

Presbytery of Lake Erie
Family Medical Leave Policy
Adopted by Committee on Ministry August 2023
Adopted by PLE September 12, 2023

Under G-2.0804, the minimum terms of call for all pastoral ministers (installed teaching elders and commissioned pastors) includes a minimum of 12 weeks of paid family medical leave. The Presbytery of Lake Erie extends this benefit to employees of the Presbytery. The Presbytery encourages member congregations to also consider this leave for their lay employees.

Extending paid leave of this nature is a part of the mission and care of the church for the people of God, especially those who are employed by the church. It shows the support, care, and healing of one another that is central to Christian Life and Worship (W-5.0204), a commitment in accordance with an abundant life in Christ for the dignity and health of the people of God (Matthew 10:10b and Galatians 6:2), and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven (F-1.0304) to the wider society. This type of benefit as set forth in Presbytery minimum Terms of Call is not without some financial and administrative burdens. Congregations and the Presbytery should work together to address any such burdens, including proper planning of budgets prior to any employee needing to use such leave. There is a need for a continued policy and stated provisions that this may be fairly applied and in order.

For purposes of this provision within the Presbytery of Lake Erie, family medical leave is defined as but not limited to:

- 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.

The phrase, family member, would normally include the employee's spouse, brother, sister, parent, children, father-in-law, mother-in-law, grandparents, step children, step parents, domestic partner, grandchildren, son or daughter-in-law or anyone else both the employee and employer agree is family.

Family Medical leave may be combined with other paid leave such as vacation time but is in addition to such leave and not satisfied by the use of other leave. The 12-week time is cumulative throughout the calendar year and does not accrue. With the agreement between the employee and the employer, intermittent leave may be granted in intervals as agreed upon. If less than 12 weeks is used in any one instance, the unused leave up to 12 weeks can still be used within the calendar year if another documented family medical concern occurs. Unused portions are not available to be cashed out. The Presbytery or congregation may grant leave (paid or unpaid) in excess of 12 weeks at their own discretion and terms on a case by case basis.

The employee/pastor, should, whenever possible, notify the church or presbytery office and request family medical leave preferably 4 or more weeks in advance. If the one requesting leave is a pastoral minister (CP or Teaching Elder), the pastor or clerk of session should notify the moderator of the Committee on Ministry as soon as possible. This process should include medical or other documentation to show a need based on the definition of family medical leave in this policy. (sample forms are included). If an employee or pastoral minister currently pays a share of any premiums, they will be expected to maintain their portion during the leave.

The leave will be paid at the current salary including participation in any benefits including medical and pension plans. Any salary increase action for which the employee may become eligible in the course of the leave will be effective upon return to employment.

Upon completion of family medical leave, the pastor/employee will be entitled to return to their current position. The position shall not be filled during the leave except on a temporary basis. If the position has ceased to exist, a comparable position will be offered at the same or greater salary.

If for the birth or adoption of a child and both parents are on the same payroll, only one may be granted leave at a time although the time can be shared in an arrangement agreed upon by all parties.