



Diocese of Nelson

Housing Policy

Note: A Faculty must be obtained before a Ministry Unit house is purchased.

Housing Policy

For all ministry positions within the Diocese the employing Ministry Unit shall provide housing for the appointee. This will mostly be in the form of a vicarage, but if a vicarage is not available some other housing suitable for the purposes of the appointment is to be provided. The purchasing of a property for the second or subsequent appointments to a Ministry Unit should not normally occur, indeed such a purchase should only happen when the property to be acquired is part of the strategic development plan of the Ministry Unit.

Where vicarages or other Diocesan properties are available the expectation would be that the appointee would live in the housing provided.. It is also the expectation that any other housing provided would be within the boundaries of the Ministry Unit unless there are special reasons for not doing so or the nature of the Ministry does not require it.

In the event that it is not possible to provide housing the Ministry Unit may as a last resort pay a Housing Allowance provided that:

- a. The Ministry Unit or Diocese is not any worse off in the present or the future;
- b. The arrangements are negotiated and included in the letter of commitment from the Bishop;
- c. That the arrangements made do not place the appointee in an advantaged position when compared with other similar ministry appointees.

Housing Allowance

In those rare cases that it has been agreed to pay a housing allowance the allowance shall be calculated on the following basis:

- a. **If the Ministry Unit owns an available house –**
The house shall be rented at market rental. The sum received less the costs of land and water rates, insurances and any other fixed charges shall be disbursed on the basis of 2/3 to the appointee (not exceeding 33% of standard stipend) as a housing allowance and 1/3 to the Ministry Unit for maintenance on the property.
- b. **If the Ministry Unit does not own an available house –**
The allowance shall be calculated by negotiation with the person concerned, using the basis of a fixed percentage of the gross stipend, normally (but not guaranteed) 33.3%: provided that due consideration may be given to the cost of appropriate rental accommodation as measured by Real Estate rental statistics within the subject residential area.

Indexing

It is the primary policy of the Diocese to provide housing to all Ministry (licensed) appointments where stipends are payable. Any indexing of any "Housing Allowance" should therefore not exceed any movements in the value of any housing that would have been provided on appointment.

Housing Allowance, where it is provided for in the letter of commitment, should therefore be adjusted by any increase or decrease shown in an agreed independent and appropriate rental housing index. Where there has been no indexing provided for in the letter of offer there will be no indexing.

Approval Processes

Before any allowances can be authorised the following processes shall be followed:

- a. Any negotiations must involve the Diocese, the Ministry Unit and the proposed appointee.
- b. Any proposed allowance, together with the basis for adjustment, if any, must be contained in any letter of commitment.
- c. Must have the concurrence of the Diocesan Secretary, who shall ensure that the offer is in accordance with Diocesan policy and does not expose the Diocese or Ministry Unit to any extra liability or undesirable precedent.

Transition Arrangements

Any Housing Allowance arrangements that are operating at the time that this policy is approved shall continue in force until such time that the recipient of those allowances wish to renegotiate their allowance. Any renegotiation will be in accordance with this policy.