

2023
Additional Information not addressed in CPS Compensation Tool
For Professional Church Workers
North Wisconsin District
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Introduction

Scripture has clear words of instruction for us in matters pertaining to the compensation of church workers (I Thessalonians 5:12-13; I Timothy 5:17; Galatians 6:6). The review committee and the congregation should know and understand this counsel. From these passages it is evident that we must treat those who labor in our midst with loving care and respect. Also it is evident that good work deserves good pay. Therefore, the matter of merit should receive serious attention. Furthermore, being in line with District Guidelines will assist in the retention of workers.

The Administrative Services Committee (ASC) of the North Wisconsin District Board of Directors is pleased to share that there is now a new tool from Concordia Plan Services (CPS) to assist with compensation matters. The struggle the ASC has faced through the years has been to adequately address the many variables in determining salaries for church workers throughout our District. The new CPS tool factors in those variables for a congregation's geographical area. It also offers a salary range of other Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod ordained and commissioned ministers, as well as the salaries of other Christian church workers in the area. The areas not addressed in the new CPS tool are addressed on page 3.

CPS Compensation Tool [for Schools](#)

Use this tool to generate compensation suggestions for positions in LCMS schools including elementary, middle and high school teacher, preschool teacher and assistant teacher, childcare teacher and assistant teacher, head administrator/principal, assistant administrator/principal, early childhood director, athletic director, director of development/advancement and director of admissions.

CPS Compensation Tool [for Churches](#)

Use this tool to generate compensation suggestions for pastors and other parish professional positions. These include Sole Pastor, Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, Director of Christian Education, Director of Christian Outreach, Deaconess, Director of Family Life Ministry, Director of Parish Music, Director of Church Ministry, Business Manager I, and Business Manager II

Standard IRS automobile mileage rate effective 1/1/23 is 65.5¢ per mile. Please note these rates change yearly; please click [here](#) for updates.

Suggestions for Implementation & General Information

I. ORGANIZE

- Pray often for God's blessing on your task.
- Appoint a special committee to study salaries and benefits for all workers in your midst. You will want to include members of your boards of: education, elders, stewardship and other appropriate boards and committees. Your pastor(s) and principal might also be advisory members of this committee.
- Use the CPS Tool to assist in determining the salary of your called worker(s). It takes into account the variables unique to each geographical area.

II. STUDY

Consider the following:

- The purpose and mission of your congregation (association) and its ministries including the Christian day school where one exists.
- A careful and honest evaluation of present salaries and benefits offered to your workers.
- A comprehensive study of job descriptions, responsibilities, expectations and division of tasks among staff persons.
- A review of your congregation's (association's) financial resources, funding patterns and capabilities.
- A study of alternative funding sources including tuition, third source funding, establishing a foundation to benefit the educational program, fraternal agencies and other opportunities which may be unique to your congregation and community.
- A study of the salary and benefit suggestions of the North Wisconsin District.

III. ACT

- Establish a plan for implementing the salary and benefit suggestions of the North Wisconsin District.
- Install a plan that will effectively seek to meet the guidelines over a period of time should there be a discrepancy between current church worker's salary and guidelines (for example 85% of goal in the first year, 92% in the second year and 100% in the third year).
- Share the specifics of their personal salary and benefit packages with each of your worker(s): salary, Concordia Plans, other benefits. A sample form is included at the end of this document.
- Continue to pray for God's blessings on the pastoral, educational and outreach ministries to congregation (association) and community.

Additional information not addressed in the CPS tool

Retreats and Sabbaticals

While this section is included in the CPS material, it is presented here to make the district congregations aware that the North Wisconsin District has developed Sabbatical Guidelines, approved by the Board of Directors, to help congregations as they seek to care for the well-being of their church workers. You may access them by clicking on [Sabbatical Guidelines](#).

Vacation based on years of service

1-3 years: 14 days
4-10 years: 21 days
11-25 years: 28 days
25+ years: 35 days

Personal Days

The congregation should have a policy to determine personal days for full-time workers. A suggested benefit is: one year of LCMS service, one per year; two years' service, two days; three years, three days up to five days per calendar or school year.

Home Equity Support

In prior years, the NWD encouraged congregations to provide a Home Equity Plan (HEP) when a home was provided for the worker. However, significant changes in the federal law now make this illegal and all congregations had to stop this practice as of December 31, 2004. Previously deferred HEP funds (on or before December 31, 2004) and earnings on these funds are unaffected. The congregation can still provide to the worker additional annual compensation which the worker can deposit in a tax-sheltered annuity, a traditional IRA, or a Roth IRA. Another option would be for the congregation to increase the salary of the worker by an amount equal to the former home equity contribution.

Severance Package

On occasion professional church workers find it necessary to resign their Call. Such a decision can be reached for a variety of reasons. Whatever the reason, resigning one's Call is a traumatic event. One of the significant challenges it presents to the worker is the need to care for his/her family during the time of transition. Another significant challenge is that it is not appropriate for the professional church worker to generate a new ministry position for himself/herself as one would be expected to do in the secular world. On the contrary, the professional church worker is expected to wait until the Holy Spirit calls him/her to a new ministry position. Unlike those in the corporate world, the professional church worker also normally does not accumulate compensatory time, sick leave, or vacation time which can sustain his/her family during the time of transition. In view of the above factors, the resignation of one's Call provides the worker's congregation/school with the unique opportunity to display the care of our Savior for those who are in need (Matthew 25: 31-46, Luke 10:25-37).

The North Wisconsin District Board of Directors recommends that when the professional church worker does not have immediate occupational plans and a source of income that the congregation and/or school seriously consider granting the worker his/her full salary, housing and allowable benefits for a period of at least six (6) months, or until he/she accepts a Divine Call and is installed in that position, whichever comes first, as an expression of their thankfulness for the past service of the worker, the respect which they have for the Office of the Holy Ministry, and their desire to show Christian compassion and care for a fellow brother/sister in Christ.

Special Circumstance - Vacancy

A position becomes vacant when the worker leaves, resigns, or becomes incapacitated. Please check with Concordia Plan Services as to when and under what circumstances an enrolled worker becomes eligible for disability payments and unable to assume their duties.

Duties

The congregation should establish its pastoral needs and describe them in a job description. Carrying out the specific functions of the public ministry is the need, but the task can be defined differently by different people. Clarity regarding expectations is critical. Congregations could choose one, many or all of the following to include in the job description:

- Preaching and the Administration of the Sacraments
- Teaching/Bible Study
- Confirmation
- Counseling
- Shut-in visits
- Hospital visits
- Attending board/committee meetings
- Administrative tasks (Secretarial help provided? Weekly preaching schedule? etc.)
- Other (as identified in cooperation with the lay leadership)

Communication

A vacancy can be a time of uncertainty and confusion. Proper communication should be maintained (a) within the congregation, (b) to and from the Circuit Visitor and the District President, (c) to and from the vacancy pastor.

Timeframe

When will the vacancy begin and when will it end? How many days per week are expected?

Suggested Guidelines for Remuneration of Pastoral Services During a Vacancy

Option 1: Payment by percentage of salary (this is the preferred option)

It is recommended that the salary of the person filling the vacancy be determined according to your current policies and guidelines. Simply, what would that individual's salary be if he would be called to the vacated position? If the vacancy worker is assuming 100% of the vacant position's duties, he should be compensated 100%; if 50% then compensated 50%.

Mileage should be paid according to IRS guidelines. Vacancy compensation excludes Concordia Plan Services benefits.

Option 2: Payment by Function

These are only minimums. Figures do not include mileage, which should be added at current IRS rates.

Leading Worship/Preaching	\$165 for one service
Bible Class	\$55 per session
Teaching Confirmation	\$35 per session
Hospital call	\$30 per visit
Home visit	\$30 per visit
Attending meetings	\$35 per meeting

Guest Preacher Fee (Provide prompt payment for this service)

One service	\$165 plus IRS mileage
Additional service	\$100
Bible class	\$55 plus IRS mileage

Questions concerning these guidelines can be submitted to DJ Schult at 715-845-8241, ext. 101 or email at dj@nwdlcms.org.

**WORKSHEET FOR COMPUTING COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES
FOR PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKERS**

WORKERS NAME

A. BASE SALARY

Basic Cash Salary

\$ _____

Housing/Parsonage Allowance

\$ _____

Fair Market Rental Value of Parsonage

\$ _____

TOTAL

\$ _____

B. ADJUSTMENTS

10-Month Contract (Teacher Only)

\$ _____

FICA-Social Security

\$ _____

Related Life Experience

\$ _____

TOTAL

\$ _____

C. NON-SALARY BENEFITS

Concordia Plan Services

\$ _____

Tax Sheltered Annuity or IRA

\$ _____

Home Equity Support

\$ _____

TOTAL

\$ _____

D. CHURCH BUSINESS EXPENSES

Automobile

\$ _____

Books, Periodicals, Continuing Education

\$ _____

Conventions & Conferences

\$ _____

IRS Housing Declaration @ % of _____ as determined by congregation.