

Carlisle Presbytery Family Leave Guidelines

Guidelines:

The following guidelines are recommended by the Presbytery of Carlisle to aid in negotiation between sessions and pastors when a leave is necessary due to the serious illness of the pastor, in the case of a serious illness of a child, spouse, or parent of the pastor, or in the event of the birth or adoption of a child. Furthermore, these guidelines are meant to help churches develop and implement policies for Family Leave, not only for pastors, but also for certified Christian Educators (here forth to be referred to as “professional staff”). These guidelines are meant to open up conversations between sessions, personnel committees, and professional staff members so as to decide upon appropriate policies. *This may also be a stepping stone for policies for an entire church staff.* **The negotiated leave should be incorporated into the terms of call.**

Time and Duration of Family Leave:

1. The duration and time of the family leave shall be mutually agreed upon between the professional staff member and the session and, in the case of ordained staff, shall be approved by the congregation as part of the annual terms of call.
2. The suggested duration of the leave is 12 weeks. If a professional staff member desires more or less time, the session is encouraged to be flexible.
3. The timing of the leave is up to the professional staff member. If possible it is suggested that no less than 30 days notice be given so that proper arrangements can be made.
4. It is preferable for professional staff to have completed one year of continuous service to be eligible for leave. Full disclosure at the time of initiation of employment is encouraged, but with the nature of family leave, may not always be possible. Sessions are encouraged to be flexible.

Compensation During Leave:

1. Sessions are urged to grant full salary and benefits for the entire leave. If a leave that extends beyond 12 weeks is negotiated, then other salary options can be negotiated as well. (For example, a 6 month leave at half-salary; up to one year of unpaid leave.)
2. Any earned vacation time and compensation, for that calendar year, may be added to the time of family leave, with the concurrence of Session.

3. The church shall assume the cost and responsibility of covering the duties of the staff member.
4. While on leave, the staff member is freed from all pastoral duties, including funerals, weddings, session meetings and leading worship.
5. If a leave extends beyond the recommended time frame due to medical complications, application can be made to the Board of Pensions for disability income. The church is encouraged to be supportive in every way when such a situation arises.
6. The Presbytery, through its Committee on Ministry, shall seek to assist the congregation in whatever ways are necessary to make a full leave available. The church and the Session are encouraged to seek Presbytery's support in planning and implementing leave of its pastor or certified Christian Educator. This may or may not include monetary and/or temporary supply assistance.
7. The Committee on Ministry shall be informed when the family leave option is exercised by a pastor including the terms of the family leave and the session's plan to cover moderator, worship leadership and pastoral care responsibilities.
8. Professional staff members who return to work following a period of approved family leave will be assured of continued employment in the same position.