

PRESBYTERY OF LONG ISLAND FAMILY LEAVE POLICY FOR CLERGY

The celebration, nurture, and encouragement of the family takes place in many ways and on many levels in the life of a congregation. During times of joy and sadness, the congregation has the opportunity and responsibility of extending care for the pastor and the pastor's family. This policy was developed by the Presbytery of Long Island to guide sessions and pastors as the terms of a family leave are incorporated into the terms of call.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of these policy guidelines is to provide sessions with minimum guidelines for a pastor's family leave to be included in all call packages that are fair and equitable. The *Book of Order of the PC(USA)* requires congregations to provide called and installed pastors 12 weeks of paid family leave per year. It is anticipated that individual congregations will not feel limited by Presbytery and the Book of Order's guidelines and will respond to the need for family leave responsibly and generously.

II. DEFINITION

In addition to other benefits, all full- and part-time installed and temporary pastors with a minimum of a one-year contract and commissioned ruling elders serving in a pastoral role are entitled to job-protected leave for qualified medical and family reasons. *Maternity and Paternity Leaves* take place prior and after the birth or arrival of the child through adoption or new guardianship. *Family Care and Bereavement Leave* takes place when the pastor's family member has a serious medical condition as defined by the New York State Paid Family Leave Act; is being placed in a healthcare facility; or has died. New York State defines a serious medical condition as an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential health care facility; continuing treatment or continuing supervision by a health care provider. The state defines a family member as spouse, domestic partner, child and stepchild, parent and stepparent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, or sibling (biological, adopted, half, and step).

III. ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for Family Leave within the Presbytery of Long Island shall be extended to all installed and temporary pastors with a minimum of a one-year contract and commissioned ruling elders serving in a pastoral role.

IV. GUIDELINES

Family Leave (Maternity, Paternity or Parental Leave)

1. The length of leave for parents welcoming a new child shall be 12 weeks. If a pastor desires more or less time, the session is encouraged to be flexible. Maternity, Paternity, or Parental leave does not need to be consecutive and can be spread out over a 12-month period.
2. Sessions shall grant full salary and benefits for the entire leave. If the session and pastor negotiate a leave that extends beyond 12 weeks, then other salary options may be negotiated.
3. Annual study and vacation leaves or sabbatical/clergy renewal leaves should not be taken immediately before or after a family leave without consultation with the session.
4. There is no minimum length of time for Family Care or Bereavement Leave, but the maximum per year is 12 weeks. Family Leave does not need to be consecutive and can be spread over a 12-month period.

V. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Study Leave shall not be used for Family Leave.
2. Should a pastor experience a miscarriage or still birth, she/he shall be given the Maternity/Paternity leave she/he would have received had the pregnancy been carried to term with no complications.
3. The time periods listed are intended to occur annually. They do not accrue.

VI. SESSION RESPONSIBILITIES DURING THE PASTOR'S LEAVE

The session is responsible for the ongoing ministry of the congregation during the pastor's leave. Session shall arrange for pulpit supply and pastoral care, including hospital visitation. COM shall appoint a session moderator pro tem and is available to support pastors and sessions during the negotiation and navigation of Family Leave, especially when pastors may need more than 12 weeks. Should paying for pulpit supply and pastoral care, along with the pastor's full salary, become a hardship for a congregation, the session may seek assistance from the Presbytery.

If both Family Leave (Maternity, Paternity or Parental Leave) and Family Leave (Family Care and Bereavement Leave) occur in the same calendar year, please contact the COM and the Presbytery Leader.