

**THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF GRAFTON
MINISTRY UNIT PROCEDURES**

SUBJECT: CLERGY HOUSING STANDARDS		PROCEDURE REFERENCE NUMBER MUP-002
DATE APPROVED 19 May 2017 by Bishop-in-Council		REVISION NUMBER Revision 1 – replaces original procedure approved on 26 May 2016
POLICY IMPLEMENTATION DATE 1 June 2017	REVIEW DATE AND FREQUENCY 2 years	RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIEW Diocesan Buildings and Property Committee

1.0 PURPOSE

Clergy housing is a vital part of parish ministry infrastructure and the provision of clergy housing recognises the usual practice of the incumbent minister being called into a parish for ministry and after a period of service being called to ministry elsewhere.

The requirements of clergy housing include the requirements expected of a suitable home in the district but need to recognise the special demands upon the clergy and their family. This necessitates consideration of the intersection between ministry and family life and the pressures that puts on space and privacy.

Clergy housing also needs to be procured so that it would suit most ministers and their families. Housing that meets specialised requirements of one minister but fails to meet the requirements of the majority of ministers is inappropriate.

This policy enacts clause 130.17 of the Diocesan Governance Ordinance 2008.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy is applicable to housing for the Incumbent and other stipended ministers in Parishes. (See clauses 130.15 and 130.16 of the Diocesan Governance Ordinance 2008.)

The policy applies to housing owned/purchased or leased/rented by the church.

This policy is not in force for housing owned/purchased or leased/rented by the minister. With respect to ministers arranging their own housing, the following clauses of the Diocesan Governance Ordinance 2008 should be referenced and observed:

130.19 – Incumbent is encouraged to reside in the accommodation provided unless exempted after consultation with the Parish and the Bishop

130.14 – Incumbent shall reside within the Parish boundaries unless exempted by the Bishop

130.18 – Outlines the provision of a housing allowance. Ministers receiving a housing allowance should be mindful that the allowance is provided to meet or contribute to housing costs and should not create a surplus of funds for their benefit.

3.0 CARE FOR HOUSING

Any minister provided a dwelling as part of their service has a responsibility to use the housing in a careful and respectful manner that keeps the presentation and condition of the dwelling in good order. An agreement to that effect is the Schedule “Accommodation Stewardship”.

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The Parish Council is responsible to be proactive with the maintenance of dwellings in their care and is to take urgent action whenever a condition comes to their attention that adversely affects the safety of the minister, the minister's family or guests.

The Parish Council shall arrange an inspection of the property not less than annually for the purpose of inspecting the condition of the property and to plan its maintenance.

Prior to the appointment of a new Incumbent, the Diocesan Archdeacon or delegate shall inspect the intended residence for the Incumbent to ensure that it is in a satisfactory condition.

In circumstances where a Parish Council forms the view that a clergy family on departing has left the residence in a state which demonstrates a lack of proper stewardship of the residence and deterioration is well beyond 'fair wear and tear', they may request an inspection of the residence by the Diocesan Archdeacon. The Diocesan Archdeacon may recommend that the departing clergyperson be made responsible for some or all of the costs incurred by the Parish to return the residence to a reasonable standard.

4.0 STANDARDS FOR MINISTRY HOUSING

4.1 Existing dwellings/housing

It is a parish responsibility to ensure that their dwellings are at the required standard. Within the constraints of the design of existing dwellings and the budget available, Parishes are to make alterations and improvements to dwellings that make them comfortable and easily manageable.

Where accommodation standards cannot be practically met, the Diocesan Property Board will consider the suitability of the dwelling on a case by case basis.

4.2 New dwellings

The site should be a flood-free level block in a stable socioeconomic area of town or city with easy access to schools, shopping centres, public services and within a reasonable distance from the primary ministry centre of the parish.

The land title and town plan should be checked to ensure that the location is suitable for residential living and is likely to remain so.

4.3 Design of New and existing dwellings

- The dwelling must have a good basic design and layout to allow for the suitability of various age groups who will occupy the dwelling.
- Should contain a minimum four bedrooms or a three bedroom, one study combination.

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4.4 Design checklist

Exterior finishes

- Walls – to be of a masonry finish or an equivalent product.
- Roof – to be of tile or durable coated steel – in a manner suitable for the climate.
- Downpipes – Adequate enough to allow for drainage mainly to deal with torrential rain.
- Driveway – to be concrete.
- Doors – Solid core doors with security screens.
- Security lighting – Sensor lighting in the prominent areas of the residence.
- External lighting – Sufficient lighting for entertaining areas, front door and rear door.

Bedrooms

- Floor covering: carpet, vinyl, timber or ceramic
- Window coverings: Curtains blinds or shutters
- Insect screens: either additional to or incorporated into security screens
- Ceiling fans: Where appropriate and safe
- Robes: Built in and or walk in robes
- Ensuite: For master bedroom.

Study/Office

- Floor covering: carpet, vinyl, timber or ceramic
- Window coverings: curtains, blinds or shutters
- Insect screens: either additional to or incorporated into security screens
- Ceiling fans: Where appropriate and safe.
- Storage: shelving for books and business records
- Access: External security door with internal access.
- Separation: Allows simultaneous use of office for ministry and family activities in the house with sufficient privacy for each use.
- Access to Internet

Lounge, dining, family

- Floor covering: carpet, vinyl, timber or ceramic
- Window coverings: curtains, blinds or shutters
- Insect screens: either additional to or incorporated into security screens
- Ceiling fans: where appropriate and safe and air conditioner if required

Garage

- A minimum of a double garage and or carport
- Access: covered or internal access to the main residence
- Doors: Automatic garage doors if applicable

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Bathrooms

- Floor covering: vinyl, timber, stone or ceramic
- Walls: Ceramic, stone, durable painted finish
- Window coverings: Curtains, blinds or shutters
- Insect screens: either additional to or incorporated into security screens
- Ventilation: windows and exhaust fan
- Vanity: Storage and basin unit of suitable size
- Power points: adequate power points safely away from bath and basin
- Shower screen to suit bathroom
- Toilet: separate to the main bathroom
- Fittings: adequate towel rails and mirrors.

Kitchen

- Floor covering: vinyl timber, stone or ceramic
- Walls: ceramic, stone, durable painted finish
- Window coverings: curtains, blinds or shutters
- Insect screens: are required with the addition of security screens if warranted
- Cooking: energy efficient oven and hot plate and exhaust fan
- Storage: largest possible pantry and cupboards
- Bench top: sufficient preparation area constructed of laminate, stone or manufactured stone product
- Power points: adequate power points
- Appliances: adequate space allowed for refrigerator, dishwasher, microwave etc.

Laundry Area

- Floor covering: vinyl timber, stone or ceramic
- Walls: ceramic, stone, durable painted finish
- Window coverings: curtains, blinds or shutters
- Insect screens: either additional to or incorporated into security screens
- Power points: adequate power points
- Appliances: adequate space allowed for washing machine and dryer and provision for water supply
- Storage: as large as possible linen storage area with adequate storage for cleaning products
- Washing tub: minimum of one

White Goods and Appliances

Family size refrigerator, dishwasher, washing machine in good condition to be supplied by the Parish

Yard Areas

- Entertaining area: covered entertaining area adjoining the main residence

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- Fencing: fully fenced or at the very least a secure fenced area for children to play
- Water: adequate external water supply
- Clothes line: drying area located in a sunny position
- Pools and spas are NOT recommended

4.5 Use

Housing is provided for the quiet enjoyment of the clergy person and his/her immediate family which includes entertaining visitors and guests but does not extend to sub-letting or the taking in of fee-paying boarders.

The operation of any non-church business venture from the residence is generally not acceptable. A request to operate a business venture from the church residence is subject to the approval of Parish Council and is only to be approved if the Parish Council is convinced that the operation of the business from the residence is not in any way detrimental to the ministry of the parish or the condition of the premises. Any agreement to use a church residence in this way is shall be reviewed every 12 months.

4.6 Disagreement

Where the Incumbent and the Parish Council disagree on the suitability of the design of an existing or proposed residence and are unable to come to a satisfactory resolution on the matter, either may refer the matter to the Property Board for resolution.

Where the issue in dispute relates to the care for or condition of the residence, the matter may be referred to the Diocesan Archdeacon for resolution.

4.7 Pets

For many households, pets form an integral part of the household. For this reason, no special permission is required for the clergy person and his/her family to have a family pet.

With respect to pets, the following points are to be observed:

- The clergy person shall be responsible for all matters concerning their pet;
- Local and State Government legislation and by-laws concerning pets and animals are to be observed at all times;
- The clergy person shall ensure that pets do not adversely impact on the ministry of the church, the actual or perceived safety of those visiting the residence;
- The parish shall not be responsible for the cost of any repairs or modifications to the residence for the accommodation of pets (excepting in circumstances where a companion animal is trained as disability support) and upon the conclusion of their ministry, the clergy person will be responsible for removal of any modification unless otherwise indicated by the parish council;
- The clergy person shall be responsible for any deterioration of the condition of the residence beyond normal wear and tear that is due to the presence of a pet;
- The residence shall not be used for breeding of pets;

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- The clergyperson shall ensure that their home contents insurance policy includes public liability insurance suitable for any public liability claim arising from their pet.

Where guests of the clergyperson's family visit with one or more pet, the above points also apply to guest pets with the clergyperson responsible.

4.8 Emergency and urgent repairs

In some circumstances an emergency may occur which will need to be rectified and contact with the parish council cannot be made. A list of trades people and local medical practitioners and their contact details will be supplied to the occupant.

5.0 HOUSING ALLOWANCE

The payment of a housing allowance does not apply to circumstances where clergy are living in housing provided by the parish whether church owned housing or housing rented/leased by the church on behalf of the clergy person.

5.1 Housing Allowance Where Suitable Church Accommodation is Unavailable

- 5.1.1. If the clergy person has suitable accommodation and suitable accommodation owned or leased by the church is unavailable, the clergy person will be permitted to live in their accommodation and receive a housing benefit.
- 5.1.2. The applicable housing benefit in 5.1.1 will be based on the rental value of the Parish Rectory, or in the absence of a Rectory, a house built to diocesan standards sited within the urban area of the principal church of the parish.
- 5.1.3. The housing benefit in 5.1.2 shall be negotiated between the Rector and the Churchwardens of the Parish and subject to the approval of the Bishop and Registrar. In setting the benefit paid, the parties shall be mindful of the rental value of the place to be occupied by the clergyperson.
- 5.1.4. Where the accommodation is not within the boundaries of the parish or more than 20 kilometres from the principal church of the parish, use of this accommodation in lieu of the Rectory will be subject to the Bishop's approval.

5.2 Housing Allowance Where Suitable Church Accommodation is Available

- 5.2.1. If the clergy person has suitable accommodation and suitable accommodation owned or leased by the church is available, permission for the clergy person to live in their accommodation and receive a housing benefit is subject to the approval in writing of the Churchwardens of the Parish after consultation with the Bishop;

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- 5.2.2. The applicable housing benefit in 5.2.1 will be based on two-thirds of the rental value of the Parish Rectory, or in the absence of a Rectory, a house built to diocesan standards sited within the urban area of the principal church of the parish but not greater than what the Parish would have to pay to lease/rent suitable accommodation.
- 5.2.3. The housing benefit in 5.2.1 shall be negotiated between the Rector and the Churchwardens of the Parish and subject to the approval of the Bishop and Registrar.
- 5.2.4. Where the accommodation is not within the boundaries of the parish or more than 20 kilometres from the principal church of the parish, use of this accommodation in lieu of the Rectory will be subject to the Bishop's approval.

5.3 Payment of Housing Allowances

Where a clergy person is in receipt of a housing allowance, the following shall apply:

- 5.3.1. Any housing allowance will be paid in addition to the clergy person's stipend.
- 5.3.2. Where a clergy person in receipt of a housing allowance terminates their appointment, housing allowance will not be included in any termination payment except to the extent where the clergy person was required to remain in the parish before finalising their appointment.

