

Resolution #4 -2026 Minimum Compensation for Priests

Resolution Title: 2026 Minimum Compensation for Priests

- 1 RESOLVED that the minimum total compensation for a newly called full-time presbyter,
2 effective January 1, 2026, be \$64,000; and be it further
- 3 RESOLVED that all congregations employing presbyters with a Letter of Agreement will report
4 annually to the diocese on their compensation; and be it further
- 5 RESOLVED that the total compensation for presbyters in full time service with an existing
6 Letter of Agreement (LOA) shall be no less than that for calendar year 2025; and be it further
- 7 RESOLVED that the guidelines for minimum compensation for supply priests be as follows:
- 8 - one service \$175.00
- 9 - two consecutive services \$225.00
- 10 - up to one unit (approximately 3 hours) of clerical time, including pastoral and non-
11 Sunday liturgical duties \$85.00
- 12 * Expenses are reimbursed at cost for meals, lodging, etc. and at the IRS minimum approved rate
13 for mileage; and be it further
- 14 RESOLVED that the workload for part time presbyters, as adopted by Canon, may be the
15 monthly equivalent of:
- 16 - half-time = two Sundays and two work weeks
- 17 - quarter-time = one Sunday and one work week
- 18 How this monthly time frame is implemented is negotiated between the presbyter and wardens;
19 and be it further
- 20 RESOLVED that when active presbyters serve one congregation for at least three months, a
21 Letter of Agreement between them will provide for the payment of assessments on behalf of that
22 presbyter to the Clergy Pension Fund, and that congregation will pay assessments to the Clergy
23 Pension Fund on behalf of that presbyter retroactive to the first month of their employment at the
24 rate of 18%.

Brief Explanation:

There are no changes to this resolution from 2025.

The Diocese of Maine is canonically required to bring forth a resolution to convention outlining compensation for presbyters for the coming year. This work is done by a Compensation Committee appointed by the bishop. In 2025, the Compensation Committee was the Rev. Lynn Rutledge, Julian Sheffield, Theodore Fletcher, and the Rev. Douglas Beck. They also serve as the Executive Committee of the Diocesan Council.

This resolution continues to establish a single minimum total compensation standard for newly-called, full-time presbyters. Rates in this resolution are the same rates as in the approved 2025 Compensation Resolution.

This compensation number is a minimum only, and not a recommended rate. It is commensurate with the minimum expectations of a presbyter in any such position. A presbyter's experience, the responsibilities of a role, the mission and goals of a congregation, and the cost of living in a community, must all factor in determining compensation.

This resolution commits our congregations to sharing compensation information with the diocese annually. This data will enable us to orient congregations and presbyters in search or reviewing an LOA with an accurate picture of compensation across our diocese.

The minimum total compensation proposed in this resolution will be the minimum the diocesan office will approve for a LOA between a vestry or bishop's committee and its presbyter.

The minimum total compensation for presbyters employed part-time must be proportional to the minimum total compensation required for full time priest/employees. (Canon 22.3)

"Total Compensation" includes cash stipend, the congregation's reimbursement of 50% of the priest/employee's Self Employment Tax, and housing and utilities allowance.

This resolution does not change existing LOAs. These are still in effect.

We recommend that congregations refer annually to the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) determined by the Social Security Administration as the benchmark when considering compensation increases related to inflation. The COLA is based on increases to the Consumer Price Index as calculated by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. The 2026 Adjustment is expected to be approximately 2.8%. We encourage congregations to keep in view the cumulative inflation experienced in recent years as they make decisions about appropriate compensation increases for 2026. For 2025, the Social Security Administration determined a COLA of 2.4. For 2024, the COLA was 3.2%.

We further encourage congregations and presbyters to evaluate the impact of inflation in their particular circumstances, taking into account proposed increases in health care premiums that must be absorbed by the congregation.

Supporting website links (if any): NA

Submitting individual or organization: Compensation Committee of the Diocese of Maine

Contact person: Rev. Lynn Rutledge

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Submission Questionnaire

Do you have an individual or organization co-sponsoring this resolution? No

Does this resolution have any budgetary impacts to the Episcopal Diocese of Maine (EDOM) Annual Budget? No

Apart from financial impact to the diocese, would implementing this resolution have any financial impact to our congregations? Yes

What are the one-time implementation costs to congregations? Please explain.: This resolution will entail implementation costs for congregations establishing letters of agreement with newly called presbyters in 2026, in that they will be required to meet or exceed the resolved minimum total clergy compensation.

Please explain the financial impact to congregations expressed in annual terms. Will there be a recurring annual cost to continue the program? This resolution does not establish a program but, rather, establishes the minimum total compensation for presbyters newly called in 2026, and thus entails a recurring cost to the calling congregation through that presbyter's tenure.

Does the action proposed by this resolution fall under the charge of an established diocesan committee, commission, council, or ministry? No

Who will be responsible to present and address questions regarding the resolution at town halls and at the convention? Julian Sheffield

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Assuming passage, who is responsible for completing the action being resolved by this resolution? This resolution establishes presbyter compensation minimums for all congregations of the Episcopal Diocese of Maine.

If the resolution is adopted, how long do you plan on the action(s) being in effect? This is a mandated resolution, presented at each Diocesan Convention for the coming year.

Reporting on an adopted resolution's progress is required at the 2026 Convention. Who will be responsible for performing this task? NA

If you have documents that support your resolution, please attach them here: NA