# Lay Pastoral Assistant Sample

# Ministry Specification

For: *(Name)*

In the Parish/Benefice of: *(Name)*

Incumbent: *(Name)*

LPA Facilitator : *(Name – Please adapt to local title for this role)*

Regularity of Contact: *monthly/bi-monthly/quarterly*. *(please insert appropriate time)*

Date of Commendation *(Date)*

Lay Pastoral Assistants play an important part in their communities by visiting and caring for those in need. Many people will show that care for others informally, but Lay Pastoral Assistants have a specific ministry to do so on behalf of the church. You have a personalised ministry specification because your ministry is based on your gifts, skills and the local situation.

LPAs are commended by the Bishop for 5 years so that it is possible to review whether the role is still one that God is calling you to. At the end of 5 years the position will lapse unless a new commendation is obtained from the Bishop.

Tasks

The focus of all LPA ministry is pastoral care which calls for a loving and compassionate heart, and a willingness to listen and support those in need.

You will be involved in the ministry of the parish in the following ways:

* visiting people in their homes who may be unwell, lonely or have been referred to the parish for some reason. Decisions about who to visit will be agreed with the *facilitator* *(or insert the local equivalent).*

*Please add other undertakings e.g. things like:*

* welcoming newcomers to our churches and communities
* visiting families before and after baptism
* marriage preparation
* hospital visiting
* supporting the bereaved

Other responsibilities will include *(Please add or delete as appropriate)*:

* working with other Lay Pastoral Assistants and members of the Leadership Team and attending monthly/bi-monthly/ quarterly meetings with the facilitator (and team)
* meeting with the whole Pastoral team at least once a year to review the ministry and undertake ongoing training

**Vacancy** (Only to be included if the parish is in vacancy):

This appointment is for the duration of the vacancy. Upon appointment of a new incumbent the ministry specification will be reviewed and renewed. This should take place within a year of the arrival of the incumbent after which point this ministry specification will come to an end.

**Support and** **Accountability**

It is important for you to be supported in your role and to be accountable, because your ministry is exercised on behalf of the Church. The *LPA facilitator* *(insert the local equivalent)* will speak with you regularly, either individually or as part of the team meeting, to provide support and guidance. You will be exercising your role alongside other LPAs and members of the leadership team and this collegiality offers support and accountability within the team. You are accountable to the Incumbent for the tasks and responsibilities agreed.

The time involved in the role will vary according to your personal circumstances and the local needs. The *LPA facilitator* *(insert the local equivalent)* will regularly review with you what is best for you and the local context.

Expenses

An LPA should not be prevented from exercising their calling by concerns about expenses but parish resources need to be managed. The general resources of the parish/benefice will be available to you, e.g. use of the office equipment, photocopier etc. It is not envisaged that there will be any expenses incurred, but if you anticipate any then please talk to your facilitator or incumbent.

*Please insert Parish policy for travel expenses.*

Review

You will have an annual review of this specification and your ministry with the Incumbent. Circumstances inevitably change and you are free to step down from the role at any time, but because this is a significant and sensitive ministry please ensure that you hand over to the *LPA facilitator* *(insert the local equivalent)* in a way that enables those you have been visiting to be cared for.

The next review will be *(date)*.

*I am happy to exercise this voluntary role on the basis of this ministry specification.*

LPA signature:

*I support (name) in this role and will provide oversight.*

Incumbent signature:

*I support (name) in this role and will provide ongoing support and guidance.*

Facilitator signature

Date:

# The Moral Contract

These questions refer to any licensed minister or volunteer within the church and are for use in the drawing up of the above ministry specification. They are not part of the specification but you may wish to discover the answers to these questions as 'raw' information before writing the specification.

1 What exactly do you want me to do?

2. What freedom to make decisions will I have?

3. Over what period?

4. How much of my time will it involve?

5. Where will I do it?

6. Who will I answer to and how?

7. What resources will be available to me?

8. What support will I receive and from whom?

9. How will any possible problems between us be handled?

10. Will I be able to talk through with someone how the job is going and when?

11. What will count as success?

12. What particular objectives do you want me to fulfil?

13. What preparations/training will I receive and from whom?

14. What opportunities for further training will there be?

15. Who will I work with?

16. How will I relate to others in the pastoral team?

17. Will there be other opportunities for ministry in the parish, which I might be able to undertake when I have done this?

18. Will I be able to give up the job gracefully at the end of this period, or if I find that it is too much for me?

19. Who will arrange for my replacement?

20. How will people know what I have been appointed to do?

21. Will the church reimburse me for expenses incurred in doing this appointment?