



ACCOMMODATION ALLOWANCE UPDATE

Pending an update to the Ministerial Stipends and Related Conditions of Placements Handbook, this update provides information on the Accommodation Allowance that applies to new placements from 1 January 2026.

In 2025, Stipends Committee conducted a review into the basis and calculation of minimum Accommodation Allowance (AA) for ministry placements. The following was approved by Synod Standing Committee to apply to new placements from 1 January 2026. Arrangements for current placements will not change. Except where by agreement of all parties, for placements made prior to 1 January 2026, the new arrangements may be implemented, as long as the Ministry Agent is not disadvantaged.

Four categories are relevant that impact how the AA is determined:

1. Urban congregational placement
2. Urban non-congregational placement
3. Rural congregational placements
4. Rural non-congregational placement

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

For all categories (rural, urban, congregational, or non-congregational),

1. Where a placement has a manse, the expectation is that it will be made available for their Minister.
2. Normally, if a manse is available, the Minister should live in the manse.
3. The AA set by Stipends committee is a minimum – appointing bodies may determine to pay more than the minimum

For congregational placements, whether urban or rural:

1. Manses or rented properties will be located within 10kms or 30 minutes' drive from the congregational placement
2. It is preferable that every placement equal to or greater than 0.6FTE has a manse.

Non-congregational placements, whether urban or rural that are Chaplaincy placements are excluded from the requirement for a manse to be provided. The Accommodation Allowance is to be paid, with the addition of holding costs (10% of AA).

URBAN CONGREGATIONAL PLACEMENTS

If a manse is available, but by agreement between the congregation and the Minister, the Minister lives in their own home, AA will be paid.

If no manse is available and the Minister lives in their own home, the AA will be paid. In addition to the AA, a payment equivalent to 10% of AA will be paid in addition (i.e. 110% of AA) to provide for the holding costs that the Minister bears themselves if in their own home, which would be paid for by the congregation if they were in the manse. These holding costs include: council rates, water rates, building insurance, emergency services levy.

If no manse is available and the Minister does not own their own home, the congregation will rent appropriate accommodation for the Minister. The determination of what is appropriate will be agreed to by the congregation, the Minister, with support by the Presbytery, taking into account the personal circumstances of the Minister, the location of the church, and what the congregation can afford. The rental agreement will be signed by the Property Trust.

If the weekly rent is above the average weekly rent for 'all houses' on website [SQM Research - Property - Weekly Rents - Adelaide](#) the additional cost normally will be shared by the placement and the Minister, unless otherwise agreed. The Presbytery will be part of the conversation where this is negotiated.

URBAN NON-CONGREGATIONAL

(The current policy does not require a manse to be provided to a Minister in non-congregational placements). New policy - as for urban congregational placements.

Basis of calculation of Accommodation Allowance

For urban congregational and urban non congregational placements, the Accommodation Allowance will be calculated as 60% of average house rent in Adelaide as at September 2025 for the 2026 Stipends Schedule. The average house rent will be sourced from this website:

[SQM Research - Property - Weekly Rents - Adelaide](#) using the 'all house' category.

RURAL CONGREGATIONAL

If a manse is available, but by agreement between the congregation and the Minister, the Minister lives in their own home, the rural AA will be paid.

If no manse is available and the Minister lives in their own home, the rural AA will be paid. In addition to the AA, a payment equivalent to 10% of rural AA will be paid in addition (i.e. 110% of rural AA) to provide for holding costs that the Minister bears themselves if in their own home, which would be paid for by the congregation if they were in the manse. These holding costs include: council rates, water rates, building insurance, emergency services levy.

If no manse is available and the Minister does not own their own home, the congregation will rent appropriate accommodation for the Minister. The determination of what is appropriate will be agreed to by the congregation, the Minister, with support by the Presbytery, taking into account the personal circumstances of the Minister, the location of the church, and what the congregation can afford.

If the weekly rent is above the average weekly rent for 'all houses' on website [SQM Research - Property - Weekly Rents - Adelaide](#) the additional cost normally will be shared by the placement and the Minister, unless otherwise agreed. The Presbytery will be part of the conversation where this is negotiated.

RURAL NON CONGREGATIONAL

(The current policy does not require a manse to be provided to a Minister in non-congregational placements). New policy - as for rural congregational placements

Basis of calculation of Rural Accommodation Allowance

The Rural Accommodation Allowance for rural congregational and rural non - congregational placements, the Accommodation Allowance will be calculated as **50%** of average house rent in Adelaide as at September 2025 for the 2026 Stipends Schedule. The average house rent will be sourced from this website: [SQM Research - Property - Weekly Rents - Adelaide](#) using the 'all house' category.

The lower percentage used is to recognize that rents in rural areas are generally lower than in urban areas.

PART TIME PLACEMENTS

If a Minister is in a part time placement (regardless of FTE) normally:

- If a manse is provided, the Minister shall contribute an amount equivalent to the remaining percentage FTE of Accommodation Allowance.
- If the Minister is in their own home, the congregation will pay the pro rata FTE of AA, plus a pro rata of the 10% holding costs.

- If the placement rents accommodation for the Minister, the Minister contributes an amount equivalent to the remaining percentage FTE of the rental amount.

Unless otherwise agreed by the placement.

Important: Congregations and non-congregational placements are encouraged to be generous when discussing accommodation allowance/ manse provision for part time placements.

For further guidance, or if you have any questions about this new methodology for calculating the Accommodation Allowance, please contact Sue Page, Associate General Secretary, Governance & Operations via email spage@sa.uca.org.au or phone 8236 4217