

**Rocky Mountain Classis
2017
Base Salary Minimums**

The RMC Executive Team Committee recommends to member churches that there be a 3% cost of living increase for 2017. There has been no cost of living increase for pastor salaries for at least 10 years.

Based upon the above, the committee further recommends that the minimum salaries within the Rocky Mountain Classis will be:

<u>Years as Ordained Minister</u>	<u>2016 Salary Minimum</u>	<u>2017 Salary Minimum</u>
0-2	\$40,067	\$41,269
3-5	\$41,336	\$42,576
6-10	\$43,348	\$44,648
11 +	\$45,445	\$46,808

In addition to the minimum required cash salary, each church shall also provide the following minimum benefits and allowances:

1. Enrollment of the minister and family in a medical insurance program, as required by the RCA.
2. Enrollment of the minister in the RCA annuity program, as required by the RCA.
3. Enrollment of the minister in the RCA group life (or cash equivalent for a comparable life program) and long-term disability program.
4. A parsonage, with all utilities, plus a telephone (exclusive of personal long distance calls), or an equivalent cash housing allowance.
5. A minimum of four weeks paid vacation annually (including four Sundays/weekends)
6. At least one week study leave annually, plus 1/52 of the base salary for expenses for each week.
7. An allowance to cover automobile expenses.

The call issued to a pastor has two main concepts which deal with the relationship between pastor and people. Specifically the pastor is to perform certain services in his/her ministry among the people and the people are to provide remuneration for the pastor to keep him/her from temporal concerns. The latter is an obligation clearly undertaken by the church.

At least annually each church's pastoral relations committee, or counterpart committee of the church, shall meet with the pastor to discuss performance and make a salary recommendation to the consistory based on this review. Churches are urged to give recognition and encouragement to dedication, creativity and other evidences of excellence in pastoral performance by way of a better than average salary increase. (See the Book of Church Order, Part II, Article 7, Section 5-IV) We urge each classis church supervision committee to write a letter each year to the local vice president, clerk and pastor sharing with them a sample performance review sheet and requesting them to verify on provided forms that a review has taken place.

The meeting with the pastor should deal openly with the financial needs of the pastor and his family. Items in addition to salary should be specifically reviewed, such as the automobile allowance, in mutual effort to provide fair and adequate total remuneration to the pastor. Besides meeting the pastor's need for day-to-day living expenses, consideration should be given to the pastor's financial concerns such as costs of educating children, providing for emergencies, and preparing for retirement.

The rationale for the salary schedule format is to reinforce the idea that a pastor's salary must be the result of reviewing individual needs and performance. The minimum starting salary framework provides a more flexible basis for the discussion between pastor and the consistory committee on how performance and needs should be recognized in the salary determination.

Each church and pastor is encouraged to explore to the fullest extent possible the benefits available from utilizing specialized clergy financial planning services. Provisions in Federal Income Tax regulations offer opportunities for savings to both parties. Tax counsel specializing in these areas should be consulted to be assured maximum benefit is going to the pastor at minimum cost to the church.