



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 listed placements, Lay Pastors 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 that are informed, 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 calculated on a proportionate basis of the minimum rate determined by Synod.

2.5 Synod

Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

2.6 Responsible Bodies

Include, but not limited to, councils of the church, congregations, Presbyteries, Agencies, hospitals and Schools.

3 Remuneration for ministers

Remuneration commonly refers to all monetary and non-monetary payment for work performed. This includes additional benefits such as allowances, accommodation and service in kind. When considered as a collective this will be referred to as a total remuneration package.

It includes:

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 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.

b) PRDA allowance

The purpose of the Personal Resources Development Allowance (PRDA) is to assist ministers 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 Retirement

a) Superannuation - non-ordained

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

b) Beneficiary Fund

The UCA Beneficiary Fund is the superannuation fund for Ministers of the Word, Deacons and Deaconesses, with a defined benefit and accumulation section. It also provides pensions for retired Ministers.

c) Home Endowment Fund

The UCA Home Endowment Fund provides members with assistance for the purchase of a residential property for retirement, through a structured savings scheme and mortgage lending. Membership is compulsory for ministers based in Victoria and Tasmania, unless an exemption is granted on evidence of home ownership.

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

Church Long Service is for the purpose of refreshment for future ministry. Currently where ministers in active ministry serve in long term supply ministry, they accrue leave where the service is at least 0.4 of full-time and at least three months in one location.

4 Principles

4.1 Values and ethos

The UCA is a Christian organisation 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 Handbook charges the synod and presbyteries with a responsibility to ensure that ministers are provided for at a level that would meet the costs of living in the community in which they are placed. Stipend must be fair and reasonable, adequate to cover living expenses and appropriate to cover the needs and responsibilities common to all ministers and their families.

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 Total remuneration for ministers

We are trying to achieve a total remuneration for ministers:

- a) That is equitable and fair and allows ministers to meet the costs of living
- b) That meaningfully reflects their capability and dedication.
- c) That reflects educational expectations of the role
- d) That reflects community expectations of the role

6 Elements of the total remuneration

We 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 be of financial assistance to ministers
- g) Greater flexibility in total remuneration packaging to meet ministers needs
- h) Ensure we utilise tax concessions and allowances to increase total remuneration
- i) Ensure we are aware of appropriate Government support aspects and include them in our total remuneration

7 Validation of information

In identifying a remuneration strategy, we would need to consider benchmarks and comparisons such as in 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

We will use the following information to inform us:

- 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
- b) Stipend
 - Other synods
 - Other ministry and roles
 - Annual national measures – CPI, WPI
- c) Fuel allowances
- d) Personal Resource Development Allowance (PRDA)

8 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.