

2019 Guidelines to Establish Compensation for Workers In the Churches and Schools of the Florida-Georgia District, Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

Development of These Guidelines

These guidelines have been developed as a resource for congregations (and associations of congregations, and hereafter referred to as “congregations”) in the process of determining compensation of workers. The guidelines were developed after convening a Compensation Consultation that included lay leaders, lay workers, ordained and commissioned rostered workers and District staff. Feedback from the consultation was sent to a Compensation Task Force appointed by President Michael. This document, and the components of the Calling and Compensation of Workers Resource website, is a result of the recommendations made by that task force.

Please Note:

- “Compensation” refers to Salary + Benefits. “Salary” does not include Benefits.
- New features to the guidelines include the addition of early childhood educators who hold either Child Development Associate certification (CDA) or Associate of Arts degrees in Early Childhood Education (AA), as well as recognition of those who have earned an Educational Specialist Degree (EdS) or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in their ministry field and those who have earned a Doctor of Ministry (DMin).
- An increment for Commissioned Ministers of Religion is now recommended.

Intended Use for These Guidelines and Special Considerations

These guidelines have been crafted in an effort to establish some degree of uniformity and practice concerning compensation of workers in the Church. Please consider the following as you review these guidelines:

- Familiarize yourself with the variety of resources that are included on the District website (www.flga-lcms.org).
- Remember that these guidelines provide recommended **minimums**.
- Congregations may need to develop a plan for gradual adjustment to these guidelines.
- These guidelines will be adjusted (e.g. base salary, benefits, etc.) from time to time, so access the website to **make sure that you are using the most up to date version**.
- Please remember that Scripture teaches that the worker is worthy of honor and an appropriate salary.
 1. “The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.” (1Timothy 5:17)
 2. “The laborer is worthy of his reward.” (1Timothy 5:18)
 3. “Let him who is taught the Word share all good things with him who teaches.” (Galatians 6:6)
- Proper care for workers means more than just financial compensation (1Thessalonians 5:12-13). We want our workers to devote sufficient time to their personal lives so that they don’t neglect their own families while being about the ministry of their calling to serve God’s people. Therefore, it is appropriate for workers to receive adequate vacation time and weekly rest.
- Workers and their families also require emotional support as they conduct their ministries, to encourage a joyful sharing of the Gospel. So pray regularly for them to

encourage them by your words and actions. Support their need to gather frequently with their peers and colleagues.

- Male and female workers should receive equal compensation for equal work.
- Congregations are encouraged to establish a Worker Care Committee to provide support to workers at the congregation level and as a vehicle for discussing concerns that may arise.
- These guidelines will not cover every calling/hiring situation for professional staff.

Helpful Resources

The District website (<https://flgadistrict.org>) contains links to a variety of helpful resources including:

- The **LCMS Congregational Treasurer’s Manual** which includes sections on Employment Issues (Exempt/Nonexempt Employees) , Federal and State Tax Matters, Administration of the Organization, and Accounting and Finance.
- The **LCMS Personnel Manual Prototype for Congregations and Districts** which serves as a model for congregations to use when developing or revising a personnel manual.
- The **LCMS Employment Resource Manual for Congregations and Districts** which assists congregations to better manage employees. Topics include Personnel Management, Federal Employment Law, New Worker Selection, Compensation and Benefits, Payroll, Recordkeeping, Performance Management, Resignations and Terminations and Health, Safety and Security.
- **Call Documents for Calling Pastors and Commissioned Ministers of Religion**
- **Cost of Living Information**
- **Worker Benefit Plans** (Concordia Plans)
- **Guidelines and Procedures for Calling a Pastor**
- **Guidelines for Calling a Commissioned Minister of Religion** (i.e. Teacher, Director of Christian Education, Director of Christian Outreach, Deaconess, Minister of Parish Music, Family Life Minister, or Certified Lay Minister)
- **District Sabbatical Guidelines**
- **The Divine Call** document from the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR).
- **LCMS Guidelines for Congregations and Their Reserve Component Chaplains**
- Information regarding **Employment Law in Florida and Georgia**

Determining a Worker’s Salary

The District recommended **minimum base salary:**

Minimum Base Salary	12 Month Worker	10 Month Worker = Base Salary x .875
Beginning January 1, 2019	\$39,682.53	\$34,722.21

Congregations are encouraged to consider appropriate revisions to the base depending upon the cost of living index (COLI) in their area. A link to a website listing the COLI is on the District website. Congregations may wish to consider adopting the total compensation guidelines of the local public school district in an effort to bring compensation more in line with professional salaries in the area. **Several examples of how to calculate salaries are on page 8 of these guidelines.**

Calculating Cost of Living

Calculating the Cost of Living Index (COLI) for any community is an inexact science. In fact, it is entirely possible to discover that several resources that utilize the same databases will arrive at different conclusions. We suggest that congregations research websites that best suit their needs.

Additional Considerations

Calculating Years of Experience: Oftentimes, a professional church worker enters the ministry after serving for a period of time in another profession. Acknowledging that all Christians are called to vocation, and that all Christians are “in ministry” in that calling, consideration of those years of service is appropriate. In addition, provision should be made to recognize the experience, skill and maturity that such a person brings to the ministry. Congregations are encouraged to recognize at least one year of experience for every two years of service in a comparable profession.

Eligibility for Synodical Certification as Commissioned Ministers of Religion: The 2004 Convention of the LCMS passed a resolution calling for congregations to recognize the value of theological training gained by teachers who have completed courses of study that qualify them to be on the Roster of the Synod as Commissioned Ministers of Religion. It is recommended that congregations add a 5% (.05) salary increment for those who qualify. If it is not feasible to do this in one year, it is recommended that the increment be added over the course of 2-5 years.

In keeping with the spirit and encouragement of the resolution to recognize the training of Synodically certified teachers, it is recommended that the same increment of 5% (.05) be applied to all others who have completed courses of study that qualify them to serve as Directors of Christian Education, Directors of Christian Outreach, Deaconesses, Certified Lay Ministers, Family Life Minister or Ministers of Music.

Salary Adjustments: Salaries may be adjusted upwards for the following positions, as well as others that go beyond the scope of a worker's base position. The range for each factor recognizes that the worker's compensation should reflect the extent of their duties and the responsibilities of their position. Note also, the increment for Synodical certification (see previous page, Eligibility for Synodical Certification) and consideration for merit raises for sustained excellence. Consideration may also be given to the size of the congregation or school.

Salary Adjustment Factors

Senior Pastor	Range .10 - .40
DCE, DCO, Family Life Minister, Minister of Music, Deaconess, and Certified Lay Minister Type Positions	Range .10 - .40
School Administrator	Range .10 - .40
Assistant Administrator	Range .10 - .40
Athletic Director	Range .10 - .25
Teachers w/ Duties Beyond the Regular School Day, i.e. Coaching, Youth, Choirs, etc.	Range .03 - .15
Eligibility for Synodical Certification	.05
Merit Raise for Sustained Excellence	Determined Locally

This Salary Matrix encourages workers to pursue professional growth through life-long formal educational experiences.

Salary Matrix for Ordained and Commissioned Ministers of Religion, Lay Teachers and Other Exempt Workers Serving in Similar Fulltime Ministry Positions

(Please note that “salary” is annual wage, and does NOT include other benefits.)

Years of Experience	CDA	AA in ECE	BA	BA+18	MA	MDiv	EdS STM	PhD DMin
0	0.65	0.80	1.00	1.08	1.16	1.32	1.36	1.40
1	0.68	0.83	1.05	1.13	1.21	1.37	1.41	1.45
2	0.71	0.86	1.10	1.18	1.26	1.42	1.46	1.50
3	0.74	0.89	1.15	1.23	1.31	1.47	1.51	1.55
4	0.77	0.92	1.20	1.28	1.36	1.52	1.56	1.60
5	0.80	0.95	1.25	1.33	1.41	1.57	1.61	1.65
6	0.82	0.98	1.27	1.38	1.46	1.62	1.66	1.70
7	0.84	1.01	1.29	1.43	1.51	1.67	1.71	1.75
8	0.86	1.04	1.31	1.48	1.56	1.72	1.76	1.80
9	0.87	1.05	1.32	1.505	1.585	1.745	1.785	1.825
10	0.88	1.06	1.33	1.53	1.61	1.77	1.81	1.85
11		1.07	1.34	1.54	1.635	1.795	1.835	1.875
12		1.08	1.35	1.55	1.66	1.82	1.86	1.90
13		1.09	1.36	1.56	1.685	1.845	1.885	1.925
14		1.10	1.37	1.57	1.71	1.87	1.91	1.95
15		1.11	1.38	1.58	1.735	1.895	1.935	1.975
16			1.39	1.59	1.76	1.92	1.96	2.00
17			1.40	1.60	1.785	1.945	1.985	2.025
18			1.41	1.61	1.81	1.97	2.01	2.05
19			1.42	1.62	1.835	1.995	2.035	2.075
20			1.43	1.63	1.86	2.02	2.06	2.10
21				1.64	1.87	2.03	2.07	2.11
22				1.65	1.88	2.04	2.08	2.12
23				1.66	1.89	2.05	2.09	2.13
24				1.67	1.90	2.06	2.10	2.14
25				1.68	1.91	2.07	2.11	2.15
26					1.92	2.08	2.12	2.16

Important Note: It is suggested that individuals who have earned an MA or beyond may receive a .01 increase on the matrix for every year beyond 25 years.

Key to Degrees and Certifications Earned:

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|-------------|--|-------------|--|
| CDA | Child Development Associate | AA | Associate of Arts Degree (in field) |
| BA | Bachelors Degree | MA | Masters Degree (in field) |
| EdS | Educational Specialist (in field) | MDiv | Masters of Divinity |
| STM | Masters of Sacred Theology | PhD | Doctor of Philosophy (in field) |
| DMin | Doctor of Theology | | |

Retirement and Health Plans

Congregations are encouraged to pay 100% of the costs for comprehensive health, retirement, disability, and survivor insurance. Congregations participating in the Concordia Retirement Plan MUST include all eligible workers. The same is true for congregations who participate in the Concordia Health Plan. The National Plan, which is qualified with the Internal Revenue Service, prohibits discrimination against any eligible employee by denying this benefit.

Housing Allowance and Home Equity

Ordained and Commissioned Ministers of Religion are eligible for tax considerations for housing. Congregations must designate a portion of the worker's salary (up to 100%) as a Housing Allowance. A resolution designating the amount allowed must be entered into the congregation's minutes annually. [See the LCMS Treasurer's Manual for more information.](#)

Also, Synod's legal counsel has designed a housing equity program for congregations whose pastors and/or teachers reside in a parsonage or teacherage. [See the LCMS Treasurer's Manual for more information.](#)

Vacation Time

Each congregation should adopt a vacation schedule for its workers. The schedule should be included in the official personnel manual of the church or school, and should be based upon the total number of years of service in Lutheran ministries. The following schedule is recommended for 12 month fulltime workers:

- Up to 10 Years of Service 3 Weeks (Including Saturday and Sunday)
- 11-20 Years of Service 4 Weeks (Including Saturday and Sunday)
- Over 20 Years of Service 5 Weeks (Including Saturday and Sunday)

Personal Leave Time/Sick Leave

The recommended standard for annual personal/sick leave is one day per month worked. Congregations are advised to develop policy that indicates whether or not unused personal and/or sick days are accumulated. Also, keep in mind that for workers enrolled in the Concordia Health Plan, the Plan takes over after 15 consecutive days of absence due to illness.

Continuing Education and Sabbatical

Each congregation is encouraged to provide opportunities for continuing study by its workers. Such provision should include both time and monetary allowance, providing the entire expense as is feasible. Additionally, workers should be expected to be life-long learners, seeking to continually grow personally and professionally.

The 2003 Florida-Georgia District Convention adopted a recommended Sabbatical policy for congregations. Congregations are encouraged to adopt it or a similar policy for its workers. This policy is posted on the Compensation Manual page on the FLGA District Website.

Pastors Serving as Military Reserve Chaplains

The 1983 Convention of the LCMS resolved, “That we encourage congregations whose pastors are members of the military Reserve to facilitate their pastor’s participation in and fulfillment of the requirements placed upon them as members of our nation’s military forces.” Serving as a military Chaplain raises issues related to compensation for the congregation and for the pastor. The LCMS has developed the *LCMS Chaplain Guidelines* to assist congregations. Appendix F of the guidelines addresses the issue of compensation. See the District website for a link to this resource.

Conference and Convention Expense

Congregations should reimburse staff members for all required or approved conference and convention expenses. According to Synodical Bylaw 5.61b, “All ordained and commissioned ministers on District rosters are expected to attend meetings of their official conferences or present a valid excuse.”

Auto Allowance and Business Expense

Congregations should provide a mileage reimbursement for miles driven in the conduct of their ministry as well as business expenses incurred by the professional church worker on behalf of the congregation as approved by the IRS. Alternately, congregations may choose to provide an automobile for their workers or they may provide an auto allowance for their workers. [See LCMS Treasurer’s Manual for more information.](#)

Moving Expenses

When a congregation Calls a professional church worker, it should pay all necessary and reasonable moving expenses for the worker and his/her family. [See LCMS Treasurer’s Manual for more information.](#)

Jury Duty

It is expected that employees will be compensated according to their regular wage scale when called to jury duty. However, congregations are encouraged to adopt policies that speak directly to any limitations that they may place upon the duration of such service.

Support Staff

Salaries for Support Staff (secretaries, business managers, day care workers, custodians, etc.) vary greatly from location to location. Congregations are encouraged to develop role descriptions for these positions, and to survey the community to determine appropriate salaries and wages. Support staff members are vital to the ministry of every congregation and school. Careful consideration should be given to provide compensation that is commensurate with their duties and responsibilities.

Sample Salary Computations with 2017 Salary Base

Example #1 A Senior Pastor with 13 years experience and an MDiv serving in Atlanta, Georgia

Education/Experience Factor (See Salary Matrix on Page 5)	1.845
Factor Senior Pastor (See table on Page 4)	.30
Sum of Factors	2.145
Times 12-Month Base (See “Calculating Cost of Living” on Page 3)	
Salary Base	\$38,311 (a)
Cost of living ratio Orlando .vs Atlanta	1.05 (b)
Salary Base adjusted (a) x (b)	x 40,227
Total Annual Salary	\$ 86,287

Example #2 A 12-Month Synodically certified school administrator with 10 years experience and an MA serving in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

Education/Experience Factor (See Salary Matrix on Page 5)	1.61
Synodically Certified Worker (See Table on Page 4)	.05
Factor for School Administrator (See Table on Page 4)	.30
Sum of Factors	1.96
Times 12-Month Base (See “Calculating Cost of Living” on Page 3)	
Salary Base	\$38,311 (a)
Cost of living ratio Orlando .vs Ft. Lauderdale	1.29 (b)
Salary Base adjusted (a) x (b)	x 49,421
Total Annual Salary	\$96,865

Example #3 A first-year, Synodically certified, 12-month teacher who coaches two sports, serving in Tampa, Florida

Education/Experience Factor (See Salary Matrix on Page 5)	1.00
Synodically Certified Worker (See Table on Page 4)	.05
Factor for Coaching (See Table on Page 4)	.08
Sum of Factors	1.13
Times 12-Month Base (See “Calculating Cost of Living” on Page 3)	
Salary Base	\$38,311 (a)
Cost of living ratio Orlando .vs Tampa	1.0031 (b)
Salary Base adjusted (a) x (b)	x 38,430
Total Annual Salary	\$43,426

Example #4 A non-Synodically certified teacher with 28 years experience and an MA in Family Ministry with a 10-month contract, serving in Jacksonville, Florida

Education/Experience Factor (See Salary Matrix on Page 5)	1.94
Times 12-Month Base (See “Calculating Cost of Living” on Page 3)	
Salary Base	\$38,311 (a)
Cost of living ratio Orlando .vs Jacksonville	.937 (b)
Salary Base adjusted (a) x (b)	x 35,897
Total Annual Salary	\$69,640