



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

UCA Handbook

Ministerial Provisions and Charges

Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

2024



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Purpose	1
1.2	TPC Responsibilities	1
1.3	Other Provisions	1
1.4	Summary of Ministerial Provisions and Charges	2
1.5	Handbook for Ministers – Distribution and Access	2
2	Definitions and Abbreviations	3
3	A Theology of Ministerial Stipends	4
3.1	The nature of stipend	4
3.2	Full-time and part-time	4
3.3	Guidelines	5
3.4	Contextual considerations	5
4	Stipend Levels and Loadings	7
4.1	Minimum Stipend	7
4.2	Part-time Placements - Minimum Stipend	7
4.3	Stipend Loadings	7
5	Car Provisions	8
5.1	Car Allowances	8
5.2	Part-time Placements	8
5.3	Cars Provided by the Church	8
5.4	Car Loans	9
6	Personal Resources and Development Allowance	10
6.1	Purpose of Personal Resource Development Allowance	10
7	Other Allowances and Work Related Expenses	11
7.1	General Expenses	11
7.2	Hospitality	11
7.3	Welfare Payments	11
8	Housing	12
8.1	Manse provided by Placement	12
8.2	Rented Accommodation	12
8.3	Care and Maintenance of Manse or Rented Accommodation	12
8.4	Manse/housing costs	13
8.5	Summary of Manse Options	13
8.6	Quantum of Manse Allowance	14
8.7	Furnishing Provisions	14
8.8	Clergy Couples	15
8.9	Removals Leave between Placements	15
9	Leave	16

9.1	Annual Leave	16
9.2	Public Holidays.....	17
9.3	Sundays free from Ministerial Responsibilities	17
9.4	Study Leave	17
9.5	Sick Leave.....	18
9.6	Carer's leave	19
9.7	Injury Leave.....	20
9.8	Compassionate or Bereavement Leave.....	20
9.9	Parental Leave (includes maternity, adoption and partner paternity leave)	20
9.10	Long Service Leave	222
9.11	Long Service Leave for Non-ordained Ministries	244
9.12	Long Service Leave - Summary of Eligibility and Conditions	255
9.13	Portability of Leave Entitlements.....	266
10	Retirement Benefits	277
10.1	Beneficiary Fund	277
10.2	Superannuation – non ordained.....	27
11	Part-Time Placements.....	288
11.1	Context.....	288
11.2	Consultation	288
11.3	Part-time Minimum for Total Range of Entitlements	288
11.4	Quantification of Part-time.....	288
12	Supply Ministry.....	299
12.1	Introduction.....	299
12.2	Supply ministry situations.....	2930
12.3	Entitlements appropriate to the different supply situations	2930
12.4	Housing	311
12.5	Furnishing provisions	311
12.6	Removal expenses.....	311
12.7	Annual Leave and Public Holidays.....	322
12.8	Study Leave	322
12.9	Sick Leave.....	322
12.10	Compassionate Leave or Bereavement Leave.....	322
12.11	Parental Leave	322
12.12	Employment Injury Leave.....	322
12.13	Retirement Benefits.....	322
12.14	Fringe Benefits Tax Arrangements	333
12.15	Other Considerations	333

APPENDIX A Pastoral Care of Ministers during Maternity Leave 344
APPENDIX B Long Service Leave Application Form..... 355
APPENDIX C(a) Ministers within a Workplace Environment (Synod Offices) 377
APPENDIX C(b) Uniting AgeWell Chaplain Guidelines 399
APPENDIX D Retirement Form..... 411
APPENDIX E Minister Remuneration Strategy 433

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This document is provided as a reference for ministers, congregations, presbyteries, and agencies of the UCA about matters pertaining to the placement and provisions and charges of ministers of the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA) within the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania.

The Terms of Placement Committee (TPC) is responsible for maintaining this resource and any feedback or suggestions should be sent to the:

Secretary, Terms of Placement Committee via email: tpc@victas.uca.org.au or by phone on 03 9116 1421.

1.2 TPC Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the TPC to make recommendations to the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania about matters pertaining to provisions and charges for ministers. Provisions and charges include:

- annual leave;
- car allowance;
- Long Service Leave;
- manse allowance;
- sick leave/special/other leave;
- stipend – minimum level;
- study leave; and
- supply fees and allowances.

1.3 Other Provisions

Other provisions which apply to ministers are managed by Synod staff and some outsourced providers. Queries in relation to these matters should be directed as follows:

Issue	Contact	Phone
WorkCover insurance	OHS Adviser	9116 1949
WorkCover incidents or accidents – must be reported within 48 hours	Synod Safety Officer	9116 1949
Car loans	MBA	9116 1933
Special pastoral aid	Pastoral Assistance Committee	9116 1422
Ministers' Long Service Leave Application and processing	Payroll	9116 1933
General inquiries about ministerial provisions and charges	Secretariat – Executive Assistant to the Associate General Secretary	9116 1421
Beneficiary Fund	Mercer Super Trust – Uniting Church in Australia Beneficiary Fund. Helpline Services: Within Australia: Website: mercersupertrust.com	1800 682 525 61 3 86871823
Removals	Property Services Email: property@victas.uca.org.au	9116 1958

1.4 Summary of Ministerial Provisions and Charges

Provisions and Charges for ministers are reviewed and approved by the Synod annually and compiled into a summary for ready use by ministers, congregations and presbyteries. This document, *Summary of Ministerial Provisions and Charges*, is distributed in December and June each year and is posted on the Synod website www.victas.uca.org.au/tpc

1.5 Handbook for Ministers – Distribution and Access

1.5.1 Hard copy

A hard copy of the *UCA Handbook Ministerial Provisions and Charges* will be provided on request to congregations and ministers following any substantial revision. Email request to tpc@victas.uca.org.au

1.5.2 Electronic copy

The *UCA Handbook* is available electronically on the Synod Website at www.victas.uca.org.au/tpc. If an email copy is preferred, please email the request to tpc@victas.uca.org.au with "UCA Handbook" in the subject line.

2 Definitions and Abbreviations

Term	Definition
Placements Committee	Advisory Committee on Ministerial Placements
Long term supply	Supply ministry of more than three months in the one location
LSL	Long Service Leave
MBA	Ministers' Benefit Account
TPC	Terms of Placement Committee
Minister	For the purposes of this handbook, the term minister shall include a Minister of the Word, a Deacon, a Deaconess, a Specified Ministry of Youth Worker, and a Pastor in an approved placement.
Occasional supply	Minister is required to provide worship service(s) and/or pastoral care days, over a continuous period of not more than one month.
PAC	Pastoral Assistance Committee (a committee of the Synod)
Placements	Throughout this handbook 'Placements' usually refers to Congregational Ministry Placements. There are a variety of other types of placements and ministry contexts within the Church that are informed by this handbook, but, for ease of language, reference is usually made to congregations as the responsible body. In different ministry contexts the appropriate responsible body may be substituted as appropriate.
PRC	Pastoral Relations Committee (a committee of the Presbytery)
PRDA	Personal Resources Development Allowance
Responsible body	Church Council, Presbytery, Agency, School etc.
Short term supply	Normally defined as a continuous period of supply ministry which is more than one month but not more than three months in the one location e.g. a single congregation, a multi-congregation parish, a cluster of congregations operating as a single entity (mission area), or a presbytery.
Synod	Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

3 A Theology of Ministerial Stipends

*Prepared by Rev Dr Chris Walker National Consultant Theology and Discipleship
Received by the Assembly Standing Committee in November 2009 (Minute 09.59)
This is a summary version. The full version is available at:
<https://www.victas.uca.org.au/tpc>*

3.1 The nature of stipend

In the church a stipend is a form of payment provided to ministers to permit them to devote themselves to ministry. Normally the ministry will be full time. The stipend is given to enable the person to be free of avoidable anxiety about having to obtain food, clothing, shelter and other necessities. The stipend is a 'monetary allowance' rather than a salary or fee for services rendered.

There is an important difference between the terms 'stipend' and 'salary'. A salary is remuneration for work carried out, usually on the basis of an assessment of the value of the kind of work in question. A stipend, while paid to ministers in a general way for their ministerial work, is not to be construed as a payment for particular work. It is not paid for particular duties or hours of work. The relationship between an employer and a salary earner is contractual. There are contractual obligations on the part of each which are enforceable in law. The relationship between a congregation, or other responsible body for a placement, and a minister is covenantal. A congregation, or other body, covenants to pay a stipend to a minister but that minister is, strictly speaking, not accountable to that congregation, or body, but to the Presbytery or other council of oversight. This, of course, is not to suggest that there is no sense in which a minister is accountable to the congregation or body in which they exercise ministry. The covenant between the responsible body and minister, involving concern for justice and care, means that the stipend will always be the first charge on any church budget.

Underlying the difference between a stipend and a salary is the distinctive nature of the ordained ministries of the church (Minister of the Word and Deacon). Although ministers may describe the Uniting Church, or their congregation or other responsible body, as their 'employer', their ministry is not simply a form of employment. It is grounded in a call from God to ministry, confirmed by the church. Although in a general sense ministers serve their congregation, or the particular group or community of people to whom they minister, and are responsive to it, they are not 'paid' or 'remunerated' for particular services to the congregation or other group involved. There is always a broader vision and a broader range of needs to be considered, and their calling makes them responsible to God and the whole church for their choices. They are ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ serving God's reign not simply carrying out prescribed responsibilities. Congregations and ministers negotiating for a call share their expectations and the presbytery or other council of oversight has the responsibility to deal with issues or problems.

There are some pressures on the notion of stipend, such as the acceptance of part time ministries (see below) and the professionalization of ministry. Ministry does require high levels of competence and conduct, high personal and 'professional' standards. However the idea that this should mean a highly remunerated ministry stands in tension with the basic understanding of ministry as grounded in God's call to serve through the church by the proclamation of the gospel in word and deed. It is a mistake to treat the stipend like a salary package. Ministers themselves need to appreciate this difference concerning their remuneration especially in an aggressive capitalist culture.

3.2 Full-time and part-time

There are now many ministries that are part time rather than full time. This includes ordained ministries as well as many paid lay ministries. This makes it look as though a part time stipend is payment for hours worked. The part time minister may or may not gain income in some other way. Nevertheless, the idea of ordained ministry is grounded in a call from God recognised by the church. The resultant relationship between ministers and those among whom they minister remains fundamental. To move from the concept of a stipend to the notion of a salary package for part time ministries would adversely affect both the relationship between ministers and their people and the approach of ministers to their work.

3.3 Guidelines

The Synod of Victoria and Tasmania makes use of the following principle: “The traditions from which we come expect a great deal of ministers. They are to become and remain Biblical scholars, articulate interpreters of current events, pastors with competence in the professional skills of psychology and human relations, as well as developing a quality of spirituality which ‘both by life and doctrine sets forth God’s true and living word.’ It is unreasonable to expect this order of contribution to the life of the church if ministers are preoccupied and anxious about money, or are spending their time in an effort to save or earn money.”

The principles for setting the minimum stipend stem from the biblical concept of **justice** which is covenantal. It is concerned with the right relationship of people with God and with one another. Micah says that what the Lord requires is that people do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8). God’s goodness and justice means fair dealing with people in daily life and treating those who are poor and needy with justice and compassion.

This biblical concept of justice requires that the stipend should be fair and reasonable. A fair stipend should relate to the economy of the nation and to the national wage level and reflect the national economy. Without implying that the ministry should be recompensed as a profession, the qualifications and competencies expected of the ordained ministry should be given some consideration in setting a fair stipend.

The stipend should be adequate. The stipend paid should be sufficient to cover the living expenses of a minister and family living and sharing in the life of the community. While ministers are in active ministry their remuneration includes not only stipend but also travel, housing or residence benefit. It should be recognised that ministers do have to provide their own housing for retirement.

The stipend should be appropriate. The stipend is intended to cover the minister’s needs and responsibilities common to all church families. When the work of a minister has particular expenses and obligations which are undertaken on behalf of the church, it is appropriate that consideration be given to meeting these in the shared fellowship of the church.

Judgments therefore have to be made by the appropriate council of the church, the synod in the case of the Uniting Church, about a fair and reasonable minimum stipend and allowances for those in the area for which it has responsibility.

3.4 Contextual considerations

From the beginning of the church it has been a fellowship that has been committed to sharing its poverty and wealth. One factor in determining the level of stipend is the ability of the church to pay. For particular reasons the minimum stipend may be beyond the means of a local congregation. However the determining factor is not only the ability of a congregation to pay but the capacity of the synod as a whole to meet the cost of the stipend. The synod and presbyteries have responsibilities to ensure that ministers are provided for as per their terms of placement. Ministers should not be expected to bear the shortfall in particular situations.

The level of stipend is related to the community in which the minister lives. It should be at a level that would meet the costs of living in that community and fulfilling the ministerial responsibilities. This involves the church in making judgments as to what is fair and reasonable, adequate and appropriate for ministers and their families.

The attitudes of Christian people to possessions and wealth are not limited to the community standards in which they live. The Christian standard of living is also to take into account the world situation which includes being conscious of the needs and poverty of people in other countries. As the church decides upon appropriate levels for the stipend this broader perspective is to be taken into consideration.

If ministers are in part time placements the proportion of the working week to be devoted to ministry needs to be agreed upon and reflected in the proportion of the full time stipend to be paid. This should not mean any departure from the essential notion of the stipend.

The family situation of ministers varies greatly including whether or not the spouse earns an income. If a family has particular needs then other ways of addressing them should be provided and not through the stipend. Ministers whose family income is greater than their needs have the responsibility of exercising stewardship concerning their income.

There is no national stipend. Nevertheless, the Uniting Church has seen fit to write into its regulations certain provisions regarding ministerial entitlements. Regulation 2.7.1 (a) states, "A Minister called to serve in an approved placement under the jurisdiction of the Church shall be paid a stipend: (i) if full time, not less than the minimum rate determined by the Synod; (ii) if part-time, calculated on a proportionate basis of the minimum rate determined by the Synod." There is a regulation that allows less than the minimum stipend to be paid as agreed upon in exceptional circumstances (2.7.1 (b)). There are also regulations concerning such matters as housing and retirement. The Beneficiary Fund functions according to a theology of stipends.

Each synod sets its own level of minimum stipend taking into consideration community standards and also with reference to the decisions of the other synods. There are some differences between what is paid and provided by 'wealthy congregations' compared with other congregations. There are loadings in some placements, especially non congregational ones. The Victorian synod has a 30% limit on this. Complete parity is unrealistic as there are contextual reasons for providing loadings due to the nature of particular ministries. Nevertheless, ordained ministers should not commence a placement on the basis of its financial rewards but out of a sense of call. The church promises to provide for their living needs.

* * * * *

This paper has drawn on papers prepared for the Synod of South Australia 1984, the Queensland Synod 1998, the Synod of Victoria 1999, and the Assembly 2009.

4 Stipend Levels and Loadings

4.1 Minimum Stipend

The minimum stipend is approved by the Synod Standing Committee for the following calendar year.

Minimum implies that the stipend cannot be negotiated downward. The Uniting Church Regulations [Reg 2.7.1 (b)] permit, however, in exceptional circumstances for a minister to be paid a stipend less than the minimum or proportionate rate. The circumstances may involve a minister with independent means (including superannuation from previous employment). It is crucial for ministers to be protected from pressure to accept less than a full or proportionate stipend, hence minister, presbytery and Placements Committee must approve any such arrangements.

4.2 Part-time Placements - Minimum Stipend

The minimum stipend for part-time ministers is pro rata of that for a full-time minister. This is consistent with accepted industrial practice. Please note that some allowances are more than pro rata.

4.3 Stipend Loadings

4.3.1 Regional loadings

Loadings related to regional situations may apply in the Queensland, Western Australia, and Northern Synods but do not apply in the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania.

4.3.2 Role loadings or discretionary loadings

Role loadings apply to specific placements in the Synod e.. moderator, general secretary and other senior Synod staff including theological teaching staff and some chaplains. Loadings may also apply to a number of congregational placements. Grounds for loadings may vary but are subject to a ceiling of 30%.

4.3.3 Loadings approval

Loadings over the minimum stipend are a matter for justification to the Presbytery by the body seeking approval for new or altered terms of placement and should be recorded by the Presbytery and reported to the Placements Committee. Loadings for Presbytery and Synod placements will be authorised by the Synod Standing Committee.

The Placements Committee will present a summary to Synod meetings of congregational placements where above minimum stipend payments are being made.

5 Car Provisions

5.1 Car Allowances

The car allowance for ministers, whether full-time or part-time, in an approved placement should be related to kilometres travelled annually on church business. It is based, as far as practicable, on estimates of reasonable actual costs. The model used seeks to reflect any changes in cost components, including relevant purchase discounts. A number of assumptions are made including the following:

- In order to reasonably meet the spread of travel situations, a model is adopted based on a 100,000 km lifetime (i.e. from say 50,000 km x 2 years to 8,000 km x 12.5 years). The average annual depreciation and interest costs (based on diminishing vehicle value) are greater for the higher travel cases.
- As depreciation and interest are the major cost components, cyclic variations in these (typically drawn from used car prices and bond interest rates) have been evened out to limit fluctuations in the Synod car allowances.
- Figures are based on a typical 'family' vehicle.
- Purchase prices, interest and depreciation rates are those relevant to the typical private car owner.
- The use of Australian Tax Office and RACV figures, for reference where available.

The minimum level of car allowance is for 5,000 km a year. This ensures that the fixed cost of a vehicle is covered whether the minister is in a part-time or full-time placement.

5.2 Part-time Placements

The car allowance for part-time placements is calculated using the standard rates for full-time ministers. A car is as necessary for the effective functioning of a minister in a part-time placement as in a full-time one.

5.3 Cars Provided by the Church

The provision of car allowances or car loans to ministers assumes that vehicle provision is essentially the minister's responsibility and that the vehicle is used for both private and professional travel. However in some situations it may be inappropriate or unreasonable for the minister to be responsible for providing their means of transport for placement travel. Such situations include:

- (a) a high level of annual travel (25,000 km and above) typical of many rural or Presbytery minister placements;
- (b) a remote placement where distinct private and placement transport needs exist;
- (c) any cases of abnormal vehicle requirements or travel conditions; and
- (d) placement of an exit student who has limited resources for necessary equity in a car.

In such cases at least, the direct provision of a Church owned vehicle (whether Synod or local) warrants consideration in lieu of (and funded from) all or part of the normal car allowances.

5.4 Car Loans

The Car Loan Fund is an important source of capital for ministers to purchase vehicles. Ministers in recognised full-time and part-time placements may be eligible to receive consecutive car loans from the Car Loan Fund operated by Financial Services. Ministers are entitled to one First Car Loan, without an establishment fee, with subsequent car loans including an establishment fee. There is an administration fee charged fortnightly but no interest payable on the loan.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Loans for vehicles for ministers are for a maximum of \$30,000. The maximum loan may not exceed the purchase price of the vehicle.
2. Loans for second-hand vehicles will be subject to the following special conditions:

Applications are to be accompanied by a detailed report from the RACV/RACT or the VACC, unless under dealer warranty.
3. An administration fee of \$12 per fortnight is charged with car loan repayments until the loan is fully repaid. The establishment fee of \$375 is charged with the car loan application. The establishment fee is waived for first car loan applications.
4. The loan is to be repaid in full over a period of five years or less.
5. Fortnightly repayments must be arranged through the Centralised Stipend System.
6. Fortnightly repayments can be made from the Ministers' Benefit Account.
7. Funds will not be released until a signed loan agreement has been returned to SMO Finance department.
8. In the event of any repayment being more than six (6) months in arrears then at the discretion of the Executive Officer of Mission Resource Unit and the Associate General Secretary the whole of the loan shall become due.
9. In the event of resignation or incapacity to continue in active ministerial work, transfer from the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, lack of a suitable placement or death, the balance of the loan shall, at the discretion of the Executive Officer of Mission Resource Unit and the Associate General Secretary, be repaid by the borrower or their estate.
10. The vehicle is to be comprehensively insured by a company approved by the Executive Officer of Mission Resource Unit and the Associate General Secretary, proof of such insurance to be provided to SMO Finance department.
11. No person, firm or organisation other than The Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, to have a financial interest in the vehicle unless approved by the Executive Officer of Mission Resource Unit and the Associate General Secretary.
12. No change of ownership will take place without the approval of the Executive Officer of Mission Resource Unit and the Associate General Secretary.

The Executive Officer, Mission Resource Unit and the Associate General Secretary reserve the right to amend any of the above in cases of individual need.

6 Personal Resources and Development Allowance

6.1 Purpose of Personal Resource Development Allowance

The purpose of the Personal Resources Development Allowance (PRDA) is to assist ministers in resourcing ministry and to provide technological and other aids.

The allowance is to be paid directly into the minister's MBA or through the minister's stipend payment. The allowance may be used as follows:

- for personal development, including supervision, an annual Presbytery conference for ministers and continuing education courses;
- to acquire personal resource material related to ministry; and
- for the capital cost of personal operating equipment such as computer, printer, other personal office equipment.

The practice of providing ministers with a phone and internet allowance and consumables for church owned equipment and postage costs is not intended to be affected by the PRDA.

6.1.1 Determining use of PRDA

While each minister may determine how the allowance is best used, expenditure on planning for professional development should be in consultation with the Church Council or other responsible body, and Presbytery.

6.1.2 Discounting PRDA

Discounting of the allowance may apply where a responsible body provides for the minister a dedicated computer, printer, or mobile phone. The Synod determines the maximum reduction which can be agreed by the minister and the responsible body.

6.1.3 Presbytery conference

It is envisaged that ministers use the allowance for attendance at annual Presbytery conferences for ministers.

Where a council of the Church requires the minister to attend a specific seminar, then normally the council concerned would meet the cost involved. The one exception is attendance at an annual Presbytery conference for ministers. What was in mind is a conference of 2-3 days duration, at a cost of up to 10% of the allowance, and the conference regarded as study leave. No other compulsory element was provided for but it would not be inconsistent with the approach envisaged if in a particular year, a Presbytery were to agree to substitute a conference/seminar equivalent in duration and cost for example organised by the Assembly or Synod.

6.1.4 Part-time placement and Personal Resource Development Allowance

For ministers in part-time placements, which are at least 0.4 of full-time ministry, the non-discounted allowance is set out in the annual *Summary of Ministerial Provisions and Charges*.

7 Other Allowances and Work Related Expenses

7.1 General Expenses

It is not practicable to fix a Synod-wide level of general expenses, however general work related expenses such as telephone, postage and stationery should be borne wholly by the responsible body for both full-time and part-time placements.

7.2 Internet and Phone

The responsible body is required to provide an internet and phone allowance as per the Ministerial Provisions and Charges. This allowance is intended to cover the cost of a phone and internet plan.

7.3 Hospitality

This is not an area where a specific Synod prescription is appropriate. For example, some responsible bodies provide an allowance or make reimbursements where a minister is able to show that excessive costs have been incurred. Any expenses need to be incurred in relation to the minister's pastoral duties or directly related religious activities.

The Terms of Placement Committee does not endorse any figure either as a norm or a limit. At the same time, in the interests of the responsible body and minister any provision would not normally be open ended.

Hospitality expenses may apply whether the minister is in a full-time or a part-time placement.

7.4 Welfare Payments

There is a view in the church that this is more a matter for those agencies which receive government funds for this purpose. The minister and congregation need to agree on what approach should be adopted. Where the congregation expects its minister(s) to respond to requests for assistance, it must be prepared to provide them with monies to do so. This may be up to a prescribed amount annually or an advance which is replaced as it runs out.

The need for welfare payments may apply whether the minister is in a full-time or a part-time placement.

8 Housing

The offer of appropriate accommodation, either UCA property or leased, is part of the remuneration provisions for all ministers in placement.

Payment of a manse allowance only applies where a minister chooses to provide their own accommodation rather than the accommodation offered as part of the terms of placement.

8.1 Manse provided by Placement

The congregation shall offer:

Either

- (a) A Manse which meets Synod guidelines and has been inspected and approved by the Presbytery; or
- (b) Other accommodation which is considered appropriate by the minister, placement and the Presbytery. This may be a leased property.

The minister may choose not to accept the accommodation offered by the placement. In this case the Synod Housing allowance will normally be paid. However, in the circumstances when a Manse is offered and declined, and commercial rental of the Manse concerned does not generate sufficient funds to enable the payment of the Housing Allowance and standard maintenance costs for the Manse, the Presbytery shall take responsibility for negotiating an appropriate allowance. The Minister shall not be directly involved in these negotiations.

The Terms of Placement, including any negotiated allowances, shall be agreed prior to a call being issued. The Terms of Placement form shall be signed by the placement and the Presbytery and included with the letter of Call. Upon accepting a Call the minister shall also sign the Terms of Placement form and return it to the placement along with the letter accepting the Call. A copy is to be sent to the Secretary of the Placements Committee.

Any change to the Terms of Placement (other than adjustments made by the Synod) requires the approval of presbytery. Any request to change the housing provisions in the Terms of Placement will be made to the Presbytery which shall negotiate amended arrangements and the timing thereof and report it to the Placements Committee.

8.2 Rented Accommodation

Where a property is rented the placement will meet all rental costs including the bond. Any leased property must be available for a reasonable period, so that the minister and family are not disrupted with continual moves. Where a move is necessary, the placement will meet the removal costs.

8.3 Care and Maintenance of Manse or Rented Accommodation

The congregation (or, in the case of rented accommodation, the landlord) is responsible for capital maintenance and all repairs and replacements relating to improvements, fair wear and tear, and general depreciation. Church Councils should also make annual inspections of the manse. (The Presbytery should also undertake an inspection every five years or when a new placement is to occur, whichever is the earlier.) Ministers should encourage regular inspections of the accommodation provided.

A minister, in accepting a call, accepts responsibility to keep the property in a state of cleanliness and ongoing general maintenance, as would apply if it were a rental situation e.g. gardens tended and lawns mown, windows clean, spouting and down pipes cleared, and appliances such as smoke alarms kept clean and functional. The occupants are responsible for costs incurred for unreasonable wear and tear or damage, including wear caused by family pets and may be responsible for paying any shortfall in bond return in rental situations if the shortfall relates to their actions.

8.4 Manse/housing costs

8.4.1 House insurance and rates

Whether accommodation is Church owned or rented by the congregation the minister does not meet the cost of the insurance of the property or normal local government rates, both general and waste service charges. The minister is responsible for manse contents insurance excluding property belonging to the placement (e.g. floor coverings and drapes). However, where the minister has a study/office on the church site, it is appropriate for the congregation to accept responsibility for insurance of the minister's personal on-site office contents under the church's policy. Note that there is a standard excess under the Synod policy.

8.4.2 Electricity, gas and fuel

All electricity, gas and fuel usage and service charges are, as a general principle, part of normal living costs and the responsibility of the minister. These expenses can be paid from a Minister's Benefit Account. Some congregations meet these costs, either wholly or, for instance, where a study is home based, contribute to the home gas and electricity accounts. This is a matter for local decision, and should be recorded in the Terms of Placement.

8.4.3 Water and sewerage

All manse water and sewerage usage and service charges continue to be the responsibility of the congregation, a common long standing practice across the Synod, including in country areas.

8.4.4 Housing costs – variations

The minister and congregation may agree to vary the above standard arrangements provided Presbytery approval is obtained. Any variation should be included in the Terms of Placement.

8.4.5 Manse provided – costs summary

Expense	Responsibility for payment
Council rates	Placement
Electricity, gas and fuel	Minister
Insurance – house	Placement
Insurance – contents	Minister
Water and sewerage	Placement

8.5 Summary of Manse Options

8.5.1 Option 1: *Approved manse*

An *Approved Manse*, where the minister is requested to live in the area of the placement. The congregation may offer an available manse which has been approved by the Presbytery under the Synod manse guidelines. This would be rent free and include the standard provision of meeting manse maintenance, property insurance, normal local government rates – both general and waste, manse water and sewerage service and usage charges as required.

8.5.2 Option 2: *Appropriate Accommodation*

Appropriate Accommodation where the minister is requested to live in the area of the placement. The congregation may offer rent free accommodation which, while not satisfying the Synod guidelines for ministers in full-time placements, is nonetheless considered by the parties, and the Presbytery in particular, to be appropriate for the minister and the domestic situation.

Relevant provisions include an adequate study/office (or on an adjacent site), maintenance costs, insurance, rates and water charges as required. Where the minister has a study/office on the Church

site, it is appropriate for the congregation to accept responsibility for insurance of the minister's personal on-site office contents under the Church's policy. Note that there is a standard excess under the Synod policy.

The need for appropriate security protection of the manse and any separate study/office, for the minister, family and visitors, is no less than for an *Approved Manse*. The accommodation may be owned or rented by the Church and, other than size, would generally meet the Synod manse guidelines. For example, the accommodation needs of a single minister or a couple without children might well be met with a two bedroom unit of appropriate quality.

8.5.3 Option 3: *Approved manse or other appropriate accommodation – not accepted*

Where the minister chooses to provide their own accommodation then the maximum manse allowance is not an entitlement, but the level is to be determined consultatively between the minister, congregation (or other responsible body) and Presbytery. This involves consideration of the rental market, to which a manse allowance may be geared, and any financial disadvantage which may occur to the congregation. The allowance may be paid into the Ministers' Benefit Account. The congregation is not responsible for maintenance, insurance, rates and water charges.

8.5.4 Part-time Placements and Housing

The need for appropriate accommodation for minister and family in a part-time placement can be no less than where the placement is full-time and a manse is an entitlement. A similar view has already been accepted in relation to the car allowance.

The wide diversity of circumstances of ministers in part-time placements, however, underlines the need for some flexibility. No single approach appears to be fair and reasonable, just and equitable, across the range of situations. Rather, a series of alternatives has been developed which minister, congregation and Presbytery can explore during the placement conversations. It is crucial that a decision on the choice of option is made before the placement is finalised. Any changes to the terms of the placement must be approved by the Presbytery and reported to Placements Committee.

In principle, if an approved manse or other appropriate accommodation is offered, it is offered on the same terms as for a full-time placement. (Option 1 or Option 2)

In situations where a minister is not engaged in a full-time capacity and chooses to provide their own accommodation, or, where the placement does not have a manse available, the congregation may pay a pro rata manse allowance of no less than 2/3rds of the contribution normally given to a full-time placement, taking into consideration the local rental market. If a minister is undertaking multiple part-time placements, the maximum manse allowance shall not exceed 1.0 in total.

The allowance may be paid into the Ministers' Benefit Account. The congregation is not responsible for maintenance, insurance, rates and water charges.

8.6 Quantum of Manse Allowance

Manse allowances are reviewed on an annual basis, with consideration to comparable rental markets. This review is approved by the Synod Standing Committee and aims to produce an outcome which reduces the chance of ministers being adversely affected by market volatility.

8.7 Furnishing Provisions

Ministers are responsible for the furnishing of manses. This gives ministers and their families freedom of personal choice.

Assistance of up to \$2,000 is available to exit students to furnish their home e.g. for white goods, dining and lounge furniture. This provision is considered, case by case, on a needs basis by the Pastoral Assistance Committee.

This assistance applies equally to ministers in part-time placements.

8.8 Clergy Couples

All ministers in placement are entitled to the value of a manse whether by the provision of an appropriate residence or a manse allowance. This entitlement applies, notwithstanding the minister's accommodation arrangements. It can happen that a clergy couple lives in the manse where one of the ministers is in placement. The minister's clergy spouse working in a different placement is entitled to receive a manse allowance from that other placement.

8.9 Removal Leave as a Placement commences

Removal leave is provided for in Reg 2.7.2 (c). This leave applies whether or not a minister is moving house. Two weeks is the normal provision. Three weeks is allowed for moves between Synods and between Victoria and Tasmania.

8.10 Removal Costs

Reasonable removal costs (up to 70 cubic metres) are normally met by the Synod if a minister is required to move residence as part of a new placement. Ministers are responsible for packing their own goods.

The Synod arranges the removals process, including seeking and approving quotes.

Interstate Moves: the synod that a minister is moving from organises and pays for the move; then invoices the receiving Synod for half the costs.

International moves: by negotiation with the Secretary of the Terms of Placement Committee.

The Synod will pay for a minister to move to the place of their choice on retirement, or for one earlier move into their own residence. If a minister elects to retire beyond the Synod boundaries, the Synod only pays for the cost to the state border (ie the travel component of the move is capped to reflect average 'normal' intrastate distances.)

9 Leave

9.1 Annual Leave

9.1.1 Entitlement

The annual leave entitlement for ministers is four weeks per annum including 4 Sundays

9.1.2 Taking of leave

Rest and recreation are essential for effective ministry. Ministers should take their annual leave entitlements within 12 months of the end of the year of service in which the leave was accrued.

There should be discussion between the minister and the responsible body or its representatives at least once a year in order to ensure effective management of annual leave.

9.1.3 Public holidays during annual leave

Where a public holiday occurs during the period of a minister's annual leave then the day or days of public holiday do not form part of the annual leave.

9.1.4 Recording of leave

Responsible bodies must approve and keep records of leave taken by a minister to ensure that there is a clear understanding of accrued entitlements and leave taken, and report these to the Synod's Centralised Stipends Payroll Service (CSPS) and Presbytery. Ministers must seek approval for leave prior to it being taken. A leave form recording the dates and approval is available at [Central Stipends and Payroll Services - Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania \(uca.org.au\)](https://uca.org.au). The completed forms must be forwarded to both presbytery and Synod Payroll Services: payroll@victas.uca.org.au.

(Please note that for administrative purposes Payroll Services designates a week as 38 hours. This is not an indication of the exact hours that are worked)

9.1.5 Taking annual leave prior to anniversary date

Whilst annual leave is on the basis of each completed year of service, ministers and church councils may agree that annual leave may be taken prior to the anniversary of the minister's placement or long term supply.

9.1.6 Maximum annual leave accrual

Annual leave entitlements are cumulative. Leave will normally be taken within twelve months of the end of the year of service in which the leave entitlements have accrued. Ministers will not be permitted to accrue more than eight weeks of annual leave without the approval of the Presbytery. This approval will be granted only in special/exceptional circumstances. Applications, including reasons, are to be made to the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee not later than six months prior to further leave becoming due. Presbytery will consult the congregation (or other responsible body).

Where a Presbytery is unable to persuade a minister to take annual leave then the Presbytery, in conjunction with the responsible body, may declare that the minister is on annual leave for specific periods.

No unused leave can be carried from one placement to another however a minister may be paid in lieu of taking annual leave on resignation or retirement from active ministry

9.1.7 Part-time placements - annual leave

Ministers in part-time placement are entitled to four weeks leave per year (including four Sundays or whatever is usual). During leave they continue to receive whatever their usual (pro rata) remuneration is.

9.1.8 Accrual during Sick Leave

Normally after 13 weeks of continuous sick leave, or 13 weeks sick leave in one placement year, annual leave ceases to accrue until the person has returned to work.

9.2 Public Holidays

Public holidays are Government gazetted public holidays. Where the minister is required to work on a public holiday e.g. Good Friday, an alternative should be arranged, preferably in the same week. Where a Government gazetted public holiday falls on a day when the minister would normally work then the minister will not be required to work on that day. This applies to both full-time and part-time placements.

9.3 Sundays free from Ministerial Responsibilities

Presbyteries and congregations are encouraged to make a provision for ministers in full-time or part-time placement to have one free Sunday per quarter. Ministers are encouraged to take advantage of one free Sunday per quarter to enable participation in, rather than leading of worship, as well as providing family time.

It is recognised that a minister whose workload of services is one per Sunday, or where they are part of a team ministry with rostering of Sunday services, is likely to be able to attend worship under another minister, and have family time together without the need of a free Sunday. This contrasts with a minister who has an ongoing load of several services each Sunday. Hence the emphasis on encourage, not require. The free Sunday is not seen as cumulative. Where such time is not taken in any quarter, it is automatically foregone.

9.4 Study Leave

9.4.1 Full-time placements

The Guidelines approved by the Synod Standing Committee include the following (synod entity names have been updated):

- 1 *14 days Study Leave shall be available each year to Ministers in a Placement with additional Study Leave available through negotiation with the oversight body. Terms of Placement approved by the Presbytery may specify a more precise figure. **14 days is the equivalent of two working weeks.***
- 2 *Study Leave shall normally be taken each year for programmes (whether set courses or self-directed study) approved by equipping Leadership for Mission to equip for ministry within the life and ethos of the UCA. This shall be planned by the Minister in conjunction with the Church Council or other responsible body. The Presbytery, in the exercise of its pastoral and supervisory role, may also choose to be involved in this planning. Normally Study Leave not taken in the year in which it is due is forgone.*
- 3 *If a substantial period of study is planned, the Minister may negotiate with the Church Council or other responsible body for Study Leave to be accumulated up to five years' entitlement. This needs approval by the Presbytery, and must be reported to equipping Leadership for Mission.*
- 4 *Ministers are expected on return from Study Leave to report to the Placement on the experience and its value to themselves and to the Placement.*
- 5 *Consideration shall be given to the needs of the Placement as well as the needs of the Minister, and the timing of Study Leave acceptable to both. Normally attention will be given to the following:*
 - (a) *Study Leave shall be taken during the current Placement unless for special reasons and with approval of a new Church Council or other responsible body such entitlement to leave is carried over into the next Placement.*
 - (b) *Taking accumulated Study Leave in the same year as Long Service Leave shall require the approval of both the Church Council or other responsible body and the Presbytery.*
 - (c) *Ministers and Church Councils or other responsible bodies will seek to minimise potential difficulties if Study Leave requests involve multiple absences from a Congregation on a Sunday.*

There are good reasons for recording study leave in a similar way to annual leave, so the responsible body can encourage ministers to use their study leave and to minimise differences which can arise between the minister and responsible body around time taken.

9.4.2 Part-time placements

Minimum study leave is pro rata of the minimum entitlement of 14 days a year for ministers in full-time placement.

9.4.3 Financial Assistance

A number of responsible bodies provide some financial assistance. There is no specific requirement on a placement; though some placements offer assistance towards the cost of course fees, travelling etc. The Personal Resources and Development Allowance is intended to strengthen existing assistance to make effective use of study leave.

9.5 Sick Leave

9.5.1 Provision

Ministers' sick leave entitlements are divided into two categories: Short Term Sick Leave and Long Term Sick Leave.

9.5.2 Short Term Sick Leave

Two (2) standard working weeks (typically 10 days for a full time placement) or pro rata for part time placements per placement year.

Absences of more than three consecutive days require either a medical certificate or a statutory declaration. This leave is managed and recorded by the responsible body. Unused short term sick leave does not carry over into the next placement year and cannot be paid out.

9.5.3 Long Term Sick Leave

Long Term Sick Leave is provision where sick leave in excess of 10 days per year is required. Sick Leave provision for ministers in placement is not dependent on length of service. It is provided so that Ministers can recover, manage, diagnose and /or seek the care required to support ill health. Leave taken as Long Term Sick Leave is funded via the Ministers Special Assurance Fund (MSA), part of the Ministers Insurance Levy paid by placements. These funds are managed by the Pastoral Assistance Committee (PAC).

9.5.3.1 Oversight and management.

The presbytery must oversee effective management of Long Term Sick Leave. Regular (at least monthly) communication between the minister, the presbytery and the PAC must be maintained. This will ensure appropriate support is being offered and the minister is given the best opportunity to recover and plan for return to ministry.

All Long Term Sick Leave requires medical certificates, which are to be provided to the responsible body, and the presbytery (PRC). The presbytery will forward a copy to the Pastoral Assistance Committee.

9.5.3.2 Financial Arrangements and supply.

When sick leave continues for more than 2 weeks (cumulatively in the placement year), or where it is known from the outset that leave will be needed for more than two weeks, supply (up to 50% of the placement time fraction) will be covered by the Ministers Special Assurance Fund (MSA) from the 3rd week.

When Long Term Sick Leave continues beyond 3 months, the MSA fund will take responsibility for the minister's entitlements, with the responsible body covering the cost of supply. The minister's travel allowance normally reduces to base level.

Financial assistance from the fund will either cease or reduce to 80% if the period of leave reaches 12 months.

9.5.3.3 Return to Ministry planning

- It is expected that there will be regular (at least monthly) meetings between the minister and the presbytery during a period of long term sick leave. An important part of each conversation should be exploring readiness and a plan to return to normal duties or to explore other options.'
- 'Return to ministry responsibilities plan.' A small group including the minister, support person, presbytery and responsible body representatives should together prepare and document how a minister re-engages after a significant period of absence due to sick leave. Please contact the Associate General Secretary for further information, advice and guidance about the return to ministry process.

9.5.3.4 If a return to ministry is unlikely:

- At 9 months, or at an earlier time if appropriate, discussion should take place with the minister regarding the next steps if there is not a possibility of a return to work by the 12 month anniversary. Outcomes would be appropriate to the circumstances in each case, and could range from a return to ministry plan (with timeframe), temporary or permanent retirement on medical grounds, retirement or conclusion of placement.

NOTE: It may be appropriate for discussions about retirement on medical grounds or age grounds to be explored at a much earlier stage.

For further information on the long term sick leave process and the guidelines to ensure the best outcome for both the minister and the placement, contact the Pastoral Assistance Committee at debra.penaluna@victas.uca.org.au

For particular advice about return to ministry planning or other pathways please contact the Associate General Secretary.

9.5.4 For accrual of Annual Leave during Sick Leave see 9.1.8

9.6 Carer's leave

9.6.1 From time to time, ministers in placement may seek to take leave to care for a sick dependant. This information is provided as guidelines for such circumstances.

Guidelines

Personal leave taken to care for a sick dependant will normally be according to the following guidelines:

- (a) The minister is seeking leave to care for a member of their immediate family or household (see definitions of "household" and "family" below) where the following definitions apply:
- (b) Having regard for the accepted cultural and religious norms of a minister's community/cultural context a family member is:
 - a partner;
 - a child or adult child (including an adopted child, foster, step-child or the child of an ex-spouse);
 - a parent (including a foster parent or an adoptive parent or a legal guardian);
 - a grandparent;
 - a grandchild; or
 - a sibling of the minister or of the minister's partner.
- (c) A household member is a relative of the minister who lives in the same house, where relative means a person related by blood, marriage or affinity (ie the relationship that a spouse has to blood relatives of the other spouse due to marriage). Same sex partners are included in the definition of household;

- (d) The minister is responsible for the care of the person concerned;
- (e) The minister will not normally take Carer's Leave where another person has taken leave to care for the same person;
- (f) Where the absence of the minister will be or is expected to be more than 2 days, or precludes the minister from attending pre-arranged commitments then the minister will advise the Church Council chairperson and the relevant Presbytery Minister of their intention to take leave including:
 - the name of the person requiring care;
 - their relationship to the minister;
 - reasons for taking such leave; and
 - the estimated length of absence.

If it is not practicable for the minister to give prior notice of absence, then the minister should provide notification at the first opportunity; and
- (g) The minister may be required to establish, by production of a medical certificate or statutory declaration, the illness of the person concerned and that the illness is such as to require care by another.

9.6.2 From time to time ministers may be faced with the unfortunate situation of the long term illness (a month or more) of a household or family member.

In such situations the Presbytery PRC should be advised so that appropriate pastoral care can be provided for the minister and suitable arrangements can be put in place for the congregation. As part of the pastoral care the PRC may approve carer's leave for the minister, and notify the PAC of its decision. Once notified of approval of leave the PAC will provide reimbursement for supply ministry costs for the congregation.

9.7 Injury Leave

Ministers in full-time and part-time placement are covered by WorkCover under a Synod-wide policy and uniform premium rate. Where a minister has an approved WorkCover claim, for 26 consecutive weeks or until the incapacity ceases, whichever is the sooner, the minister is entitled to normal remuneration, including any payments into a Benefit Account, other than the distance component of the travel allowance. Where incapacity is recognised by WorkCover as continuing beyond 26 weeks, the minister receives the appropriate WorkCover benefits, together with continuation of the payments into the Ministers Benefit Account.

9.8 Compassionate or Bereavement Leave

This is leave in circumstances of bereavement, family illness or personal crisis, and should be provided to both full-time and part-time placements. If more than a week is likely to be envisaged, the Presbytery should be consulted.

9.9 Parental Leave (includes maternity, adoption and partner leave)

(a) Maternity Leave

Ministers in full-time or part-time placements are entitled to three months paid leave in respect of maternity. Paid leave normally commences not earlier than six weeks before the expected due date of the baby, with the provision of six weeks paid leave after the birth being compulsory irrespective of the date of commencement of the leave. The Synod meets the cost of supply during the period of leave. This is funded through the Synod Special Insurance Fund to which responsible bodies are required to contribute in respect of each minister. The paid leave duration is not normally intended to be discretionary or subject to partial work arrangements. This is seen to be in the interests of the minister, supply minister, responsible body and the church.

During the three months paid leave the responsible body continues to pay stipend and provide other ministerial entitlements (other than, as with Long Service Leave, the distance component of the car allowance). That includes ongoing occupancy of the church provided rent free accommodation or, where no manse is provided, continuation of the manse allowance. The period is recognised as service with the Church. Where the supply ministry requires provision of accommodation and that cannot be provided locally, this is part of the cost of the supply arrangement which the Synod covers.

It is neither appropriate nor practicable to require all ministers eligible for three months paid maternity leave to return to work as soon as that leave concludes. Ministers are encouraged to access the Government's paid parental leave scheme. Any extension of leave beyond the three months is a matter for consultation between the minister, responsible body and Presbytery, subject to the leave not extending beyond the child's first birthday.

During any accepted period of extended leave, the minister shall be entitled to the continued provision of the rent free manse or payment of manse allowance, as prior to the confinement. Any accrued annual leave or Long Service Leave may be taken during the unpaid extended maternity leave.

The responsible body is not required to make any payments to the minister or to pay any levies and the like in respect of the minister during any unpaid maternity leave (though voluntary payments may be made to the Beneficiary Fund/superannuation).

Where a responsible body considers that it is financially disadvantaged during the period of unpaid maternity leave because it is required to provide accommodation for supply ministry, it may apply to the Synod to cover the shortfall.

The minister's continuity of service with the Church is not interrupted by any period of maternity leave but unpaid leave does not count as service for Church purposes.

The pastoral care of the minister during maternity leave is seen as important. Guidelines have been developed relating particularly to concerns raised about ministers in congregational situations. These are appended, marked Appendix A.

(b) Adoption Leave

Ministers in full-time and part-time placement are entitled to up to three months paid leave where the minister is the primary care giver of an adopted child, or 10 days if not the primary caregiver. The general conditions are those that apply as with maternity leave, including the Synod meeting the cost of supply during the period of paid leave.

Leave may be extended beyond the paid period up to 52 weeks in total, on an unpaid basis. Again, the provisions applicable are those which apply in respect of extension of maternity leave, but apply to either partner who is a minister.

(c) Partner Leave

A minister whose partner gives birth is able to take 10 days paid leave (pro rata for part time placements) within the first three months of birth. This leave is paid by the responsible body.

Non birth parents in full-time or part-time placement, who become the primary carer of their child, or a child of their spouse, are entitled to up to 52 weeks unpaid leave, provided such leave does not extend beyond the child's first birthday. They are also encouraged to access the government's paid parental leave scheme. This leave cannot be taken concurrently with their partner's maternity leave. During the leave the minister shall be entitled to the continued provision of the rent free manse or payment of the manse allowance. Other provisions are akin to those applying to unpaid maternity leave.

9.10 Long Service Leave

9.10.1 Eligibility

Long Service Leave for Ministers of the Word, Deacons, those in the Specified Ministry of Youth Worker and pastors in placement, is provided under the Synod Ministers Long Service Leave Scheme.

9.10.2 Main provisions

The leave is not simply a period of paid absence which accrues following a specified period of approved service. Its objective is to provide refreshment for future ministry.

With the changing location of ministry, Long Service Leave accrues on an 'industry wide' basis. Service with the Church may be in a placement with a congregation, agency, Presbytery, Synod or the Assembly in Australia, with UnitingWorld (or its successors) or recommended by it outside Australia, or while released with Presbytery approval, to a form of ministry in Australia but outside the UCA. Service may be full-time or part-time, (see Section 12.8) and in recognised private arrangements.

The scheme ensures that the cost of Long Service Leave does not fall directly on the 'responsible body' at the time the minister takes leave. It is shared through 'responsible bodies' paying a levy on the minimum stipend of ministers to the Long Service Leave Fund. In addition to the minister continuing to be paid normal entitlements during leave (other than a distance travel component based on 5,000 kms a year in lieu of normal travel allowance), the fund pays the minister a personal allowance to assist in the taking of leave.

On completion of fifteen years' service with the Church, ministers are entitled to thirteen weeks Long Service Leave. However, ministers may opt to take an initial six weeks Long Service Leave after the first seven years' service. After the initial fifteen years' service, ministers are entitled to eight weeks Long Service Leave for each subsequent period of eight years' service.

Periods of Long Service Leave shall normally not be less than four weeks. There is no minimum period between successive periods of Long Service Leave but where the gap between periods of Long Service leave is less than three years, the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee shall consult with the congregation. Annual leave can be taken in conjunction with Long Service Leave.

Leave entitlements may be paid out on death or retirement, including the personal grant.

9.10.3 Taking of leave

Presbyteries have a particular responsibility in the timeliness and management of ministers taking Long Service Leave.

9.10.4 Responsibilities

The Associate General Secretary together with Accounting Services is responsible for the administration of ministers Long Service Leave.

The Terms of Placement Committee's role is one of policy formulation and development. In keeping with this, the Committee has authority to deal at its discretion with exceptional issues arising out of Long Service Leave policy, including guidelines for doing so.

9.10.5 Procedure

Where a minister is considering taking Long Service Leave they should first discuss the matter with the Church Council (or responsible body). The minister will then complete a Long Service Leave application and seek the approval of the Presbytery. The Presbytery will consult with the 'responsible body' if it is less than three years since the last period of Long Service Leave or if the responsible body has not supported the taking of leave.

The Presbytery is responsible for supply arrangements, including ensuring that they are in place an adequate time prior to the commencement of leave.

9.10.6 Payment of Ministers' Long Service Leave costs (Standing Committee ref 07.50.1)

The following costs associated with ministers on Long Service Leave will be paid from the Ministers' Long Service Leave Fund:

- (a) Minimum stipend;
- (b) Long Service Leave Grant;
- (c) Personal Resource Development Allowance; and
- (d) Travel allowance (excepting distance component).

9.10.7 Costs of Long Service Leave supply

All costs of Long Service Leave supply are the responsibility of the relevant congregation/responsible body, including funding of accommodation for supply ministry where required.

9.10.8 Continuity of service

Service is regarded as continuous despite the taking of approved paid and unpaid leave. Approved paid leave includes any annual leave or Long Service Leave, any absence on account of illness or injury and any other paid leave which has been approved by the relevant Presbytery, or for Synod placements, the General Secretary.

Approved unpaid leave does not constitute a break in service; however Long Service Leave will not accrue during any period of unpaid leave.

9.10.9 Retirement and outstanding Long Service Leave

Where a minister retires or resigns in good standing, the total remaining balance of the minister's Long Service Leave will be paid out in accordance with clause 9.10.11.

9.10.10 Administration of Long Service Leave

In October 2007 the Standing Committee strongly encouraged that the Presbytery Minister - Administration in each Presbytery should:

- be responsible for the administration of ministers Long Service Leave in that Presbytery;
- in collaboration with Accounting Services, maintain records to assist in effective management of ministers Long Service Leave; and
- Consult with the Presbytery Minister - Pastoral Care in this task. In the light of changed Presbytery Minister roles it is important that each presbytery designate these responsibilities to a particular person or role.

9.10.11 Ministers Long Service Leave entitlements

Long Service Leave entitlements for ministers comprise the following:

(a) Stipend

Payment of the minimum stipend from the Long Service Leave Fund

(b) Long Service Leave Grant

Payment of a Long Service Leave Grant, currently 65% of Stipend, from the Long Service Leave Fund

The purpose of this grant is to encourage ministers to take refreshment away from their usual place of ministry.

(c) Travel Allowance/Provision of a Motor Vehicle

- Travel allowance

Where a minister on Long Service Leave normally receives a travel allowance then a travel allowance which is calculated at the rate of the current 5,000 km per annum travel allowance will be paid to that minister from the Long Service Leave Fund;

- Provision of Motor Vehicle

Where a minister in a placement is provided with a motor vehicle then that arrangement will continue during the period of Long Service Leave;

- Personal Resource Development Allowance:

Whilst on Long Service Leave, all ministers will receive the Personal Resource Development Allowance from the Long Service Leave Fund.

(d) Manse provision

Provision of a manse or the current manse allowance during the time that a minister is on Long Service Leave will continue to be the responsibility of the congregation or responsible body.

9.10.12 Recognition withdrawn

Where the recognition of ordained ministers is withdrawn under Regulation 2.10.3.a (iii) or (b), they forfeit their Long Service Leave entitlement, but the Standing Committee may approve a payment where there is any period of accrued leave not taken, including pro rata payment for an incomplete period of accrual, except where the minister is accruing a first entitlement of leave.

9.10.13 Youth Workers

The Long Service Leave provisions regarding withdrawal of recognition of ordained ministers also apply to withdrawal of accreditation of youth workers.

9.10.14 Access to pro rata Long Service Leave on termination

Effective from December 2006 the requirement for payment of Long Service Leave entitlement for a minister at the time of termination is 7 years continuous service.

9.10.15 Double Long Service Leave period for half pay rate

Long Service Leave may be taken for a double period on half pay, where, following discussions between the minister, the congregation (or other responsible body) and the presbytery, there is agreement to grant the application. In the absence of agreement, the application is deemed not to be granted.

In such circumstances where Long Service Leave is taken for a double period on half pay, the Manse Allowance (if applicable) should be paid at half (0.5) of the current allowance.

9.11 Long Service Leave for Non-ordained Ministries

For those who have moved from one role to another under the Pastor regulations, service will be considered continuous, provided the gap between roles is no more than three months.

Those that have accrued a minimum of seven years continuous service, where the person is retiring from active ministry, will receive Long Service Leave.

Where Long Service Leave entitlement has been accrued, payment in respect of the leave will be made from the Ministers' Long Service Leave Fund. The placement (e.g. the congregation) pays for Supply and continues to provide housing to the minister.

The Fund pays the minister's stipend, a personal allowance (65% of stipend), and travel allowance for 5,000 km per annum pro rata.

9.12 Long Service Leave - Summary of Eligibility and Conditions

9.12.1 Long Service Leave for ministers– Full-time

Years of service required to be eligible for LSL	Accrued LSL entitlement (in weeks)	Options for taking LSL
7	6.09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In full at 7 years + of service ▪ In periods of not less than 4 weeks at a time ▪ At full pay for people of entitlement ▪ Paid out in lieu of leave on retirement ▪ At half pay for twice period of entitlement
10	8 2/3 ^d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In full at 10 years + of service ▪ In periods of not less than 4 weeks at a time ▪ At full pay for period of entitlement ▪ Paid out in lieu of leave on retirement ▪ At half pay for twice period of entitlement
15	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In full at 15 years + of service ▪ In periods of not less than 4 weeks at a time ▪ At full pay for period of entitlement ▪ Paid out in lieu of leave on retirement ▪ At half pay for twice period of entitlement ▪ Taken in 2 shorter periods

- Where the gap between successive periods of Long Service Leave is less than 3 years, the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee shall consult with the congregation.

9.12.2 Long Service Leave for ministers – Part-time

Long Service Leave is accrued pro rata for ministers who are in part-time placements. For example, where a placement is half time then the Long Service Leave entitlement is for the same period of time as the table above but paid at the half time rate.

9.12.3 LSL - Payment of costs

Cost	Paid by
Stipend	Long Service Leave Fund
Base travel allowance	Long Service Leave Fund

Long Service Leave Grant	Long Service Leave Fund
Manse allowance	Congregation
Supply Ministry	Congregation

9.13 Portability of Leave Entitlements

Long Service Leave is portable and can be carried over into a new placement. Study leave can only be carried over into a new placement for special reasons and with the prior approval of both the Presbytery and the new responsible body. The portability of sick leave (the only other major area where portability may be recognised) is not relevant because of the 'as needed' nature of the benefit for ministers.

10 Retirement Benefits

10.1 Beneficiary Fund

The Mercer Super Trust – The UCA Beneficiary Fund was once the chosen provider for superannuation for ordained ministry agents because it provided a defined benefit section. However this provision has now closed to new members. It continues to offer an accumulation Fund. Ministers who are in the Beneficiary Fund are able to contact Mercer on the below details.

Contact details are as follows:

By Phone:

In the first instance:

Helpline: 1800 682 525 (or 61 3 86871823 if calling from overseas)

In Writing:

Mercer Superannuation (Australia) Limited

GPO Box 4303

Melbourne Vic 3001

10.2 NGS Super

All workers fall under Choice of Fund legislation and have the option of nominating a superannuation fund. If workers do not nominate a fund the default fund applies: "NGS Super".

NGS Administration	Phone	:	1300 133 177
GPO Box 4303	Fax	:	(03) 8640 0813
MELBOURNE VIC 3000	Website	:	http://www.ngssuper.com.au/

11 Part-Time Placements

11.1 Context

Part-time situations can vary widely. The placement may range from a single part-time placement in one congregation, to a placement shared with other ministers, to multiple part-time placements in two or more congregations. The minister may be in a part-time placement by choice e.g. while undertaking study, writing or semi-retired, or for personal reasons. The minister may have secured part-time secular employment or be seeking additional part-time employment. Geographic location can be important.

It is taken for granted that presbyteries actively pursue full-time placements, including the practicability of alternatives such as linking two or more congregations and aggregating part-time placements, and that, as a general rule, there is no reasonable alternative to a situation which equates to less than a full-time placement.

11.2 Consultation

Placement arrangements require consultation between the prospective minister, congregation(s) or other responsible bodies, and presbytery, from the early stages of the placement process. This is no less true of part-time placements as full-time; indeed, some aspects can require more attention (see e.g. *Housing* below). It can be unhelpful for issues to be raised after placement occurs when they could have reasonably been foreseen. Presbytery, through its Pastoral Relations Committee, has the responsibility to oversee these arrangements.

Where part-time placements aggregate, particularly in two or more congregations, it is important that there is a clear and documented understanding of the respective obligations of each of the parties e.g. a written agreement. Entitlements should not be treated separately. Rather they are considered on an aggregated basis and ordinarily the cost split pro rata between the individual placements.

11.3 Part-time Minimum for Total Range of Entitlements

To attract the total range of entitlements, part-time placements (whether as a single placement or aggregated) must be **at least 0.4 of full-time**. In exceptional circumstances a placement may be less than 0.4 in which case the presbytery determines the terms of placement (consulting, if necessary with the TPC).

11.4 Quantification of Part-time

From time to time debate arises as to how part-time should be quantified in terms of hours or how particular elements of ministry should be recognised in terms of time fractions of full-time service. Consistent with the theological considerations on ministerial entitlements, the hours of work of ordained ministry, whether full or part-time, are not seen as an area where precision is appropriate, any more than it is, for example, with other professional work or what committed members give in voluntary roles to the Church. Nonetheless, in the absence of some guide, there is considerable scope for misunderstanding and resentments.

A common view is that with a 0.5 placement, the responsible body can expect the minister to be engaged in the work of that ministry for about 20 hours a week, including preparation time for worship. As to the recognition of particular elements of work, the time fraction for which service is credited for part-time (and supply) ministry for Long Service Leave provides a guide:

- each day of pastoral care = 0.2 week
- one worship service = 0.1 week
- more than one service = 0.2 week

12 Supply Ministry

12.1 Introduction

Supply Ministry is a specific ministry normally provided by ordained ministers. It can range from a single Sunday service to a longer term ongoing ministry, full-time or part-time, of a year or more. It may be provided by a minister in active ministry, including awaiting a placement, or undertaking supply ministry by choice, or by a retired minister, whether temporarily or permanently, including a minister whose health precludes a placement but not supply ministry. Supply ministry does not include Intentional Interim Ministry; this is recognised as a placement. Supply ministry is normally paid through Centralised Stipend and Payroll Systems.

12.2 Supply ministry situations

With the variety of circumstances and arrangements, the development of provisions which may be appropriate to each individual situation is well-nigh impossible. Three broad situations have been identified which are sufficiently different from each other to warrant different entitlements.

12.2.1 Occasional supply

Definition: Worship service(s) and/or pastoral care days, over a continuous period of not more than one month

12.2.2 Short term supply

Definition: Short term supply is normally defined as a continuous period of supply ministry which is more than one month but not more than three months in the one location e.g. a single congregation, a multi congregation parish, a cluster of congregations operating as a single entity (mission area), Presbytery

12.2.3 Long term supply

Definition: Supply ministry of more than three months in the one location

12.2.4 Short term supply - extension

Where supply ministry is for a specific period, and its continuation is proposed, it is necessary for the presbytery, in consultation with the responsible body and minister, to determine its future basis. For example, a supply ministry of two months may be extended a further two months. The entitlements would be those of short term supply and they would apply for the further two months after the initial period. (It would be contrary to the spirit of the provisions if there were simply continued extensions for further periods of up to three months rather than proper consideration of extension of supply ministry of more than three months). On the other hand, if after the initial two months the decision was to extend the supply ministry for a further four months, the long term supply ministry entitlements would apply for the second period. At the same time, where a long term supply ministry is extended, those entitlements would continue, whatever the period of extension. Note too that retrospective change is not envisaged.

12.3 Entitlements appropriate to the different supply situations

The entitlements for the different supply situations do not vary with the classification of the minister providing that ministry, e.g. whether the minister is in active ministry or retired, or a ministerial candidate not on field placement. Supply ministry fees do not apply to lay preachers. See <https://victas.uca.org.au/ministry-mission/lay-preachers-association/> for further information

The provisions for occasional and short term supply ministry apply to ministerial candidates not in field placements, who are undertaking supply work.

12.3.1 Occasional supply

Worship service(s) and/or pastoral care days over a continuous period of not more than one month.

The arrangements are ordinarily between the responsible body and the supply minister. The present approach of occasional supply fees is seen as appropriate. They relate to services, pastoral care days and reimbursement of travel costs, normally at the ad hoc rate. On the other hand, supervisory and oversight responsibilities, let alone developmental ministry, regarding the congregation would not ordinarily be part of the role.

The ad hoc travel rate recognises two different situations. The higher rate is “normal (average total) cost reimbursement”. This applies to ministers not in an approved placement, theological students and retired ministers. The lower, “marginal cost reimbursement”, applies to ministers in placement or other employment.

Besides paying the fees for services or pastoral days, the responsible body is also required to make a Superannuation Guarantee contribution on behalf of the minister for all supply payments and applicable allowances.

12.3.2 Short term supply

Involving a continuous period of more than one month but up to three months in the one location.

The arrangements are to be determined between the congregation and the minister, subject to the oversight of the Presbytery.

A fee structure similar to occasional supply fees, and similarly reviewed, applies. However, additional preparation time for services can normally be expected with the greater involvement of a minister in the congregation. Some limited participation in the life of the congregation, can also be required. Pastoral ministry time may need to increase to provide for this. Alternatively, pastoral visitation will correspondingly be reduced. The responsible body is required to make a Superannuation Guarantee contribution on behalf of the minister for all supply payments and applicable allowances.

The ad hoc car allowance applies up to a level of approximately 1,250 kilometres per month, after which the standard car allowance rate applies.

12.3.3 Long term supply

Long term supply involves a continuous period of more than three months in the one location.

This ministry is not permanent in the sense that a placement is. On the other hand, there can be similarities with a placement, with specific objectives or ministry goals being set, and a substantial level of participation in the congregation with supervisory and oversight and developmental responsibilities. It may not necessarily be full-time but it is certainly expected that it would be not less than 0.4, ” To attract the total range of entitlements, part-time supply must be **at least 0.4 of full-time.**” Moreover, while there may be no specific duration, as with a placement, there is nonetheless an element of commitment on the part of the minister. It may involve a year or more at a time. In brief, this form of supply is closer to a placement than where occasional supply fees are appropriate.

Because of the variety of possible circumstances, the detailed arrangements in each situation need to be mutually agreed between the congregation, minister and presbytery.

12.3.3.1 Stipend

The minimum stipend, full-time or pro rata, should apply.

Loadings on Minimum Stipend

It is not anticipated that a minister in a supply situation would receive a loading on the minimum stipend. Any loading requires approval of the Presbytery.

12.3.3.2 Car allowance– Long term supply ministry

The car allowance, as with ministers in placements, should be related to the kilometres travelled on church business. The minister is to be paid a car allowance as though it were a placement. This to be paid monthly for each full month of completed service. The provision of a church car would be an acceptable alternative.

12.3.3.3 Personal Resources and Development Allowance

This allowance applies to ministers undertaking long term supply ministry. It would be paid monthly for each full month of completed service. For part-time ministry, see page 10.

12.3.3.4 Other allowances and work related expenses

(a) General expenses

Insofar as telephone, postage, stationery etc. are work related expenses, they should be borne wholly or effectively by the responsible body. In the case of telephones, a common approach is payment of rental, all local calls and work-related calls.

(b) Hospitality

Some responsible bodies provide an allowance or make reimbursements where a minister is able to show excessive costs have been incurred. Any such expenses would need to be incurred in relation to the minister's pastoral or related religious activities. In the interests of the responsible body and the minister, any provision would not be open ended.

(c) Welfare payments

Where a congregation expects its supply minister to respond to requests for welfare assistance, it must be prepared to provide the minister with monies to do so. This may be up to a prescribed amount for a specific period or an advance which is replaced as it runs out.

12.4 Housing

Housing arrangements will need to be determined consultatively between the minister, responsible body and presbytery. Consistent with the general approach to supply ministry, provisions in a long term supply situation should not be more favourable than those applying in an approved placement of the same proportion of time.

Where the minister is requested to live in the locality of the congregation, consideration can be given to the provision of an "Approved manse" or "Appropriate Accommodation". See *Part-time placements and housing*: (8.4.4); and *Options 1 and 2* for details.

Where the minister is not required to live within the locality of the congregation but continues to live in their own home, whether any allowance is appropriate and its level need to be determined consultatively.

12.5 Furnishing provisions

Where a manse is being provided, the question of furnishing may need to be addressed where member(s) of the supply minister's family continue to occupy the family home in another area. Again this will need to be dealt with consultatively.

12.6 Removal expenses

While long term supply ministry may extend to a year or more in the one location, it may be as short as three months and one day. It has not the permanency of a placement and therefore the payment of removal expenses by the Synod does not normally arise. Whether a long term supply minister needs to move any "goods and chattels" to the supply location is related to the issue of furnishing provisions for the supply minister. In the first instance, it has to be pursued consultatively between responsible body, minister and presbytery. The interim nature of the arrangement has to be recognised by all concerned but it is equally not in anyone's interests if the accommodation arrangements are not conducive to effective ministry.

12.7 Annual Leave and Public Holidays

Ministers in long term supply ministry are entitled to four weeks annual leave per year (full-time or pro rata), accumulated at one week per each three months of supply and to be taken during the time in supply.

Public holidays are Government gazetted public holidays. Where the supply minister is required to work on a public holiday e.g. Good Friday, an alternative should be arranged, preferably in the same week. Where a Government gazetted public holiday falls on a day when the supply minister would normally work then the minister will not be required to work on that day. This applies to both short term and long term supply.

As with ministers in placement, presbyteries and congregations are encouraged to provide a free Sunday a quarter to long term supply ministers in full time supply. This enables the minister to participate in, rather than lead, worship as well as providing family time together. The free Sunday is not seen as cumulative. Where such time is not taken in any quarter, it is automatically foregone.

12.8 Study Leave

Where the duration of the long term supply ministry is at least 12 months, the minister is entitled to the minimum study leave of 2 weeks in the case of a full-time minister and pro rata thereof in the case of part-time long term supply ministry.

12.9 Sick Leave

A congregation is expected to cover the long term supply minister on short term sick leave. However, unlike a placement, a long term supply minister is not required to be paid during a continued illness. The Synod does not pick up the cost of alternative ministry, and the responsible body pays no Special Insurance contribution.

Ministers in full-time Supply are entitled to five days sick leave in the first year accrued pro rata in respect of each complete month of service and eight days sick leave in subsequent years. Sick leave would be cumulative from year to year with the same responsible body but it is not portable. Ministers in part-time placements would be entitled to sick leave on a pro rata basis.

12.10 Compassionate Leave or Bereavement Leave

This is for action at the local level, always in consultation with the Presbytery.

12.11 Parental Leave

Long term supply ministry is not identical with a placement. It does not involve the same element of permanency in the particular location. In these circumstances, parental leave is not seen as appropriate.

12.12 Employment Injury Leave

Where a supply minister is still in active ministry and has an approved WorkCover claim, for 26 consecutive weeks or until incapacity ceases, whichever is the sooner, the minister is entitled to normal remuneration, including any payments into a Ministers Benefit Account, other than the distance component of the travel allowance. Relevant medical expenses are also paid to ministers in active ministry with an approved WorkCover claim. Where incapacity is recognised by WorkCover beyond 26 weeks, the minister receives the appropriate WorkCover benefits, together with continuation of the payments into the Benefit Account.

Where the minister is retired, the total benefits are limited to medical expenses, for up to 12 months.

12.13 Retirement Benefits

The responsible body is required to make a Superannuation Guarantee contribution on behalf of the minister for all supply payments and applicable allowances.

12.14 Fringe Benefits Tax Arrangements

Ministers Benefit Accounts and the related arrangements are applicable to ministers in long term supply arrangements.

12.15 Other Considerations

One of the outcomes which it is hoped to achieve in supply arrangements is a framework in which flexible provisions may be negotiated but within accepted parameters and with the active involvement of the Presbytery.

(a) 'Private arrangements'

Application of the supply arrangements now in place removes the need for 'private arrangements'. The Presbytery has to approve all ministry arrangements.

(b) Supply service under 0.4 of full-time

Supply service less than 0.4 needs to be addressed only in respect of long term supply ministry. The entitlements envisaged for occasional supply and for short term supply are not specifically related to the level of ministry; they are "fee for service".

With long term supply ministry, it may not be full-time but it is certainly expected that it would be not less than 0.4. It is only on this basis that a number of the provisions are seen to be appropriate.

If a minister were undertaking two or more long term supply ministries which aggregated at least 0.4, they would not be treated separately. Rather they would be aggregated and the cost of entitlements split between the responsible bodies of the ministries.

If, notwithstanding all of the above, a long term supply ministry of less than 0.4 is approved, the view is that the fees for short term supply should be applied. If, however, this is considered inappropriate, the Terms of Placement Committee should be consulted.

APPENDIX A

Pastoral Care of Ministers during Maternity Leave

Crisis pastoral situations in a Congregation can disrupt maternity leave. Central to this situation is the supply ministry.

Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committees and Presbytery Ministers need to be proactive, ensuring that supply arrangements are agreed and approved by the Presbytery well before maternity leave commences. This should not be another matter for which the minister is personally responsible before confinement.

Placements need to respect that the minister is on maternity leave. This is in the interests of not hindering the minister's ability to return to effective ministry and the care and development of the baby. The Church Council should see that the congregation knows the role and availability of the supply minister and how they can be contacted if required.

The minister herself needs to be conscious that many of us, lay or ordained, are reluctant to let others assume our responsibilities. Most crisis pastoral situations can be handled within normal supply arrangements, the demands of others cannot. The supply arrangements need to be sufficiently flexible to ensure that interruption of leave is minimal, if not eliminated.

The three months paid leave is not normally intended to be subject to partial work arrangements.

Circumstances can demand additional supply ministry, at least for a time or from time to time. If a proposed supply minister believes that they are unlikely to be able to respond to such situations that should be shared with the PRC, or relevant Presbytery Minister, so that additional standby provisions can be available if desired. Where such situations arise, the supply or the incumbent minister should advise forthwith the relevant Presbytery Minister Pastoral Care or PRC so that consideration can be given to the need to provide additional supply and its timing. As far as practicable, the PRC should clear what is proposed with the Synod Pastoral Assistance Committee. The oversight of this additional supply is part of the PAC's overall responsibility for Synod paid supply. The additional supply is not intended to be a means to increase the standard supply provision. Rather, it is an appropriate response to unexpected "crises" within the congregation warranting additional supply resources during paid maternity leave.

APPENDIX B

Long Service Leave Application Form

Long Service Leave Application



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

Version: LSLA v003

When / How to Use This Form

This form is to be completed by a minister when applying for long service leave.
On completion of this form please forward to your Presbytery PRC for approval.
Presbytery on approval please forward to:
payroll@victas.uca.org.au

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION – MUST BE COMPLETED BY MINISTER

1.1 Minister's Name			
1.2 Address			
1.2 Contact Numbers			
	BH	Mobile	
2 LSL Details	Ministers who will take LSL should complete 2.1 below. Ministers who are retiring and seek payment in lieu of LSL should complete 2.2		
2.1 LSL Dates	1st Day of Leave	Last Day of Leave	No of Weeks
2.2 Retirement date			
3 GRANT Payment	Please advise how you would like to receive payment of your Grant. You can transfer up to 100% into your MBA account. Please circle and complete where applicable:	MBA Transfer please write the percentage _____ %	All paid as wages
Ministers Signature			Dated

SECTION 2: PRESBYTERY APPROVAL

Presbytery of:			Date of Approval
Approved by PRC	PRC - Please Sign your name above	PRC - Please Print your name above	
Secretary Contact Details			
Secretary Contact Numbers			
	BH	Mobile	
Office Use Only			

Long Service Leave Information and Processes

1 Entitlements whilst on Long Service Leave

1.1 Ministers who are on Long Service Leave (LSL) will receive the following entitlements which will be paid from the Long Service Leave Fund, pro rata for part time:

- (a) Minimum stipend
- (b) Long Service Leave Grant of 65% of current stipend, paid per week of LSL
- (c) Travel allowance calculated at the rate of the current 5,000 km per annum rate

OR

Where a minister in a placement is provided with a motor vehicle that arrangement will continue during Long Service Leave

- (d) Personal Resource Development Grant

1.2 Where a minister in a placement is provided with a manse allowance by the congregation / sponsoring body, that arrangement will continue during the period of Long Service Leave

1.3 As Minister not in placement may apply for Long Service Leave

2 Payment in lieu of Long Service Leave

Where a minister retires or resigns in good standing then the total remaining balance of accrued LSL entitlements will be paid out from the LSL Fund as per 1.1 above.

3 Supply Arrangements and Costs of Supply

Arrangements for and costs of supply ministry during the period of the minister's Long Service Leave are the responsibility of the congregation / sponsoring body, including costs of accommodation, travel and any other supply ministry costs.

4 Long Service Leave application process

The minimum period of LSL is 4 weeks. For additional information please refer to the UCA Handbook of Ministerial Provisions and Charges Section 9.10

- (a) Minister

In order to apply for Long Service Leave, the minister completes page one of this form and submits it to the relevant presbytery for approval.

- (b) Presbytery PRC

The Presbytery PRC authorises the minister's Long Service Leave by signing where indicated on page one of this form and then forwards the completed form to:

payroll@victas.uca.org.au

Payroll Services arranges payment of Long Service Leave in accordance with dates which are provided on page one of this form.

5 Accrual of Long Service Leave entitlements

Long Service Leave accrues 1 week per year after 15 years of service

Service	Accrued Long Service Leave
7 years	6.09 weeks
10 years	8.66 weeks
11 years	9.53 weeks
12 years	10.4 weeks
13 years	11.27 weeks
14 years	12.13 weeks
15 years	13.00 weeks

APPENDIX C(a)

Ministers within a Workplace Environment (Synod Ministries and Operations)

Preamble

Placement within the context of Synod Ministries and Operations (SMO) brings with it an additional and different set of accountabilities, tensions and responsibilities that may be quite unfamiliar to some ministers. Exercising ministry within a management structure and with line managers creates a very different working environment from that experienced in congregation-based ministries. This document has been put together to help with the transition and has two primary purposes:

1. To facilitate a conversation between ordained staff and their managers about management structures which embrace every employee; and
2. To identify some features of 'placement' life in this particular environment.

The majority of staff and volunteers within SMO are lay people and this document is designed to foster an understanding of the office environment and help ordained people develop a healthy regard for the processes that guide and govern the SMO as a workplace.

Lay Staff Collective Employment Agreement (LSCEA)

Nearly all lay staff are employed under this agreement and it is important that you familiarise yourself with the conditions under which lay people are employed and the rights and responsibilities of lay people within SMO.

Synod workplace policies and procedures

SMO has a range of workplace policies and procedures that shape and govern workplace behaviour and legislative compliance eg Occupational Health and Safety; and Bullying, harassment and sexual abuse. These policies are available on the Intranet. It is important that you familiarise yourself with these policies and comply with them. These policies complement and do not replace those codes and regulations which govern the conduct of ordained persons in placement. Attendance at Child Protection Training and Code of Ethics training is required.

Progress Review

After 6 weeks a period of time will be set aside for a conversation between the line manager and the ordained member of staff to discuss how the placement is going.

Performance, Planning and Development Reviews

A feature of Synod-based placements that some people may be less familiar with is the process of annual performance, planning and development reviews. The review process is linked with the development of strategic plans and annual work plans. This aspect of SMO life will be explained by the line manager/supervisor. Issues of non-performance will be addressed by the line manager in accordance with the pattern and processes outlined by People and Culture.

Working from Home

Ministry in other settings often enables people to work quite flexible hours and perform many tasks from home. A placement within SMO often requires considerable adjustment to work from an office and keep regular hours. Working from home is only available from time to time through prior negotiation with the appropriate line manager/supervisor. If and when working away from the office, it is important that key contact staff like Administration Officers know where all members of staff are and can keep others informed.

Leave

People in placement within SMO are expected to comply with the workplace policies and procedures as outlined on the intranet and in the Lay Staff agreement regarding leave, although quantities of leave vary. This includes sick leave which should be recorded, notified and accounted for in the appropriate way.

Whilst it is recognised that 'normal' working hours tend not to fit the concept of stipended ministry, the need for 'time-in-lieu' does sometimes apply and this needs to be approved by the line manager.

Grievance Procedures

Lay staff are expected to adhere to the grievance procedures outlined in the SMO Grievance Policy and Procedure. Ministers in placement are subject to these same procedures.

Sacraments and Obligations

Placement in Synod operations brings with it its own set of demands and expectations. It is recognised that participation in the preaching and sacramental life of the Church is part of the 'ordained life'. However, it is important to recognise the potential for involvement in such activities as funerals and weddings to conflict with the primary responsibilities of the placement and its accompanying position description.

It is expected that people in placement at SMO will normally be involved in working across the whole Synod and therefore will not be available for regular and sustained ministry support of particular congregations. It is recognised that from time to time a person in placement might be asked to conduct a funeral or wedding during normal working hours; this request should always be discussed with the line manager.

Induction

A person's placement within SMO should always be accompanied by the appropriate induction. The location and timing should be discussed with both manager and presbytery. Possibilities include a time enabling colleagues and members of the committee with oversight of the role to attend or within a regular chapel service held within the workplace, at their 'home' congregation, or in a context that best illustrates the nature of their ministry.

This recognition of ministry must be conducted within 3 months of the appointment commencing.

Relationship with Presbytery

Placement within the Synod does not compromise a minister's relationship with their presbytery but it does raise a number of questions about the level and kind of involvement that might emerge. People in placement within SMO usually have a ministry that requires from them the capacity to serve all presbyteries without fear or favour. Assuming the role of Presbytery chairperson or secretary, Committee convenor or acting as a presbytery representative has the potential to affect perceptions and could render the placement ineffective in its primary tasks.

It is also important to recognise that a SMO placement can sometimes bring a person into contact with previous placements, even the most recent one, and this requires special sensitivity. Declaring awareness of the circumstance, or any possible conflict of interest, or highlighting particular boundary issues may be sufficient response. However, any involvement of this kind in presbytery life should be preceded by a discussion with the line manager and, if necessary, the presbytery.

Conclusion of Placement

Upon conclusion of a placement within SMO, it is appropriate that formal relationships with particular bodies within the Church should be deferred for at least one year. For example, it would not be appropriate for someone previously in placement in SMO to become a member of the Synod Standing Committee, Ministry and Mission Committee, Property and Operations Committee, or any other body with which they may have had significant involvement.

Ministers within a Workplace Environment – November 2018 revised Jan 2023

APPENDIX C(b)

Uniting AgeWell Chaplain Guidelines

Preamble

Placement within the context of Uniting AgeWell (UA) brings with it an additional and different set of accountabilities, tensions and responsibilities that may be quite unfamiliar to some people. For example, exercising ministry within a management structure and with line managers creates a very different working environment from that experienced in congregation-based ministries. This document has been put together to help with the transition and has two primary purposes:

1. To facilitate a conversation between ordained staff and the management structures which embrace every employee; and
2. To identify some features of 'placement' life in this particular environment.

Nearly all UA staff and volunteers are lay people and this document is designed to foster an understanding of the aged care environment and to help ordained staff develop a healthy regard for the processes that guide and govern UA as a workplace.

Uniting AgeWell Policy Manual

The Policy Manual contains information that shapes and governs workplace behaviour and legislative compliance e.g. occupational health and safety. It is important that you familiarise yourself with this document. This manual complements and does not replace those codes and regulations which govern the conduct of ordained persons in placement.

Progress Review

After 6 weeks a period of time will be set aside for a conversation between the line manager and the ordained member of staff to discuss how the placement is going.

Performance Appraisal

A feature of UA based placements that some ministers may be less familiar with is the process of annual performance appraisals. The performance appraisal process is linked with the development of strategic plans and annual work plans. This aspect of UA life will be explained by the line manager/supervisor. Issues relating to performance will be addressed by the line manager in accordance with the pattern and processes outlined in the policy manual.

Working from Home

Ministry in other settings often enables people to work quite flexible hours and perform many tasks from home. A placement within UA often requires considerable adjustment to working from an office and keeping regular hours. Working from home is not a normal option and is only available from time to time through prior negotiation with the appropriate line manager/supervisor.

Leave

People in placement within UA are expected to comply with standard practice and apply in advance for all annual, study leave and Long Service Leave. Absence from the workplace due to sickness should be notified to the relevant manager/supervisor and recorded in the appropriate way along with the provision of medical certificates when necessary. Whilst it is recognised that 'normal' working hours tend not to fit the concept of stipended ministry the need for 'time-in-lieu' does sometimes apply and this needs to be discussed with the line manager rather than assumed.

Grievance Procedures

Clear grievance procedures are provided for UA staff and it is important that ministers working in UA settings respect these processes.

Sacraments and Obligations

Placement in UA brings with it its own set of demands and expectations. It is recognised that participation in the preaching and sacramental life of the church is part of the 'ordained life'. However, it is important to recognise the potential for involvement in such activities as funerals and weddings to conflict with the primary responsibilities of the placement and its accompanying position description.

It is expected that people in placement within UA will not be available for regular and sustained ministry support of one congregation or more. UA recognises that from time to time a person in placement might be asked to conduct a funeral or wedding; this request should always be considered in the context of a discussion with the line manager.

Induction

A person's placement within UA should always be accompanied by the appropriate induction service. This recognition of ministry must be conducted within 3 months of the appointment commencing.

Relationship with Presbytery

Placement within UA does not compromise a minister's relationship with their Presbytery but it does raise a number of questions about the level and kind of involvement that might emerge. People in placement within UA usually have a ministry that requires from them the capacity to serve all Presbyteries without fear or favour. Assuming the role of Presbytery chairperson or secretary, or acting as a Presbytery representative, has the potential to affect perceptions and could render the placement ineffective in its primary tasks.

It is also important to recognise that a UA placement can sometimes bring a person into contact with previous placements, even the most recent one, and this requires some special sensitivity. Declaring awareness of the circumstance, or any possible conflict of interest, or highlighting particular boundary issues may be sufficient response. However, any involvement of this kind in Presbytery life should be preceded by a discussion with the line manager and, if necessary, the Presbytery.

Conclusion of Placement

Upon conclusion of a placement within UA, it is appropriate that formal relationships with particular bodies within the Church should be deferred for at least one year. For example, it may not be appropriate for someone previously in placement in UA to become a member of the UA Board or other closely related body.

APPENDIX D

Retirement Form

Ministers Retirement Notice



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

Version: 5/12/2018

When / How to Use This Form

This form is to be completed by a minister when giving notice of retirement.
On completion of this form please forward to your Presbytery PRC for noting.
Presbytery on approval please forward to:
The Secretary of the Placements Committee
eLM 29 College Crescent, PARKVILLE, VIC, 3052. – placements.secretary@victas.uca.org.au

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION – TO BE COMPLETED BY MINISTER

Minister's Name												
Address												
Contact Numbers	Mobile						Home					
Current Placement												
Treasurer's Name												
Contact Details												
Accrued leave entitlements	Taking annual leave before retiring				Taking long service leave (submit LSL application form)				Being paid out long service leave (submit LSL application form)			
	Yes		No		Yes		No		Yes		No	
Retirement date (usually end of month of final stipend payment)												
Removal Information	Address										Preferred Date	
Retirement Presbytery (ask for transfer if changing presbyteries)												
Minister's Signature											Dated	

SECTION 2: PRESBYTERY RECORD

Presbytery of:		
	Date of Recording	
Recorded by PRC		
	PRC - Please Sign your name above	PRC - Please Print your name above

SECTION 3: PLACEMENTS COMMITTEE RECORD

Meeting date	
Signed by Placements Committee Secretary	

Planning for Retirement

Regulations re Retirement

2.6.1 (d) A Minister may retire

- (i) permanently
 - (1) after reaching the age of 55,
 - (2) on the issue of a medical certificate by the Synod's Medical Advisers that the Minister is unfit for active service and the Beneficiary Fund has determined a pension will be paid, or
 - (3) for any other reason which the Placements Committee after consultation with the Presbytery considers sufficient;
- (ii) temporarily for a defined period with the approval of the Placements Committee of the Synod on the recommendation of or with the concurrence of the Presbytery on the issue of a medical certificate by the Synod's Medical Advisers that the Minister is temporarily unfit for active service and the Beneficiary Fund has determined a pension will be paid. Such temporary retirement may be extended or varied by the Placements Committee and at the end of the period of temporary retirement the Minister shall be available for active service or seek permanent retirement.

Please give at least 3 months' notice to your PRC and Church Council or equivalent body of your intended retirement date. **The date of retirement is the end of the month when the last stipend is paid**, not the day of the farewell or when the final period of leave starts.

This form will initiate contact with:

- The Minister's Presbytery –through the Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC);
- The Placements Committee – PRC is responsible for passing this form to the Committee;
- Payroll and MBA – Placements Committee will pass the form to Payroll Services;
- Removals – Placements Committee will make initial contact with Property Services; and
- Mercer: Beneficiary Fund – Placements Committee will make an initial contact. The minister will also need to contact the Fund directly.

Notes about:

- MBA – any credit that is paid out after retirement is taxable
- Removal costs – the Synod meets reasonable removal costs. Property Services administers removals (9116 1920)
- Supply - If you wish to be available for supply please contact your PRC and the Placements Committee Secretary.

f

APPENDIX E

Minister Remuneration Strategy

	UCA Synod of Victoria and Tasmania	Terms of Placement Committee Minister Remuneration Strategy

1 General Information

Purpose

The aim of a remuneration strategy is to create fair and just remuneration that is visible to ministers, pastors, members and responsible bodies across the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania.

This strategy will address remuneration for ministers of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania.

2 Definitions

2.1 Minister

Unless otherwise stated, minister means Ministers of the Word, Deacons (ordained ministries), Deaconesses, Pastors in placements and those in the Specified Ministry of Youth Worker (non-ordained ministries), and who are in an approved placement.

2.2 Committee

Terms of Placement Committee

2.3 Placements

Placements usually refer to Congregational Ministry Placements. There are a variety of other types of placements and ministry contexts within the Church but, for ease of language, reference is usually made to Congregations as the responsible body. In different ministry contexts the appropriate responsible body may be substituted as appropriate.

2.4 Part-time Placements

The amounts for allowances which are specified in this document are for full-time placements. Where a minister is in a part-time placement then the allowances are usually calculated on a proportionate basis of the minimum rate determined by Synod, unless otherwise specified.

2.5 Synod

Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

2.6 Responsible Bodies (as per Regulation 4.1)

Responsible body means a body that is responsible for the management and administration of property, and which either itself carries out those responsibilities or appoints another body to undertake them either in whole or in part; and includes, but is not limited to, councils of the Church, congregations, presbyteries, Institutions, and some schools.

3 Remuneration for ministers

Remuneration in this document refers to all monetary and non-monetary payment for work performed. This includes additional benefits such as allowances and accommodation.

Remuneration may include the following components:

3.1 Stipends

In the context of stipends, remuneration refers to a form of payment provided to ministers to permit them to devote themselves to ministry. The way a stipend differs from a normal salary is that a minister is not contracted to certain hours or duties but rather enters a covenantal relationship with a congregation or other organisation.

3.2 Accommodation

Housing arrangements will need to be determined consultatively between the minister, responsible body and Presbytery. Consistent with the general approach to supply ministry, provision in a long term supply situation should not be more favourable than those applying in an approved placement of the same proportion of full-time.

3.3 Allowances

a) Manse allowance

The offer of appropriate accommodation, either UCA property or leased, is part of the remuneration components for ministers in placement in a congregation or presbytery. Payment of a manse allowance only applies where a minister chooses to provide their own accommodation rather than the accommodation offered as part of the terms of placement.

b) PRDA allowance

The purpose of the Personal Resources Development Allowance (PRDA) is to assist ministers with supervision costs, professional development and to help resource ministry and to provide technological and other aids.

c) Car allowance

The car allowance for ministers, whether full time or part time, in an approved placement should be related to kilometres travelled annually on church business. It is based, as far as practicable on estimates of reasonable actual costs.

3.4 Superannuation

a) Superannuation - non-ordained

Those accredited to the Specified Ministry of Youth Worker and those recognised as pastors who are in an approved placement, are not members of the Beneficiary Fund. They come under *Choice of Fund* legislation and have the option of nominating a superannuation fund.

b) Beneficiary Fund

The UCA Beneficiary Fund, a sub plan of the Mercer Super Trust, is a superannuation fund offered to Ministers of the Word, Deacons and Deaconesses, with a defined benefit and accumulation section. It also provides pensions to retired Ministers who have defined benefit membership.

3.5 Insurance and other charges

Whether accommodation is Church owned or rented by the congregation, the minister does not meet the cost of the insurance of the property or normal local government rates, both general and waste service charges. It is appropriate for the congregation to accept responsibility for the insurance of the ministers' personal on-site office contents under the church's policy.

3.6 Ministers Benefit Accounts

Persons who qualify as religious practitioners for the purposes of fringe benefits tax legislation are exempt from such a tax. As a consequence they are able to pay into a “Ministers Benefit Account” an amount sacrificed from their stipend and allowances.

3.7 Long Service Leave Purpose

Church Long Service is for refreshment for future ministry. See the Long Service Leave Rules for further details. LSL can be accessed after 7 years.

4 Principles

4.1 Values and ethos

The UCA is a Christian denomination that values justice and equitable treatment of its members. The UCA Handbook of Ministerial Provisions and Charges (Handbook) describes the relationship between the responsible body and the minister as covenantal, involving concern for justice and care.

The Synod recognises its duty of care to ministers and the importance of maintaining adequate support for ministers in all aspect of their calling. All components of remuneration are considered and adjusted annually to ensure ministers receive reasonable financial support and that factors related to living costs do not unduly distract a minister from their capacity engage meaningfully with their ministry and mission.

4.2 Visibility

The synod is committed to a pro-active visible and transparent approach to remuneration.

4.3 Stewardship

The Synod is committed to justice and equity in remuneration. It also is committed to the wise stewardship of all its resources and faithfully commits to managing them well. The Synod is acutely aware of the impact on the broader Church of any decision that is made and will take this into consideration.

5 Remuneration for ministers

5.1 The Synod supports ministers through remuneration in the form of a stipend and allowances to reflect the following:

- a) equity and fairness
- b) the reasonable costs of living
- c) a minister’s capability and dedication.
- d) educational expectations of ministry
- e) community expectations of the ministry
- f) the unique nature of the engagement as a “calling’ or ‘vocation’ to the ministry and mission of the Uniting Church

5.2 The Synod will achieve this through ensuring:

- a) An annual stipend adjustment that is appropriate and fairly determined
- b) A remuneration base that is recognised as equitable

- c) That the total package of remuneration for ministers is fair
- d) That the annual adjustment of allowances meets the needs of ministers
- e) The manse allowance is reflective of market conditions
- f) The Ministers Benefit Account (MBA) meets ATO requirements and is of financial assistance to ministers
- g) The Synod utilises tax concessions and allowances to increase total remuneration
- h) The Synod is aware of appropriate Government support aspects and includes them in the total remuneration

6 Validation of information

In identifying a remuneration strategy, the Synod needs to consider benchmarks and comparisons such as other synods, other churches, synod staff remuneration and other not for profit roles such as teachers and lecturers.

Complexities in this process would be presented in the various allowances such as the manse allowance, the impact of the PBI and the fact that all ministers receive a standard rate of stipend.

The Synod will use the following information to inform it:

- a) Total remuneration calculation
 - Other synods
 - Benchmarks under the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania Lay Staff Agreement
 - Benchmarks in the service professional sector: ie teaching, health; other not-for-profit organisations
 - Other synods
 - Other ministry roles
 - Annual national measures – CPI, WPI
- b) Travel and fuel allowances
- c) Personal Resource Development Allowance (PRDA)

7 Procedure

- 8.1** People & Culture will source and provide appropriate information to the Committee to assist in reaching remuneration-related decisions.
- 8.2** The Terms of Placement Committee reaches a decision and makes recommendations to the Synod Standing Committee or Synod as appropriate for approval.
- 8.3** All related materials and handbooks are updated upon Standing Committee/Synod approval.
- 8.4** The Chair and the Secretary distribute appropriate communications.