

Parochial Fees – Bishop’s Guidelines

with effect from 1 January 2019

A. OCCASIONAL OFFICES

1. Principles

a. Under the Ecclesiastical Fees Measure 1986 as amended a fee is the property of either of a Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) or a Parochial Church Council (PCC). The fee (sometimes referred to as a statutory fee) is legally payable to the DBF regardless of who the actual minister is and whether or not they receive a stipend.

b. The Table of Fees prepared by the Archbishops’ Council states the portion of the fee attributable to the PCC and the portion attributable to the DBF. The table can be found on the Church of England website <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/clergy-resources/national-clergy-hr/life-events-parochial-fees-and-guidance>. The general principles are that the level of fees will be justifiable, transparent and as inclusive as possible, while also providing a reasonable contribution to parishes and dioceses for the provision of the ministries concerned.

c. Fees are charged where the occasional office takes place in a church (parish church or licensed building), churchyard or cemetery/crematorium. The PCC fee relates to church buildings and local administration and ministry costs and includes lighting and the normal remuneration of any church servant (for planning and administrative costs). The PCC may prescribe reasonable “extra” fees for such items over which those receiving the ministry have a genuine choice, such as music, bells, heating, vergers presence at the service, but these must be clearly described as “optional”.

d. The DBF fee relates to the provision of authorised ministry for example the time spent in conducting a service, and also the proper accompanying preparation and pastoral support, together with a contribution towards the training and development of all our ministers and various diocesan support activities.

e. All Clergy who hold the Bishop’s License, including those with Permission to Officiate, accept their mutual responsibility one to another and must comply with the Bishop’s guidelines in the treatment of fee income.

f. Two decision trees are annexed to this document which should guide you through the process of determining whether a fee is charged.

[Decision tree: Occasional Offices - Parochial Fees](#)

[Decision tree: Casual Duty Fees](#)

2. Payment of Fees

a. All fees, both the DBF and PCC element, are payable to the PCC, regardless of whether the service is conducted by the parish priest or any other minister, including ministers from other denominations or licenced lay ministers in certain circumstances. No minister is entitled to retain any fees, except retired clergy (please refer to point 2b. below).

b. All clergy, stipendiary or not, who are retired and who conduct a service instead of the parish priest, are allowed two-thirds of the DBF fee. Retired clergy taking services during a vacancy are entitled to be paid the full DBF fee (refer to B1 below).

c. The Fees may be collected by the parish treasurer, or other suitable person, and the DBF element, net of any payments made by the PCC to retired clergy, forwarded by them to Church House.

d. The Incumbent remains responsible for ensuring that there is accurate and prompt payment and for ensuring proper accounts are kept on the sheet provided by the Diocesan Office, or another appropriate form. The Incumbent may request someone to act as a Fees Administrator to assist with this. The form entitled ‘PCC Parochial Fees Form’ can be found on the diocesan website (www.salisbury.anglican.org) in the Finance/Parochial fees section or by using the search tool at the top of the web pages.

e. It is recommended that incumbents receive and review the quarterly fee returns prior to submission to the DBF.

f. Funeral fees collected by a chaplain funded by NHS Trust should be paid on to that Trust. The chaplain should liaise with the parish of the deceased, and the incumbent.

g. It is at PCC discretion and responsibility for the payment of reasonable travel and other expenses. These should be offered and reimbursed at the time of the service unless other arrangements have been made.

3. Marriages

It is the Bishop's expectation that each couple should be properly prepared for their marriage, and it is the responsibility of the Incumbent to ensure that this preparatory work is done. It is also his or her responsibility to ensure that any marriage conducted within the parish church is conducted according to Marriage Law.

Fees in relation to the publication of Banns and the issuing of marriage certificates are in all cases payable to the PCC. The fees relating to the registration of marriages payable by the Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths are due to the DBF, unless a third party completes the work.

4. Blessing of Marriages in Church following a Civil Ceremony

There is no prescribed fee. However in the light of the Bishop's expectations that the couple be properly prepared for their marriage, it is reasonable to expect them to make a payment to the PCC and to the DBF equivalent to those fees for a marriage, excluding the banns and certificate fees. Where there is any such income, it should be treated in the same way as fee income. Where the Incumbent does not conduct the ceremony the same principles should be followed as in paragraph 2 above.

Fees are not due for informal blessings (e.g. 25th wedding anniversary; renewal of vows) which are held on or as part of a regular (weekday / Sunday) service. Donations might be invited at PCC / Incumbent discretion.

5. Funerals

It is the Bishop's expectation that proper pastoral care of the bereaved takes place in connection with a funeral and it is the Incumbent's responsibility to ensure that this care is carried out.

a. In church

Where the Incumbent is not the officiant, the principles in paragraph 2 above should be applied.

b. Memorial service

When a memorial service is carried out it is usual to charge a fee equal to that made for a funeral in church and the treatment of the fees is exactly the same. This also applies when a funeral service incorporating the committal is held at the crematorium with a separate later memorial service.

c. At a Cemetery or Crematorium

If requested, an Incumbent is under a legal obligation to conduct the funeral service of a deceased parishioner at a cemetery or crematorium. However, the service may be conducted by another priest or by a Licensed Lay Minister. When a retired priest takes the service, refer to paragraph 2.

The fee is paid to the PCC where the deceased resided or where they were on the electoral roll if different.

Funeral Directors should be encouraged to pay all fees by BACS or cheque, not cash (to the PCC in which the deceased was resident rather than to individuals).

6. Waiving Fees

Fee income is legally payable and the parish priest cannot waive fees generally. The DBF element forms an integral part of Diocesan Budget. The waiving of DBF fees should only be considered in very exceptional circumstances in consultation with the Archdeacon, bearing in mind the lost income can only be recovered through increased Parish Share contributions.

For PCC fees, the parish priest concerned has a right of waiver, after consultation with the churchwardens.

The parish priest should be able to account for a particular decision to waive a fee.

7. Inspection of Parochial Registers / Fee Audits

In accordance with Section 9(i) of the Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978, the Bishop has instructed the DBF to set up a system of inspection of parochial registers on a random and risk basis by the Board's officers. This is,

partly to provide a clear audit trail relating to the receipt and disbursement of fee income. It is also in response to a number of high profile national cases concerning improper accounting of fee income.

8. See Section D for [FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS](#)

B. CASUAL DUTY FEES

1. Vacant Benefices

The Diocese is responsible for the payment of fees during a vacancy. Guidelines and the relevant claim forms will be sent by Church House to the churchwardens, treasurer and PCC secretary before the vacancy commences. You can also contact the Pastoral Department at Church House on 01722 438650 to request a pack.

The Casual Duty fee for a **regular Sunday service is £40.00 and £30.00 for a weekday service**, subject to a maximum payment for two services per Sunday or four per week. Where Holy Communion immediately follows another service then only one fee is payable. Eligible services are those that form part of the regular pattern of worship in the benefice.

The PCC is responsible for the payment of reasonable travel and other expenses. These should be reimbursed in full and should be offered at the time of the service unless other arrangements have been agreed.

During the vacancy, the officiant receives the statutory fees for weddings and funerals in full and the parish should use the appropriate form 'Parochial Fees Form during a Vacancy', which can be found on the Diocesan website.

No fee is payable to stipended Clergy or Licensed Lay Ministers, but their expenses should be reimbursed in full. Where there is more than one parish in a benefice the sequestrators will need to ensure that the benefice does not claim more than the maximum fee of four services per week. Where additional services are felt to be necessary, payment of the clergy is a matter for the individual PCC, and reimbursement out of the sequestration fund will not be available.

Where there is a vacancy in a team ministry the Pastoral Department at Church House should be contacted in the first instance (01722 438650). It will be at the discretion of the Archdeacon whether the fees can be paid and the criteria will usually be the same as those applied for payment in cases of long-term sickness (see 2. below).

2. Sickness, Holidays and other absences

Fees and expenses are the responsibility of the PCC, and are normally payable at the Casual Duty fee levels. However, in cases of certified sickness absence of five weeks or more the diocese may reimburse the fees on the Archdeacon's recommendation and in liaison with the pastoral department where one or more of the following criteria are met:

- The benefice has a small ministerial team and is either geographically large or has a three or more churches
- In a multi-parish or multi-church benefice there is not sufficient ministry to cover the vacancy
- The parish/benefice or team is unable to cover the costs themselves
- A modified service plan has been agreed
- There are a limited number of retired clergy available locally

The Pastoral Department, in consultation with the Archdeacon, will agree which services can be covered by this arrangement (not all may qualify). The benefice must ensure that a "Fitness for Work MED 3" certificate has been submitted to the Accounts department at Church House. The Archdeacon should be informed if a phased return to work is proposed.

It is expected that clergy who are retired and living in the benefice and who hold the Bishop's Permission to Officiate would not normally expect a fee in these circumstances and we would ask parishes to call on Licensed Lay Ministers to support them during a vacancy or prolonged term of illness in a benefice.

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Claims for reimbursement of casual duty fees should be submitted no later than three months after the expense is incurred. No reimbursement will be made for expenses which are older than six months or have remained unclaimed for more than three months after the vacancy has been filled or the post-holder has returned to work following a period of long-term sickness.

C. EXCEPTIONS

This leaflet is a set of guidelines which are not expected to cover every individual situation. The Pastoral Department or the Archdeacon should be consulted where exceptions need to be made in particular cases.

Approved by Bishop's Council 1 December 16.

Updated 5th December 2018

D. OCCASSIONAL OFFICES – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What costs are covered by the fees?**

DBF fees are built up from assumptions about the costs of ministry (from published statistics) and the likely number of hours needed to provide a good ministry for the particular service.

PCC fees include a location/building element based on national statistics for the overall costs of repairs and maintenance of church buildings and the number of hours in use, and an element for administrative staffing based on a secretarial rate of pay.

PCC fees for burials and monuments include an element to provide for long-term maintenance of the churchyard.

- **When to charge the PCC fee for a Baptism certificate**

The fee is payable for the supply of a certified certificate of baptism when it is an entry in the register of baptism. A fee is also specified for a 'short' certificate under section 2, the Baptismal Registers Measure 1961.

No fee is specified for the issuing of 'souvenir cards' that do not comply with the prescribed statutory wording either under the 1978 Measure or the 1961 Measure and thus have no status in law.

- **Fees due for burial of ashes / body into existing grave; simultaneous services**

If the ashes of two or more people (e.g. husband and wife, family members) are buried at the same/similar time in one grave, it would generally be acceptable to charge one set of DBF and PCC fees as the incumbent prepares ministry for one service and the PCC fee is for the administration and long-term maintenance of one grave. The same principle would apply for simultaneous burial in one grave.

For interment of ashes or burial into existing grave, on a separate occasion, would be considered two separate events. Two sets of DBF fees would be applicable as ministry have been provided on two separate occasions. The PCC fee includes an element to provide for long-term maintenance of the grave. As there is only one grave, the incumbent concerned has a right of waiver, based on the circumstances and after consultation with the churchwardens and or Archdeacon.

- **Replacement monument**

It is generally considered acceptable to waive the PCC fee, on the basis that the original fee covered the long term maintenance of the churchyard and therefore should not be paid again. The DBF portion of the fee continues to be due as this relates to the administration/stipend of the clergy.

- **Is a fee payable for the Monument in the churchyard of persons aged under 16 years?**

Monument fees are payable, if a monument, commemorating the deceased, is to be erected on a separate grave or cremated remains plot for a person under sixteen years of age. For the PCC element of the fee, the incumbent concerned has a right of waiver, based on the circumstances and after consultation with the churchwardens and or Archdeacon. See section A.6 for waiving of DBF fees.

- **How do I keep records of services not taken at church, i.e. crematorium?**

As per paragraph A.2.d, the incumbent is responsible to ensure that accurate and complete records are kept for parochial fees.

Examples of sufficient record keeping for the purpose of Diocesan Fee Audits as per paragraph A.7.: folder with printouts of email (or postal) correspondence from funeral director(s); copies of PCC invoices sent to local funeral director(s); "All Souls" list of deceased maintained for annual remembrance service (if applicable); an online diary or log; separate register (not Church Service register).

- **Are fees due if a chaplains takes the service?**

Following on from section A.1.a & A.1.b : Chaplains (for example hospital chaplains, prison chaplains, school chaplains) are not entitled to receive parochial fees. Where a chaplain who is a clerk in holy orders or a licensed deaconess, reader or lay worker, officiates at a service in respect of which fees are prescribed under a parochial fees order, as a matter of law the fees belong to the DBF and the PCC in the same way as they do if parochial clergy officiate. Chaplains can only lawfully take a service for which a parochial fee is prescribed with the consent of the minister who has the primary responsibility for the service. Chaplains who take a service on behalf of an incumbent may receive a payment with prior agreement from the Archdeacon.

- **Minster from another denomination conduction a service**

There are no statutory fees payable when a minister of another denomination conducts a service in Church, which is not an Anglican service. If the building is merely being used by another denomination then the fee is not payable.

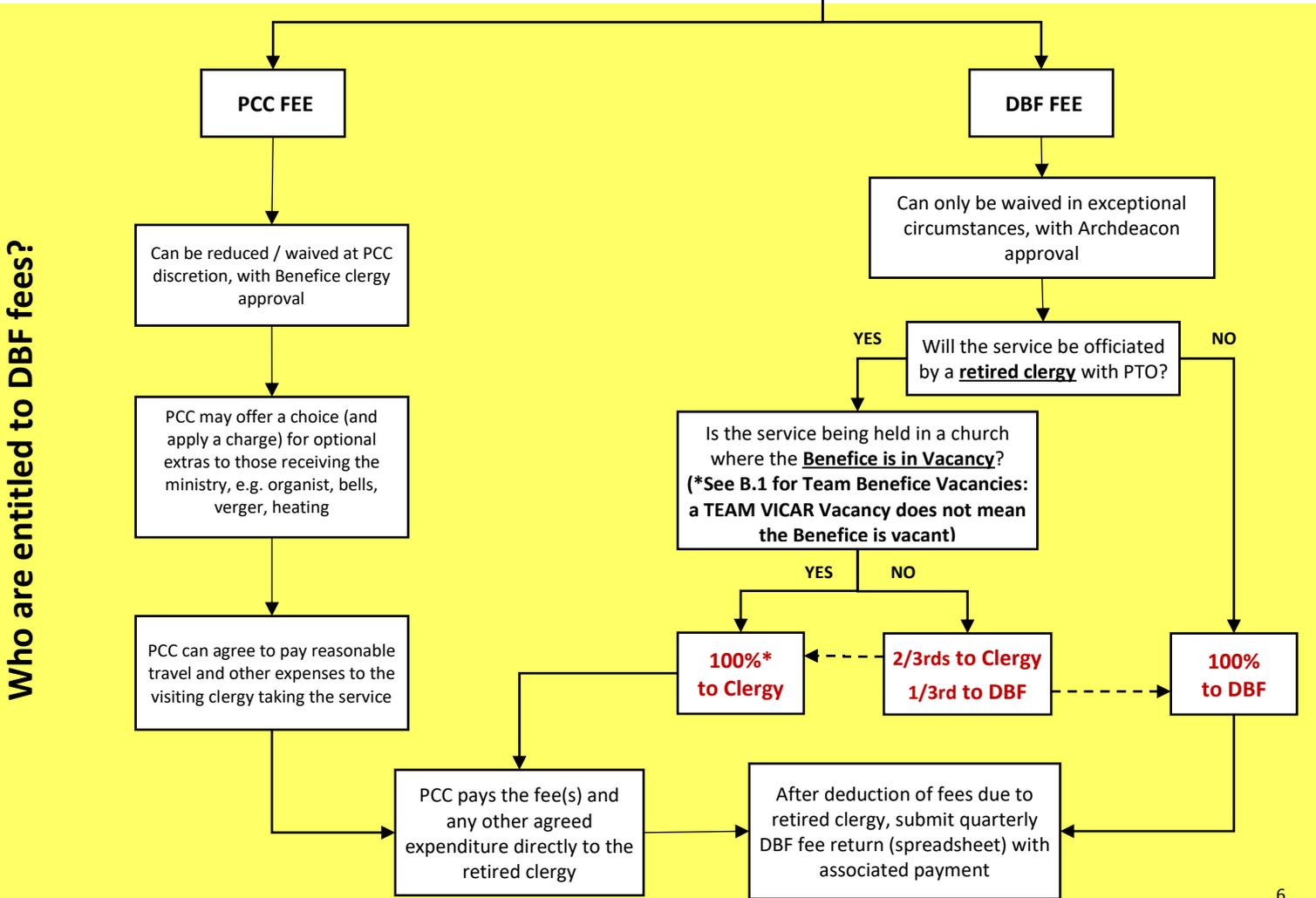
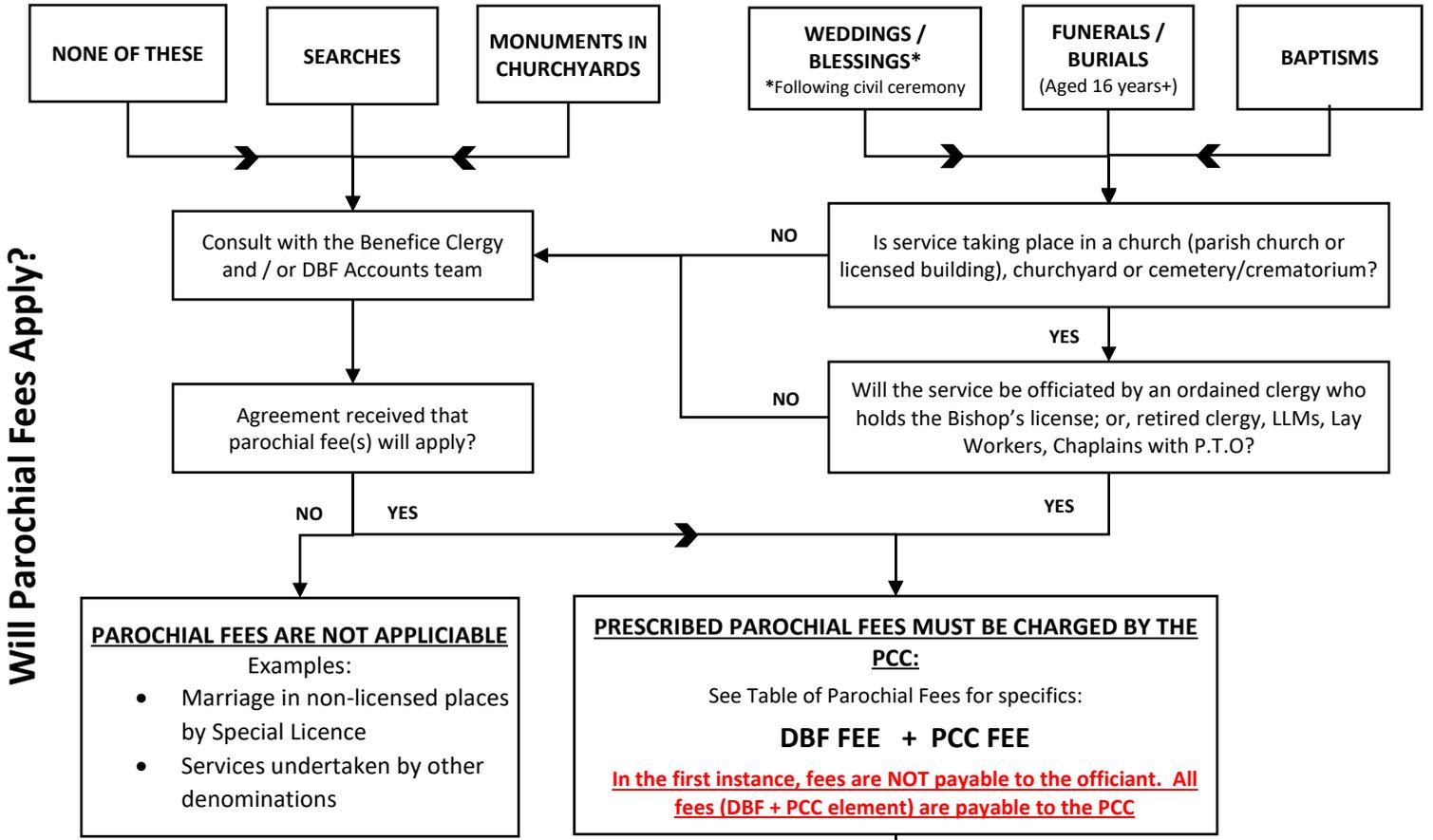
If a minister of another denomination 'assists' at an Anglican occasional services (in accordance with Canon B43), then fees are due in the usual way.

- **The Church of England national legal office have provided a guide for further information:**

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/clergy-resources/national-clergy-hr/life-events-parochial-fees-and-guidance/life-events>

**We require one of the following services
Are parochial fees due and to whom should we pay it?**

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS



**We (the parish) have no priest to take a regular (Weekday / Sunday) service.
Are we entitled to claim the cost of providing services?**

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS

