

Family and Medical Leave Policy (Adopted by Administrative Team COM 12-7-23)

Introduction

This Family and Medical Leave Policy of the Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey, when combined with other leave options, including benefits available to those who participate in the Board of Pensions, is intended to provide a comprehensive leave policy.

This Family and Medical Leave Policy provides paid leave for life circumstances such as the birth, foster placement, or adoption of a child, care for your serious health condition, healing following a loss or tragic event, or care for a family member with a serious health condition.

Under this policy, Ministers of Word and Sacrament are eligible for up to 12 weeks of paid leave on a rolling 12-month basis. For example, if a pastor uses four weeks of leave beginning February 1, 2024, four weeks of leave beginning June 1, 2024, and four weeks of leave beginning December 1, 2024, the staff member would not be entitled to any additional leave until February 1, 2025.

Pastors may use Family and Medical Leave for:

- a. The birth of a child and in order to care for that child.
- b. The adoption or placement of a child for foster care with you and to care for the child. [NOTE: Leave for birth, adoption or foster care of a child must be taken within one (1) year of the birth or placement of the child.]
- c. Your own serious health condition that makes you unable to perform the functions of your position.
- d. Your own healing following a loss or tragic event when under medical care.
- e. To care for an immediate family member* with a serious health condition.

Serious Health Condition Definition

A serious health condition is:

- a condition that requires inpatient care at a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity or any subsequent treatment in connection with inpatient care;
- a condition that requires continuing care by a licensed health care provider (ex. surgery, physical therapy after surgery);
- illnesses of a serious and long-term nature, resulting in recurring or lengthy absences (ex. migraines, restorative surgeries); or
- a chronic or long-term health condition which, if left untreated, would result in a period of incapacity of more than three (3) days (for example: cold or flu that incapacitates you for more than 3 days and you are under care of a physician).

When the need for family and medical leave involves a serious health condition, the Pastor must provide the Session (or Session Committee responsible for personnel matters) with a note from a medical provider explaining the need for leave and length of leave.

Benefits During Leave

Congregations shall continue the health benefits during the leave period at the same level and under the same conditions as if the pastor did not take leave.

Status After Leave

If the pastor takes leave under this policy, they shall return to the same position they were in when their leave started. When the pastor returns from Family and Medical Leave under this policy, they must provide a return-to-work note from a medical provider.

*“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. The Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey realizes that there are many non-traditional relationships that are equally important to our pastors; therefore, the definition may also apply to any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the pastor is the equivalent of a family relationship.