



# United Methodist Parsonage Standards

Parsonage standards provide uniformity to the extent that ministers and congregations know what is expected of each other, moving expenses in relation to changing furniture and furniture storage are minimized, and appointments may be based upon abilities and gifts, and not upon the size or type of family. It is understood that some churches provide housing allowances, but these standards relate to the majority of our pastoral charges.

**The pastor will care for the parsonage as a “good steward” of the property, avoiding undue wear and tear. The pastor will be responsible for any damage caused by pets, personal guests, or family members. Whenever there is a change in appointments, it is required that the parsonage is left clean enough that the next occupant does not have to clean anything.**

To furnish an atmosphere by which clergy are able to care for their families and reenergize for ministry, and to provide economy, convenience, and good will for parsonage families and congregations, the following standards are:

1. Adequate heating and cooling facilities (central heat and air are desirable), and adequate water supply, plumbing and lighting, to be inspected annually by those stated in ¶12533.4 of the *2012 Book of Discipline* or current *Discipline*.
2. Stove, refrigerator with sufficient freezer capacity, and a dishwasher.
3. Furniture for the living room, dining room, eat-in kitchen, and one bedroom (including good mattress and box springs for the bed).
4. Window treatments and provisions for adequate maintenance for all windows.
5. Carpets for all floors, or suitable floor coverings and provisions for adequate maintenance. **We do not recommend carpeting for bathrooms or kitchens.**
6. Washing machine and dryer in good condition. Purchase telephone.
7. All utilities will be in the church’s name.
8. Smoke detectors adequate for the parsonage.
9. Adequate lawnmower with storage. If the yard is large, it is encouraged that a riding lawnmower be purchased.

If the furnishings are in good condition and the minister does not care to use the above mentioned furnishings, she/he will be expected to provide storage. If the parsonage has furnishings in rooms not required and the pastor does not wish to use the furniture, the church will be expected to provide storage. **Furnishings shall be stored to insure against damage. They should be stored where heating and cooling are provided.**

When replacing furniture, used furniture from members’ homes, etc., will not be placed in the parsonage. New furniture should be provided.

Any Charge buying, building or renovating a parsonage shall:

1. Provide accessibility to persons with handicapping conditions and keep steps to a minimum in consideration of various health problems.
2. Select one with at least three bedrooms (four where possible), one of which shall be on the ground level.
3. Provide two baths, with at least one on the ground level, with exhaust fans.
4. Since ministers often talk with members in the living room, a family room or den shall be in all parsonages.
5. A built-in two car garage or carport with an adequate entrance and an automatic garage door opener.

Shall provide:

1. Heating and cooling with cost efficiency in mind; for example, making alternate sources of heat available, proper insulation, storm windows and doors, or double pane windows, etc.
2. Neutral colors for ease in matching walls, curtains, and draperies with bedspreads, etc.
3. That an annual amount, not less than \$500, be carried in the budget for the Charge to maintain repair, and upgrade parsonage and furnishings.

In accordance with ¶2533.4 of the *2012 Book of Discipline*, the Chairperson of the Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, and the Pastor shall make an annual review of the church-owned parsonage to assure proper maintenance. This assessment of the parsonage and its needs will be reported to the Administrative Board of Council.

The report will be included in the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee's report and recommendations to the annual Charge Conference. A report form will be included in the church's annual Charge Conference packet. This report will include at least the following: (For the questions to be covered in a review, see the following form.)

In reference to appointment changes, outgoing pastors will extend the invitation to incoming pastors and spouses to visit and see their new parsonage prior to Annual Conference. Such visits will occur subsequent to a date set by the Cabinet. Once the charge is notified that the pastor will be moving, an inspection will be made at that time. The parsonage family will make sure the parsonage is clean. The Parsonage Committee and/or others charged with responsibility of the maintenance and care of the parsonage shall make arrangements for carpet cleaning and necessary repairs prior to the arrival of the incoming parsonage family.

Each district office should have floor plans on file of each parsonage in the district to assist moving pastors and their families in planning for the move. A list of furniture and furnishings should also be included in each parsonage file. A copy of these Parsonage Standards is to be printed in alternate conference Journals. Copies of these standards will be printed and placed in the hands of pastors and Pastor-Parish Relations Committee Chairpersons.

*Submitted by:*

*Board of Ordained Ministry Parsonage Standards Sub-Committee*

***Revised May 2013***