

Maine Conference, United Church of Christ
AT-A-GLANCE AUTHORIZED MINISTERS' COMPENSATION GUIDELINES
Renewal Information for churches 2018

INTRODUCTION

This document is designed to be an at-a-glance guide to basic principles for clergy compensation as well as a guide for churches as they attempt to update or renew an Authorized Minister's compensation package. For more information on salary, housing, or benefits, please see the latest [Clergy Compensation Guidelines](#) or contact the Maine Conference, UCC Office at 1.800.244.0937.

There should be an agreement between the church and the Authorized Minister that an annual review of salary and benefits will take place. Annual performance review is also recommended to encourage common understanding of the needs of the community and the church and to stimulate the ordained minister's growth and development.

I. SALARY GUIDELINES

- Authorized minister compensation is unique and is recognized so by the IRS. For more information, pastors and churches can refer to the Pension Boards of the United Church of Christ [Tax Resources](#), especially the current year's Tax Guide for Ministers.
- Authorized ministers "salary basis" includes cash salary and housing (either a parsonage or a housing allowance).
- Benefits are in addition to salary and housing.
- We recommend an annual adjustment of salary basis based on experience, COLA, and merit, as well as any necessary housing adjustments.
- Those serving in associate, commissioned, and licensed ministries may use 85-90% of the base salary for their church size and experience as a base.

Suggested Minimum Salary with Parsonage

Church Members	1-4 Years Exp.	5-8 Years Exp.	9-12 Years Exp.	13-16 Years Exp.
<100	\$34,018	\$36,570	\$39,123	\$41,674
100-150	\$35,664	\$39,580	\$43,466	\$47,415
151-250	\$38,635	\$42,616	\$46,597	\$50,580
251-400	\$41,609	\$48,633	\$55,655	\$62,679
401-500	\$44,606	\$52,402	\$60,199	\$67,994

Suggested Minimum Salary with Housing Allowance

Church Members	1-4 Years Exp.	5-8 Years Exp.	9-12 Years Exp.	13-16 Years Exp.
<100	\$44,222	\$47,541	\$50,859	\$54,173
100-150	\$46,362	\$51,454	\$56,545	\$61,638
151-250	\$50,225	\$55,402	\$60,578	\$65,753
251-400	\$54,092	\$63,223	\$72,351	\$81,483
401-500	\$57,988	\$68,122	\$78,257	\$88,392

For every 100 members over 500, an additional \$2500 should be added to the salary base.

1. Experience

Cash salary should be adjusted annually to account for years of experience:

Note: It is recommended that each minister would receive at least a \$400 per year increase based on experience beyond 16 years.

2. Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)

We recommend a Salary Basis (cash + Housing Allowance) percentage increase based on the cost of living

adjustment annual percentage (which can be found at [The Social Security Administration site](#).) The salary bases noted on this sheet represent an estimated COLA increase of 0.3% for the year 2017.

3. **Merit Increases**

While we understand that congregations are not always able to increase their Authorized Minister's salaries as much as they would like, **we strongly encourage them to give their Authorized Minister's salary increases in addition to Cost of Living based on performance.**

4. **Housing**

If housing compensation changes (e.g. parsonage is bought or sold), then refer to Authorized Ministers Compensation Guidelines. If you have any questions, please call the Maine Conference, UCC office at 1.800.244.0937.

5. **Part-Time Ministry**

Part-time ministers should receive salaries proportional to the commitment of their work week. For example: A **1/2 time** pastor with **5–8 years of experience** serving a church with **<100 members** and receiving a **housing allowance** is recommended a cash basis salary minimum of **\$23,771**.

II. BENEFITS

Churches are encouraged to provide full benefits to Authorized Ministers: Pension Boards Annuity Fund, Life and Disability Insurance, Health (Dental and Vision) Insurance, and Professional Expenses. Some of these benefits are based on the Salary Basis. Information on these benefits can be found at [Pension Boards' website](#), or at 1.800.642.6543.

If there are significant changes to existing benefits or if benefits are being added, then please refer to Authorized Ministers Compensation Guidelines for more information. Further, churches should regularly review the following items:

1. **Professional Expenses**

Professional expenses (car or travel allowance, UCC and continuing education conferences, books, etc.) should be reviewed annually to determine whether budgeted compensation for professional expenses is adequate.

2. **Continuing Education**

Continual study is a necessity for effective ordained Christian ministry. Authorized Ministers need time for professional development. Periods of study leave of two weeks annually are important to the improvement of the quality of ministerial service and are a good investment by the congregation.

Some Authorized Ministers may choose to use this leave "a day at a time" in order to pursue an advanced degree, or may want to use this in conjunction with sabbatical time for the same reason. It is helpful if the Authorized Minister and the appropriate body in the church can negotiate the most effective way of using continuing education time.

3. **Vacation/Leave**

Authorized Ministers should receive at least four weeks of annual paid vacation (including four weekends). Churches should increase vacation one week for every 5 years served. Sick Leave: accrued sick days should be documented annually (recommendation is 10 sick days which, if not used, can be "banked" up to a maximum of 30 days).

4. **Parental Leave/ Family Care / Bereavement Leave**

Provisions should be made for clergy (of any gender), at the birth or adoption of a child, for a minimum leave of six weeks at full salary and benefits. They are encouraged to grant up to 12 weeks of leave if possible, and to negotiate with flexibility for up to six months during this important time of family adjustment and change. Leave should not be truncated for part-time ministers.

Churches are encouraged to provide time and negotiate with clergy in advance a policy for taking leave in times of need for the minister's family to care for itself, and indeed, grieve when dealing with loss. In the event of a death in the authorized minister's family, congregations are encouraged to offer as much time as would be compassionate.

5. **Sabbatical Leave**

Sabbatical leave and upcoming Sabbatical plans should be discussed annually. After a period of five years of service, a sabbatical leave of at least three months should be given for additional study.