

Guidelines for Extended Ministerial Development Leave

1. Objective

Extended Ministerial Development Leave (EMDL) provides a three-month break from parish duties or ministry activities. Shorter durations do not qualify since the essence of EMDL is its extended nature; benefits cannot be fully realised in a shorter timeframe, though there may be other funding options for briefer absences. EMDL should encompass the following aspects:

- Education
- Time for personal reflection and spiritual growth
- Renewal
- Growth in both personal and professional capacities
- Contemplation

It is important to note that EMDL is not:

- An additional holiday
- A period to seek new employment
- A recovery phase from chronic illness or stress

The primary focus is to enhance your ministry by developing your skills and broadening your experiences.

2. Eligibility

Full-time, paid clergy can apply for EMDL through the Director of Mission if they meet these criteria:

1. Have at least 12 years of full-time stipendiary ministry, typically 8-9 years after completing initial training.
2. Have not taken a similar EMDL in the last 7 years, either in this diocese or another.
3. Have served in their current role for a minimum of 3 years.
4. Have not received funding for a Major Academic Course within the past 3 years.
5. Are not within 2 years of retirement during the year EMDL is planned.
6. Have consulted with and received support from the Church Wardens.

Self-supporting ministers who effectively commit full-time to diocesan ministry may also be eligible, although funding availability may vary.

3. Considerations

When applying, take into account:

- Family and personal situations
- The needs of your parish or ministry context
- The ability of your deanery/colleagues to manage responsibilities during your absence

It is the applicant's duty to arrange coverage; however, diocesan clergy may offer assistance, and alternative suggestions, such as seconding a local SSM or curate, might be available.

4. Planning

During the planning phase, ensure you address:

- Clear objectives (what you intend to achieve and why)
- Timing
- Location(s)
- Key subjects for study/research/experience
- Additional activities
- Reporting on outcomes

Engaging with the Director of Mission early in the process is crucial. Avoid committing any funds until your EMDL has been officially approved.

5. Application Process

Applications for EMDL are generally invited 18 months prior to the anticipated leave. If there are more applicants than available grants and additional funding cannot be secured, decisions will be made based on service length and demonstrated need.

6. Funding

Each year, up to 8 grants of **£1,200** (which includes the annual CMD Personal Allowance) are offered. It is expected that parishes contribute to costs if the approved plan exceeds the basic grant amount; The Director of Mission will contact the Parish, regarding this, once plans are finalised. There are also various grant sources available, including:

- WCMET (for women and study),
- The Boniface Trust (for sabbatical/refreshment activities),
- Sons of the Clergy, and

- EiG's Ministry Bursary Awards.

These options will be discussed during the planning meeting. Full receipts must be submitted before any payments are issued. We can cover expenses related to approved professional/academic courses, accommodation, and travel, but please consult me before making any commitments if you have questions.

While we support allocating some time (up to 2 weeks) for leisure activities (such as golf, cooking classes, scuba diving), these cannot be funded through the EMDL budget, nor can we cover expenses for family members accompanying you.

7. Subsequent EMDLs

After seven years from your first EMDL, clergy may request a 4-week Ministerial Development Leave (MDL) for specific developmental projects. Funding for this will be limited, but clergy can utilise their CMD personal allowance and apply for external grants.

Additionally, clergy may apply for a special 4-week MDL during significant transitions or when particular tasks need attention.

Alternatively, ten years after the initial EMDL, clergy can apply for another three-month EMDL with potential full funding, though this is not assured. For any inquiries regarding this process or your eligibility on the invitation list, please feel free to contact me.

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