

SABBATICAL LEAVE POLICY

PRESBYTERY OF WEST VIRGINIA

1. The purpose of a Sabbatical Leave policy within the Presbytery of West Virginia is to allow time away from normal job responsibilities for personal and professional growth, spiritual renewal and a revitalization of vision and hope. The leave should offer a time of refreshment for the benefit of both the participant in the leave and his/her staff or congregation/validated ministry. It would also be appropriate for the session to consider how the sabbatical time could be an opportunity for its own growth and renewal.
2. A Sabbatical Leave is a break and change from the everyday routine and therefore would include a balance of reflection and prayer, rest, study and travel. It is not to be considered a vacation. It is NOT intended to be used as a chance to escape difficulties within the work place nor is it a substitute for annual study leave.
3. Eligibility for a Sabbatical Leave would require the completion of a least seven (7) consecutive years of employment within the particular congregation/validated ministry. There must be at least seven (7) years between Sabbatical Leaves.
4. Specific requirements include:
 - a. Ordinarily, the length of a Sabbatical Leave will be a maximum of four (4) months in any one year (or two months in each of two consecutive years); annual study leave may not be taken contiguous with a sabbatical; and vacation would not be taken in conjunction with sabbatical leave.
 - b. Adequate opportunities for planning the substance of the Sabbatical Leave and for the sharing of its results are vital to its success and should not be overlooked. Prior to the beginning of the leave, there should be at least one-year notice to the session, the congregation/validated ministry and staff outlining the purpose of the

sabbatical as stated in 1 above. Nine months prior to the leave, a written proposal detailing its purpose and content should be submitted to the session. Proposals for interim pastoral leadership shall be developed and presented for approval.

c. During the period of the Sabbatical Leave, full salary and benefits will be provided by the congregation/validated ministry. Payments under the terms of call for travel expenses and other administrative expenses will be suspended during the period of the Sabbatical Leave.

d. Upon returning from Sabbatical Leave, the minister must remain in his/her position for at least one (1) year or otherwise forfeit the salary attributable to the period of the leave.

e. There will be a detailed report and reflections along with re-entry plans which will allow the session, congregation and the minister to share their different journeys.

f. In all cases, the minister will be restored to his/her former position and status and shall receive a salary at the level he/she would have had had he/she not taken the Sabbatical Leave.