

## Parental Leave Guidelines for the Presbytery of East Tennessee

**Introduction:** Changes in a pastor's family bring new challenges and new opportunities. These guidelines are meant to help churches discuss, develop and implement policies for Family Leave for pastors when a child joins the family through birth or adoption. These guidelines may also be a stepping stone for policies for an entire church staff. The negotiated leave should be incorporated into the terms of call.

**Maternity Leave Eligibility:** When a female pastor is to give birth to a child or children.

**Paternity Leave Eligibility:** When a pastor's wife is to give birth to a child or children.

**Adoptive Leave:** When a pastor adopts a child or children.

### Terms:

1. A minimum of 8 weeks paid of Maternity Leave, which could begin before the child's arrival, depending on health issues.
  2. A minimum of 2 weeks of paid Paternity Leave at the time of the child's arrival.
  3. A minimum of 2-8 week paid Adoptive Leave at the time of the child's arrival (amount of time dependent on the circumstances of the adoption).
  4. The church shall continue paying for Board of Pensions dues. Requests for longer than the recommended term can be arranged based on the pastor's needs, at the discretion of the session in consultation with the Care of Church Professionals Subcommittee of the Committee on Ministry. Any earned vacation time, sick time, or compensation for that budget year may be added to the time of maternity/paternity leave, with the concurrence of the Session.
  5. While on leave, the pastor is freed from all pastoral duties, including funerals, weddings, session meetings and worship leadership. The church shall assume the cost and responsibility of covering these pastoral duties during the leave.
  6. Specific details of the leave should be negotiated by the pastor and session through the personnel committee or, if there is no personnel committee, through session, a reasonable amount of time before the anticipated arrival.
- As soon as the pastor has disclosed the need for Family Leave to their session, the session shall arrange for a consultation with the Care of Church Professionals Subcommittee of the Committee on Ministry to evaluate the terms of Family Leave.