

PARSONAGE FAMILY HOUSING STANDARDS

I. INTRODUCTION

In the context of these standards the following definitions apply:

parsonage family: includes a single person or a husband and wife with or without dependent children.

handicapped accessible space and/or equipment: space and/or equipment required by a parsonage family member with a handicapping condition in order for that person to live independently. (see Handicapped Accessibility)

The Conference has determined that the parsonage system shall continue to be the norm for providing housing for clergy. In certain situations, however, a Housing Allowance may prove a more effective approach to housing needs.

Every church and parsonage is unique as are the needs of the pastors appointed to the churches. The most comprehensive parsonage standards cannot address the variety of parsonages and pastor's needs and/or desires. However, standards need to be presented in order that equitable living conditions be developed across the conference.

The purpose of establishing standards for parsonage family housing is to describe what is expected in the housing which the local church provides for the parsonage family, and what is expected to happen during the time the parsonage family lives in the housing provided. Standards are defined herein *as* statements to which the current status of a parsonage building and the management of that building can be compared for purposes of determining whether or not improvements in the housing for a parsonage family need to be made. Above all, these standards are set in place to ensure that all church-owned residential real estate be maintained in at least minimum compliance with all applicable health and safety laws, codes and regulations.

The local church and the parsonage family share in the responsibility for housing and in the need to work cooperatively to secure and maintain appropriate housing in accord with principles of Christian stewardship.

These standards describe housing which provides for a parsonage family a home that is:

1. comfortable and conducive to a happy family life;
2. safe for those in residence and those visiting the parsonage;
3. conserves energy and is economical to operate; and
4. located in the church's neighborhood or next closest neighborhood to the church which is suitable for safe family living and far enough from the church to insure the privacy of the parsonage family..

In meeting appropriate standards, emphasis should be given to durability, functionality, and reasonable comfort. Good stewardship encourages maintenance on a timely and, where possible, preventative basis, with a view to long term savings. Additions and changes in construction or major decoration should be undertaken with a concern for good stewardship. The Pastor and the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee may negotiate items not specifically dealt with in the following Standards.

These Standards apply to all West Ohio Conference provided housing.

Local churches with parsonages that do not meet these standards are expected to work toward meeting the standards. We suggest that those churches that do not have

parsonages which meet these standards make one improvement or more per year toward the goal of meeting all of them.

When a pastoral change occurs, when equipment needs to be replaced, when the parsonage is being replaced, and when parsonage family needs change, every effort must be made to meet as many unmet standards as is possible. If a church is building a new parsonage, it is to be built in full accordance with these standards.

II. BUILDING STRUCTURAL STANDARDS

The following living areas are recommended to be a part of every parsonage:

Finished Family or Recreation Room

Kitchen:

1. Ample counter space (minimum of 30-40 sq. ft.).
2. Ample storage cabinets.
3. An informal eating area for a minimum of four (4) persons.

Bedrooms:

1. One bedroom on the first floor (minimum 230 sq. ft.).
2. Two additional bedrooms.

Study/Office {Fourth Bedroom}:

This room may serve as an "at home study" or as a fourth bedroom depending on the needs and wishes of the parsonage family. If an office/study is not provided at the church, the parsonage office/study space should have a separate entrance and be equipped as an office/study (see Equipment and Furnishings Standards).

Closets:

One closet in each bedroom with:

1. Minimum of six (6) feet of closet rod per person with some full-length hanging space.
2. Provision of additional closet space or wardrobe if needed.

Additional Closets:

1. Linen closet.
2. Pantry.
3. Coat / guest closet.

Bathrooms:

1. One full bathroom on the first floor with all facilities (toilet, sink & vanity, shower) wheelchair accessible, including grab rails when needed (minimum 80 sq. ft.).
2. One additional full bathroom with tub and shower.
3. Ample towel racks for family and guests.
4. Large medicine cabinet or storage area.

Laundry:

On 1st floor (*suggested* minimum 64 sq. ft.).

Garage, Driveway and Sidewalks / Walkways:

1. Attached, two car capacity garage, with overhead door and automatic garage door opener (concrete sidewalk between house and an unattached garage).
2. Adequate garage storage space or storage shed for lawn equipment gardening tools, lawn furniture, and snow removal equipment.
3. Hard-topped driveway with adequate parking space.
4. Concrete sidewalks and walkways.

Yard:

Fencing, where needed, with adequate space for outdoor use by parsonage family.

Basement:

1. Full basement wherever possible.
2. Dry.

Bulk Storage Space:

1. Easily accessible.
2. Dry.
3. Adequate to the needs of the parsonage family (If bulk storage space in the parsonage is inadequate to the parsonage family's needs, the church *should* pay for another storage location providing sufficient and appropriate space, privacy, and security.).

Living Areas Sizes:

LIVING AREAS	SIZE IN SQUARE FEET	
	CURRENT EXISTING AVERAGES	RECOMMENDED
Living room – <i>accessible</i> - 1st floor	240	360
Dining room – <i>accessible</i> - 1st floor	120	210
Kitchen – <i>accessible</i> – 1st floor	90	160
Informal Dinning (Breakfast nook)- <i>accessible</i>	50	100
Bathrooms	43	80
Bathroom – <i>accessible</i> - 1st floor	80	100
Bedroom #1	96	144
Bedroom #2	144	230
Bedroom – <i>accessible</i> - 1st floor	120	230
Study / Office {Fourth Bedroom}	96	120
Family / Recreation Room	120	200
Laundry – <i>accessible</i> - 1st floor	64	64
Two-Car Garage – <i>accessible</i>	400	480
Bulk Storage Space	100	
Optional Great Room – substitutes for Living and Family / Recreation Rooms	420	500
Children's outdoor play area	500	600

Note: *accessible* living areas are adapted to allow persons with wheelchair, and other handicaps, to live independently. (see **Handicapped Accessibility**)

III.EQUIPMENT and FURNISHING STANDARDS

The following equipment and furnishing should be a part of every parsonage.

Kitchen:

1. Vented exhaust fan / hood over stove.
2. A fire extinguisher is required.
3. Lights: Central overhead, over sink, over stove.
4. Stove- gas or electric - with self-cleaning oven and clock timer.
5. Garbage disposal.
6. Refrigerator/frost-free freezer (side-by-side) *a suggested minimum of 20 cu. ft.*
7. Dishwasher.

Laundry:

1. Automatic clothes washer and dryer with permanent press cycles.
2. Stationary laundry tub.

Bathrooms:

1. Vented exhaust fan.
2. Full length mirror.

Study/Office:

Office furniture provided for a parsonage study/office (when no office/study exists in the church) should be home-office furniture (typically wood, not the typical metal institutional office furniture).

1. Office desk.
2. Desk chair - padded, tilt, with arms and floor rollers.
3. Two (2), vertical, four-drawer file cabinets with locks.
4. Ample bookshelves - built-in or free standing - for the pastor's library.
5. Two office chairs.

Window Treatments:

Drapes and / or curtains, blinds and/or shades as appropriate on all windows

The Following Safety Equipment Is *REQUIRED* :

1. Fire extinguishers in kitchen, garage, and furnace area.
2. Smoke detector on each floor wired into building electrical system (not plug-in or battery operated).
3. Carbon monoxide detectors (in appropriate locations).

Floor Coverings:

1. Hardwood floor, or carpeting, in all bedrooms, study, living room, dining room, and study.
2. Appropriate floor coverings in kitchen, bathrooms, laundry, and basement.

Communications Equipment:

1. A private telephone line (independent from the telephones lines for the church itself) with extensions in kitchen, bedroom and study and jacks in each room, with option for two (2) telephone lines.
2. Outside TV\FM antenna, basic cable, or satellite receiver installation when antenna reception does not provide quality picture and sound reception. Reception of premium channels is the choice and financial responsibility of the parsonage family.
3. If the pastoral family uses a computer with internet capability, the church should consider providing internet accessibility.

General Equipment:

1. At least two (2) outdoor water spigots, one in the front and one in the rear of the house
2. Safe and adequate water supply.
3. Forty (40) gallon gas (or 80 gallon electric) water heater.
4. Water conditioner, if needed.
5. Doorbell at the main entrance.
6. Handrails for all steps and hazardous locations shall be provided.
7. Storm windows and screens; storm / screen doors (with Plexiglas or safety glass windows).
8. 200 (minimum) amp grounded electrical service with circuit breakers.
9. Two (2) grounded electric duplex outlets per wall per room in living areas.
10. Two (2) separate 20-amp circuits, each with a minimum of 2 duplex outlets, for counter-top / small appliances in kitchen.
11. Ground-Fault-Interupters (GFI) duplex receptacles in areas with sinks / water.
12. Two (2) outdoor, weatherproof, electric duplex outlets, one (1) in front of house and one (1) in back of house.
13. Outdoor lighting for all entrances, garage, and driveway.
14. Energy efficient central heating (with humidifier) and air conditioning system and programm-able thermostats with at least two zones (living area, sleeping area).
15. Dehumidifier when necessary.
16. Where needed, an adequate sump pump with battery back up.
17. Power attic fan where appropriate.
18. A security system adequate to insure the safety of the parsonage family, when necessary.
19. Adequate equipment for lawn care (hoses, rakes, spades, including a self-propelled power mulching lawn mower, or riding mower where necessary) and snow removal equipment.
20. Insulation to meet Federal energy requirements.
21. House shall meet all local building, health and safety codes.

Donated Furniture and Equipment:

Used furniture and equipment donated to the church should never be placed in or utilized in the parsonage.

New equipment and furniture donated to the church for use in the parsonage must meet all specifications set forth by these Parsonage Standards and local church Trustees. New furniture or equipment donated for use in the parsonage should be clearly designated as items to become part of the parsonage furnishings and owned by the church or designated as personal gifts to the pastor's family.

IV. OPERATIONAL STANDARDS**Safety and Health:**

To provide for the health and safety of the parsonage family, the Trustees will arrange for the following inspections:

1. Annual fire and safety inspections conducted by professionally qualified inspectors.

2. Heating / air conditioning, electrical and plumbing systems shall be inspected periodically, or at the request of the parsonage family, for safety and optimum performance.
3. A baseline radon test, conducted by a properly certified inspector, shall be done for each existing parsonage if one has not already been done, and one shall be done for each new parsonage purchased or constructed. Appropriate action shall be taken to eliminate or minimize the radon hazard if any is found.
- *4. A baseline evaluation of formaldehyde hazards shall be done if construction materials (insulation and paneling) and household equipment are possibly emitting formaldehyde. Appropriate action shall be taken to eliminate or minimize the formaldehyde hazards if any are found.
- *5. A baseline evaluation of the presence of asbestos materials used in construction (insulation and siding) and on heating units and hot water units and plumbing shall be undertaken. Appropriate action shall be taken to eliminate or minimize the asbestos hazards if any are found.
- *6. A baseline evaluation of the presence of lead base paint and plaster used in construction and lead plumbing shall be undertaken. Appropriate action shall be taken to eliminate or minimize the lead hazards if any are found.
7. If the parsonage has a private water supply, bacteria testing shall be done as frequently as recommended by the local health department.
- *8. A baseline environmental setting evaluation of the parsonage should be made for all existing parsonages if one has not already been done, and one shall be done for all newly purchased or constructed buildings. This is especially important if the parsonage is near an old industrial complex, an old or new disposal area, or a chemical plant. The local health department should be contacted to obtain educational information and materials and to identify properly certified environmental inspectors and service providers.
9. Testing and / or inspection with regard to any other matter concerning health and safety shall be undertaken every six to eight years, as well as any time circumstances which indicate the need for such testing or inspection. If any unexplained health problems or personal health sensitivities of members of the parsonage family housed in the parsonage occur, the need for further environmental testing shall immediately be determined. Any corrective work and / or acquisition of corrective equipment shall be the responsibility of the Trustees and Staff / Pastor Parish Relations Committee, in accordance with the above standards.
10. Records of all safety and health inspections and environmental testing shall be kept in the Parsonage Records Book.

***Items marked with an asterisk indicate evaluations which are strongly recommended for all parsonages built prior to 1978.**

Utilities:

All utilities shall be furnished by the local church including gas or fuel oil, electricity, water, basic telephone (except personal toll / long distance calls), sewage, garbage collection, and basic cable TV or basic satellite service (where required).

Decorations:

Both the interior and the exterior of the parsonage should be well kept so as to preserve its physical condition and its aesthetic appeal. Redecorating should be undertaken periodically, with major emphasis being given, but not limited to, times of a change of parsonage families. The tastes of the parsonage family shall be given preference as long as they are consistent with the potential needs of future parsonage families. Light earth tones or other neutral shades of paint, wallpaper, drapes, blinds, floor coverings, and major appliances should be considered as a way of making the decor accommodate many different styles and colors of parsonage family furnishings.

Modifications to Parsonage:

Changes to the existing parsonage structure and property such as playgrounds, decks, sheds, of a permanent or temporary nature designed to enhance the livability for the parsonage family including children, pets, and persons with handicapping conditions or unique situations shall be negotiated between the pastor, the Staff / Pastor Parish Relations Committee, and the Trustees.

Ground Maintenance:

All permanent plantings, such as trees, shrubs and lawn (including seed, fertilizer, lime, etc., for them) shall be the responsibility of the church. Maintenance, lawn mowing and snow plowing shall be mutually arranged between the pastor and charge. It is the pastor's responsibility to provide care for any personally desired flower or vegetable garden and play equipment. The possible removal of such equipment and restoration of the parsonage grounds, if needed, shall be the responsibility of the parsonage family removing or leaving the equipment.

Yearly Maintenance and Cleaning:

The local church is responsible for having the following maintenance and cleaning activities done and paid for.

1. Carpet and drape cleaning as needed or at least once every other year.
2. Changing the furnace filter(s) at least twice each year.
3. Inspecting the furnace every year. Duct cleaning shall be done whenever deemed necessary.

Insurance Coverage:

1. Property Insurance: the local church must provide property insurance for the parsonage dwelling and for all furniture, appliances, etc., owned by the local church. The parsonage must be insured for *between* 80 to 90% of the *fair market* replacement value. Liability insurance shall also be carried *on the* parsonage *real* property.
2. Personal Property and Liability Insurance: the parsonage family is responsible for obtaining renters / tenants insurance for personal property and personal liability.

Pets:

Local health regulations, zoning ordinances, and community standards of living govern the extent to which pets may be kept on the parsonage property and in the parsonage. Damages of any type caused by pets must be repaired by the parsonage family at their expense prior to leaving the parsonage.

Repair and Improvement Budget:

A budget line item for maintenance, improvement, and interior decor modifications of the church-owned parsonage *should* be included in the churches' annual budget. An

optimum figure of 2 1/2% to 5% of the replacement cost of the parsonage is suggested as an amount which enables the church to have a consistent program of maintenance and improvement.

Annual Review of the Parsonage:

At a mutually agreed upon time the chairperson of the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee, the chairperson of Trustees, and the Pastor shall annually conduct an inspection (*The Book of Discipline, 2000*, para. 2532.4) of the church owned parsonage to assure proper maintenance and compliance with these standards. The *Yearly On-Site Inspection of a Parsonage* form (West Ohio Conference) shall be used to record the results of the inspection. The completed form shall be included in the local church's annual charge conference report.

1. If repair, remodeling, or redecorating are needed to correct deficiencies and/or physical damage discovered during the annual inspection, a plan of action should be agreed upon by the local church and the parsonage family.
2. If serious deficiencies exist in meeting these standards for parsonage family housing, a special budget for long-term improvements *should* be established and expended until those deficiencies are corrected and these standards are satisfactorily met.

Problem Resolution:

When difficulties or misunderstandings arise in the care and maintenance of parsonages and furnishings which cannot be satisfactorily resolved on the local church level, the District Superintendent shall be consulted by the pastor and / or local church. If the problem remains unresolved, any of the parties may request the involvement of the District Board on Church Location and Building, which shall adjudicate the problem. Regular inspection by the District Superintendent and / or the District Board will be conducted until a parsonage meets basic standards.

Parsonage Record Book:

The Trustees shall prepare and keep up to date a Parsonage Records Book which includes:

1. A complete inventory of all church-owned appliances, furnishings, window and floor coverings, yard and ground maintenance equipment, and other parsonage and garage equipment. The name of the company from which an item was purchased, date of purchase, and serial numbers shall be listed with each item.
2. All guarantees and warranties.
3. Instructions / service manuals for the use of all equipment.
4. Repair and parts lists for all equipment.
5. A list of companies or persons who should be called for service for each piece of equipment.
6. A list of emergency telephone numbers for utility service repairs.

The Parsonage Record book shall be kept in the Parsonage.

A videotape of all views of the exterior and interior of the parsonage, including equipment and furnishing, should be made. For insurance purpose a videotape is an excellent record of the contents and condition of the parsonage, garage, and property.

Handicapped Accessibility:

Whenever the need arises for the church-owned parsonage to have handicapped accessible space and / or equipment provided in order for a parsonage family member with a handicapping condition to be able to live independently, the local church shall complete the necessary space remodeling and / or purchase the necessary equipment.

If an accessible parsonage is needed by the parsonage family, but a currently owned parsonage is not accessible or cannot be economically remodeled to be accessible, the local church will rent, lease, or purchase an accessible parsonage, or *in the alternative* provide a housing allowance which will allow the parsonage family to rent, lease, or purchase an accessible house.

Any living area listed as *accessible* in the Living Area Sizes table of these standards *should* be made wheelchair accessible if that area is in an existing parsonage being remodeled or if that area is in a new parsonage purchased or built.

The Book of Discipline, 2000, specifically directs local churches to have a handicapped accessible parsonage whenever a new parsonage is purchased or built:

paragraph 2543.3 b) "After approving a purchase proposal, the charge conference shall be deemed to have authorized and directed the board of trustees to proceed with the purchase. In the case of the purchase of a parsonage, the board of trustees shall either:

- (1) purchase a parsonage that has on the ground-floor level:
 - (a) one room that can be used as a bedroom by a person with a disability;
 - (b) one fully accessible bathroom; and
 - (c) fully accessible laundry facilities; or
- (2) purchase a parsonage without the accessible features for persons with disabilities specified above and remodel it within one year's time, so that it does have those features."

V. COMMITTEES' and PARSONAGE FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

Committees' Responsibilities:

The Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee and the Trustees are jointly responsible for the parsonage. These two groups shall work together cooperatively to meet all the Parsonage Family Housing Standards including the maintenance, repair, decoration and other concerns related to the church-owned or leased parsonage in a manner which is timely, prudent and in accordance with the needs of the parsonage family.

1. The Trustees, Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee, and the Administrative Board / Council of each local church are responsible for providing housing for use of the parsonage families assigned to the local church, housing which meet these standards:
 - a) Local churches which do not own parsonages shall provide a housing allowance in an amount which will allow the parsonage family to rent, lease, or purchase housing which meets the standards for parsonage family housing.
 - b) If a parsonage, when inspected by a newly appointed pastor, is found not to meet the standards for parsonage family housing, and is deemed to be unacceptable for the parsonage family, the pastor can request a housing allowance.
2. The Trustees shall keep the church-owned or leased parsonage in good repair and attractive in appearance.

3. The Trustees Chairperson and the Chair of the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee, with the Pastor, shall conduct an annual inspection of the parsonage (see Annual Review of the Parsonage).

Parsonage Family Responsibilities:

The parsonage family shall take proper care of all parsonage property observing the rule to always leave the parsonage, grounds, and appliances clean and in good condition. The parsonage family is specifically responsible for:

1. Providing bedding, bath and linens, cooking ware, silverware, dishes, lamps and lamp bulbs, small appliances, etc.
2. Providing the furniture (Living Room, Dining Room, Kitchen dinette, Family Room, Bedrooms, etc.).
3. Providing for routine housekeeping / cleaning including vacuuming, dusting, window washing, etc.
4. Choosing and arranging for a telephone long distance carrier (direct billing is encouraged).
5. Notifying the Trustees immediately of the need for all minor and major repairs and maintenance.
6. Participating in the Annual Review of the Parsonage.
7. Paying for repair of damage, in excess of normal wear and tear, which is incurred during their occupancy, including such items cleaning of stains, and repairs of: 1) holes in walls; 2) damage caused by pets (including fumigating for pet odors); 3) damage caused by personal equipment and tools; and 4) damage to yard and landscaping.
8. Inviting church officials and incoming pastor's family for review of the premises prior to a change of appointment.

VI. HOUSING ALLOWANCE STANDARDS

The normal practice shall be for a local church/charge to own and maintain a parsonage for the pastoral family appointed to serve that church/charge. However, when extraordinary circumstances warrant, consideration of a housing allowance in lieu of a church-owned or leased parsonage may be initiated by a pastor, local congregation, or the bishop and cabinet.

Exploration, discussion, and negotiation shall be carried out in consultation with the District Superintendent. After obtaining consent from the bishop and cabinet to the proposed plan, final approval to implement a new housing arrangement must come from the local church's Administrative Council upon recommendation from the Staff Parish Relations Committee.

In establishing and continuing a housing allowance the following activities shall be undertaken:

1. A housing allowance shall include:
 - a) An amount necessary to rent, lease, or purchase housing, that meets these Standards, in the ministry area of the local church or the community where an existing parsonage is located (such an amount may be determined in consultation with a local board of realtors.).

- b) An amount sufficient to provide the utilities required by these Standards including gas, electric, fuel, water, sewage, basic telephone, basic cable, etc.
2. The housing allowance shall be reviewed annually and adjusted, if necessary, to meet changes in actual costs of housing.

3. When an appointment change is anticipated, the Staff / Pastor Parish Relations Committee of a church that is currently providing a housing allowance shall review and evaluate current costs attendant to owning a parsonage in comparison to the housing allowance being provided to determine which method of providing housing for the parsonage family will be most cost effective.
4. Upon a new appointment following a long pastorate with a housing allowance a church will need to carefully review its housing allowance to determine if increased housing costs warrant an increase in the housing allowance.
5. When a housing allowance is provided the parsonage family is expected to secure housing within the immediate area, not to exceed a 20 mile radius of the church/charge to which the pastor is appointed. Clergy Couples are excluded from this requirement.
The housing allowance must be clearly defined by Charge Conference action and recorded in the Charge Conference minutes.

VII. PASTORAL APPOINTMENT CHANGES STANDARDS

Whenever a new parsonage family will be moving into the parsonage the following standards apply.

Moving Arrangements:

1. Moving costs for up to 15,000 pounds shall be paid by the receiving church, including rental of up to five wardrobes. Moving costs in excess of those for the 15,000 pounds must be paid by the pastor. [In the event of a clergy couple, the maximum weight permissible is 20,000 pounds. If the clergy couple is appointed to two separate charges, the moving costs shall be equally divided between the two charges.]
2. A minimum of two itemized bids, including adequate insurance, shall be secured by the pastor from qualified professional movers. The pastor shall provide the local church receiving the pastor a copy of each bid.
3. Before moving, the pastor shall arrange with the moving company and the receiving church for payment of the bill for moving.
4. The pastor shall request the moving company to furnish two copies of the moving bill. One copy for the receiving church, the other copy to be sent to the District Superintendent.
5. Expenses for removal and installation of appliances owned by the pastor shall be allowed only when these items are not furnished in the receiving church's parsonage.
6. Unnecessary stops and delays of the moving van should be avoided. However, in order to properly repair and redecorate the receiving church parsonage a one or two day delay of unloading of the moving van may be necessary.

7. It shall be the responsibility of both the outgoing parsonage family and the local church to see that the parsonage being moved out of is left clean and in good repair.

Outgoing Pastor Activities:

1. The outgoing pastor shall leave the parsonage in clean, empty and orderly condition (with refuse ready for proper disposal). Arrangements shall be made for any cleaning, repairs or disposal which fall beyond the scope of normal wear and tear or accumulation (e.g., pet damage). Such cleaning or repairs shall be done, whenever possible, before the parsonage is vacated. Should the outgoing pastor fail to take care of such matters, the Staff / Pastor Parish Relations Committee shall have them completed and bill the outgoing pastor for expenses incurred.
2. The outgoing pastor shall leave her/his successor:
 - a) Tagged keys for all locks.
 - b) The Parsonage Record Book, updated to the time of the current move.
 - c) Forwarding address and phone number.
 - d) The outgoing pastoral family shall complete a pre-move out inspection report noting any items in the parsonage which are in need of remedy or repair. This report shall be made on the *Yearly On-Site Inspection of a Parsonage* (West Ohio Annual Conference) form which is otherwise used for evaluating the parsonage on a yearly basis. In addition to those persons and committees who are listed on the form, a copy shall all be supplied to the new parsonage family.
3. The outgoing pastor should tour the parsonage with the incoming pastor to acquaint her/him with the features, operation and needs of the parsonage as soon as possible after the appointment is announced.

Incoming Pastor Activities:

1. The incoming pastor shall consult with the Chairperson of the Staff / Pastor Parish Relations Committee and Chairperson of the Trustees as soon as practical with regard to matters of operation, repairs, maintenance and decoration of the parsonage. The pastor and the Chairpersons shall determine a plan for any necessary action, which shall be undertaken in timely and prudent fashion.
2. The incoming pastor shall familiarize her/himself with the facilities and operational procedures of the parsonage, in order to insure the continuance of proper operations and maintenance.

Staff / Pastor Parish Relations Committee Activities:

1. The Chairperson of the Staff / Pastor Parish Relations Committee shall consult with the outgoing pastor prior to that pastor's moving with regard to necessary and / or desirable repairs, maintenance and redecoration of the parsonage. They shall also consult about any necessary replacement or addition of items mandated by these Standards.
2. The Chairperson of the Staff / Pastor Parish Relations Committee shall consult with the incoming pastor as to any special needs of the incoming parsonage family and as to considerations of taste and style before matters of replacement, addition or redecoration are undertaken. Final decisions about such matters shall rest with the Staff / Pastor Parish Relations, in accordance with these Standards, but the desires of the parsonage family shall guide the Staff / Pastor Parish Relations Committee's decision wherever practical.

3. At the time of pastoral transition, the Staff / Pastor Parish Relations Committee is responsible for major housekeeping items, including cleaning and waxing of floors, washing of windows, cleaning of rugs, drapes or other window treatments, and any other cleaning and repairing necessary to prepare the parsonage for the new parsonage family.
4. The Chairperson of the Staff / Pastor Parish Relations Committee shall consult with the incoming pastor shortly after the family has taken up residence to insure that the pastor is familiar with the parsonage, its equipment and operation, and has the necessary information she/he needs to care for those aspects of the ongoing operation and maintenance of the parsonage which are the pastor's responsibility.
5. In the event that there exist items needing remedy or repair in the parsonage which for whatever reason, require more time for attention than the short period during the pastoral change over, and where those items are significant and may involve disruption or displacement of the parsonage family during the repair period, the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee shall provide temporary housing and pay for any necessary storage charges for the Pastor in order that there are suitable alternative living arrangements for the pastoral family during the repair period.

VIII. SALE OR RENTAL OF PARSONAGE AND USE OF PROCEEDS

If it is deemed no longer necessary or desirable to own and maintain a church-owned parsonage the local church may rent or sell a church-owned parsonage. Such a situation often occurs whenever a housing allowance will be provided in lieu of use of the church-owned parsonage.

Rental of a Parsonage:

1. The local church may retain the existing parsonage and rent it to a third party.
2. Unless there are compelling missional reasons, rental to a third party should be at an amount equal to the fair market rental value of a house similar to the parsonage in the community where the parsonage is located.
3. Whenever possible, the lease term should be for one year (renewable annually by agreement) with an option to give a thirty (30) day notice to tenants to vacate the property when needed for a parsonage family.
4. The parsonage shall continue to be maintained in the manner provided for in current Parsonage Standards including the annual inspection.
5. Rental income shall be used to pay for an existing mortgage (principal, taxes, and interest), for property taxes and property insurance on a paid-off parsonage, and for utilities, maintenance and improvements. Funds needed for these purposes in excess of the rental income must be paid out of the church's annual budget.
6. Rental income in excess of the expenses listed in "5." above may be used to provide the agreed upon housing allowance and parsonage living expenses or be accumulated in a Parsonage Purchase Fund to be used to purchase or build a new parsonage when the need arises.

Sale of a Parsonage:

The sale of a church-owned parsonage is governed by the rules set forth in *The Book of Discipline, 2000*, para. 2541 and para. 2542. All proposed sales must be approved by the District Superintendent.

Proceeds of the sale of a parsonage shall be placed in a Parsonage Purchase Fund (invested escrow fund) which shall be managed in the following manner:

1. Investment income of the Parsonage Purchase Fund shall be reinvested in the Fund, and may not be used for any other church budget purposes, until the Fund equals 100% of the current average cost to purchase or build a parsonage, which meets all current Standards, in the geographic ministry area of the local church.
2. In the event that a parsonage is to be built or purchased and provided to the pastor in lieu of a housing allowance, the Parsonage Purchase Fund must be used for that purpose. A newly acquired or constructed parsonage shall meet current Standards.
3. When the merger of congregations creates a situation in which there are more parsonages than pastors to occupy them, local church may sell the unoccupied parsonage(s). Proceeds from the sale of a parsonage in this situation can be used for local church-related capital expenditures provided: The remaining occupied parsonage(s) meet the approval of the District Board on Church Location and Building. If not, sale proceeds must first be used for repairs and upgrades of the occupied parsonage(s), which are necessary to receiving such approval.

IX. CLERGY COUPLES HOUSING STANDARDS

The following standards shall apply to housing situations where two clergypersons are married and serving two separate appointments:

1. Where no parsonage is provided by either church, the two churches shall share equitably in the payment of an adequate housing allowance for the clergy couple. Additional remuneration may be provided to each pastor to reflect the attendant decrease in housing costs to each church and the additional Social Security and pension implications for the clergy couple.
2. While it is noted that housing is not a matter of right (See Judicial Council Decision 562), it is also noted that there is nothing in the *The Book of Discipline* which would prevent a pastor that does not need housing from negotiating for more compensation (Judicial Council Decisions 547 and 562).
3. When there is more than one parsonage available, the District Superintendent(s), in consultation with the clergy couple and the churches, shall determine appropriate living arrangements. The churches may share equitably in the cost of utilities for the resident parsonage. Additional remuneration may be provided to each pastor to reflect the attendant decrease in housing costs to each church and the additional Social Security and pension implications for the clergy couple.
4. Each church shall continue to be responsible for its own parsonage's maintenance, taxes, mortgage, insurance, and capital improvements.

X. ENFORCEMENT

While these standards are not intended to be punitively enforced against any charge by the Annual Conference, the fact that a charge is not in compliance with

the standards may nevertheless be used by the Bishop and the District Superintendents as one criterion in the appointment-making process. Enforcement of these standards is at the discretion of the Bishop and the District Superintendents in consultation with the District Committees on Building and Church Location.