

**Guidelines for creating remunerated supernumerary roles**

**Renewed and approved by the Stationing Committee October 2019- This note replaces all other previous advice**

**Usual Arrangements**

Supernumerary Ministers are stationed in the circuit in which they reside. (With the exception of those who are in formally agreed appointments in other circuits when sometimes they can appear twice on the stations),

Supernumeraries remain in the covenant relationship with the Conference, they will expect and be expected to continue to exercise the ministry of a presbyter or deacon as outlined in SO 792(1). For this reason it is common to list them on the Plan below the circuit staff (sometimes without any division from those in the active work). Presbyters, and deacons who are local preachers, will agree with the Superintendent an appropriate number of appointments on each quarter’s Plan.

The agreed number of services of Holy Communion taken by each supernumerary presbyter should be included in any calculation relating to an application for an authorisation for a layperson, deacon or probationer under SO 011.

Where a supernumerary minister is to have responsibilities beyond the conduct of worship (i.e. to exercise pastoral responsibility), it is important that all parties are quite clear on all the points that follow.

**Where a supernumerary minister is to have responsibilities beyond the conduct of worship**

The first step is to decide what proportion of the week is to be devoted to the work of ministry. Although the 2007 report *Policy on Part-time Appointments* calls for appointments to be defined as x sessions week (a day consisting of three sessions, two of which are devoted to the work of ministry), most people naturally begin by thinking in terms of x days. The importance of the ‘sessions’ method is to emphasise that there must be time in the minister’s ‘working’ day for the activities of normal life and for relaxation. This is as true for those in part-time appointments as for anyone else. Defining the appointment as e.g. ‘three days’ or ‘six sessions’ a week including Sundays equates to ‘half-time’. ‘Half-time could also be defined as ‘two days or four sessions a week and Sundays in proportion’. Common sense must be applied in the interpretation of these principles – but it is important to note that the 2007 report includes Sundays in the days that define the size of the appointment.

Standing Orders (SO 792(3)) do not permit a supernumerary minister to have pastoral charge of a local church (unless they apply to the Stationing Advisory Committee (SAC) for permission to return to the active work). This is so that proper accountability (through the obligation to attend staff meetings, circuit meetings and representative sessions of Synod) can be maintained. It is however appropriate for a member of the circuit staff to have formal pastoral charge (as is common in the case of a probationer) although the supernumerary has the hands-on pastoral responsibility. It is worth noting that a supernumerary minister, stationed in the circuit, is permitted by SO 502(1)(a)(ii) to chair a Church Council ‘as and when requested by the Superintendent’. Likewise, an appointment over 49% (3 days a week / 6 sessions) requires the minister to request from SAC permission to return to the active work.

**Defining the appointment**

It is important that all parties have clarity around the appointment. A letter of agreement must be issued and will cover the following points:

**Location and scope of appointment**

It must be made clear (a) in what circuit(s) the person is to serve (b) what their specific responsibilities will be, both in terms of responsibility for local churches and other specific tasks associated with the appointment (e.g. local preacher tutoring) as far as can be foreseen at this stage. Given that things under this heading may emerge later, care must be taken about the time-limits specified below.

The extent of commitment to offering appointments to the plan must be made clear, in terms both of (a) number of appointments per quarter and any special provisions about their distribution (b) specific commitments to particular churches etc.

Arrangements for weddings and funerals should be made clear.

**Duration of appointment**

The length of time for which this appointment should last must be clearly defined, together with any arrangements for review and/or extension.

**Accountability**

There must be clarity about the ways in which the minister (a) will be accountable for her/his work, and (b) will be accounted for by being supported. There should be clarity around how supervision will be offered and by whom.

**‘Size’ of appointment**

There must be a clear statement of the number of sessions (and on which days) per week the appointment is to consist of. This time is to include meetings and the preparation time required for preaching, preparing and leading services. (A session is, broadly, a morning, an afternoon or an evening. A day is assumed to consist of two sessions devoted to the work of ministry.) The times when the minister will not be available to be contacted must be clearly specified and widely publicised.

Arrangements for cover outside these hours for weddings and funerals and pastoral emergencies must be specified.

**Obligatory reimbursement**

Expenses incurred in the performance of ministerial duties must be reimbursed on a monthly basis. Mileage should be paid on the same basis as for ministers in the active work. The proportion of telephone and broadband charges and call costs to be reimbursed by the circuit must be agreed. Fees for weddings and funerals are to be offered on the same basis as to other ministers in the circuit.

**Discretionary reimbursement**

If the work of ministry is to be carried out from the minister’s home, the circuit may offer to reimburse a proportion of heating and lighting costs. A book/resources grant may be offered.

**Housing, allowances and pension**

In some situations, a circuit may wish to offer payments, allowances or accommodation as additional support for the ministry of a supernumerary. If such arrangements are envisaged, they need to be set up with careful negotiation and safeguards for the circuit and the minister concerned. The explicit consent of the District Policy Committee will be required and, since there will be implications in tax or employment law, proper professional advice must be taken from the relevant departments at Methodist Church House (stipends & tax and pension).

If a stipend (full or part time) is paid to a supernumerary for ministerial duties previously carried out by an active minister, the Circuit pension contribution is payable. This applies whether or not the supernumerary returns to the active work or opts not to contribute to the Ministers' Pension Scheme (supernumeraries may however opt to contribute and accrue entitlement to pension).

Please contact the Pensions Team at [pensionshelp@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:pensionshelp@methodistchurch.org.uk) or 020 7467 5258 to discuss issues relating to a supernumerary’s pension.

Please contact the Payroll & Stipends Team at [stipends@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:stipends@methodistchurch.org.uk) or 020 7467 3780 to discuss any issues relating to the reimbursements or benefits for supernumeraries. They team can also offer some support in relation to taxation issues and you may also find the Church’s Taxation Directory <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/finance/taxation-directory/> a help.

**Help to determine an appropriate level of part-stipend:**

The definition of the appointment then suggest the proportion of stipend that is payable.

* Two days a week appointment = one-third stipend
* Three days a week appointment = half stipend
* Four days a week appointment = two-thirds stipend

**Approval of appointment**

The appointment must be approved by the Circuit Meeting, and the District Policy Committee must then be consulted.

**Smallprint**

The term ‘appointment’ used above is not an appointment in the technical/Methodist sense of being appointed to the staff of the circuit (and therefore counted in the establishment figure). Supernumeraries are not listed on the staff of the circuit unless they have officially returned to the active work.