



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CHURCH MUSIC
TO THE
IRISH BISHOPS' CONFERENCE
Payment of Church Musicians - Guidelines 2022**

These guidelines have been prepared by the Advisory Committee on Church Music and were presented to the Bishops' Conference in December 2002. The rates are updated annually. Since 2006 the guidelines on fees are jointly published by the Advisory Committee on Church Music and the Church Music Committee of the Church of Ireland Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough. The following includes the introduction prepared by the Advisory Committee on Church Music published with the recommendations as issued in previous years with some additions.

It is stressed that the fees recommended here are guidelines. Some parishes have arrangements in place and these should be respected. 2022 brings a small increase to each band as seen below.

- These guidelines for fees for church musicians are used increasingly as a reference throughout Ireland. They should be regarded as guidelines and advice, not directives so that each musician and parish should make its own arrangements.
- 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.
- The rates are the minimum suggested fees in 2022 for trained and competent musicians who are willing to undertake appropriate in-service training. The qualifications and ability of the musician, his/her expectations, the ability of the choir, the quality of the church organ, are among the matters which must be borne in mind when applying the guidelines to the local situation.
- 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.
- Usually, the church musician will be engaged as an independent contractor on a 'for services' basis. However, if the musician is engaged on a contract of service, the parish should note its legal responsibilities in relation to taxation, social welfare insurance, employer's liability insurance, and health and safety.
- It is also very helpful to have a common understanding between the parish team 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.

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 sizeable additional cost in the future.

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.

We suggest that clergy/parish team 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 heading 'miscellaneous').

It is hoped that pastors will find these guidelines useful in determining an appropriate payment level. The Advisory Committee emphasises that it is essential that the value of music in the worship of the Church and the musicians' training, skill and commitment are realistically recognised in monetary terms.

Guidelines for Fees for Church Musicians -2022

Normal weekly duties Fee for 48 Sundays - see (b) below

Band A	One Mass/Service, no choir	€3,575
Band B	One Mass/Service, choir with a Sunday rehearsal	€4,775*
Band C	One Mass/Service, choir with a weekday rehearsal	€5,970*
Band D	Two Masses/Services, no choir	€5,970*
Band E	Two Masses/Services, choir with a Sunday rehearsal	€7,686*
Band F	Two Masses/Services, choir with a weekday rehearsal	€9,295*

*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 him/her the appropriate fee when the marriage couple/family wish to engage an organist of their choice. The implementation of this principle requires flexibility, so as to avoid misunderstanding and unfair criticism of musicians. However, some people don't choose the organ as the accompanying instrument for a wedding/funeral and use string quartet, harp, guitar and other ensembles. This is their right and no payment is due to the resident organist in these instances. 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 €250 but should be higher when the musician is required for a rehearsal or when music has to be bought or learned.

Funerals: The **minimum** suggested fee for organists and cantors is €150 - €175 for one service; €250 - €275 when music also is provided at a service in church on the eve of a funeral. Travelling expenses (78c per km), may be paid where appropriate. Fees should be reviewed annually by reference to pay inflation and national pay agreements. (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 €85 for the first service on any day and €55 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.