



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

ARCHDIOCESE BENEFITS COMMITTEE

Date: July 1, 2025

To: The Reverend Clergy and the
Esteemed Members of the Parish Councils

From: Archdiocese Benefits Committee

Re: **Clergy Compensation Plan Guidelines for 2026**

Enclosed is the Clergy Compensation Plan Guidelines for the Year 2026 and a description of the various funding sources for the Archdiocese Benefits Program.

Upon review of the Remuneration Range for the members of the Clergy a recommendation was made for an increase in the year 2026. After much consideration the Archdiocese Benefits Committee granted a 5% increase as illustrated on the attached Clergy Compensation Plan Guidelines.

The Parish Obligation for Clergy benefits will continue to follow the total commitment benefit funding method as in the previous last five years.

The clergy continue to follow the current three tiers of contribution. They may contribute 3 ½% of earnings with a pension accrual of 1%, secondly, Tier Two you may contribute 5 % of earnings with a pension accrual of 1 ½% of pension accrual and Tier Three you may contribute 6 ½% of earnings with a pension accrual of 2 %.

Please note that your contributions prior to December 31, 2017 are not affected in any way and will remain the same.

As in the past, we are continuously reviewing our Plan to make sure that we are financially stable currently and into the future. We understand that changing the pension plan does affect the accrued pension benefit. However, this change is necessary to keep the plan replenished so that it may continue to grow and provide benefits to all our participants.

We also ask you to enroll in the Electronic Withdrawal Program if you have not already done so. Please contact GDC Financial at 1 – 800 -785-4432 to do so.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Archdiocese Benefits Office.

Thank you.



Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

ARCHDIOCESE BENEFITS COMMITTEE

The Clergy Compensation Plan Guidelines for 2026

In accordance with the *Uniform Parish Regulations* of the Archdiocese, the annual compensation package for the year 2026 includes: (A) Salary and Housing Allowance, and (B) Benefits, as outlined below. Note: this represents a 5% increase over 2025.

A. SALARY and HOUSING ALLOWANCE

<u>YEARS OF SERVICE</u>	<u>REMUNERATION RANGE</u>
Up to 5 years	\$ 68,760 - \$ 93,120
6 – 10 years	\$ 93,120 - \$103,728
11 – 15 years	\$103,728 - \$118,872
16 – 20 years	\$118,872 - \$131,328
21 – 25 years	\$131,328 - \$141,408
26 – 30 years	\$141,408 - \$150,504
31 – 35 years	\$150,504 - \$159,192
Over 35 years	\$159,192 - \$168,072

NOTES

- It is suggested that the annual minimum increase in a clergyman's remuneration include an annual cost of living increase beginning January 1st of each year.
- When using these remuneration ranges, the Parish Council should consider the size of the parish and factor the relative cost of living for its specific geographic area.
- In the event a parish provides "housing" by making available a parish owned home, then an equitable and reasonable "deduction adjustment" should be made from the Salary and Housing Allowance figures above, based on the local fair market rental value of the home being provided.
- Any exception to the Clergy Compensation Plan Guidelines must be approved by the clergyman's Hierarchy.

B. BENEFITS

Page 2 of 2

In addition to the above, the parish must provide:

- 1) An **automobile** (which the parish purchases or leases) for use by the Priest, with all related expenses paid by the parish.
- 2) **Social Security/Medicare taxes** (FICA/SECA) equal to the maximum self-employment Social Security/Medicare tax each year, currently 15.3% of Salary, the Housing Allowance (or rental value of a parish home), and payments for Social Security/Medicare taxes (which becomes taxable income).
- 3) The monthly health insurance premium for the Archdiocese-sponsored and approved **Orthodox Health Plan**, either single or family coverage, as appropriate. All clergymen of the Archdiocese **are required** to participate in the Orthodox Health Plan (OHP).
- 4) A minimum annual **vacation** of fifteen days (2 weeks), to a maximum of five (5) weeks (35 Days), taking into consideration the clergyman's cumulative years of service to the Archdiocese.
- 5) **Expenses** for attending District/Metropolis Clergy-Laity Assemblies and Retreats, the Biennial Clergy-Laity Congress, Clergy Continuing Education Programs, and the Archdiocese Presbyters Council Retreat.
- 6) A three (3) month **sabbatical** leave for each six (6) years of service with the same parish.

The Priest is personally responsible for contributing 3 ½ %, 5% or 6 ½ % of his monthly pension eligible earnings to fund his Pension Benefit.

For the year 2026, the maximum contribution amount is \$6,864 (3 ½%), \$9,792 (5%) or \$12,720 (6 ½%) based on the maximum Remuneration plus Social Security/Medicare taxes.

For Pension Plan purposes, "monthly earnings" is defined as Salary and Housing Allowance, plus Social Security/Medicare taxes (FICA/SECA).

Issued by: **Archdiocese Benefits Office**
July 2025

SPECIAL NOTATION

All parishes are obligated to pay the monthly Archdiocese Benefits Contribution, which is calculated by the National Finance Committee together with the local Metropolises. This includes parishes without a full-time priest. Those parishes with more than one clergyman are required to pay for each assigned clergyman. The Archdiocese Benefits Contribution is a critical part of the funding for the Archdiocese Benefits Program, which includes the Pension, Disability, Life Insurance and Clergy Assistance Programs. The Archdiocese Benefits Contribution is not a part of a priest's remuneration package.



Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

Funding for the Archdiocese Benefits Program – Year 2026

Funding for the Archdiocese Benefits Program has these sources:

1. **Personal pension contributions** from participating clergy and lay employees equal to 3½ %, 5 % or 6 ½% of earnings. This contribution is credited to the specific participant's account, earns interest, and is reported separately on the individual's annual Retirement Plan Benefits Statement provided in the summer of each year for the previous year.
2. **Archdiocese contributions** comprised of the following:
 - a) A monthly contribution, is calculated by the National Finance Committee together with each respective Metropolis **in the year 2026** for each assigned priest. The parish contribution is payable even when a parish does not have a permanently assigned priest.
 - b) A monthly contribution, of **\$835***, is **calculated in the year 2026**, for each participating priest and layperson employed by the Metropolis, who is assigned to or other participating Institution of the Archdiocese.
 - c) A monthly contribution, of **\$835***, is **calculated in the year 2026**, for each participating priest and layperson employed by the Archdiocese, who is located at 8 East 79th Street in New York.

It is important to note that the Archdiocese, Parish, and Institution monthly Benefits Contributions are not priest or employee specific. Therefore, they are not credited to the participant's account. Rather, they are credited to the general Benefits Fund, which, in addition to supporting the pension plan, and provides the other important benefits included in the Archdiocese Benefits Program at no cost to the participant. This includes the Life Insurance Benefit, the Long Term Disability Benefit, and the Confidential Assistance Program, to name three.

The Benefits Fund also provides assistance to clergy and their families as it also sustains the Archdiocese Benefits Office.

In instances where the monthly parish contribution is a demonstrable hardship, as in the case of new parishes, the parish should approach its Chancellor and request that he petition the Archdiocese Benefits Committee on its behalf for relief.

*Please note that the contributions of \$835 is being reviewed currently and may be subject to change.