

THE CLERGY CRITICAL NEED FUND: GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING

The Diocesan Fund for Critical Clergy Needs (CCN) is an endowed fund that provides financial grants to the clergy of the Episcopal Diocese of New York to assist with the cost of critical needs in the general categories of healthcare, financial hardship, the education of their children, and clergy wellness.

The CCN Committee is a group of lay and ordained people resident in the Episcopal Diocese of New York who have been appointed by the Bishop of New York to discern the distribution of monies from the CCN Fund.

The intended purposes of the historical grants that were allocated by the Trustees to create this Fund are what guide the CCN Committee in its decisions about the kinds of requests that can be supported. The CCN Committee remains committed to discerning how to best utilize this Fund given the wide range of needs that the original grants could not have anticipated in their historical context.

Who is Eligible?

Bishops, priests and deacons, active or retired, who are canonically resident in the Episcopal Diocese of New York are eligible to apply for CCN Fund grants. Surviving spouses and family members of clergy may be eligible depending upon the situation.

For guidance, please contact Canon Nora Smith, the CCN Staff Support person, at nsmith@diocesenyc.org

How do I apply?

Grant deadlines are the last Friday of February, May, August, and November. This does not apply to Wellness Grants. Please see that section below for more information.

The application form is filled out online.

Please review the form to learn more about needed information and documentation. All applications must be filled out completely and include documentation in support of the grant request for the CCN Committee to consider it. For assistance with the application, please contact Canon Nora Smith at nsmith@diocesenyc.org

All grant requests (except for Wellness Grants) are reviewed by the CCN Committee during their quarterly meetings in March, June, September, and December. Applicants are informed of decisions about their grant request soon after the quarterly meeting. All applications and grant awards are kept strictly confidential.

In urgent situations requiring immediate consideration, please contact Canon Nora Smith at nsmith@diocesenyc.org to inquire about initiating a grant request.

THE CLERGY CRITICAL NEED FUND: GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING

What kinds of concerns are covered by the Diocesan Fund for Critical Clergy Needs?

The CCN Committee generally defines a critical need as an unexpected and/or unusual expense that arises due to crisis or unexpected hardship. The CCN Committee reserves the right to determine whether a situation is of a critical nature.

The Diocesan Fund for Critical Clergy Needs supports requests in 4 categories:

1. Healthcare
2. Financial Difficulty
3. Tuition Assistance for Children of Clergy
4. Wellness – these grants have an upper limit and are awarded on a different cycle to enable swifter access.

While tuition assistance for the children of clergy doesn't usually arise out of crisis or unexpected hardship, the CCN Committee has been charged with distributing these assistance grants. Education itself is a critical need.

Because wellness is also critical to the functioning of a cleric, the CCN Committee sets aside funding on a regular basis to provide support for clergy Wellness Grants.

HEALTHCARE GRANTS

The CCN Fund provides financial assistance in times of medical crisis or for extraordinary healthcare costs not covered by insurance. Healthcare grants may include, but are not limited to:

- medical care provided in time of severe illness or other family medical crisis;
- extraordinary dental, vision, or auditory care or hearing aids;
- acute mental healthcare in time of crisis;
- acute medical or rehab care in situations involving addiction.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to understand the parameters of their insurance plans and to work within their health plans' requirements. The CCN Committee will consider approving a grant request for unpaid medical bills once all healthcare bills have been submitted to an insurance provider and the response has been received. This must be included in the documentation.

THE CLERGY CRITICAL NEED FUND: GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING

Healthcare bills for “Out of Network” services will only be considered if no such services are available in network. Grant requests for services where the cleric has opted out of service from available “In Network” providers will not be considered.

If a cleric is in between cures (moving into or out of the diocese) or if their congregation neglected to pay premiums, the CCN Committee will consider covering up to six months of premium payments for medical insurance. Otherwise, the regular costs of health insurance, such as co-pays and deductibles, and premiums for a Medicare Supplemental Insurance Policies, are not considered a critical need.

Any subsequent application for a CCN grant that relates to an ongoing health crisis will be reviewed in the context of previously awarded grants.

NOTE: For those clergy considering living or traveling abroad, the CCN Committee does not approve grants for assistance with healthcare costs incurred outside of the United States.

Please be aware that many health insurance plans, including Medicare, do not cover such healthcare expenses. Therefore, clergy planning to travel abroad are urged to obtain traveler’s insurance. Clergy who reside abroad for an extended period of time are encouraged to investigate appropriate healthcare options, including for emergency situations.

FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY GRANTS

The CCN Committee considers requests for assistance with financial needs of a critical nature that may or may not be related to healthcare expenditures.

To confidentially inquire about applying for a Financial Difficulty Grant, please contact Canon Nora Smith, CCN Staff Support at nsmith@dioceseny.org

THE CLERGY CRITICAL NEED FUND: GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING

TUITION ASSISTANCE GRANTS FOR CHILDREN OF CLERGY

Clerics may apply to receive grants from the CCN Fund to assist with the costs of tuition for their children in three kinds:

1. Undergraduate degree programs
2. Certified adult vocational training
3. Primary or secondary school education, under special circumstances

1. Undergraduate Degree Programs

When applying for tuition assistance for an undergraduate degree program, please be aware of the following:

- These applications are time sensitive. The CCN Committee will only consider undergraduate degree program applications at the June meeting. Therefore, applications will be received from January through May for the next academic year.
- The maximum amount awarded is \$5,000 per student per academic year. The amount rewarded to each student will depend upon the number of requests received in a given year.
- Annual grants for each child will be awarded no more than 4 times, whether for undergraduate degree programs, vocational training, or both.
- Applications must be supported by tuition invoicing documentation from the college or university at which the student is enrolled.
- The CCN Fund does not provide grants for graduate-level study.

2. Certified Adult Vocational Training

When applying for tuition assistance for certified adult vocational training, please be aware of the following:

- Applications may be submitted at any time.
- The maximum amount awarded is \$5,000 per student per academic year. The amount rewarded to each student will depend upon the number of requests received in a given year.
- Annual grants for each child will be awarded no more than 4 times, whether for undergraduate degree programs, vocational training, or both.
- Applications must be supported by tuition invoicing documentation from the program in which the student is enrolled.

THE CLERGY CRITICAL NEED FUND: GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING

3. Primary or Secondary School

Clergy may apply for a grant from the CCN Fund for their children's primary or secondary education, under the following circumstances:

1. When a child has special needs requiring a particular educational setting or pedagogy, documentation of learning differences as well as the school's IEP is required.
2. When a cleric lives and works in a critical mission area of the diocese, where public schooling is clearly inadequate. In this case, the cleric may apply for assistance with their child's private school education.

When applying for tuition assistance for primary or secondary school, please be aware of the following:

- Applications may be submitted throughout the year, in time for any of the quarterly deadlines listed above.
- One grant per child, per academic year will be awarded.
- Grant requests must be supported with invoicing documentation from the school at which the student is enrolled.

THE CLERGY CRITICAL NEED FUND: GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING

WELLNESS GRANTS

The CCN Committee considers wellness to be a critical need for clergy and we recognize that clergy are often the best judge of how to manage their own wellness. These grants function differently than the other 3 categories of grants listed above.

How is Wellness different from Healthcare? While the two are inter-related, the CCN sees our Wellness Grants as an opportunity to help the individual cleric support their overall mental, spiritual, and emotional health. When we are out of balance in one area, our whole being can be dramatically affected, often leading to other health or financial issues. We hope that these grants will encourage our clergy to take the time and space they need to tend to their own wellness.

What kinds of things are covered by this grant? Simply defined: Clergy spiritual and emotional wellbeing as defined by the cleric. Examples: retreats, coaching, spiritual direction, online retreat/course, tending to overall wellness/health, pitching a tent in the woods, etc.

How much can be applied for? Up to \$500 once per granting cycle, which is typically one calendar year. It is advised that the cleric consider all the costs involved including fees, travel, meals, childcare, etc. when applying. No documentation of costs is required.

What is the deadline for this grant? The Wellness Grants are the only category of grants that are awarded on a rolling basis. Every month, members of the CCN Committee will review the applications and contact the clerics.