



Family and Medical Leave Policy¹

Book of Order G-2.804

Purpose²

The Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy is committed to a culture that helps our pastors meet the demands of family and ministry responsibilities and honoring the life that Christ has given to us. Offering the option of taking paid time off when they or a family member is sick is not just good for them and their families, but it is also healthy for the whole of the Church. The following policy was developed by the Presbytery Giddings-Lovejoy (GLPBY) and shall be considered minimum standards for +pastors.

Parental Leave

Parental leave is meant to give parents the opportunity to spend concentrated time on building up a new relationship with a child in their household. It is not vacation or study leave. All parents who receive a new child into their home due to birth, adoption, placement of long-term foster children, or other legal guardianships of children shall be granted a minimum of 12 weeks paid leave with benefits. In the case of a miscarriage or stillborn child, or failed placement of adoption, up to 4 weeks paid leave with benefits shall be granted. For any person that has given birth, a session should give serious consideration to offering up to 6 weeks of paid medical leave with benefits above and beyond parental leave. A session and pastor may negotiate an extension of parental leave, as needed, with terms agreed upon by the session and pastor.

The timing of parental leave is up to the pastor. The weeks do not need to be taken concurrently but must be used within one year of the first day of parental leave. People planning to welcome a child into their home shall ordinarily give their session at least a three-month notice of the intent to take parental leave. In cases where it is not possible to give a three-month notice, the person should give as much notice time as possible.

Family Leave

In addition to parental leave, other situations may arise for which a pastor needs to take time for family leave. Qualifying events for which a pastor may take family leave include, but need not be limited by the session to, the death of an *immediate family member, serious illness of self or an immediate family member, death, or moving an immediate family member into a care facility. A session should consider the fact that some other family relationships are as close to a person as these relationships, and they are encouraged to act with grace and generosity in such situations.

A pastor may take up to 12 weeks paid with benefits during a calendar year for family leave. The weeks need not be consecutive. A pastor is expected to be in close communication with their session regarding the weeks needed. Should a pastor find themselves in an extraordinary situation in which more than 12 weeks of family

Approved by COM 2023-10

leave are needed within a calendar year, the pastor and the session of their church should enter into dialogue with the Committee on Ministry (COM) to work out appropriate arrangements.

A pastor shall give as much notice to the session as possible when taking family leave.

General Issues Pertaining to Parental and Family Leave

Parental and family leave time cannot accrue, and any unused leave time will not be compensated when a pastor leaves their call. If a pastoral call is dissolved within 12 months of taking a period of leave, the pastor's unused vacation time shall be credited against the leave.

Vacation time shall not be used as a substitute for any of these forms of leave, but can be used to supplement the leave, if approved by the session.

Upon a pastor's completion of their parental or family leave, the pastor shall return to their position. The position will not be filled during the leave, except on a temporary basis. If a session moderator pro tem is needed and not secured in advance by the pastor, the COM will provide a session moderator pro tem to the session during the pastor's leave.

It is the responsibility of the congregation to provide the pastor with full pay and benefits during 12 weeks of parental leave (and extended medical leave, if offered) and family leave. The pastor and the session should, as far as possible, work together to plan for pulpit supply, pastoral care coverage, and other necessities for the duration of the leave. Preaching honoraria, mileage reimbursements, and other ministry expenses needed to fill pastoral responsibilities shall be the responsibility of the session on behalf of the congregation.

If more than one kind of leave needs to be taken within a calendar year that necessitates taking more than 12 weeks total leave, a pastor and their session shall involve the COM to discuss the needs of the pastor and congregation and to work out an agreeable arrangement between all parties. If providing more than 12 weeks of leave in a given year provides a financial hardship to a congregation, this, too, will be discussed with COM, and the presbytery may provide assistance to congregations in demonstrated need.

These leaves shall be documented by the session in its minutes and reported to COM.

+Pastors refers to Installed (Pastor, Associate Pastor, Head of Staff, Co-pastor and Non-Installed Positions (Transitional and Temporary Supply.)

*"Immediate family" generally refers to your spouse, partner, children, parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, sibling (including step and half), grandparent, grandchild, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, son-in-law, and daughter-in-law. Your spouse is an individual to whom you are legally married in a marriage that conforms to the definition in the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This includes individuals in a common law marriage, a state-licensed civil union or state-licensed domestic partnership, as well as individuals in marriages validly entered into outside of the United States that conform to the Book of Order definition. Your children include biological, adopted, or foster children and legal wards and children and stepchildren for whom you provide care and financial support on a daily basis. This list is descriptive, not exhaustive. realizes that there are many nontraditional relationships that are equally important to our employees; therefore, the definition may also apply to any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.³

¹ The creation of this policy draws from the family leave policy of New Haven Presbytery.

Approved by COM 2023-10

² Taken from The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey Family Leave Policy – 2021 and Cherokee Presbytery Family Leave Policy.

³PC(USA) Sample Paid Family and Medical Leave Policy