

## **Instructions for Congregations Applying for a Vicar**

1. A Vicarage Application being submitted by a congregation needs to include the following items:

- a. Two (2) copies of the **VICARAGE AGREEMENT FORM**.

This form is to be printed by the congregation using the electronic version of the Vicarage Application on a natural-colored parchment paper. It should be printed on a colored printer.

The Vicarage Agreement Form should be completed with original signatures.

- b. One (1) copy of the **VICARAGE APPLICATION FORM** (pages 1-3).

The form should be filled out in detail. It should be printed on white paper.

- c. Make a copy of the Vicarage Agreement Form and the Vicarage Application Form your records.

- d. Send the original completed Vicarage Application Form (1 copy) and the signed Vicarage Agreement (2 copies) to your District President.

2. The minimum vicarage term is twelve months, with most vicarages beginning between August 1 and September 1. Generally, students are not assigned to vacant parishes.

3. Financial Guidelines: Part IV of the application form should be filled out accurately in all parts. The most recent guidelines adopted by the Council of Presidents are as follows:

- a. **Minimum Salary:** \$1,400 per month or \$16,800 per year (single or married).

***Convertible or Colloquy Vicar:*** The salary for a convertible or colloquy vicar should meet the District guidelines for a new graduate, including Concordia Plans. (Assumptions: the Vicar is second career, older, with family, and the vicarage may convert to a pastoral call.)

- b. **Housing:** Allowance or specific housing should be provided without cost to the vicar. Housing should be commensurate with the community's standard of living. If you are providing a housing allowance, please give amounts for both single and married vicar, unless you cannot accept a married vicar. If you have specific housing (such as a parsonage or other dwelling), please specify briefly what it is -- size, number of bedrooms, limits of family, furnishings included, etc. If you have any limitations on size of family or if you are somewhat flexible in salary and housing, please indicate this, also.

- c. **Utilities:** Utilities (except personal long distance calls) should be paid by the church or the vicar should be given a utility allowance which will cover the cost of these items.

- d. **Moving/Relocation:** Round-trip travel from and to the seminary should be provided without cost to the vicar. Travel generally includes mileage, food, and overnight lodging as required by the distance. Moving allowance should be sufficient for self-moving (rental trailer or truck) of necessary belongings. If fully furnished housing is provided, travel expenses and shipping/transportation of necessary items should still be covered.
- e. **On-the-job Transportation:** Please state amount and method of provision for covering indicated expenses.
- f. **Paid Vacation Time:** Usual amount is two weeks
- g. **Health Insurance Coverage:** Congregation is to pay the premium for vicar and his family (actual cost up to \$6,000 per year - more if the congregation so decides).
- h. **Vicarage Fee:** The fee to the seminary is currently \$579.00.

Many of the above benefits generate an income and Social Security (FICA) tax liability for the vicar and an additional Social Security (FICS) tax liability for the congregation. The congregation must remit the employer's share of FICA and must withhold and remit income taxes for the vicar and the vicar's share of FICA. Please become acquainted with the tax aspect of these benefits. The brochure, "Congregations Payments to (or for the benefit of) a vicar" has been prepared by our tax department and is attached to these instructions. Please share these details with your churches.

By making adequate financial provisions for the vicar, the congregation is assisting the LCMS in the synodical program of ministerial training.