

# Continuing Education & Professional Expenses for Religious Educators



Guidelines for Congregations  
published by the  
Liberal Religious Educators Association,  
Metro NY Chapter



***Strong RE Programs Begin with Strong Leaders***

**Metro NY LREDA supports excellence in your Religious Education program by:**

- connecting religious educators with their colleagues in Metro NY and beyond.
- supporting new religious educators with guidance and the cumulative wisdom of seasoned colleagues.
- encouraging religious educators in their ongoing professional development.
- advocating for best practices in relationships between congregations and their religious educator.

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**You can get additional info about**

Metro NY LREDA at [uumetrony.org/lreda](http://uumetrony.org/lreda)

Continental LREDA at [lreda.org](http://lreda.org)



May, 2015

Dear Congregational Leader,

A primary factor in the strength of your religious education program is stability of professional leadership – the length of tenure of your Director of Religious Education (DRE), Director of Lifespan Faith Development (DLFD), etc.

The two recurring things that we find influencing a religious educator's success are the connections they make with colleagues and their ability to participate in professional development.

Metro NY LREDA is committed to helping congregations achieve vibrant RE programs and successful relationships with their religious educators.

### **Why this booklet ?**

Many congregations have asked about professional expenses for their DRE. Why provide professional expenses? What benefit will accrue to the congregation? How much is appropriate? The enclosed guidelines were created to answer these questions and guide congregations in computing the right amount for their situation. You may direct any questions to [metronylreda@gmail.com](mailto:metronylreda@gmail.com)

Thank you for your continued support of religious education.

the Executive Committee of the  
Liberal Religious Educators Association,  
Metro NY Chapter

# **Liberal Religious Educators Association Metro NY Chapter**

## **Guidelines for Professional Expenses Provided by Congregations**

*There is a correlation between performance as a religious educator and having adequate funds to do the job well.*

### **The Benefits of Professional Development and Training for Religious Educators**

Both religious educators and congregations can experience the benefits of well-trained religious educators with professional identities, conduct and attitudes. Religious educators who receive ongoing professional development and training supported by their congregations often....

- ~Apply the knowledge and experience they gain in their daily congregational work.
- ~Know where to go for the most current RE program resources and curricula.
- ~Are part of a network of religious educators who share ideas and provide support.
- ~Identify as professionals and conduct themselves as such.
- ~Provide valuable leadership that stabilizes their programs and motivates participants.
- ~Feel more confident in their roles, which leads to satisfaction and longer tenure.

## The Congregation's Responsibility

*A budget category separate from that of the religious educator's salary package should be established to cover conference, professional, and travel expenses.*

Professional Expenses include:

- Professional conferences such as LREDA Fall Conference, UU General Assembly, regional meetings, and summer RE conferences.
- training programs, retreats, and continuing education.
- periodic meetings of colleagues.
- registration, travel, room and meals for above.
- dues for LREDA, continental and chapter, and other organizations as needed.
- books, periodicals, subscriptions.
- out-of-pocket costs connected with congregation-related meetings or events.
- all normal and usual business related expenses.

The religious educator should account for expenditures according to established procedures of the congregation.

Since participation in these is part of the religious educator's work in the congregation, it is viewed as study time, not vacation or time off. The contract/job description should make a provision for study time and how the RE program will be managed in these absences.

### Sample Professional Expenses Clause from a DRE Employment Contract

In addition to Base Compensation, the congregation will budget for the Director of Religious Education's professional expenses, including conference travel, fees, room and board; dues; journals, books, subscriptions; continuing education; and all normal and usual business related expenses, payable directly or as reimbursement to the DRE. Payment will be made up to the amount budgeted for these purposes upon production of appropriate receipts.

Attendance at professional meetings, training programs, and conferences is part of the work schedule.

Scheduling of conference travel and continuing education are to be arranged in advance with the chair(s) of the RE Committee (or the Minister or other supervisor of the DRE). The RE Committee (or supervisor) will arrange for a substitute for the DRE on those Sundays. The DRE will leave full instructions for the substitute DRE .

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This guide is compiled from materials from the Unitarian Universalist Association; the Liberal Religious Educators Association; The UUA Ministry & Professional Leadership staff working group and Office of Church Staff Finances; *To Sustain the Living Tradition*; *The Search for RE Leadership – Best Practices for UU Congregations*; *A Blueprint for Excellence: Best Practices for RE*; with specific thanks to Laurel Amabile, Pat Ellenwood and Jan Gartner.

**Liberal Religious Educators Association – Metro NY Chapter**  
**Guidelines for Professional Expenses Provided by Congregations**  
**Effective 2014**

**Quarter-Time Coordinator of Religious Education / RE Administrator**

**10 hours or 3 units a week**

LREDA membership dues/year (175 continental, 50 Metro NY)	225
Nine monthly meetings of LREDA cluster (avg 25 travel)	225
Metro NY LREDA events (general meeting, two retreats, Professional Day)	475
Metro NY District Annual Meeting (plus programming for religious professionals)	300
Professional Resources (Renaissance Modules, trainings, books, equipment, etc.)	475
<b>Total</b>	1,700

**Half-Time DRE / Coordinator of Religious Education**

**20 hours or 6 units a week**

LREDA membership dues/year (175 continental, 50 Metro NY)	225
Nine monthly meetings of LREDA cluster (avg 25 travel)	225
Metro NY LREDA events (general meeting, two retreats, Professional Day)	475
Metro NY District Annual Meeting (plus programming for religious professionals)	300
Professional Resources (Renaissance Modules, trainings, books, equipment, etc.)	675
LREDA Fall Conference (avg airfare, housing and registration)	1,100
<b>Total</b>	3,000

**Three-Quarter Time DRE**

**30 hours or 9 units a week**

LREDA membership dues/year (175 continental, 50 Metro NY)	225
Nine monthly meetings of LREDA cluster (avg 25 travel)	225
Metro NY LREDA events (general meeting, two retreats, Professional Day)	475
Metro NY District Annual Meeting (plus programming for religious professionals)	300
Professional Resources (trainings, books, equipment, etc.)	1,075
LREDA Fall Conference	1,100
UUA General Assembly	1,300
<b>Total</b>	4,700

**Full-Time DRE**

**40 hours or 12 units a week**

LREDA membership dues/year (175 continental, 50 Metro NY)	225
Nine monthly meetings of LREDA cluster (avg 25 travel)	225
Metro NY LREDA events (general meeting, two retreats, Professional Day)	475
Metro NY District Annual Meeting (plus programming for religious professionals)	300
Professional Resources (trainings, books, equipment, etc.)	1,500
Miscellaneous	575
LREDA Fall Conference	1,100
UUA General Assembly	1,300
<b>Total</b>	5,700

**Note:** All housing at half of double room rate. Local travel average of public transportation or driving reimbursed at IRS determined rates. Air travel average of last five years locations of Fall Conference and GA. Travel meal allowances at \$8 breakfast, 12 lunch, 20 dinner. Renaissance Modules assumed in-district; for out-of-district trainings add transportation.

# WORKSHEET

## Our congregation's estimate of amounts needed for the DRE Professional Expenses Budget Line

	<u>Estimated Cost</u>	<u>Budget Amount</u>
LREDA (Liberal Religious Educators Association)		
Continental and Local Dues	100	
(Continental \$50 first 3 years and fewer than 5 Ren. Modules, then \$175. Metro NY \$50)	or 225	_____
Monthly religious educators meeting (LREDA cluster)		
appx 9 per year at \$_____ travel	225	_____
Metro NY LREDA chapter meeting and Professional Training Day	80	_____
Metro NY LREDA retreat, 2 at \$200	400	_____
LREDA Fall Conference, with transport, average	1,100	_____
Renaissance Modules, OWL and Youth trainings, and such 15 hour trainings at appx \$350 each incl travel	@ 350	_____
One day trainings and workshops	@ 100	_____
Metro District Annual Meeting and Religious Professionals workshop	250	_____
General Assembly, including prior Professional Days, etc. with transport, average	1,300	_____
Summer RE Conference (e.g., RE Week at Star Island, Ferry Beach or the Mountain)	900	_____
Books, periodicals, etc	_____	_____
	<b>Total \$</b>	_____

*This worksheet was designed for religious educators serving  
congregations in Metro NY.  
It is easily adaptable for a congregation in any region.*