

**DIOCESE OF CHESTER CLERGY SABBATICAL INFORMATION**

**Sabbatical leave will not be granted more than once in every seven years of service, and applicants should have been in their present post for at least three years.**

**Process**

**Preparation:**

1. Seek the permission of your Suffragan Bishop to apply for sabbatical leave.
2. Contact the office of the Ministry Team to discover if grant-supported places are available (limited to 12 each year). Be aware that ministers in receipt of stipend support from sector posts may not be entitled to in-service sabbaticals for that part of their appointment.
3. Complete the sabbatical application form available on the diocesan website. Once this form has been countersigned by your Suffragan Bishop forward it to the Ministry Team.
4. Once the completed form has been received by the Ministry Team you will be assigned a place in the scheme for the appropriate year. Please note that in some years more applications are received than places available. In these circumstances applications are dealt with in order of the date the form is received at the office. (Should you for any reason defer your sabbatical to another year, your place in the scheme for the re-arranged year will be determined by the date on which written notice of the deferral is received in the Ministry Team. In other words grant-support is not automatically transferable from year to year and a new application needs to be made).
5. Often applicants arrange a meeting with the Director of Ministry to make preliminary plans. If you would find this helpful please email us on ministry@chester.anglican.org. How near the date of your planned sabbatical this meeting takes place is entirely dependent on what you find most useful. Many people find 12 months prior to the date a good time but it may need to be much earlier if you are planning applications to trusts or other outside bodies.
6. Obtain the support of the wardens and PCC(s) – and make sure they understand that the PCC will be responsible for paying any fees or travel expenses that the covering of services whilst you are away will require. If assistance in explaining the advantages of the sabbatical scheme would be helpful please ask as the Ministry Team will readily provide someone to do so.
7. It is essential that you make sure your Rural Dean knows the precise dates of your sabbatical.
8. Plan your programme in detail for the three months available to you. (Shorter periods or ‘instalment’ arrangements are generally not available under the sabbatical scheme).
9. Arrange, with the co-operation of your wardens, cover for your parish(es).
10. **Vicarage access, etc**

When you are due to take your sabbatical leave, you should notify the Property Department of the dates so any planned works or statutory requirements (eg Gas Safety Inspections) can be scheduled and organized appropriately.

You should also provide the Property Dept, with contact information for someone who has access / keys to the house in case of emergencies should the sabbatical involve the house being left unoccupied for a period of time. This would usually be a Churchwarden or family member.

If the house is to be left unoccupied for more than 28 days consecutively, then you must make arrangements for the house to be inspected weekly,for insurance purposes.

Take and enjoy the sabbatical.

**Follow up:**

1. Debriefing is often helpful – the Director of Ministry or another Ministry Team member will readily assist with this, simply email us on ministry@chester.anglican.org if you would like to arrange this.
2. Write a short reflection on the sabbatical – including your thoughts on the preparation as well as the actual sabbatical time. Please submit this directly to the Director of Ministry. Such reflections help to build up data on what works well, and it may be that your experience has made you a ‘resource person’ in a certain area.
3. Be prepared to share something of your experience with the local church. You will be the best arbiter of what is appropriate but people often like to know a little about the benefits the sabbatical has brought to your faith and practice.

**Purpose**

1. It is helpful to have a clear purpose or focus. This does not mean your sabbatical has to be achievement driven, but simply that it is useful to be clear what you want to get out of it.
2. Some people use the sabbatical time for reading – but again it is useful to decide what focus this might have. If a reading consultant would be helpful, please ask.
3. Others want to undertake a specific study and write a paper or booklet – this might be done from home or by staying at a college.
4. Some people use the time to go on courses or undertake an ‘immersion experience’ in a different part of the world.
5. All should use at least some of the time for nothing more than recreation.

**Financial Help**

A modest grant from the Diocese is given (in addition to your usual stipend) – the Director of Ministry will provide the form. Generally this is paid in the year the sabbatical is taken. If plans would make an earlier payment advisable (for example, for long distance travel) please ask as the Director of Ministry can usually arrange this. Your CMD grant can also be used to support the sabbatical. Discretionary grants are also sometimes available – please see the CfM webpages on the diocesan site for more details. The Director of Ministry can advise on other possible sources of funding.

Enquiries to

ministry@chester.anglican.org