

Appendix H: Family Leave Policy

Family Leave Guidelines for the Presbytery of East Tennessee

Introduction: In accordance with the action of the 225th General Assembly and subsequent ratification by a majority of Presbyteries, the Presbytery of East Tennessee has adopted the following Family Leave Policy.

All Ministers of Word and Sacrament serving a PC(USA) entity are entitled to a minimum of 12 weeks paid family medical leave. Family leave is defined as including, but not limited to, the following:

- Leave to accommodate the birth, foster placement, or adoption of a child;
- Leave to provide care to an ill or disabled family member;
- Leave to heal following a loss or tragic event.

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.
- During Paid Leave, the pastor will continue to receive all benefits in their terms of call, including dues paid to and benefits provided by the Board of Pensions.
- Use of vacation time is not required but may be used to extend leave time at the discretion of the pastor.

Following the period of paid leave, the pastor shall be entitled to return to the same position with the same title, terms of call, hours worked, and job description.

Types of Leave

- **Parental Leave:** Within one year of birth or adoption, a pastor may take up to twelve consecutive or intermittent weeks bonding time.
- **Caregiver/Family Leave:** In times when a family member requires care due to an illness or disability, a pastor 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 pastor may take up to twelve weeks Paid Leave, either consecutively or intermittently, depending on the nature of event and need.

Support

- While the individual congregation/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 pastor. Pastors are encouraged to anticipate leave with sensitivity around the needs of the congregation/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 congregations/entities encourage pastors to take time for the good of their families. Sessions are encouraged to work with the Presbytery if assistance in funding Paid Family Leave is needed in order best to serve the Kingdom of God.