

Business Versus Personal Expenses

Policy: There should be some consistency throughout diocesan parishes in determining what is classified as business expenses for priests to be paid for by the parish.

Rationale: As priests relocate to different parishes, it is helpful if they all classify expenses similarly. Obviously, there will be some variations, and therefore, the details should be worked out in open discussion during budget time between the pastor and parish finance council. Following are some suggested guidelines:

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- 1) Dry cleaning: The cleaning of clerical and liturgical garments would be considered parish expense. All other items would be considered priests personal expense.
- 2) Phones: Priests should identify any personal phone calls on the monthly phone bill and reimburse the parish for calls to family and personal friends.
- 3) Cell Phones: Parishes should pay for the cost of a basic cell phone plan. A priest will pay for costs above a basic plan unless determined by the parish leadership.
- 4) Meals: Priests are entitled to board from their parish and therefore regular food costs (grocery bills) would be considered an expense of the parish. Priests should submit receipts for meals away from the parish. Food costs should not exceed what is budgeted by the parish.
- 5) Subscriptions/Publications/Newspapers: Material related to priest's ministry should be paid for by the parish. Material related to a priest's personal interests should be paid for by the priest.
- 6) Mileage: Priests should be reimbursed at the federal business rate for their business mileage. Travel for personal reasons should be paid for by the priests. Business mileage would include the following:
 - a) Mission trips for anything due to parish ministry (Mass, religious education, funerals, parish council meetings, etc).
 - b) Home visits for sacramental, professional, or spiritual purposes (homebound communion, evangelization)
 - c) Diocesan functions not otherwise reimbursed (Pastoral Ministry Days, Fall Clergy Convocation, Priest retreat, Deanery meetings)
 - d) Parish and pastoral business (communal reconciliation services, local hospital visits, local jail visits, etc.
- 7) Moving: The sending parish should be responsible for transporting priest's belongings to a new parish within reason. Mileage to visit to a new parish should be paid for by the sending parish.