

The Diocesan Commission on Personnel began in 1974 by an act of diocesan convention. Its purpose is to consider compensation and benefits for clergy and other church employees and to make recommendations that seek justice, equity, and fair compensation. The Commission's work focuses on human resources issues: creating and consulting on personnel policies for the diocese and congregations, benefits recommendations for clergy and lay employees, and the clergy compensation scale.

Through an [annual update for congregations](#), the Commission provides resources to congregations to stay current with changes in Washington State Paid Family and Medical Leave, changes to Washington State Minimum Wage and Overtime rules, updates to the [Personnel Handbook Template](#), and encouraging wellness for all lay and clergy employees through use of the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#).

Benefits recommendations this year include **selection of base medical and dental plans** for 2024 (with updates to both medical and dental plans - see diocesan resource website). Medical premiums for the base plan increased a modest 6 % from 2023 and basic dental premiums did not change. The Commission **proposes a 4.6% COLA** for 2024 clergy and bishop's staff salaries (see **Resolutions Committee Report**).

In 2023, the Commission reviewed and made recommendations on Letters of Agreement, with the intent to increase clergy and lay employee physical and emotional health and wellness. A guideline recommending benefit-sharing for **lay employees who work part time for multiple congregations** is now available. The **clergy Letter of Agreement has been updated** regarding moving expenses, cell phone cost sharing, and clergy wellness expectations. **All clergy, regardless of time in call, are highly encouraged to update their LOA annually.** Updated LOA templates are available from the Canon to the Ordinary.

In 2019, the Commission began a critical analysis of the **clergy compensation scale**, considering geographic differences in cost of living in our diocese as well as re-evaluating the structure of the scale itself. After a 4 year process of research and analysis, the Commission presents its findings and recommendations in the **Clergy Salary Scale Report (E11)**.

Considering clergy compensation led the Commission to questions of **compensation equity among clergy**. In 2021, the commission collected and analyzed data about clergy demographics (age, race, gender, LGBTQ identity, disability, neurodivergence) as well as wage and congregational size. A report of that data was presented to diocesan convention in 2021. Updates and new data categories were collected from clergy in 2023. Findings will be presented in early 2024.

Congregational grades use congregational data to calculate a 'grade' for clergy compensation. In early 2022, recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic would impact congregational data for at least two years, the Commission requested that Diocesan Council freeze congregational grades for 2023 at the same level as 2022 (based on data from early 2020). Diocesan Council agreed, and grades for 2022

and 2023 remained the same. In March 2023, at the Commission's request, Diocesan Council unfroze congregational grades. Congregational grades for 2024 will be calculated on congregational data from 2022. 2024 congregational grades will be published before Diocesan Convention 2023.

Following on the equity-seeking and justice-making resolutions of Diocesan Convention 2021, the Commission focused additional work in 2023 on responding to Resolution 6: *Equity and Inclusion and Justice in Diocesan Clergy Pay Scale*. The **Final Report on Resolution 6 (E.9)** will be presented during Diocesan Convention.

In 2024, the Commission anticipates another congregational resource update early in the year, including updates on Washington State Minimum Wage increase and Overtime Exempt salary threshold. The Clergy Salary Scale Report proposes an update and resolution to be considered by Diocesan Convention 2024. Feedback and conversations with congregations and clergy about the proposed resolution in 2024 will inform the final resolution language.

The Commission thanks outgoing members Ms. Jeannie Wells and the Rev. Sabeth Fitzgibbons, whose terms end at the conclusion of Diocesan Convention 2023.

The Commission offers consultation to clergy and congregations about all matters related to human resources. Please contact Dede Moore, Canon for Diocesan Networking and Connections or the Rev. Elise Johnstone, chair elect, (elise@sjbwestseattle.org) with any questions.

Respectfully submitted by the Rev. Sabeth Fitzgibbons, chair.

On behalf of commission members:

the Rev. Canon Elise Johnstone (*chair elect*)

Ms. Karla Koon

the Rev. Mike Mayor

Ms. Diane Santiago

Ms. Jeannie Wells

the Rev. Rich Weyls

the Rev. Canon Arienne Davison, *ex officio*

Canon Dede Moore, *ex officio* (dmoore@ecww.org)