

# **Diocese of Coventry**

## **Working Agreement for**

### **House for Duty (HfD) Ministers in Support Roles**

#### **Guidance Notes**

1. The Diocese of Coventry has produced our own guidance on House for Duty (HfD) ministry.
2. HfD ministry is not in itself a separate office; HfD ministers will be incumbents, priests in charge or assistant staff depending on the post that they are appointed to. The Role Description (RD) or Working Agreement (WA) should aim to make this clear.
3. The WA is supplementary to the Statement of Particulars (SOP) in respect of the post to which HfD ministers are licensed.
4. The WA will be negotiated with HfD Ministers, their incumbent and noted by their PCC(s). It should be reviewed jointly by the HfD minister and incumbent at least every three years or when significant changes take place in their ministry.
5. Because the WA provides the Bishop and Archdeacons with important information about the way in which the HfD resource is being deployed, final Agreements and any subsequent amendments must be copied to the Bishop and Archdeacons' Offices.
6. WAs for HfD ministers will set out:
  - a) the amount of time the HfD minister is required to give to parochial ministry (this is normally Sunday plus 2 other days);
  - b) whether this entails a particular geographical focus;
  - c) how the HfD minister will share ministry with the incumbent and other members of the local ministry team;
  - d) how accountability is exercised within the local ministry team;
  - e) how particular ministerial skills may be exercised;
  - f) any wider deanery, diocesan or chaplaincy focus, and any workplace involvement, which the individual's ministry might include, using their particular experience or expertise.
7. WAs should provide a basis for the working out of ongoing relationships in a shared ministry rather than being seen as a set of rigid rules.
8. Although a review of the WA should take place at least every three years, it is good practice for there to be an annual review meeting between the HfD minister and incumbent. The main purpose of the review is to help the individual exercise a valuable and fulfilling ministry within the framework for mission and ministry which the local church is engaged in. Any wider focus may need to come under separate arrangements for review.

9. HfD ministers who have specific ministries in secular employment (Ministers in Secular Employment – MSE) will normally be licensed to a parish and will require a parochial WA as described in these Guidance Notes. Such an agreement will recognise their individual circumstances and may include appropriate documentation from their secular employment.
10. Those who have a deanery or diocesan focus to their work will normally be licensed to a parish and will require a parochial working agreement. The agreement will outline the expectations of time spent on each part of the individual's ministry, and should include a separate description of the wider focus. A separate working agreement for each part of ministry may be considered, if this was useful.

**WORKING AGREEMENTS SHOULD BE DRAFTED UNDER THE FOLLOWING HEADINGS: -**

1. Introduction

This explains the purpose and overall scope of the working agreement, e.g

*This Agreement supplements the Statement of Particulars for the Rev'd X in his/her role as Y. Its purpose is to set out the extent to which X will share with their incumbent and other members of the ministry team the worship and work of the parish/benefice. It includes details of the time that X is willing to offer the parish/benefice and what he/she may expect in terms of training, encouragement and support. X has a wide experience of / particular skills in..... and this agreement explains how that experience /skill will be utilised in his/her ongoing ministry.*

2. Focus of Ministry

The Working Agreement will describe the focus of the ministry. For a HfD minister this will normally be the parish where they reside.

If the HfD minister has other responsibilities in which they act in an official capacity (e.g. a chaplaincy, membership of a Diocesan Council or school governor), they should be recorded under this heading. Also include any wider ministry which the office holder exercises within the deanery or diocese.

For a HfD minister in part-time secular employment (MSE) this section should contain full details of the interaction between their role in the workplace and the parish or elsewhere. In particular it should record the extent to which they:

- expect to be able to express their vocation and their status as ordained and representative Christian in their place of work;
- hope to reflect their secular working experience in their parish ministry;

- may benefit from engagement with this ministry by their incumbent and other members of the parish ministry team.

Where a MSE has a ministerial role in their workplace which is recognised by their employer, this may be reflected in their Contract of Employment or equivalent. Where they receive any provision for support and review of their ministerial role this should be included in this Contract.

### 3 Working Arrangements

The Agreement should specify:

- Working days, this is usually Sunday plus two other days (or equivalent number of hours);
- days which are designated as rest days or are allocated to other work or commitments should be noted;
- entitlement to annual leave (this may include time off after Christmas and Easter). This information should tie in with the SoP;
- A HfD minister who has responsibility for a parish should normally ensure their own sickness/holiday cover in consultation with their incumbent;
- the extent to which the HfD minister may be expected to provide cover when the incumbent is away from their parish;
- the extent of the HfD minister's involvement in ministry if a vacancy occurs. This will be discussed with the Churchwardens and the Area Dean and be formalised in a new WA. (The Self-Supporting Minister has no legal responsibility to provide cover in a vacancy. The conduct of the church's affairs and the maintenance of services, including the occasional offices, are the responsibility of the Churchwardens and Area Dean.)

### 4. Worship

The Agreement will set out:

- the extent to which the HfD minister will share the conduct of public worship with the incumbent and the ministry team;
- the frequency with which the HfD minister will preside at the Eucharist;
- the frequency with which the HfD minister will preach;
- the extent to which the HfD minister will share in the conduct of occasional offices, assessing baptisms, weddings and funerals; taking account of any associated preparation and visiting.

5. Supervision, Support and On-going Development or Education

The Agreement should specify the arrangements for:

- a) the incumbent and the HfD minister to meet and pray together;
- b) regular meetings with other members of the ministry team to plan the work programme;
- c) an annual review with the incumbent;
- d) the HfD minister to take a retreat each year;
- e) the HfD minister to take part in Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD);
- f) the HfD minister to belong to and attend Chapter meetings.

6. General Pastoral and Teaching Ministry

The Agreement should acknowledge any particular ministry skills which the HfD minister already possesses (or expects to develop) and say how those skills will be exercised. It should also indicate the degree of independence the HfD minister will have in exercising those skills.

7. Parochial Support

The Agreement will describe the extent to which parishes will encourage the HfD minister and their family by prayer and other support.

8. Revision and Termination of Agreement

The Agreement will be for a period of three years. The Agreement will be reviewed and updated at the end of that time or earlier if there are any significant changes in the HfD minister's responsibilities or personal circumstances.

It will be revised before a vacancy starts and on the arrival of a new incumbent. Responsibility for review and revision lies with the HfD minister and the incumbent. The Archdeacon Pastor is available to provide advice and guidance if needed.

The WA will terminate if the minister is deployed elsewhere.