



# DIOCESE OF SIOUX CITY

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To all priests

The Bishop and Presbyteral Council, by request, have developed a guidance document for the Diocese and parishes to use in the case that a facility owned by the Diocese or parishes is rented out for housing. This document is neither a mandate or a policy but instead a **guidance document** that those who oversee housing may use when they rent / provide the facility to someone other than the pastor or a parochial vicar assigned to the parish if they wish.

The document is attached and can also be found on the Diocesan Webpage under **“Parishes and Schools”**.

Feel free to contact my office with questions.

Thank you,

Deacon Mark Prosser

# **Guidance Document**

## **Addressing Individuals Residing in Diocesan /Parish Rectories (Dwellings)**

This guidance document has been developed by the Sioux City Catholic Diocese in order to give suggestions and assist in establishing parameters for when a priest has retired and/or left active ministry either incarnated or non-incarnated in the Diocese of Sioux City or for a deacon, woman religious or lay person(s) who resides in a rectory or other parish owned residence (dwelling) at any parish within the boundaries of the Diocese of Sioux City or in any residence (dwelling) owned by the Diocese of Sioux City.

The document is for the use of the Diocese, pastor and parish leadership, if they so desire, and is designed to highlight certain areas and topics that a pastor, parish or the Diocese may want to consider when providing housing for a retired priest, deacon, woman religious or lay person.

These suggested guidelines include any of the aforementioned people living in a parish or diocesan owned dwelling either alone or with other priests.

**It should be noted that in every case where one of the aforementioned people have been granted housing in a parish or Diocesan dwelling it should be done so under a written agreement noting expectations and responsibilities on the part of the occupant and the property owner that is signed by all involved parties.**

### **Property Maintenance:**

1. Any **person(s) (cleric or laity)** residing in a diocesan or parish owned dwelling will maintain the property to the best of his/her ability and report any needed repairs or replacement to the appropriate authority.
2. Person(s) are prohibited from bringing any pets into a diocesan or parish owned dwelling without the specific permission of the entity which owns said dwelling. If permission is granted the residing person(s) are financially responsible for all damage or wear caused by any authorized pet upon moving out of said dwelling. Excessive or unreasonable damage by a pet in a diocesan or parish owned dwelling while the any person still resides in the dwelling may be cause for the property owner to order the pet removed or the residing occupants evicted from the dwelling.

3. When living with other priest(s) all the courtesies afforded in a shared living arrangement are to be followed to insure harmony and a healthy, clean living environment. ***This section is for priests only.***
4. Family members, staff and laity are also allowed to reside in dwellings owned by the Diocese or a parish as long as a written agreement noting rent (if applicable), living arrangements and property maintenance expectations are defined and signed off on.

### **Required Living Rules:**

1. A written agreement should be established and signed by the pastor / designate and person(s) residing in any dwelling owned by the Diocese or parish. Said agreement should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis and renegotiated upon the assignment of a new pastor to the parish.
2. If rent is charged to the occupant(s) residing in a dwelling owned by the Diocese or parish it is expected that said rent will be paid on time. A pattern of delinquent payments can result in eviction of the resident.
3. All rules established by the dwelling owner (Diocese or parish) are to be adhered to by all occupants residing in the Diocesan or parish owned dwelling.
4. Person(s) residing in a Diocesan or parish dwelling are to adhere to all Diocesan and parish rules and protocols established by the Bishop and pastor of the parish they reside in (if applicable).
5. No priest(s) residing in a Diocesan or parish dwelling may schedule or preside at any liturgy unless appropriately assigned by the pastor of the parish nor may they schedule any additional or “special” liturgies at any church or facility within a parish boundary without the specific authorization of the pastor of the parish. Failure to comply with the directions of the Bishop or the pastor of the parish where they reside may result in their eviction.
6. Any person(s) residing in a dwelling owned by the Diocese or parish who speak out or act out in opposition or defiance towards the sitting Bishop or pastor lose their right to reside in Diocesan or parish housing.
7. No illegal substances or immoral materials are allowed in any dwelling owned by the Diocese or parish.

## **Requirement for Independent Living Status:**

1. All person(s) who reside in a dwelling owned by the Diocese or a parish must be able to successfully care for themselves in an independent living environment.
2. If at any point a person residing in a dwelling owned by the Diocese or a parish becomes ill, injured, or otherwise presents mobility and balance challenges the Diocese or parish reserves the right to request written authorization from a practicing physician that it is safe for the resident to remain in the dwelling living an independent lifestyle. If said documentation is not attainable then the resident will no longer be allowed to live in the dwelling and will be encouraged and assisted (if needed) to relocate to a facility that can provide the appropriate level of care needed.