

PAYMENT OF CHURCH MUSICIANS

The fees recommended here are guidelines, and are from the Bishops' Advisory Committee on Church Music.

- The suggested minimum remuneration levels relate to amateur musicians. Here 'amateur' indicates musicians who may be professionally qualified and who earn their living principally outside the world of music. Higher rates would be appropriate for musicians who earn their living principally by performing and/or teaching music. Factors such as level of qualifications, length of service, responsibility for a junior choir and the amount of administrative work involved should also be taken into consideration.
- When appointing musicians, parishes should consult the *Code of Practice on Determining Employment Status*, published by the Department of Social Protection and the Workplace Relations Commission (updated July 2021). If a musician is engaged by the parish, legal responsibilities in relation to taxation, social welfare insurance, employer's liability insurance, and health and safety, should be noted.
- It is appreciated that in some cases a local agreement exists whereby the church musician either accepts no payment or donates it back. While of enormous benefit to the parish, this generosity on the part of the musician distorts the cost of running the parish. It is recommended that in such cases the parish should pay the appropriate level of fee into a separate fund as, when the present musician leaves, it is probable that the successor will have to be paid. This procedure will establish a realistic payment level for the post and will avoid a sudden sizable additional cost in the future.
- It is very helpful to have a common understanding between the clergy and musician regarding the choosing of music for the liturgy, fees for weddings and funerals, the use of the organ for teaching and so on.
- The value of regular in-service training cannot be over-emphasised, especially in these times of changing liturgies and the wide variety of styles of music now used in our churches. It is suggested that clergy should be pro-active in drawing the attention of their musicians to

opportunities for professional development. The annual summer school of the Irish Church Music Association is an obvious course to consider, and the Advisory Committee will be happy to suggest other appropriate courses to those seeking advice. See G under the Miscellaneous heading on the next page.

GUIDELINES FOR FEES FOR CHURCH MUSICIANS 2020

Normal weekly duties for 48 Sundays (see point B in Miscellaneous overleaf):

Band A – One Mass/service, no choir	€3,505
Band B – One Mass/service, choir with Sunday rehearsal	€4,662*
Band C – One Mass/service, choir with weekday rehearsal	€5,853*
Band D – Two Masses/services, no choir	€5,853*
Band E – Two Masses/services, choir with Sunday rehearsal	€7,536*
Band F – Two Masses/services, choir with weekday rehearsal	€9,113*

** These fees relate to a combined organist/choir director position. Where the positions are shared between two people as choir director and organist, it is suggested that each should receive at least 75% of the above fee with the implication that the total cost to the parish will be at least 50% higher than the rates above.*

WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

Where a church has an appointed organist it is normal practice to pay them the appropriate fee when the marriage couple/family wish to engage an organist of their own choice. The implementation of this principle requires flexibility, so as to avoid misunderstanding and unfair criticism of musicians. It is recommended that each church should have a worked out policy in this matter, agreed in advance between clergy and musicians.

Weddings

The minimum suggested fee is €240, but should be higher when the musician is required for a rehearsal, or when scores have to be purchased, or music learned.

Funerals

The minimum suggested fee is €140 for one service; €169 when music also is provided at a service in church on the eve of a funeral. Travelling expenses at a rate of €0.78 per km, may be paid where appropriate. (The Association of Funeral Directors has been informed of these rates.)

MISCELLANEOUS

- A. Fees should be reviewed annually by reference to pay inflation and national pay agreements.
- B. Musicians should be entitled to at least four Sundays off each year and the parish should pay the deputy for those Sundays. The responsibility for finding a deputy is primarily that of the musician.
- C. Musicians should be allowed two Sundays sick leave in any one year, for which period the parish will meet the cost of a deputy.
- D. The minimum rate for deputy work is €80 for the first service on any day and €53 for each subsequent service.
- E. A written contract should be entered into, outlining the terms, conditions and responsibilities attaching to the post and listing the occasions, including the festivals other than Sundays, for which the musician is required.
Additional payment should be made for duties over and above those set out in the contract.
- F. Church authorities should reimburse expenses incurred by musicians, such as choir music, postage and stationery, within an agreed budget.
- G. Church authorities should encourage and expect musicians to attend appropriate courses (in music, liturgy, theology, etc.) in Ireland and elsewhere at least once every three years, and should contribute towards the cost, recognising the benefit accruing to both the parish and the musician from continuous professional development.