

## M E M O R A N D U M

To: 112<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia (2022)

Fr: The Diocesan Personnel Commission

Re: Response to *Resolution #6: Equity, Inclusion, and Justice in Diocesan Clergy Pay Scale* from the 111<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia

Date: October 13, 2022

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The Diocesan Personnel Commission supports the vision and spirit of resolution #6 (2021) as it attempts to address implicit bias and structural injustice in the payment of clergy salaries. We affirm the objectives of equity, safety, and care for every clergy person who serves in the Diocese of Olympia, and we encourage this convention to apply principles of equity, inclusion, and justice in all matters pertaining to the compensation of diocesan clergy.

We respond to the text of resolution #6 (2021) as follows:

*Resolved, that this 111<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Olympia call upon the Diocesan Personnel Commission to create Mandatory and Advisory policies regarding clergy compensation and benefits that will apply to all priests in the diocese, whether serving in missions, parishes, bishop's designated stations or any other specialized ministry.*

The Personnel Commission recommends advisory or mandatory policies to Diocesan Convention, which can choose to adopt them for “the Diocese and its Parishes and Missions” (Diocesan Canon 23, Sec 3). We await the guidance of the Committee on Constitution and Canons about the canonical status of bishop’s designated mission stations or other specialized ministries and whether they are considered “the Diocese” for the purposes of clergy compensation and benefits.

*Resolved, that the Personnel Commission develop Advisory Policies that ensure the availability of medical benefits to clergy working in Bishop's Designated Mission Stations and specialized ministries.*

Eligibility for medical benefits is determined by General Convention and governed by the Denominational Health Plan (DHP). This can be changed by an action of the General Convention. Current eligibility in the DHP and the diocesan Health Coverage policy is determined by the number of annual employee work hours. Current diocesan policy is as follows: *Medical insurance must be provided to all employees who work 1500 or more hours annually, or .75 FTE (3/4 time) of actual fulltime hours. Part time employees working between 1000-1500 hours, or .50-.75 FTE may self-fund coverage. An employer is not required to contribute any amount toward medical insurance premiums for part time employees but is encouraged to do so if economically feasible. Dental insurance will be provided for all fulltime employees and dependents at the established minimum standard. Part-time employees working at least 1000 hours annually may self-fund coverage. An employer is not required to contribute any amount toward dental insurance premiums for part time employees but is encouraged to cover the employee's premium if economically feasible; payment of premiums for dependents of part-time employees would be self-funded.* Employees working less than 1000 hours are not eligible to participate in the DHP. Furthermore, under the DHP, the Diocese, Churches, and Missions cannot fund premiums for other medical insurance coverage outside the DHP.

Our Diocesan Convention could propose to change the eligibility criteria for the DHP by passing a resolution at Convention for submission to a future General Convention. For example, our Convention could recommend that GC change the DHP minimum hours for eligibility from one thousand (1000) hours per year to a lower number. This Commission supports additional exploration, discussion, and study and will take this up as part of our work in 2023.

*Resolved, that the Personnel Commission and the Bishop begin conversation with the Church Pension Fund regarding mechanisms for inclusion of priests in these ministries in the Clergy Pension Fund.*

Participation in the Church Pension Group (CPG) is dependent upon contributions to the plan. Therefore, clergy need to be paid some amount of salary that is then

reported to CPG so that pension contributions can be collected. Even a small contribution to CPG allows access to the other benefits offered by CPG such as life insurance, voluntary savings plans, and the CREDO wellness experience.

*be it further*

*Resolved, that the Personnel Commission be asked to report back to the 112th Convention concerning the policies developed and reporting on the progress of assuring equitable pay and access to medical and pension benefits for all clergy.*

We offer this progress report to Convention with a commitment to continue to explore these important issues of equity, inclusion, and justice.

In the coming year the Commission will:

- Investigate other diocesan mechanisms to pay non-stipendiary clergy, mission station clergy, and those engaged in other specialized ministries.
- Explore alternative funding resources to make health care more accessible to eligible clergy.

Respectfully submitted by the Rev. Richard Weyls ([rich.weyls@gmail.com](mailto:rich.weyls@gmail.com))

On behalf of commission members:

the Rev. Canon Jennifer King Daugherty

Ms. Diane Santiago

Ms. Jeannie Wells

the Rev. Sabeth Fitzgibbons

the Rev. Canon Elise Johnstone

the Rev. Canon Arienne Davison, ex officio

Canon Dede Moore, ex officio