

Paying expenses and taking leave

This User Guide provides advice to Chaplaincies in dealing with the important matters of how we should be making sure that that 'expenses' and the arrangements for 'taking leave' are properly understood.

All organisations work more effectively where there is a clear understanding of what is required of whom. The Diocese and Chaplaincies are no different, and having in place sensible arrangements can prevent difficulties arising from misunderstandings. The Diocese requires that formal agreements are set out in the 'terms and conditions' which set and which set out clearly what are the overall expectations. It will be agreed with the Chaplain at the time of appointment and any variation must be agreed with the chaplain and in consultation with the Archdeacon.

This User Guide provides further information and in particular provides prompts to some of the more detailed matters which could benefit from local agreement with the Chaplain. Where local agreements are reached then these are always best recorded in some way so that there can be no misunderstandings at a later date.

Expenses

Experience shows that 'expenses' are an area for potential problems unless the agreements between the Chaplain and the Chaplaincy Council are quite clear, particularly on the following matters.

How are expenses to be claimed: Is there a 'Chaplaincy claim form', what receipts are to be supplied, how often should claims be submitted, how are the costs reimbursed and who 'signs off' the expenses (typically the Chaplaincy Treasurer)?

Travel and related expenses: What are reasonable expenses? For example are there any limits for overnight accommodation, class of travel, snacks taken between meals?

Use of a Chaplaincy car: Where a Chaplaincy car is provided, what are the arrangements for covering the costs of its use (maintenance, repairs, insurance and local taxes) and are there any restrictions on the private use of the car (including fuel costs, use of the car to travel outside the relevant country)?

Chaplaincy 'consumables': What 'consumables' (for example printing ink, paper) are covered by the Chaplaincy rather than the Chaplain?

Chaplaincy accommodation and utility bills: Who is responsible for costs associated with the Chaplaincy accommodation including local taxes, utility bills, maintenance, replacement of worn fixtures and fittings?

Telephones: What arrangement are in place for the provision of a mobile telephone, the private use of Chaplaincy land lines and mobiles and reimbursement of personal mobile usage.

Other issues: What arrangements are agreed for the payment of relevant subscriptions for matters of relevance to the Chaplains role in the Chaplaincy and any consumables used by the chaplain on behalf of the Chaplaincy.

Emergency expenses: Any agreements to cover emergency expenses, for example a need for a Chaplain and immediate members of their family to return to their 'home' country in the event of serious illness/death of an immediate family member (parent, child, spouse/partner)?



Taking Leave – and arrangements

for time off

Weekly day of rest: The Diocese requires that every Chaplain must have one day of rest each week. This is essential for the well-being of the Chaplain and their family. Chaplaincies should make sensible arrangements to ensure that the Chaplain's 'day off' is not disturbed other than by a truly emergency need. This could include the diversion of Chaplaincy calls to a Churchwarden, Secretary/Administrator etc who could determine if the Chaplain needed to be disturbed – or could the matter wait?

Leave/holidays: it is always sensible to have clear and agreed arrangements on the amount of leave, how much notice is appropriate and who is responsible for finding cover for the period concerned.

Attendance at Diocesan/Archdeaconry meetings (eg Synods, 'Cluster Groups' etc), relevant training and development events, 'Retreats', time for private prayer and reflection are not matters that are to be treated as 'leave'. They are a part of - and essential to - the Chaplain's role.

Experience has shown that where these matters are properly covered then this has a positive impact on the well-being of the Chaplain and their family and consequently the Chaplaincy as a whole. So, pedantic as it might seem, it is an aid to the smooth ministry in a Chaplaincy and an essential part of what we need to do.