

The Church of England is to make extra funding available to dioceses for grants to help clergy and lay workers struggling with the cost of living crisis, it was announced today.



Up to Â£3 million will be distributed to diocesan boards of finance or nominated local discretionary funds for targeted hardship grants to help clergy and lay employees such as children and youth workers.Â

The grants, to be administered at diocesan level, are aimed at those struggling with the cost of living crisis, in particular with rising energy bills. Â

Decisions about the distribution of grants will be made at diocesan level but it is expected that people from the following groups will be eligible to apply:Â

- Stipendiary clergy, including curates
- Self-supporting ministers with a provided house (âHouse-for-Dutyâ)Â
- Salaried lay workers employed by the diocese or parishes such as youth and childrenâs workers
- Retired clergy carrying out a specific role in support of Diocesan ministry as agreed by or at the request of a Bishop or ArchdeaconÂ

A Church of England report published last year backed targeted support for clergy facing financial challenges such as those with larger families or with no additional household income other than the stipend.

A survey of clergy conducted for the review showed that 62% of respondents Â reported that they were living comfortably or doing all right.

But 13% reported finding it âquite or very difficultâ to manage and 25% described themselves as just getting by.Â

John Spence, Chair of the Archbishops' Council finance committee, said "Our clergy and lay workers are in the frontline of mission and ministry in the Church of England. Every day they make a massive difference for their communities. We know that a significant number face a challenge over the coming months in the face of the rising cost of living.

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"Dioceses will be given additional resources to ensure that not only clergy but those lay workers such as youth and children's workers most in need of financial support will receive the help they need."

**More information:**

- The additional resources will supplement existing discretionary funds held at diocesan level and other sources of financial support for clergy facing financial challenges.

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