienced no periods for 12 consecutive months and no other biological or psychological cause can be identified.

9.4.4 Making practical and pragmatic adjustments

For clergy, making adjustments to a 'working environment' can be complex, but there may be a number of ways in which exploring how adjustments to your role/working environment may reduce the effect that the menopause is having on you.

Examples of possible adjustments that can be discussed and may be considered as initial temporary changes and reviewed regularly to help monitor/assess a situation may include:

- Conducting an individual risk assessment (to identify any particular areas of the working environment that are potentially challenging).
- Flexible working (with later/earlier start or end days/weeks).
- Locality to toilet facilities when visiting churches, homes, schools etc.
- Reviewing rest breaks.
- Flexible working patterns.
- Reviewing support for additional sickness absence.

9.5.4 Support and sites for information and guidance

- ✓ NHS
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/>
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/help-and-support/>
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/treatment/>
- ✓ Menopause support websites - Over the bloody moon
<https://www.overthebloodymoon.com/>
<https://www.menopausematters.co.uk/>
Daisy Network – www.daisynetwork.org support for women experiencing early menopause
- ✓ Menopause charity
<https://www.themenopausecharity.org/menopause/>

Physical symptoms

Every woman will experience the menopause in different ways to others. There are however some symptoms and challenges that have been well researched and documented by medical specialists. These include (in a non-exhaustive list):

- hot flushes;
- insomnia;
- fatigue;
- poor concentration;
- joint pain;

- headaches;
- skin irritation;
- heavy bleeding;
- urinary problems;
- perimenopause symptoms.

Psychological difficulties

As a result of the symptoms above, or as an extension of the hormone imbalance, individuals going through the menopause may also experience (a non-exhaustive list):

- depression;
- anxiety;
- panic attacks;
- mood swings;
- irritability;
- problems with concentration or memory;
- loss of confidence.

Seeking professional medical advice and support will always be encouraged.

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

Appendix 1

A COMMITMENT TO CLERGY WELLBEING

We hope you will find this practical overview for our clergy and PCCs helpful. Please do cross reference any issue detailed here with the Sheffield Diocese Clergy Handbook.

Ordained ministry combines the challenges of a very public role with the burden of carrying matters of extreme sensitivity and confidentiality. The associated pressures are often also felt by a minister's partner, children and wider family, and friendship networks. A large part of the work is unseen by others, and it can be hard to regulate working hours and to know whether they are 'at work' or not. As part of their ordination promises ministers are to, 'be diligent in prayer, in reading Holy Scripture, and in all studies that will deepen [their] faith and fit [them] to bear witness to the truth of the gospel' (cf. Galatians 2.5,14) and to 'fashion [their] own life and that of [their] household according to the way of Christ, that [they] may be a pattern and example to Christ's people' (cf 1 Timothy 3.5; Titus 2.7). The following commitment by the PCC is to help empower ordained ministers to establish patterns that will sustain them in a healthy and fruitful ministry, particularly in regard to their own mental health, spiritual wellbeing and work/life balance.¹

1. Healthy work/life balance

1.1 Clergy should take all their allocated annual leave

- a) 36 days annual leave in each leave year (January-December).
- b) The 8 bank holidays (or more depending on the year e.g. a Coronation) or time off in lieu.

Note: The days of annual leave may not be taken on: More than 6 Sundays a year, any of the Principal Feasts of the Church of England as set out in Canon B6 paragraph 2, Christmas Day, Easter Sunday, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, The Parish's Patronal Festival.

1.2. Clergy should take their rest periods

- a) Uninterrupted rest period of 24 hours in each period of seven days.
- b) Good practice includes not working the evening before the day of rest.²

¹ Words inspired by 'Flourishing in Ordained Ministry' produced by Sheffield Diocese, p.6 and the Church of England Ordinal declarations (<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/ministry/common-worship-ordination-0#mm013>).

² 'Flourishing in Ordained Ministry' produced by Sheffield Diocese, p.19.

- c) A 'double rest day' should be taken in any month in which no annual leave is taken.

1.3. Clergy should manage a healthy pattern to their working hours

- a) Good practice suggests that between 38-50 hours should be worked in a week (no more than an average of 50 hours a week).³
- b) Given the unsociable hours many clergy work and that they only have one day of rest, things like household and garden chores, life admin, health and other appointments should be accounted for on work days, to enable the full 24 hours a week to be given to rest.
- c) Clergy tend to work unsociable hours, but this should not be at an unreasonable cost to family and other commitments. Good practice would limit evening work to no more than an average of three a week and a Saturday (being a time when others may well be free for social activities) or if not practical because of the nature of the parish or because it is already the day off, another day, be seen as a lighter day, rather than one where work is actively generated.
- d) Working hours for clergy will also include the things put in place to manage their wellbeing and access to support, such as, Spiritual Accompaniment, Pastoral Supervision, training, and meetings with peers (see section 3 for more).
- e) In times of increased stress and pressure – such as ministry during times of tending to acute pastoral needs of others, dealing with a crisis in the parish, undergoing a complaint or experiencing personal situations etc., the clergy person may need more time off for self-care and wellbeing. This should be discussed and agreed with the Church Wardens and the Archdeacon.
- f) Recreation time, such as sport or other hobbies, are important for a healthy balanced life and clergy should be encouraged to give reasonable priority to these things within their week.⁴
- g) At times, an emergency may arise such as related to sickness or the needs of those they care for, and an established plan should be in place to activate the relevant cover that may be needed. In this situation the Church Wardens should contact the Area Dean.

1.4 Clergy should use their allocated time for retreat and have regular study days

- a) Clergy are entitled to Annual Retreat of at least a minimum of 5 days for full-time posts.

³ 'Flourishing in Ordained Ministry' produced by Sheffield Diocese, p.18.

⁴ 'Flourishing in Ordained Ministry' produced by Sheffield Diocese, p.24.

- b) It is expected that clergy will build-in times during their week to have moments to retreat to spend time with God, such as at least one full day a month away from the parish.⁵
- c) Study and Ongoing Ministerial Development is an important aspect of clergy growth and development and regular time, such as at least 5 days per year, should be given to it.
- d) A sabbatical is available for those who have served a minimum of ten years in stipendiary ministry - an extended time of leave for up to three months.

2. Healthy Boundaries

2.1 Clergy should be mindful of how they use their Vicarage as a place of work

- a) Clergy should be able to have a separation between the work aspect of their home and their social aspect, such as using the office/study as the primary place for work.
- b) With the Vicarage being a place of work, it may be that parishioners feel they can have access to the clergy person 24/7; this is not a healthy or realistic expectation. Clergy should be clear of the boundaries they want to uphold. For example, only answering the door to those who have arranged an appointment, having other plans in place for times when people forget their keys or other things for church, etc. It is also important to operate a clear 'Lone Working Policy' and to use third spaces e.g. cafes, as a place to meet with people when appropriate, to alleviate the balance of time in the Vicarage as work and to increase safety.
- c) Household occupiers should feel safe, secure and comfortable in the Vicarage which is integral to good wellbeing. The diocese is committed to taking measures to help ensure this via the Archdeacon.⁶

2.2 Clergy should be mindful of the communication provision they put in place

- a) It is good practice for clergy to have a separate personal phone from their work phone and personal email from their work email. A clergy person should not feel that they are to be accessed 24/7 and they should operate periods when they turn their phone off and not check emails, such as days off, study periods, retreats and other times where they benefit from not being accessed.⁷

⁵ 'Flourishing in Ordained Ministry' produced by Sheffield Diocese, p.21.

⁶ 'Flourishing in Ordained Ministry' produced by Sheffield Diocese, p.39.

⁷ 'How Clergy Thrive' by Liz Graveling p.27.

- b) Clergy should not be disturbed or interrupted when they are on leave (e.g. annual leave, sickness, compassionate), their days off, or when they are on retreat unless there has been a discussion about how they would like to be communicated with or informed of something.
- c) Realistic expectations should be set on the turnaround time for things like emails and other correspondence. Information in footers and automated replies can give a timeframe and manage expectations (e.g. 'I am away from my desk and will not be reading emails again until...')
- d) Thought should be given to how internal and external communications are managed in the church, with consideration given to how it may impact the clergy person e.g. the number and frequency of activity on 'WhatsApp' groups, Facebook groups, email chains etc.
- e) Behaviour that is abusive, harassing, anti-social, obsessive and/or excessive whether in person, on the phone, or written, is not to be tolerated by the clergy person. They, in conversation with the Church Wardens, can restrict the method and frequency of a person's contact, including blocking a number and withdrawing access. Wider advice, for example IT and other advice, may be sought by the central diocesan HR team; safeguarding team; property team (if additional security may be needed); and communications teams.
- f) Clergy do not provide an emergency 24/7 service. While they will try to be there for their parishioners in times of need, their response is managed alongside other commitments and competing priorities, including managing their own well-being and keeping themselves safe.

3. Healthy Support⁸

3.1 Clergy should develop a healthy network of support

- a) A Spiritual Accompanier for accountability and guidance on developing their spiritual life.
- b) Pastoral Supervision – a small group meeting with a supervisor to work through issues and have support.
- c) Churches' Ministerial Counselling Service for confidential 1:1 counselling.
- d) People within the structure providing advice and support such as the Associate Archdeacon Transition Enabler, the Area Dean, the Archdeacon, the safeguarding team and other specialists.

⁸ A fuller list of support is provided in Appendix 6 of 'Flourishing in Ordained Ministry' produced by Sheffield Diocese

- e) A core group, which may include the Church Wardens, who the clergy person is open with regarding the challenges and stresses of the role and potentially personal life, and how they are implementing the practices in this commitment in order to have support and accountability.
- f) Peer support - such as prayer partners / book club / Bible study / cell group etc.

3.2 Financial pressures may be alleviated by accessing grants

- a) The Clergy Support Trust
- b) English Clergy Association for holidays
- c) St Lukes for clergy wellbeing and health care

3.3 Training and development

- a) Clergy should access the training provided by the diocese.
- b) Clergy should identify and access other training and learning opportunities in relation to what's relevant to their parish and their own development needs.

3.5 Support for particular circumstances

- a) Some clergy (or family members) will have characteristics or be from backgrounds that may mean they are more likely to be exposed to prejudice and discrimination, or have increased pressure from working in an unfamiliar context, which will have its own toll and stress. This may be based on gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, disability etc. There should be awareness of the impact of these situations on the wellbeing of clergy and support offered and signposted by the diocesan HR team and the Archdeacon.
- b) It is recognised that there may be different challenges that are experienced based on the situation of the clergy person, such as if they are single / married / have children / other dependants etc. There should be awareness of the impact of these situations on clergy and their family and support provided or signposted by the Archdeacon.

3.6 Health support

- a) Clergy at different times in their life, such as going through the menopause or having a medical diagnosis or a life-limiting condition, may need to make reasonable adaptations and adjustments to their work, including their work environment. This should be discussed and reviewed in the first instance with the Archdeacon, and the HR Team are on hand for advice and guidance. Plans can then be discussed with the Churchwardens.

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

10. Sickness absence

This section includes information about:

- 10.1 Supporting sickness absence
- 10.2 Stipend payments during sickness absence
- 10.3 Cover arrangements during sickness absence
- 10.4 Communications during sickness absence
- 10.5 Occupational Health
- 10.6 Reporting sickness absence
- 10.7 When an individual is unable to return to work

10.1 Supporting sickness absence

- 10.1.1 Throughout any period of sickness the diocese will respect individual dignity and privacy – in accordance with medical guidelines, medical information will only be shared with the individuals' express informed consent.
- 10.1.2 The bishop, Archdeacon, and HR manager will ensure that we stay in touch throughout the stages of illness and/or longer-term treatment and that we can offer and/or link with local networks of colleagues, for the best professional, spiritual/pastoral, and practical care.
- 10.1.3 Where medical reports and professional advice is sought this will be to ensure that we are able to offer practical advice, suggestions and recommendations phrased both in terms of fitness for duty, and short-, medium- and longer-term adjustments which will enable an individual to return to full capacity at work as safely as possible.

10.2 Stipend payments during sickness absence

- 10.2.1 A sick pay period is a rolling twelve months' period. (This means that if someone is absent in March and then the following January the two are linked; if someone is absent in March and then the following April then that is a new sick pay period and the two are not linked).
- 10.2.2 The diocese will continue to pay full stipend for 26 weeks for long term periods of sickness absence (this includes statutory sick pay). All sick pay includes Statutory Sick Pay (SSP is up to 28weeks) thus ensuring that the full stipend is received throughout this period.
- 10.2.3 After 26 weeks there will be one final full stipend pay for a three-month period that will enable long term plans to be made, and to link up with Occupational Health; and, where appropriate, any other potential outcomes such as supporting an ill health retirement process.
- 10.2.4 At the end of this three-month period there will be a round table meeting with the individual, the Archdeacon and the HR Manager, and a clear plan will be put

in place as an individual moves to no stipend income. In cases of hardship, we will support individual applications for grants and other benefits from appropriate bodies.

10.2.5 Any further periods of pay are solely at the discretion of the Bishop in consultation with the Diocesan Secretary.

10.3 Cover arrangements during periods of sickness absence

10.3.1 Where possible individuals may be able to arrange cover arrangements (e.g., when there is planned absence before an operation). Where this isn't possible clergy should contact the Area Dean or Archdeacon so that support can be given to Churchwardens for cover arrangements.

10.3.2 The diocese recognises that it can be an onerous task asking an individual to make their own arrangements at a time when they are feeling most vulnerable/ill. It may be that local colleagues, e.g., the Area Dean, or chapter colleagues, can work with individuals to lighten this load and to help make cover arrangements for them where this is helpful.

10.4 Communications during sickness absence

10.4.1 It is important to manage communications during ill health. An out of office message on emails, and telephone are essential on personal devices, as well as via church `offices` where these exist and arrangements for cover or alternative points of contact for information or advice should be coordinated.

10.4.2 It is also important to `manage the message` and be clear about what information and individual is happy to be shared or not, so people can be in touch, or not, depending on a situation.

10.5 Occupational Health

10.5.1 The diocese's Occupational Health arrangements include a professional consultancy arrangement with a qualified and experienced independent Occupational Health provider.

10.5.2 Occupational Health advice focuses on how the individual's medical condition impacts on their ability to fulfill their role and what reasonable adjustments might be made to facilitate a return to full capacity. Advice may include a framework and guidelines for managing a gradual return process, and may also include, where appropriate, advice for family, colleagues, line managers, and senior staff.

10.5.3 The Occupational Health professional will look at nature of work, workload, current pressures, and priorities, and give their advice on what is realistic and what is not advisable. It is usual that more than one OH appointment will be made so that the OH physician can help the individual track progress and increase workload gradually and so return to their full duties.

- 10.5.4 Occupational Health referrals are made by the diocesan HR team following a discussion with the Archdeacon and individual concerned.
- 10.5.5 In general terms clergy who have been off sick for two months or more will be referred to the Occupational Health doctor. A report from the appointment will be agreed with the individual and shared with the relevant Archdeacon, and Bishop.
- 10.5.6 Where the individual requiring Occupational Health is a curate, the training incumbent and appropriate bishop will receive the report and the individual, training incumbent and bishop with the advice from the HR Manager will coordinate how a supportive plan is progressed depending on the situation.

10.6 Reporting sickness absence

- 10.6.1 Under Common Tenure arrangements all Stipendiary clergy are required to ensure that they communicate any periods of ill health: For **the first week** a self-certify note/email should be sent to the relevant Archdeacon's PA in confidence.
- 10.6.2 This short period of sickness absence should at least be communicated locally and to the Area Dean so that any cover arrangements can be made.
- 10.6.3 For **absences of 7 days or more** for all clergy a GP fit note should be sought and forwarded (scanned or sent in hard copy) to the relevant Archdeacon and HR team so that joined up practical and pastoral support can be coordinated as appropriate.
- 10.6.4 For curates, you should let your your training incumbent and the Director IME2 know.

10.6 Where an individual is unable to return to work

- 10.7.1 In the most serious of cases, it may be that an individual will not be able to return to, or maintain their duties. In this case it is likely that an ill health retirement application will need to be made to the Church Pensions Board.
- 10.7.2 If this is the case the DBF will provide full stipend for a 3-month period whilst this process is being navigated and will do all it can to provide support throughout this time.
- 10.7.3 A final period of three months at full stipend may be agreed at the discretion of the bishop (and again only when the individual has had regular reviews with the diocese's Occupational Health physician) and in preparation for moving to zero pay from the end of that time and to allow time for planning and moving.

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

11. Ministerial Development Review (MDR) ministry review scheme

- 11.1 The Bishop is responsible for ensuring a review process of continuing ministerial development is in place across the diocese, and all clergy are required to participate.
- 11.2 The clear focus of an MDR process is to offer support for the ongoing formation, development and wellbeing of the clergy, and to enable clergy to be more reflective and effective servants of Jesus Christ in the light of the diocese's vision and strategy.
- 11.3 The details of all the events and processes for the diocese's MDR scheme are available through this diocesan website, [here](#).

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

12. Continuing ministry support and development

- 12.1 Sheffield Diocese is committed to lifelong learning. For more information about this and the various courses, and events we provide click [here](#) and [here](#).
- 12.2 Attendance at the diocesan conferences, and the Bishop's Annual Lecture is expected. Where there are extenuating circumstances that might prevent you from attending please do discuss this with the Area Dean/Archdeacon.

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

13. Safeguarding

- 13.1 In line with national, and Church of England legislation and requirements, diocesan requirements, and general best practice; Sheffield Diocese has very clear expectations for how all clergy should lead, champion, and role model effective safeguarding.
- 13.2 All clergy must attend and refresh designated training, learning and development opportunities and undertake DBS renewals according to national requirements. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken and will result in the immediate withdrawing of a licence or authorisation meaning the clergy will not be able to act as a Clerk in Holy Orders. It will also necessitate the clergy in question being removed from the National Register of Clergy.
- 13.3 PCCs should ensure that an annual statement of safeguarding appears in the APCM report.
- 13.4 Every parish/benefice should have a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) who works with the PCC to ensure that policies and process are in place, activities are appropriately risk assessed and recorded/followed up. In every setting the details of the PSO and any other people with safeguarding responsibilities should always be clearly visible. The role of the PSO is made simpler if the parish signs up for the free resource that is offered by the Diocese, on the Safeguarding Dashboard [here](#).
- 13.5 Incumbents must ensure that for all roles working with vulnerable groups, that those involved in the recruitment to those roles have undertaken Safer Recruitment and People Management training and that induction, probation and supervision/review processes are in place to support those people in their roles.

The Diocese has a wide range of safeguarding information and for all matters safeguarding which clergy should be familiar with through these links, [here](#) and [here](#).

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

14. Capability Policy and procedure

14.1 Introduction and overview

The national capability processes and procedures can be accessed through this link, [here](#).

- 14.1.2 Principally, capability processes for clergy are designed to help and support dealing with poor performance before things become more serious and ensuring that there is clarity about what is expected. It is about *'what you do and how you do it'*, and the overarching emphasis of the process is to work with a priest with the aim that they will be able to sustain their ministry with clear diocesan guidance, timelines, and support in place; and only when this has proved impossible, would further action be required.
- 14.1.3 Within the scope of the policy the Bishop and senior staff may take into considerations the requirements of the Ordinal, Codes of Professional Behaviour, appropriate ecclesiastical offices/measures, and the specific requirements of a role (as detailed in an individual's Roles and Responsibilities document when they were appointed to the role). *NB if the initial roles and responsibilities document is somewhat out of date, for example if the priest has been in post for sometime, this may be a useful first starting point to update in order to help set clarity and expectations).*
- 14.1.4 There are two stages of a capability process – informal; and formal; and it is important to recognise that a capability issue may reflect a mismatch between the requirements of the role and the person doing it in a specific context. A capability process in one set of circumstances will not prejudge the individual in terms of them being more than capable of doing a job in another situation/context.

14.2 Principles underpinning the capability process

These include the following:

- Access to policies and guidelines.
- Fair and due process.
- Clarity of role.
- Right to reasonable support, advice and training/guidance.
- Right of representation/to be accompanied.
- Natural justice - right of reply.
- Right of appeal.
- Pastoral care and support.
- Right to object to membership of a panel (but only on the grounds of alleged partiality).
- Support through sickness absence, critical illness (may be directed support).
- Reasonable adjustments through disability.

- 'Career'/HR advice and support for opportunities for seeking alternative work outside the Church where appropriate.

14.3 Informal and formal stages

- 14.3.1 It is unlikely that a capability process would come out of the blue. Conversations about issues of capability may well have taken place in informal ways, and discussions may also have taken place about ways in which to improve. Also, Ministerial and/or Episcopal Reviews may have picked up on issues in their own distinct self-contained settings.
- 14.3.2 A formal process will only be considered if informal actions have not proved sustainable.
- 14.3.3 The formal processes may result, in the most serious of situations, in the office holder being removed from office and the clear recommendation is that a member of clergy engages positively with the processes and seeks out all the advice and support that is put in place.

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

15. Grievance Policy and procedure

15.1 Introduction and overview

Clergy have the right to seek redress if they have concerns which cannot be resolved during the normal course of their duties. The objective of the grievance procedure and its supporting advice is to deal with issues promptly, fairly and consistently, with a focus on problem solving, facilitated resolution, mediation, and conciliation wherever possible. Further information is available [here](#).

15.2 Principles underpinning a grievance process

These include:

- All grievances will be taken seriously and responded to fairly and quickly.
- Grievances will be dealt with informally wherever possible.
- All matters will be kept confidential.
- The focus will be on issues not personalities.
- Account will be taken of the legitimate interests of all concerned.
- Office holders will have the right of representation by a colleague or trade union representative at any meeting.
- Grievances may be pursued without fear of sanction.

15.3 Informal and formal processes

- Informal stage – wherever possible attempts should be made to address the person or body responsible for the matter directly and attempt to resolve the grievance informally. Please do seek support if having someone to support this would be helpful. The HR Manager is also available to offer advice and guidance.
- Formal stage – if the grievance has not been resolved informally or within a reasonable time period, the office holder may choose to proceed to the formal stage which comprises:
 - ✓ *Stage one* – the grievance needs to be set out in writing, describing what attempts have been made to resolve the matter informally and what is the desired remedy.
 - ✓ *Stage two* – the person handling the grievance as designated by the Bishop will investigate the matter and then hold a meeting to discuss the issues. This will be followed by a letter detailing the decisions made regarding appropriate resolution.
 - ✓ *Stage three* – if the matter has not been resolved satisfactorily then the office holder may appeal in writing. They will then be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the issues. The decision of the appeal body will be given in writing. There is no further right of appeal.

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

16. Disciplinary Policy and procedure

16.1 Introduction and overview

Formal disciplinary process are afforded to all clergy (whether in active ministry or not) under the Clergy Discipline Measure (CDM). *NB: At the time of this handbook the CDM process is under national review and the new Clergy Conduct Measure policy and processes are under review. This policy will therefore be updated to reflect those changes as appropriate.* Further information is available [here](#).

16.2 Process and informal following up of a complaint received

16.2.1 From time to time ‘complaints’ or issues of concern about individual members of clergy are brought to the attention of the Bishop or to members of his senior staff. These issues may not result in, or warrant, any sort of formal CDM-based process; but it is important that each is followed up appropriately within fair, open and informal due process, with pastoral sensitivity, and in which all parties are afforded the opportunity to share or report their concerns; and with the right to be represented, and of the right of reply.

16.2.2 Where this is the case, a designated member of senior clergy e.g., an Archdeacon may follow up a concern raised in a way that:

- allows each party to be heard;
- allows for a period of reflection on what appropriate next steps may be (or during which time to seek other perspectives on the situation);
- to set out from a senior overview what the appropriate next steps should be to the parties (eg training, mediation, etc);
- to bring the parties together where possible;
- to check in periodically to see how things are going.

16.3 Process and formal disciplinary procedures

16.3.1 The CDM procedure begins with a formal complaint of misconduct along with supporting evidence being sent to the Bishop. A CDM is only appropriate if a cleric is alleged to have:

- acted in breach of ecclesiastical law;
- failed to do something which should have been done under ecclesiastical law;
- neglected to perform or was inefficient in performing the duties of office;
- engaged in conduct unbecoming or inappropriate to the office and work of the clergy.

16.3.2 The Bishop seeks the Diocesan Registrar for advice and having received this, the decision may be made to:

- (i) Dismiss the case (in which case there is no further action).

or

- (ii) Invite the priest or deacon about whom the complaint is made to send a written answer verified by a statement of truth, together with evidence in support.

16.3.3 Following (ii) (above) the Bishop may then decide which of five possible available courses of action the appropriate to the situation. These are to:

- take no further action;
- record the complaint conditionally for a period of up to five years;
- refer the complaint to a conciliator in an attempt to obtain agreement between the complainant and the respondent as to how the complaint should be resolved;
- impose a disciplinary penalty (only with the consent of the respondent); or
- require the complaint to be formally investigated by the Designated Officer, a barrister employed in the Church of England Legal Office.

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

17. Resigning from office and termination of office

(for information for retirement related issues see section 6 of this Handbook). Common Tenure arrangements set out where a cleric's post may cease. This can be for a number of reasons, for example, due to age; a training post; or another time-limited post; and will always be clear in an individual's Statement of Particulars when they are appointed to a role.

17.1 Ending/termination of a post arrangements

- 17.1.1 All clergy are required to retire at 70 years (some extension may be approved by the Bishop with appropriate consultation and agreement).
- 17.1.2 The Bishop may terminate a role in a number of specific circumstances as follows:
- The death of an office holder.
 - Due to a legal pastoral reorganisation (Pastoral Measure).
 - Where an office holder is removed/prohibited from office under criminal proceedings, or CDM.
 - On the expiry of a Regulation 29 time-limited post.
 - Where the office holder is removed from office following capability procedures.
- 17.1.3 Where an office holder has a license due to a post being linked to an employment contract for role – if the individual leaves the employment contract for whatever reason the license will be automatically revoked.
- 17.1.4 Where an office holder has two elements of their role linked by appointment they may only cease to hold one element of that arrangement with express permission. The Statement of Particulars will make the context clear. (For example an incumbency with a DDO role – one element cannot be given up in isolation).

17.2 Notice periods for resignation

- All clergy are requested to give at least 3 months' notice before resigning their appointment. (No matter what/where their role).
- Notice periods can be waived with the express permission of the Bishop.

17.3 Vacating a property

- 17.3.1 With a resignation or retirement, there comes a requirement to vacate the property provided for the better purposes of the role (ie, a diocesan provided house, vicarage, rectory etc.).
- 17.3.2 The Property Team will have clear guidance on arrangements for moving out and leaving the property and its garden/grounds in an appropriate condition.

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)

18. Compassionate leave/arrangements for bereavement in service

18.1 Introduction

Nothing can reduce the shock of bereavement, but some practical advice may help and there will inevitably be some logistical and administrative tasks which will need navigating during what will be a very difficult time.

18.2 Compassionate leave for an office holder

- 18.1 The Bishop will grant compassionate leave for a widowed/widowed office holder for an initial period (usually up to the beginning of the week following the funeral) and then review with them and ongoing pastoral support will be paramount.
- 18.2 The Area Dean and Archdeacon will keep in pastoral touch too, and support the Churchwardens in securing cover arrangements

18.3 Arrangements for a widow/widower where their office holder partner dies in service.

- 18.3.1 The Bishop and Diocesan Secretary will ensure that there is a period to remain in the property during all the lead up to the funeral and for 8 weeks after the funeral in order to arrange to move.
(But please don't panic! the Diocese would not be hard and fast about regarding this as a maximum, and a mutually satisfactory arrangement will be made which takes into account both the circumstances of the widow(er) and the future ministerial needs of the parish).
- 18.3.2 Where the widow/widower doesn't have a secured home to move to, they should seek urgent advice from the Archdeacon. The diocese's Clergy Retirement Officer, Property Team and the HR Manager may also be able to offer advice and support, and signpost to other organisations as appropriate.

18.4 Things to do!

- 18.4.1 On a practical note it is always advisable to know where certain things are kept, for example, Wills, marriage certificates, birth certificates and insurance policies; lists of those to be notified of the death, etc., so that someone else can do this on your or your widow(er)'s behalf if you wish; and any special requests regarding funeral arrangements (which should be stated in the Will).

18.5 Finance and *pension (for clergy under 70yrs old in active stipendiary service)*

- 18.5.1 All stipendiary clergy are covered by the Church Commissioners' Group Pension Scheme, which is non-contributory (Additional Voluntary Contributions are permitted).
- 18.5.2 If a stipendiary deacon or priest dies in service before the age of 65, a lump sum of three times the National Minimum Stipend for the previous year will be payable tax free.
- 18.5.3 Whilst the Pensions Board has discretion as to whom this lump sum death benefit is paid, any wishes expressed by the deceased through a will or nominated beneficiary will be respected wherever possible.
- 18.5.4 Although clergy aged 65-70 are also covered, the amount of benefit declines sharply to take account of the retirement lump sum payable at the age of 65.
- 18.5.5 If you want access to independent financial advice, please contact the Diocesan Secretary.
- 18.5.6 A widow(er) will receive a proportion of the pension that his/her spouse would have received on normal retirement from the date of death. The diocese's Finance Team will inform the Pensions Board, who will initiate payments.
- 18.5.7 The Widow(er) may also receive/be eligible for State benefit or other benefits. Further information is available [here](#).
- 18.5.8 Under the clergy pension scheme, the 'normal retirement age' is 68. At this point it is possible for you to retire on pension without any reduction in retirement benefits for early retirement.

Reviewed December 2023

[Back to contents](#)