

Clergy Support Fund Handbook

Compiled by The Rt Rev Peter Manto, Bishop
Ordinary, and the Rev Canon Ian MacGregor,
Diocesan Clergy Financial Wellness Champion

Version 2.1
Revised September 2025 (includes Amendment No. 1)

Amendment Record

Amendment No. 1 — Approved by the Trustees, September 2025

Effective Date: September 2025

Section Amended: Process for Making Application – Request Evaluation and Approval Process

Summary of Amendment:

Establishes a defined procedure for reviewing and approving exception requests for financial assistance exceeding \$1,500.00.

Text of Amendment:

“Any request for financial assistance from the Clergy Wellness Fund exceeding \$1,500.00 shall be considered an *exception request*. Such requests shall be reviewed and deliberated upon by the Trustees, and approval shall require a simple majority vote of members present.”

Approved by: The Trustees of the Diocese of the Central States

Authorized by: The Rev. Fr. David Goodwin, President of the Trustees, and The Rt. Rev. Peter Manto, Bishop Ordinary

Introduction

Our clergy represent one of the most significant human resources our parishes possess. This reflects the focus of Jesus, our Great Shepherd, who sacrificed His life for His sheep. There are numerous ways to support our clergy as they serve on the frontlines of ministry. The scriptures are rich with commandments for caring for others. In the Old Testament, the Levites were not granted land as an inheritance; instead, their inheritance was viewed as God Himself. They were sustained by a portion of the offerings brought by other tribes due to their role as priests serving Israel. Specific cities were designated to them within the territories of the other tribes to facilitate their priestly duties. In the New Testament, St. Paul indicates that the New Testament “elders” deserve fair compensation and care from the people they serve (1 Timothy 5:17-20).

Many clergy in this diocese are bi-vocational and generally receive compensation from their parishes at rates significantly lower than the standards of the Anglican Church of North America (ACNA). As a result, they and their families may encounter emergency needs that exceed their personal finances and the resources of the parishes they serve. With the support of our Standing Committee and Trustees, the Diocese of the Central States has created the Clergy Support and Relief Fund to help address these financial challenges. This fund is intended to assist licensed clergy (all ordained men, including bishops, presbyters, deacons, and retired clergy) who have served for at least six months currently or in the past in the DCS.

As the Bishop Ordinary of the Diocese of the Central States, I want to express our gratitude for you, your family, and your service to the Lord and the church.

Signed,

The Rt Rev Peter Manto
Bishop Ordinary
Diocese of the Central States
Epiphany 2025

Rationale for Clergy Support Funds

As a diocese, we consider our clergy and their families an essential resource in our life together. Regardless of a parish's circumstances, the well-being of the clergy serving these congregations remains paramount.

Although clergy and their families frequently encounter the same financial difficulties as the laity, they may feel overworked and overlooked, receiving less support than their congregations. This situation can lead to shame, guilt, and reluctance to communicate financial needs or seek help for ministry opportunities.

To that end, our diocese has established a clergy support fund to assist our clergy during life's difficult seasons. Galatians 6:2 states, "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." As the clergy shoulder the burdens of their parish, our diocese aims to share a portion of that load with them.

Approved Purpose for Clergy Support Funds

The Clergy Support Fund alleviates temporary financial hardships, capping assistance at \$1,500 annually.

For instance:

- Medical expenses for an ordained cleric or a member of his immediate family not covered by insurance.
- Hardship cases related to food, clothing, and shelter for the cleric and his immediate family.
- Transportation necessary for the cleric to fulfill the responsibilities outlined in his position description within the parish or his approved "second" job.
- The Bishop Ordinary may authorize a short-term loan (to be repaid according to a specific schedule with a designated future date) after consulting with and obtaining the Trustees' approval.

What is not eligible:

- Medical expenses of an individual outside the cleric's *immediate* family.
- Expenses related to repairs to a facility where a parish gathers, including those resulting from catastrophic events such as hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, hail, floods, or fire. (Such needs will be handled as unique situations requiring more than this fund can provide.)

Tax Implications of Clergy Support Funds

1. We prefer to issue support fund checks to third-party entities on behalf of the cleric.

2. If we write a check directly to the cleric, we will issue a Form 1099 for any amount equal to or greater than the current IRS stipulation. (www.irs.gov)
3. We will not transfer the Clergy Support and Relief Funds through cash or gift cards.

Confidentiality and Documentation

The situations prompting disbursement from this fund and the names of the clergy are held in strict confidence between the beneficiaries, the Bishop Ordinary, the Trustees, and the Treasurer. The Diocesan Clergy Financial Wellness Champion will periodically report the scope but not the details to the ACNA.

The Treasurer reports the balance of these funds to the Trustees when we review the quarterly financial reports.

Process for Making Application

1. Please mail or email the Clergy Support Form (see the following page or find it at rec-dcs.org) to the Bishop Ordinary. The Bishop and the Treasurer will then meet to evaluate the request. (They may call the cleric to pray and gather additional information.)
2. At the next meeting of the Trustees (or in a “called” special meeting for urgent requests), they will discuss the request with the Trustees, answer any questions, reiterate the confidential nature of this request, and call for a vote of the Trustees.
3. After the vote, the Treasurer will act accordingly.
 - a. The Treasurer will advise the cleric on whether or not the request has been approved.
 - b. If the request is approved, the Treasurer will acknowledge the disbursement and confirm that the funds have been disbursed for the requested purpose.
4. Any request for financial assistance from the Clergy Wellness Fund exceeding \$1,500.00 shall be considered an *exception request*. Such requests shall be reviewed and deliberated upon by the Trustees, and approval shall require a simple majority vote of members present. (Amended September 2025 by action of the Trustees.)
5. If the approval is for a loan, the details for the repayment will be appropriately confirmed in writing with the cleric, and then the funds will be disbursed.

Again, please be assured of our affection for you and your calling to the church.

N.B. The stipulations in this document supersede the guidelines given in 2018.

The Clergy Support Fund Request Form

Date _____

Title	
Full Name	
Clerical status	
Parish	
Home Address	
City, State, Zip Code	
Phone	
Email	

1. Are you Bi-vocational? Yes or No
2. What is your total yearly compensation?
3. What are you requesting Funding for? Please describe in fewer than 500 words the needs you have.
4. How much are you requesting? Please note if more than \$1,500, additional questions will apply.
5. When do you need these funds?