



# POLICY DOCUMENT

ARCHDIOCESE OF KANSAS CITY IN KANSAS

<b>Issued Date:</b> 22 May 2026	<b>Last Reviewed Date:</b> 19 May 2026
<b>Subject: Priest Compensation</b>	

## I. Purpose

The Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas establishes this policy to ensure equitable, just, and transparent compensation and support for priests serving in ministry within the Archdiocese.

*Canon Law notes:*

*Canon 281 §1:* Clerics deserve remuneration befitting their condition and enabling them to fulfill the duties of their state.

*Canon 384:* The Archbishop must ensure the welfare and rights of clerics.

*Canon 1276:* The Archbishop oversees the administration of ecclesiastical goods.

## II. Definitions

1. Ensuring adequate support for clergy in active ministry.

*Canon 281 §1–2:* Support must provide for “decent support” and social assistance.

2. **Uniformity and Equity**

All priests in comparable assignments are compensated according to unified archdiocesan norms.

*Canon 270 & 271:* Transfer and assignment of priests require regulated norms.

3. **Responsible Stewardship**

Compensation decisions reflect the Church’s obligation to steward temporal goods responsibly.

*Canon 1284:* Administrators of ecclesiastical goods must act with prudence and diligence.



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## 4. Transparency

Clear communication of compensation standards is required of both parishes and the Archdiocese.

## III. Policy

# 1. Elements of Priest Compensation

## 1.1 Clergy Salary

The Archdiocese establishes an annual salary scale for priests, differentiated by assignment and years of service.

*Canon Law notes:*

*Canon 281* mandates just remuneration.

*Canon 384* obligates the Archbishop to provide priests with adequate means.

*Canon 532* requires pastors to administer parish goods per archdiocesan norms.

**See Schedule of Priest Compensation**

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## 1.2 Sacramental Offerings (Not to be referred to as Stole Fees)

Mass offerings and sacramental offerings follow archdiocesan schedules and must be recorded.

*Canon Law notes:*

*Canons 945–958* govern Mass offerings.

*Canon 951:* A priest may retain one offering per day unless concelebration rules apply.

*Canon 1264:* The Archbishop sets offerings for sacraments after consulting the presbyteral council.

- **The current amount for Mass Offerings is \$10. Mass offerings are already included in the priest salary.**



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- **The Code of Canon Law requires that Mass offerings be recorded and tracked separately and accounted for upon fulfillment.**
  - **Other Sacramental Offerings** on the occasion of sacraments or rites are presumed to be for the parish unless specifically stated otherwise (*cf. Can. 1267 §1*). If retained by the priest these are considered by the IRS as taxable income for the priest
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## 1.3 Housing

Parishes must provide suitable rectory housing or, when impossible, an archdiocesan-approved housing allowance.

*Canon 281 §2* requires that clerics receive provision for “their needs.”

*Canon 615* (by analogy): Religious are to have suitable dwelling; the same principle applies to archdiocesan clergy.

- **Priests are to leave the rectory in the same or better condition as when they moved in. Damages to the rectory (by pets, smoking etc.) or other actions by the priest (not normal wear and tear) are the personal responsibility of the priest.**

Prior to departing a parish, a pastor is required to do a walk-through of the rectory with the parish finance council chair. If there is a dispute the local dean will arbitrate.

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## 1.4 Food and Household Provisions

Parishes provide food and household necessities or fund them through an archdiocesan-set allowance.

*Canon 1274 §1*: The Church provides for the support of clergy through various means.

### Definitions

1. **Groceries**: Food and non-alcoholic beverages purchased for consumption at the rectory.
2. **Meals Eaten Out**: Restaurant meals consumed personally by the priest (not ministry-related).



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3. **Business Meals:** Meals hosted and shared with individuals or groups where the primary purpose is ministry, parish business, evangelization or pastoral care.
  - The parish provides groceries/meals for the rectory, up to \$400.00 per month per priest. This is not taxable to the priest. The cost of groceries beyond \$400.00 and meals eaten out are personal expenses to the priest.
  - Business meals are reimbursable. The ministry purpose, names of attendees and itemized receipts must be documented by the priest, provided to and retained by the parish office.
  - **All priest expenses** must be reviewed and approved by the parish/entity Finance Council Chair, business manager or equivalent, prior to payment. For standard amounts, this may be achieved through the budget process.
  - The priest is to pay for his personal items such as toiletries, clothing, alcohol (unless used for parish functions), car insurance and maintenance, gas and any other items deemed personal. These items may not be paid for by the parish.
  - The parish is to pay for household expenses such as cleaning, laundry, rectory maintenance (unless damage is caused by the priest) and utilities.

## **Documentation and Authorization Requirements**

- Itemized receipts are required for all groceries and meals. Receipts for business meals must document the purpose and attendees per IRS regulations. All documentation is required prior to reimbursement and must be retained by the parish office.
- Personal items must be purchased in a separate transaction and not submitted for reimbursement or payment.
- Requests for reimbursement must be submitted monthly and approved by the Finance Council Chair or equivalent.

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## **1.5 Transportation**



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Priests may be reimbursed for ministry travel at IRS rates.

*Canon 1284:* Administrators must maintain proper documentation for Church expenditures.

*Canon 1287:* Financial reports are obligatory.

- Private autos may not be purchased in the name of the parish.
- The priest may track all ministry-related mileage and submit it for reimbursement, at the current IRS reimbursement rate, to the parish Finance Council Chair for approval monthly. No personal mileage may be reimbursed.

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## 1.6 Health and Insurance Benefits

All priests must receive medical, dental and vision coverage, disability insurance, and life insurance when provided by the Archdiocese.

*Canon Law notes:*

*Canon 281 §2:* Clerics must be provided with social assistance, including health care.

*Canon 1274 §2:* The Archdiocese should maintain systems for the support of clergy.

- Coverage details are provided in the annual Priest Benefits Guide.
- Premiums are paid by the employer. Deductibles, co-insurance and out of pocket costs are the responsibility of the priest (personal expense).
- Priests nearing age 65 should enroll in Medicare Part A.
- Retired priests are to use Medicare as primary insurance with the medical plan of the Priest Pension Plan as secondary.
- Each priest has access to reimbursement from the Archdiocese up to \$400.00 annually for health and fitness expenses (i.e. gym, fitness equipment, etc.).



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## 1.7 Assisted Living and Skilled Nursing

The Archdiocese is committed to our priests receiving the best and most appropriate care in their declining years. Quite often, the priest individually will make arrangements for this and will be able to provide for such care out of his personal financial resources such as retirement benefit, social security and personal savings. Given the cost of assisted living and skilled nursing, this may not be possible for the full remaining lifetime of a priest due to limited resources.

*Canon Law notes:*

*Canon 281 §2:* Clerics must be provided with social assistance, including health care.

*Canon 1274 §2:* The Archdiocese should maintain systems for the support of clergy.

- To meet the cost of assisted living/skilled nursing, it is assumed that the priest will commit the monies received from his monthly pension, defined contribution, social security benefits and personal funds to provide for his care.
- If the priest does not have funds and applies for Medicaid, the Archdiocese will pay the difference required for the priest to remain in a private room in accord with Medicaid regulations. Specific needs and circumstances of the individual priest will be reviewed on an as-needed basis.

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## 1.8 Retirement Benefits

The Archdiocese contributes to the priest pension plan and employers to a defined contribution plan.

*Canon Law notes:*

*Canon 281 §2:* Clerics must be provided with social security.

*Canon 1274 §1:* Funds must exist for the support of clergy including retirement.



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- Archdiocesan priests must be enrolled in the U.S. Social Security program.
- A summary plan document (SPD), for the Priest Pension Plan and the 403(b) Plan, is available upon request from the human resources department.

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## 1.9 Continuing Formation and Retreats

Retreat and formation costs are funded according to archdiocesan limits.

*Canon Law notes:*

*Canon 276 §2* requires ongoing formation and an annual retreat for priests.

*Canon 279 §1* mandates theological continuing education.

- Continuing education and retreat expenses are reimbursed at 100% for registration, room and board and 50% of travel-related expenses for one personal retreat and one continuing education opportunity each calendar year.
- For international travel, 25% of travel-related expenses are reimbursed.
- For 30-day retreats, 75% of program cost and 75% of travel are reimbursed.
- Requests for reimbursement must be made no later than 6 months after the retreat or conference and must be made within the same fiscal year the event occurred.

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## 1.10 Ministry-Related Expenses

Parishes provide all tools, liturgical items, office supplies, and communication tools needed for ministry.

- Cell phone bills are reimbursable up to \$100.00 per month.



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*Canon 1286: Workers must receive rightful remuneration and working conditions.*

*Canon 1284: Administrators must maintain goods in proper order.*

## 1.11 Sacramental Ministers

Sacramental Ministers are ordained priests who serve the sacramental needs of a parish community. The Sacramental Minister works under the direction of the Canonical Administrator of the parish.

*Canon 1286: Workers must receive rightful remuneration and working conditions.*

- Sacramental Ministers are responsible for:
  - Celebration of the Liturgies on weekends and holy days
  - Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (regular schedule)
  - Celebration of baptisms, weddings and funerals according to need
  - Weekday celebration of Liturgies as agreed upon
  - Care of the sick, especially Sacrament of the Anointing
- Those in active ministry will receive normal salary and benefits as delineated for priests serving in the Archdiocese. The source of payment is determined on a case-by-case basis.

## 1.12 Substituting and Assisting Priest Remuneration

Parishes are responsible for finding and compensating a substitute priest in the event of the absence of the pastor or parochial administrator. For longer term absences, the parish should consult with the Dean.

Compensation for substitution and assisting is as follows;

- \$40 Weekday masses
- \$75 Sunday masses
- \$50 Confessions
- \$50 Baptism



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- \$100 Wedding
- \$100 Funeral (If not covered by the family.)

The priest may present mileage to the parish for reimbursement at the current IRS rate.

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## 2. Time Away From Ministry

### 2.1 Weekly Day Off

Priests receive one weekly day of rest.

*Canon Law notes:*

*Canon 276:* While canon law does not legislate a weekly day off, it mandates ministerial health and reasonable workload.

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### 2.2 Vacation

Four weeks of paid vacation per year (including a maximum of four weekends) which represents time spent away from normal pastoral responsibility for the purpose of relaxation (and travel).

*Canon 283 §2:* Clerics are permitted time for vacation.

- Unused time is not carried over to the next year.
- Permission for vacation beyond the four weeks must be granted by the Archbishop.
- The priest who receives permission for an extended vacation continues in his priestly appointment; however, he is not compensated by the parish or other ministry beyond the four weeks vacation time.
- The vacationing priest is responsible for expenses incurred by him while on vacation (personal expense).



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- The priest is responsible for providing a replacement in his absence. The parish or ministry is responsible for remuneration to this substitute. See Section 1.12 of this policy.
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## 2.3 Sick Leave

Paid leave is permitted for illness; absences of five or more consecutive days must be reported to the local dean and the Vicar for Clergy.

*Canon 281 §2:* Provision must be made for sickness.

*Canon 1001* encourages due care for the sick.

- A temporary sick leave is granted by the Archbishop for reasons of health.
  - The priest continues on his assignment and the parish/ministry is responsible for his normal salary and benefits for a period up to three months.
  - The Archdiocese is responsible for providing a replacement during his time of illness or recuperation.
  - Sick leave may evolve into a Leave of Absence (see section 24 of this policy). Consideration may also be needed for Long Term Disability. Such matters should be referred to the Vicar for Clergy who should consult with the Director of Human Resources on benefit issues.
  - Permanent disability is covered by the Priest Pension Plan. Priests must also apply for Social Security disability if going on the Priest Pension Plan disability program.
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## 2.4 Leave of Absence

Personal Leave: Leave may be granted for serious family emergencies or pastoral necessity (personal reasons).



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Administrative Leave: A leave may also be imposed by the Archbishop.

*Canon 273:* Clerics owe obedience to the Archbishop, who governs permissions for absence.

*Canon 275:* Priests must support one another in fraternal assistance.

- A priest may normally request a leave of up to one year for personal reasons.
- Requests for personal leave must be made to the Archbishop, who, once in receipt of the request, will confer with the Council on Personnel.
- When a leave of more than three months is granted, the priest does not remain in his assignment.
- An administrative leave is case specific. The priest may or may not remain in his assignment. Those remaining in their assignment will be paid by their employer (parish or other entity). Those not remaining in their assignment will be paid by the Archdiocese.
- **Priests on leave may receive up to the canonical base, unless other employment is attained.**
- Health and retirement benefits will continue while on leave. Room and board is case specific and must be approved by the Archbishop.

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## 2.5 Sabbatical

A sabbatical is an educational or personal spiritual renewal experience that a priest may seek to assist in his personal and/or pastoral growth.

- A priest may request a sabbatical after an extended period of service of ten years or more in the Archdiocese.
- Priests on the faculty of academic institutions are subject to the policies of the respective institution, which must bear the responsibility of providing the sabbatical program.
- The priest is expected to be involved in a formal program of personal renewal and/or educational development.



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- The period of sabbatical is three months. Permission for a longer period must be granted by the Archbishop.
- Longer periods of absence from pastoral assignment will be considered a form of leave of absence or assignment to extended studies, unless the Archbishop determines otherwise.
- At least ten years must be served after a sabbatical prior to requesting another sabbatical.
- A request for sabbatical, detailing the program, cost and length of time, must be submitted to the Archbishop in writing, at least six months prior to the requested start date.
- **Pastoral responsibility:** If a priest takes a sabbatical while continuing in his current assignment, the Vicar for Clergy is responsible for providing his replacement. If a priest requests a sabbatical after completing his pastoral assignment with no intention of returning to the same position of ministry, pastoral care will be provided through the assignment of a new priest according to normal procedures.
- **Funding:** The priest receives the same remuneration and benefits as when serving in active ministry. When returning to the same assignment, that employer is responsible for payment. When moving to a new assignment upon return from sabbatical, the Archdiocese is responsible for payment.
- Three-fourths of the cost of formal programs approved for the sabbatical (room, board, fees) will be paid by the Archdiocese. The priest is personally responsible for one-fourth of the cost of formal programs plus any additional expenses such as travel, vacation, etc.
- Upon return from sabbatical, the priest is to provide to the Archbishop a written report of his sabbatical experience.

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## 3. Accountability, Stewardship, and Compliance



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## 3.1 Financial Transparency

All compensation must be recorded in parish/archdiocesan financial systems.

*Canon Law notes:*

- *Canon 1287 §1:* Administrators must render accounts to the Ordinary.
  - *Canon 537:* Parish finance councils assist with transparency and good order.
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## 3.2 Prohibited Practices

Priests may not solicit personal gifts or accept unregulated cash payments. Directed contributions, as defined by IRS Publication 526 on Charitable Contributions, are not allowed.

*Canon 1267 §3:* Gifts given to clerics for the Church belong to the Church unless proven otherwise.

*Canon 285 & 286:* Clerics are forbidden from business enterprises and improper profit-seeking.

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## 3.3 Parish Responsibilities

Parishes must budget appropriately and follow archdiocesan norms.

*Canon 1284 §1:* Administrators must exercise vigilance and prudence with Church goods.

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## 4. Review and Amendment

Policy reviewed every year and amended with approval of the Archbishop.

*Canon 1276:* Archbishop supervises administration of temporal goods.

*Canon 500:* Presbyteral Council assists in governance matters.

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## 5. Implementation and Exceptions

Exceptions may be granted only by the Archbishop or his delegate.

*Canon 381 §1:* The Archbishop holds ordinary, proper, and immediate authority.

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