

SECTION 4: RELIGIOUS

For the sake of collaboration and efficient parish and religious congregational functioning, and for the sake of justice within the archdiocese, both pastors and major superiors have the responsibility to correspond and agree on terms for any religious serving in ministry within parish structures. The following policies shall be followed.

4.1 COMMUNICATION

Communication on the hiring and housing of religious in parishes must be preceded by letters to the executive director of the department for clergy in the case of religious priests, or the executive director of the department for religious in the case of women and other non-ordained religious. These letters from both pastors and major superiors are to state the request and the time commitment that is being established. Requests for permission to have the reservation the Blessed Sacrament in a religious house are to be sent to the executive director of the department for pastoral services.

4.1.1 Terms of such agreements are to be written and reviewed annually by the pastor and the religious congregation. Termination of such agreements by either party is to be communicated to the appropriate archdiocesan departments.

4.1.2 The canonical establishment of a religious house can only be authorized directly by the Archbishop in correspondence with the major superior. Such convents, residences, and monasteries are those of a permanent nature, and do not rely on existing parish structures. The pastor of the parish is to be notified of their establishment by the archbishop or by the appropriate archdiocesan department.

4.1.3 Religious in residences owned or rented outside of parish owned structures, as well as those living in parish-owned residences or canonically established residences, are to communicate any changes of address directly to the department for religious through the annual summer census forms which are sent to each congregation and community house.

4.1.4 Since lay parity for positions held by religious is in effect as of July 1992, arrangements for housing ought to be written in a lease agreement form if offered to religious by the parish.

4.2 COMPENSATION OF RELIGIOUS IN ARCHDIOCESAN/PARISH MINISTRIES

The religious congregation is the contractual party, with the individual religious applying for the position she or he is qualified for. For tax reasons, the contract may not be made with the individual religious.

4.2.1 Religious congregations will make congregational or individual commitments to a school, a parish, or an agency, for a set or indefinite period of time, as has been the procedure in the past.

4.2.2 If the religious congregation chooses to contribute part of this compensation back to the school, parish or agency, or not accept the full compensation, they may do so. The actual amount to be waived or returned should be established prior to the start of the new contractual year. Volunteers from among religious constitute another possibility of contributing ministry back to a school, a parish, or an agency.

4.2.3 Cars and convents are no longer provided to religious serving in parishes and schools. With lay parity, transportation and housing become the responsibility of the religious congregation. If mutually agreeable to both parties, the school or parish may lease the convent and sell or lease any cars to the religious congregation. Formal lease documents should be used and are to be signed by both parties.

4.2.4 Payments for health insurance and pensions will be the same as for lay employees. In computing pension payments to be made to the religious orders, the proper contribution would be 13.65% of salary, (6% pension payment and 7.65% social security tax) unless other arrangements have been made by mutual agreement.

4.3 TESTIMONIALS OF SUITABILITY FOR RELIGIOUS

This policy applies to all religious – priests, sisters and brothers. The policy only applies to testimonials concerning Safe Environment. Testimonials concerning theological orthodoxy or qualifications as a presenter in the name of the Church should be handled separately and individually. This applies only to persons coming to minister in the Archdiocese of New Orleans for a single event. Those religious assigned to ministry in the Archdiocese of New Orleans work with the procedures of the appropriate office.

4.3.1 TESTIMONIALS ON BEHALF OF RELIGIOUS MINISTERING IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW ORLEANS

Religious should request a Testimonial of Suitability from their appropriate religious superior. The Archdiocese of New Orleans is not able to issue testimonials for religious.

4.3.2 TESTIMONIALS RECEIVED IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW ORLEANS ON BEHALF OF VISITING RELIGIOUS

Any visiting religious intending to exercise public ministry in the Archdiocese of New Orleans is required to present prior to engaging in any such ministry a Testimonial of Suitability from his or her religious superior or their duly authorized delegate. All testimonials should be sent to the Office of the Archbishop of New Orleans who will forward all testimonials to the Priest Personnel Office, which will be the repository for all Testimonials of Suitability for religious visiting the Archdiocese of New Orleans. The Priest Personnel Office will acknowledge receipt and inform the appropriate local ministry site of the reception of the testimonial. The Priest Personnel Office will keep a record of all testimonials received. Testimonials are only valid for the particular time of ministry stated in the document.

Archdiocese of New Orleans Policy Handbook
March 2014 Section 4: Religious