

User Guide

Sabbatical Leave for Clergy

Purpose

Sabbatical leave is a period away from parochial / congregational responsibilities, normally of two to three months duration. The fundamental purpose of a sabbatical is to have a time for rest, renewal and re-creation so as to return refreshed in one's ministry. It is not simply the same as extended study leave, although there will be elements of study in a sabbatical; nor is it a simple ministry exchange. It should *combine* the following elements:

Study and development:

1. Space for reflection – time for self and for God
2. Refreshment

The overall aim is that it should be a help to ministry, either directly (if the emphasis is on study or skills), or indirectly (if the emphasis is more on personal development). This leave period may be initiated through the process of Ministerial Review.

Eligibility

Sabbatical leave should normally be available, after consultation with the Diocesan Director of Ministerial Development, the relevant Archdeacon and the Lead Bishop, to licensed clergy between the ages of 38 and 59, providing:

He or she has normally completed 15 years of licensed ministry overall:

1. They have not had a similar period of extended study leave in the previous 10 years
2. They have been at least five years in their present post, and
3. They are not actively looking for a move during the planning period
4. They have not had a CMD grant for a major academic course within the previous 5 years.

Factors to be considered

1. Family and personal circumstances
2. The needs of the congregation or chaplaincy: this should be discussed at an early stage with churchwardens and have their support
3. The availability of locum cover over the period of leave
4. The ability of the congregation or chaplaincy to cope with locums, in particular, the housing of locums.

Finance

It is expected that the congregation or chaplaincy will continue to pay the stipend and pension contributions of the applicant.

A funding package for the sabbatical will likely come from these sources:

1. Contribution from CMD fund [[Link to draft User Guide djc4.5](#)]
2. Congregation or Chaplaincy contribution. This will include covering locum costs and will need to take due account of the ability of the chaplaincy to provide funding.
3. Personal contributions, according to circumstances
4. Other possible sources of funding from grant-awarding trusts and charities

Planning

The following elements need to be addressed satisfactorily during the planning process and in discussion with one or more of the Director of Ministerial Development, the relevant archdeacon or the Lead Bishop:

1. Clarification of aim of the sabbatical (i.e. what is to be done, and why)
2. Timing and length. A sabbatical leave is over and above annual holiday entitlement.
3. Place or places where the sabbatical will be spent
4. Main focus of study
5. Other activity/ies
6. Tutor/mentor/supervisor
7. Reporting back

Requesting Sabbatical Leave

After planning is complete a formal request should be made in writing to the Suffragan Bishop. This request will include:

1. A statement of the aim of the sabbatical period
2. A reasonably detailed sabbatical itinerary showing exact dates of the proposed leave, how and where the time is to be spent, and the proportions of the sabbatical dedicated to study, reflection/retreat and refreshment
3. A budget, including the sources of funding.

For stipendiary clergy, the assurance that the chaplaincy or congregation has agreed to pay stipend, pension and expenses during the leave.

4. Details of the locum cover arranged including details of how the chaplaincy or congregation will cover any additional expenses related to the cost and housing of locum priests.
5. Who has or is advising on the use of sabbatical time, as a mentor.
6. An agreement to write a short reflection on the sabbatical, once completed to be shared with the Bishop, the Director of Ministerial Development, and the Church Council.

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