

**LETTER of AGREEMENT**  
between Deacon XYZ and the Rector/Vicar of  
Q Episcopal Church,  
ABC, New Jersey

**A. Diaconal Duties**

1. Deacon XYZ is assigned to Q, ABC, New Jersey, effective \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Deacon XYZ's primary ministry will be as \_\_\_\_\_. Other community ministries will be as agreed upon by the deacon and the rector/vicar.
3. Within the parish, it is expected that Deacon XYZ will participate as much as possible in the usual role of the deacon, i.e., in ministries to the sick, the poor, and any who are in need. Deacon XYZ should exemplify this ministry in the liturgy by assisting at the altar, reading the gospel, bidding people to prayer and confession, commissioning lay eucharistic visitors, and dismissing the people for service. It is expected that Deacon XYZ will assist the rector/vicar by preaching on a [regular / occasional / seasonal] basis.
4. It is expected that Deacon XYZ will participate in convocational and diocesan activities, particularly in assistance to the bishop.

**B. Reporting**

1. Historically, deacons are assigned by the bishop and report to the bishop. In recognition of the constraints of modern life, any deacon assigned to a parish by the archdeacon reports directly to the rector/vicar.
2. The deacon shall meet annually with the bishop and/or an archdeacon for a review of the deacon's ministry.

**C. Ministry and Personal Time**

1. The usual amount of time dedicated to diaconal ministry is expected; i.e., between ten and fourteen hours per week, given seasonal and scheduling variations. This includes Sunday worship.
2. Deacon XYZ shall receive no less than four weeks off annually (including Sundays), to coincide with employment vacations. If possible, such time off should be coordinated with the rector/vicar, but it should be recognized that personal or employment demands might often take precedence over parish activities.
3. In recognition of the demands made upon [her/him] by [her/his] secular and ecclesiastical responsibilities, Deacon XYZ shall receive, every five years, sabbatical time off in addition to any other time off he receives. This sabbatical time should be at least one month in duration, and be part of a personal program for renewal and/or personal growth. This shall be negotiated with the rector/vicar and communicated to the archdeacon.

4. Deacon XYZ shall receive one week off per year for a scheduled personal spiritual retreat

#### **D. Allowances**

1. While diaconal work is by and large non-stipendiary (that is, without fixed or regular pay), it is also recognized that it should not cost the deacon monetarily to do [her/his] work in the parish. Therefore, Deacon XYZ shall be paid mileage, according to diocesan guidelines, for distance traveled in the ministries [she/he] performs for Q, including but not limited to visiting the sick of the parish, and travel for other business done on behalf of Q. This does not include regular travel to the church for worship services or meetings.

2. If Deacon XYZ is requested to officiate at a Sunday Morning Prayer service for which the parish would normally hire a supply priest, it is expected that [she/he] will be paid within the current guidelines of the diocese for supply clergy. This does not apply when [she/he] is asked to preach in the presence of another officiant.

3. The rector/vicar, or in case of a vacancy the Wardens, may negotiate with Deacon XYZ for [her/his] leadership of other worship services for the parish as the case may arise, keeping in mind the schedule of the rector/vicar and the needs of the parish. This may include Evensong, and may not necessarily involve remuneration.

4. Deacon XYZ shall receive an allowance of \$\_\_\_\_\_ per year, to support [her/his] ministry and/or be used for personal growth.

5. All financial arrangements shall have the approval of the rector/vicar, Wardens, and Vestry.

#### **E. Term of Letter of Agreement**

1. A Deacon shall serve at the pleasure of the rector/vicar and may not serve beyond the period of service of the rector/vicar, except that pending the call of a new rector/vicar, a Deacon may continue in the service of the Parish if requested to do so by the Vestry and under such conditions as the Bishop and Vestry shall determine.

2. It is understood that, within three months after the arrival of a new rector/vicar, the Deacon will take a leave of absence from the parish of between one and three months for the purpose of discernment. This requirement shall be announced and its purpose explained to the congregation in advance of the new rector/vicar's arrival. It is expected that, during this period of discernment, the Deacon will seek counsel and direction from the Bishop and/or Archdeacon(s) regarding the Deacon's ministry. The Deacon may also enter into conversation with the new rector/vicar about the possibility of continuing service in the parish. By the request of the new rector/vicar and with the Bishop's approval, the Deacon may return to the parish under the terms of a new Letter of Agreement, to be negotiated with the new rector/vicar and the Vestry.

3. This letter may be terminated before its term after discussion among the rector/vicar, deacon, and bishop or archdeacon. It should be recognized that in any

unresolved parish difficulty arising from the relationship between the rector/vicar and the deacon, the bishop will automatically reassign the deacon for the benefit of the pastoral relationship within the parish. Under Title III, Canon 9, Section 3(a) of the national canons, any assistant cleric, including a deacon, may have his/her employment terminated by the rector/vicar at any time.

4) As a deacon, XYZ may be reassigned by the bishop or archdeacon at any time if the need arises, and with due notice and agreement.

**F. Other**

1. When the deacon decides to retire from active service in the diaconate, [she/he] is required to follow the diocesan guidelines on clergy retirement. Retirement need not occur at age 72 unless the deacon has participated in the Church Pension Fund.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bishop or Archdeacon

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rector/Vicar, Q Church

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deacon

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
for the Vestry, attest

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date