

Parsonage Standards
(adopted at the 2016 Annual Conference)

The *Book of Discipline* states, “Housing provisions shall comply with Annual Conference housing policy and parsonage standards.” In order to establish a housing policy and housing standard the Annual Conference recommends three options available for the local church. The Annual Conference does not put one option above the other. The options are co-equal, depending upon the local situation.

The Charge Conference shall review the recommendations of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee regarding provision of adequate housing for the pastor(s) of a local Charge in consultation with the District Superintendent, the Charge shall choose one of these three options.

OPTION ONE

Housing Allowance: Any congregation considering a housing allowance shall consult with the District Superintendent to understand all the positive and negative aspects of housing allowances. Before implementing a housing allowance, a congregation must obtain the District Superintendent’s permission. The congregation must present a tentative draft budget for the first two years and demonstrate the impact of the change on the overall fiscal health of the congregation. If the congregation decides to sell an existing parsonage, the church leadership shall follow the Discipline guidelines for selling the parsonage and using the proceeds of the sale.

Upon recommendation of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the Board of Trustees with approval by the Finance Committee, the Charge Conference

shall provide an annual housing allowance. The housing allowance shall not be considered as part of compensation or remuneration of the pastor(s).

OPTION TWO

Upon recommendation of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the Board of Trustees with approval by the Finance Committee, the Charge Conference shall provide a parsonage that furnishes only major appliances, installed floor covering and window dressing.

OPTION THREE

Upon recommendation of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the Board of Trustees with approval by the Finance Committee, the Charge Conference shall provide an adequately furnished parsonage, with quality furnishings, that complies with these standards:

REQUIRED MINIMUM STANDARDS

In addition to the *Discipline* requirements for parsonages the following is required for all parsonages, in the Alabama -West Florida Annual Conference:

- Electrical wiring that meets code and is sufficient to meet today's needs for electricity.
- Climate control - both heating and air conditioning

Rooms:

- Living Room or Great Room
- Dining Room or eating area large enough for at least 8 people
- Kitchen
- 3 bedrooms
- 2 baths
- Indoor laundry area
- Shelter for 2 vehicles
- Secure storage area

Equipment:

Good quality, dependable appliances:

- Stove
- Microwave
- Dishwasher
- Refrigerator with freezer compartment
- Washer and dryer
- Hot water heater of at least 60 gallons
- Wired for basic cable or satellite dish service
- Maintained smoke alarms
- Current fire extinguishers for kitchen and other required areas
- Vacuum, if there are carpets

If no lawn service and pastor is expected to maintain lawn the following are minimum requirements:

- Gas mower, Trimmer or weed eater

Furnishings:

- Quality window coverings in neutral colors that insure privacy
- Quality floor coverings in neutral colors that is durable and easy to maintain

Maintenance:

- Regular pest control inspection and treatment
- Annual termite inspection and treatment
- Landscaping and maintenance thereof should be representative of the neighborhood.
- Regular schedule for painting both on the outside and inside of the house as needed. Any needed repairs should be done in a timely manner
- Annual carpet cleaning
- Regular maintenance and cleaning of chimneys if one exists

CARE OF THE PROPERTY

1. The pastor and family should care for the parsonage as good stewards for the Lord's property, carefully avoiding undue wear and tear, but at the same time they should "be at home" in the parsonage, knowing that the home and furnishings are to be used with inevitable and expected depreciation.
2. The pastor and family are responsible for the repair or replacement of furnishings when, through negligent use of furnishings, breakage results, but ordinary wear and tear, such as is expected when a house is lived in, is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees/Parsonage Committee.
3. The church shall provide an adequate amount of insurance of the building, furnishings, and equipment and for public liability. The minimum amount of insurance carried on the parsonage should be equal to 80% of the replacement value of the building, furnishings, and equipment. *All clergy families are responsible for insuring all of the family's personal items.*
4. There shall be a plan identifying repairs, replacements or additions that need to be made to the parsonage. All broken and worn-out furniture or equipment should be removed.
5. The Board of Trustees in consultation with the parsonage committee shall keep the parsonage and furnishing in good repair. They shall furnish the clergy family with a list of those church members who can do minor repairs and the names of repair companies with whom the church does business. A list of procedures to follow when repair work is needed should also be given to the clergy family
6. Regular pest control inspection and treatment, annual termite inspection and annual carpet cleaning should be budgeted.
7. The pastor and spouse should be consulted in the selection of furnishings and equipment.
8. If the vacating parsonage family had pets they shall be responsible for having the house and yard treated for fleas and other parasites before moving. They shall also be responsible for having the carpeting and upholstery cleaned and must vacate the house early in order to allow for this process to occur.
9. Each pastoral charge should place an amount in the budget annually for normal maintenance and repairs to the building, furnishings, and equipment or the replacement of same if necessary.