**Diocese of York**

**Church of England Funerals**

**Guidance Notes for Funeral Directors - From January 2025**

Parochial fees must be charged for occasional offices; these include funerals, burials and the erection of monuments in churchyards. Since a change in the law came into force at the beginning of 2013 there are two elements to each fee; they are ‘Fee payable towards the Diocesan Board of Finance’ and ‘Fee payable to Parochial Church Council’. All fees are the legal property of the PCC and DBF and must pass through the appropriate parochial or diocesan accounts.

The DBF makes a grant from its portion of the fee to retired clergy who formerly held a stipendiary post. All payments for funerals taken by retired clergy should be made either to the relevant parish (PCC) or the York Diocesan Board of Finance (YDBF), as explained below. The PCC or YDBF are then responsible for passing the correct payment on to the retired cleric according to a diocesan scale.

Since January 2013, “extra” charges by churches are restricted to heating and genuine optional extras (e.g. music, bells, verger) and reasonable out-of-pocket expenses for the priest. Extra charges for church administration etc. are unlawful.

**Recommended approach to paying the fees**

Here are the recommended ways of paying the fees:

***Please do not make any payments in cash and ensure that all bank transfers or cheque payments are made to a PCC or to the YDBF, rather than to any individual.***

**Funeral including a service in church**

Please make a single payment (bank transfer or cheque) to the PCC of the local church. The amount should be for the diocesan fee, PCC fee, and any extra charges combined. The diocesan and PCC fees combined will be as follows:

* **Church funeral followed by cremation, or burial in council cemetery £269**
* **Church funeral followed by burial in churchyard £609**

Individual churches’ extra charges for heating, music, clergy travel etc will be additional to these amounts and each church will tell you what those figures are.

**Funeral at crematorium only**

* **The combined diocesan and parish fees will be £234**

*If the minister taking the funeral is on the staff of a local church* (vicar, curate, Reader etc) *or the arrangements for the funeral have been coordinated through a local church*, please make a single payment (bank transfer or cheque) for £234 plus clergy out-of-pocket expenses to the PCC of that church. The local church will send the relevant part of the fees on to the diocesan office.

***If the minister is not on the staff of a local church*** (e.g. a retired priest) ***and/or it is not clear which PCC should be paid***, you should make a payment (bank transfer or cheque) to **York DBF** and ensure that a payment form has been completed. The payment form can be downloaded from [www.dioceseofyork.org.uk/fees](http://www.dioceseofyork.org.uk/fees) . If you choose to pay by cheque, the minister who performed the funeral will then be responsible for passing the cheque on to YDBF who will ensure that the correct parts of the fees are distributed to the appropriate parties. Please do not make out any cheques payable to a retired minister personally. If you choose to pay by bank transfer please make your payment to **York** **Diocesan Board of Finance Limited, 20-99-15, 30985759** and e-mail the supporting payment form to finance@yorkdiocese.org .

**Burial of cremated remains in a churchyard**

* **The combined diocesan and parish fees will be £198**

If you are involved in collecting the fees, please process them in the same way as the funeral fees.

**Are there any circumstances in which fees are not charged?**Fees must normally be charged for all Church of England funerals, even if the priest or lay minister taking the service is a volunteer. However, vicars have the authority to waive fees if there are special individual circumstances, which they will discuss with you. (Please note that retired clergy, curates and Readers do not have the authority to waive fees, and if you have any queries on this point you should contact the relevant Archdeacon.)

**What should we do if we are aware of a person claiming to carry out Church of England services who is not complying with this system for handling fees?**Everyone involved in organising and conducting a Church of England funeral must comply with legal requirements. A CofE funeral is a funeral taken by an authorized CofE minister (lay or ordained). So, a service conducted by any other person cannot be described as a CofE funeral, even if the words from a CofE form of service are used. In addition, the legislation makes it clear that the statutory fee belongs to the YDBF.

It is unlawful for anyone to act in such a way that the Board of Finance does not receive the part of the fee to which it is entitled. That is one reason why we ask that you do not make cheques payable to individual clergy. If you have any concerns or queries, please contact the relevant Archdeacon, using the following contact details:

* The Archdeacon of Cleveland adcl@yorkdiocese.org tel:01642 706095
* The Archdeacon of the East Riding ader@yorkdiocese.org tel: 01482 881659
* The Archdeacon of York adyk@yorkdiocese.org tel: 01904 758241

Equally, the Archdeacon should be informed of any person claiming to take services in the name of the Church of England who you have any reason to believe does not have the appropriate licence and authorization.

***Canon Peter Warry Ven. Amanda Bloor Ven Andy Broom Ven. Sam Rushton*** *Diocesan Chief Executive Archdeacon Archdeacon Archdeacon
 of Cleveland of the East Riding of York*

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