

SICK AND FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE POLICY

To be as faithful to its personnel as they are to the congregation, the Presbytery encourages each Session to develop leave policies that are fair to both the individual and to the church. This policy sets forth the **minimum** amount of leave that each congregation; an individual congregation may choose, through the actions of its Session, to provide more generous leave benefits.

SICK LEAVE POLICY

ELIGIBILITY

This policy applies to ministers of Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Church professionals (CP), Certified Christian Educators, and ordained ministers from other denominations (herein after church professional) who are serving a PC(USA) congregation by virtue of a covenant agreement, contract, or installed terms of call within the bounds of the Presbytery of West Virginia. This policy applies to those individuals whether they are serving in a part-time or full-time capacity.

DEFINITIONS

“**Sick Leave**” is defined as time off work due to an individual’s illness or injury. Sick leave is not a substitute for or an addition to vacation time.

Included within the definition of the term “illness or injury” is physical illness or injury, dental issues, optical issues, psychiatric or psychological issues.

PAID SICK LEAVE

At the beginning of each calendar year of service, a congregation shall credit twelve (12) days of Sick Leave to each minister of Word and Sacrament, CP, Certified Christian Educator, or ordained minister from another denomination who is in covenant to serve their congregation.

Persons who enter into service after the beginning of a calendar year shall be credited at the time of the commencement of their covenant with a proportionate amount of sick leave.

At the time of the termination of a relationship the minister of Word and Sacrament, CP, Certified Christian Educator, or minister from another denomination shall have no claim for pay in lieu of unused Sick Leave.

ACCRUAL OF SICK LEAVE

Unused Sick Leave may be accrued up to a maximum of thirty (30) days.

EXTENDED SICK LEAVE

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If an eligible individual's situation requires the use of more than thirty days of sick leave or whatever balance of sick leave the individual had accrued, the individual shall attempt to negotiate the situation with the Session of the congregation. There is nothing in this policy that would require or prohibit a Session from making arrangements that are more generous than the minimums stated in this policy.

The purpose of this policy is to provide for the needs of the congregation, as well as the church professional, during times when he or she is not able to carry out normal responsibilities. These should be considered minimum requirements. This policy shall be a part of the terms of call, covenant, or contract in all church professional relationships within the Presbytery.

When requested by the individual and after appropriate certification of special need by the individual's treating physician, a Session shall grant an Extended Leave, either part-time or full-time up to six months.

If the Extended Leave is needed because the church professional is injured or ill and the leave extends beyond thirty (30) days, the church professional may begin the process of claiming any applicable disability benefits.

The first three months of extended leave time shall be paid at 75% of monthly salary and 25% of monthly Pension, Major Medical payments, and housing allowance shall continue at 100% of the annual terms of call.

The second three months of extended leave shall be unpaid leave time with no salary or travel allowance paid. However, Pension, Major Medical payments, and housing allowance shall continue at 100% of the annual terms of call, covenant, or contract.

For a three-month period of leave time taken, the minister shall give up one week of paid vacation. For a six-month leave, the minister shall give up two weeks of paid vacation and one week of paid study or continuing education leave.

Upon completion of leave time, the minister shall return to their position. The position shall not be filled during the leave, except on a temporary basis.

In the event that the individual's treating physician determines that the individual is unable to resume their normal duties and work schedule, consideration should be given to whether the duties can be performed through an accommodation. However, if the individual's treating physician determines that the person is unable to substantially perform the duties of this position, with or without appropriate accommodation, the Session will provide salary and benefits in full or until the Board of Pensions extended medical coverage begins on the ninety-first day of illness or disability. Any remaining personal days/sick days are lost.

PAID FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

POLICY

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“The terms of call shall always meet or exceed any minimum requirement of the presbytery in effect when the call is made. The session shall review annually the minister’s terms of call and shall propose for congregational action (G-1.0501) such changes as the session deems appropriate, provided that they meet the presbytery’s minimum requirements. The call shall include provision for twelve weeks paid family medical leave and participation in the benefits plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly.” Book Of Order G-208.04

Church and Other PC(USA) Entity Support

- While the individual church/entity is responsible for the funding and administration of Paid Family Leave, state-provided disability and paid leave benefits and Board of Pensions financial protection programs may be considered in order to help offset income continuation costs.
- Where possible, communication of mutual needs and planning is vital to minimize disruption for the entity served by the church professional. Church professionals are encouraged to anticipate leave with sensitivity around the needs of the church/entity/body, including but not limited to temporary replacement and fulfillment of duties.
- Paid Family Leave is not intended to be a burden but rather a source of joy as churches/entities encourage church professionals to take time for the good of their families. In the spirit of the connectional church, councils of the PC(USA) are encouraged to work together to assist individual churches/entities in the development of funding Paid Family Leave in order best to serve the Kingdom of God. Presbyteries and synods are encouraged to facilitate conversations regarding how individual churches/entities might fund Paid Family Leave.

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TYPES OF LEAVE

- Parental Leave: Within one year of birth, foster placement, or adoption of a child, a church professional may take up to twelve consecutive or intermittent paid leave weeks bonding time.
- Caregiver/Family Leave: In times when a family member requires care due to an illness or disability, a church professional may take up to twelve weeks Paid Leave, either consecutively or intermittently, depending on the nature of illness and need.
- Personal Loss: In the event of the death of a loved one or a tragic event, a church professional may take up to twelve weeks Paid Leave, either consecutively or intermittently, depending on the nature of event and need.

LEAVE PARAMETERS

- Up to 12 weeks (total, regardless of precipitating event or circumstance) of Paid Leave per year, with as much advance notice as possible. Paid Leave may be used—in accordance with need—consecutively or intermittently.

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- During Paid Leave, the church professional will continue to receive all benefits including Pension, Major Medical payments, and housing allowance at 100% of the annual terms of call, covenant, or contract.
- Use of vacation time is not required but may be used to extend leave time at the discretion of the church professional.

Following the period of Paid Leave, the church professional shall be entitled to return to the same position with the same title, terms of call, hours worked, and job description.

RESOURCE

The Presbyterian Church (USA)'s Advocacy Committee for Women and Gender Justice offers a suggestion for churches to assist them in making plans to accommodate family leave – <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/the-pcusas-advocacy-committee-for-women-and-gender-justice-has-ideas-for-covering-worship-leadership-for-12-weeks-of-family-leave/>.