

Covenant of Ministry

The sample covenant in this appendix is for reference purposes. Actual covenants should include the elements included in the sample but the form and the words may vary. Note that the signatories to the covenant must be as shown in the sample.

The covenant begins with a statement of the deacon's vocation and the manner the deacon is called to engage in ministry. One would expect to find the work of the deacon in the parish or group at the intersection of their mission and of the sense of call of the deacon. The description of the deacon's ministry will include their external ministry, stated to explain how the Church's mission is being extended into the wider community.

The next part of the covenant should deal with the areas of ministry the deacon will undertake in the Church setting for the next year. The expectation is that the covenant will be specific and measurable. How many times and how many hours are questions that should be asked. Write from the perspective of the annual review and ask the question, "How will I know if I have accomplished this?" Diocesan work should be included in this part of the covenant as well as parish and workplace ministry.

The third part of the covenant should encompass accountability and discipline. The deacon is accountable to the rector, or other authorities appointed by the bishop. At the same time, the parish or group is accountable to the deacon for support. Another statement will indicate a recognition of the rector's authority on all matters relating to the parish. There should also be a statement that outlines the intention to meet, report and consult. Another statement indicates that the covenant will be reviewed annually. This portion of the covenant needs to recognize that the deacon is non-stipendiary and that paid employment and family commitments must be recognized and have priority at most times.

The fourth and final section of the covenant outlines working conditions and support. There must be a statement that the expenses of the deacon's ministry will be paid by the parish or group. This might include books for classes the deacon is leading, mileage for trips to a nursing home and similar expenses. Some parishes may make provision for the deacon to have a monthly or annual honorarium to cover such expenses. The parish or group must also provide for the full cost of the deacon's membership in the Continuing Education Fund of the Diocese of New Westminster. Provision should be made for holidays and study leave. Other matters may also be covered according to the needs of the parish and the deacon, such as parking and office space.

The Archdeacon for Deacons will assist the rector, wardens and ordinand with the development of the first covenant and is available to assist in later reviews if requested to do so.

For postulants, it is appropriate to have a learning covenant which is a modified form of the deacon's covenant. The learning covenant should outline the postulant's learning goals, plans for achieving those goals and supervision.

Sample Covenant

A COVENANT BETWEEN

(Parish/Deanery/Ministry Group)

AND

(deacon's name)

This Covenant describes the ministerial relationship between the Parish/Deanery/Ministry Group of _____, Diocese of New Westminster and _____ (deacon).

Statement of Vocation of _____ (deacon).

- ❖ We understand that the ministry of a deacon is to:
 - make Christ and his redemptive love known, by my word and example, to those among whom I live and work and worship.
 - interpret to the Church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world.
 - enable and support the people of God in carrying out the baptismal ministries to which God calls them;
 - be visible as a deacon and perform the liturgical functions of a deacon as set out in the liturgies of the Anglican Church of Canada: and
 - assist and support my rector.

Ministry and Relationship with the Parish

- ❖ **Workplace Ministry** – Insert a description of the deacon's workplace ministry here, the deacon's work in the world or work that assists God's people in engaging with and serving the poor, the needy, the marginalized. Explain how this pastoral ministry extends the ministry of the Church and elaborate on its diaconal nature. Comment on how the deacon will interpret to the Church the needs, concerns and hopes of the greater community.

- ❖ **Parish Ministry** – Insert a description of the deacon’s parish ministry here, explain how this ministry cultivates a heart for service within the parish. The description may include the following:
 - **Worship** – Elaborate on the role of the deacon at the Sunday liturgies and at such other liturgies as may be reasonably agreed to from time to time.
 - **Christian Education** – Insert a clear statement of what it is you will provide in this area and its clear relationship to cultivating a heart for service in the parish
 - **Pastoral Ministry** – Describe any pastoral ministry you will undertake and its relationship to cultivating a heart for service within the parish.
 - **Diocesan Ministry** – Specify any service on committees of the Diocese as requested and as time permits. Time spent in such service will be included in the required ministry hours set out in the section of this Covenant which speaks to working conditions and support.

Accountability and Discipline

- ❖ _____ (Deacon) _____ is accountable to the rector in all matters pertaining to the Parish of _____.
- ❖ _____ (Deacon) _____ accepts the overall authority of the Bishop and Archdeacon for Deacons.
- ❖ _____ (Deacon) _____ is accountable to _____ in all matters pertaining to his/her work as a _____ *(use this section if engaged by an ecclesial body other than a parish).*
- ❖ _____ (Deacon) _____ will adhere to the requirements for deacons as contained in the Deacons’ Handbook, including the policy and process relating to retirement.
- ❖ Through regular staff meetings and reports, _____ (Deacon) _____ will report and consult with the rector with respect to the various aspects of his/her ministry.
- ❖ As deacon, _____ (Deacon) _____ is a member of *(insert names of parish committees of which you are a member).*
- ❖ _____ (Deacon) _____ will participate in an annual review of his/her ministry and these provisions with the rector and wardens and will accept amendment of these provisions as necessary and as may be mutually agreed to by the rector, the wardens and _____ (Deacon) _____. Evaluation of performance and competence and continuation of ministry connected to the parish.
- ❖ _____ (Deacon) _____ will attend Vestry Meetings of the Parish and submit a written report of his/her ministry and activities within and outside the Parish to Vestry.

- ❖ The rector and the wardens recognize and affirm _____ (Deacon) 's family and work obligations with respect to time and energy, the need for balance in his/her life and the lives of his/her family members and the need for _____ (Deacon) to take care of himself/herself in all aspects of her wellbeing. The Parish will, as much as possible, limit its access to _____ (Deacon) to the agreed periods of time he/she will be engaged in active diaconal ministry.
- ❖ This Covenant has a term of one year from the date of signature. _____ (Deacon) and the rector and wardens will perform an assessment of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the ministry described in this Covenant in one year's time at which time a renewed covenant may be signed.

Working Conditions and Support

- ❖ The Parish has no obligation to provide remuneration for _____ (Deacon) 's ministry. The Parish will reimburse to _____ (Deacon) out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the performance of his/her ministry.
- ❖ _____ (Deacon) will take advantage of continuing educational opportunities within and without the Diocese and the Parish. To facilitate _____ (Deacon) 's continuing education, he/she is entitled to three weeks' annual educational leave. Additional educational leave may be taken as may reasonably be agreed to from time to time by the rector and _____ (Deacon). The Parish will pay the entire amount of monthly contributions required by Canon 12 and Regulations of the Anglican Church of Canada in respect of _____ (Deacon) 's continuing education to the Diocese of New Westminster Continuing Education Fund.
- ❖ _____ (Deacon) will carry out his/her ministry in the parish / in workplace (clarify) an average of _____ hours per week. _____ (Deacon) is entitled to four weeks' vacation each year, the timing of which will be reasonably agreed to by the rector and _____ (Deacon). If required for the efficient exercise of _____ (Deacon) 's ministry, the Parish will provide a work space for _____ (Deacon) to use, if available.

In witness of this Ministerial Relationship,

the Rector and Wardens of the Parish of _____ and

_____ (Deacon) and the Archdeacon and Bishop have signed this Covenant

as of the _____ day of _____.

Rector

Deacon

People's Warden

Archdeacon for Deacons

Rector's Warden

Bishop