

**Presbytery of Milwaukee Personnel Policies for Pastors  
Amended November 12, 2020**

**PERSONNEL POLICIES FOR PASTORS**

These policies have been developed as a means of providing a uniform set of personnel policies to guide the Sessions of Milwaukee Presbytery in their relationships with their Pastors. The spirit of these policies is one of trusting cooperation focused on the mutual well-being of our churches, Pastors, and the Presbytery. These compensation policies indicate the minimums; it is anticipated that individual churches will not feel limited by these policies and will respond responsibly and generously. For good cause shown by the congregation and pastor, these requirements may be waived or adjusted by the Presbytery through its delegated commissions.

The Presbytery's Pastoral Compensation Minimums are reviewed by the Presbytery and subject to change annually. They are provided separately.

**SICK LEAVE POLICY and DISABILITY BENEFITS**

*Definitions*

1. **Illness/Injury** - any physical, mental, emotional or other condition, which requires or makes prudent temporary relief of normal pastoral responsibilities for up to 10 days
2. **Short Term Disability** - any condition, physical or emotional, which requires or makes it prudent for the pastors to avoid the fulfillment of normal responsibilities for a period of 11 to 89 days
3. **Long Term Disability** - a period of 90 days or longer of disability. The following definition of disability in the Board of Pensions Benefits Plan shall apply: the inability of a Member (minister member of the Benefits Plan) due to sickness or bodily injury to perform substantially all the material duties of his or her regular work or any other type of work that would afford a reasonably comparable level of income. (Benefits Plan, Article II, Sec. 2.1 (h))

**Paid Sick Leave**

The congregation shall provide the following minimum paid sick leave annually which can be utilized for illness/injury and short-term disability. The annual number of paid sick days is determined by hours per week- see chart below.

Minimum Sick Days Apportionment

35+ hours per week: 10 days (including up to 2 Sundays)

28 hours per week: 7 days (including up to 1 Sunday)

20 hours per week: 5 days (including up to 1 Sunday)

(In the case of hours per week not presented above, sick days will be provided based on rounding to the nearest increment including up to at least one Sunday.)

A Pastor shall use no more hours of sick leave for a work day than the normal number of hours for which he/she was scheduled to work on that particular day. Use of sick leave must be approved in advance, if possible, by the Session. For absences of three (3) days or more, the Session may ask the Pastor to provide a physician's statement. If approval becomes a matter of dispute, the COM may be called in to help settle the matter.

In the first year, paid sick days are accumulated at the rate of 1 day per month beginning on the

**Presbytery of Milwaukee Personnel Policies for Pastors  
Amended November 12, 2020**

31<sup>st</sup> day of employment. Unused Paid Sick Leave can be accumulated up to 90 days total and utilized for short-term disability. Upon dissolution of a pastoral relationship, the Pastor is not entitled to be paid for any unused paid sick leave.

**Disability Benefits**

In addition to paid sick leave, the Pastor is entitled to 10 extended short-term disability days for each year of service (prorated by number of hours of service in the congregation if less than full-time), which can be accumulated up to 90 days. Extended short-term disability days shall accumulate at the rate of 10 days each year beginning in the first year at the end of the first month.

If a Pastor remains disabled by illness/injury after exhausting all accumulated vacation and paid sick leave benefits, in consultation and agreement with the Session, the Pastor must either take an unpaid leave of absence if approved by Session or use accumulated extended disability leave. If the Pastor has accumulated extended short-term disability days available, it is the Pastor's option to choose the (paid) extended short term disability leave before taking an unpaid leave of absence.

Extended short-term disability leave serves as income replacement at 60% of the Pastor's weekly salary and will be paid by the congregation until all extended short-term disability leave is exhausted. At that time, the Pastor will move to unpaid leave. In no event shall a congregation be responsible to pay more than 90 days of combined paid sick leave and extended short term disability leave.

If the Pastor is a participating member of the Benefits Plan's disability benefits, after 90 days of short-term leave, long-term disability benefits will be available through the BOP. Once the Pastor reaches eligibility for disability benefits through BOP, the church will no longer pay the accumulated extended short-term disability days. Any unused extended short-term disability leave days will remain accrued for future use. If all extended short-term disability leave days are used prior to reaching 90 days, the Pastor will move to unpaid leave. See [www.pensions.org](http://www.pensions.org).

When possible, the Pastor shall inform the Session in advance of impending medical inability to work and of the intention to use extended short-term disability days. As a condition of receiving extended disability benefits, the Pastor may be required to provide medical proof of inability to work.

Mileage, continuing education and other reimbursable expenses are not payable during a period of medical inability to work.

Upon dissolution of a pastoral relationship, Pastors are not entitled to be paid for any unused extended short-term disability days, and extended disability days may not be transferred to a new pastoral call.

**Unpaid Leave**

Upon request, the Pastor may be granted up to 30 days unpaid leave, including up to 1 Sunday for each consecutive 5 days unpaid leave. Approval for unpaid leave may be granted by either the Session or the CPM. Requests for unpaid leave shall preferably be made in writing with 30 days notice however the Pastor should provide such notice as soon as is practicable, specifying the amount of leave time desired in writing to the Session.

**Presbytery of Milwaukee Personnel Policies for Pastors  
Amended November 12, 2020**

## STUDY LEAVE POLICY

A study leave of at least two weeks per year shall be provided for all Pastors. This includes two Sundays. Normally the study leave should be taken each year. In conversation with and approval by the Session, the study leave may be accrued up to six weeks (three years).

The purpose of the study leave is to enhance the professional abilities of the Pastor which shall be mutually beneficial to both the pastor and the church. The goal is for self-development in the work of ministry and not for vacation, recreation, or leisure. Study leave should equip a pastor for the work not only in the local church, but the whole Church. Hence a study leave may have immediate and direct relevance broader than the current pastoral position. Each Pastor shall present the plans and rationale for each study leave to the Session for discussion and approval of the timing of the leave. In the event of dissolution of the relationship, any accumulated study leave time and allowance shall be forfeited.

Congregations are expected to contribute financially to a pastor's continuing education. These funds are needed to offset the costs of study leave as well as cover expenses for books. Please see the annual minimum terms of call for compensation minimums for continuing education.

## VACATION POLICY

The Pastor shall be provided a minimum of four weeks (including normal days off and 4 Sundays) paid vacation annually. Vacation shall begin accumulating at 1 week per quarter in the first year.

Vacation is a necessary time of rest, refreshment, and relaxation for health and work performance. It is the responsibility of the Session/Personnel Committee and the Pastor to see that vacation time is used annually in order to have an effective ministry. Vacation is to be kept separate from study leave, attendance at conferences, or weekly days off and sabbatical leave. The Pastor is encouraged to take vacation in a large enough block of time (at least one week) for the refreshment which is necessary for effective renewal.

The Presbytery encourages that up to but no more than 10 days of vacation time can be rolled from one year into the next calendar year. The annual refreshment from vacation comes only if the Pastor takes the vacation regularly. Excessive accumulation of vacation time does not provide for that regular refreshment. No more than 12 weeks may be accumulated at one time and this should only occur after discussion and approval by the Session.

Unused vacation benefits up to 3 weeks are payable in full to the date of the dissolution of the pastoral relationship.

## WEEKLY SABBATH

The Pastor is expected to take at least one full, uninterrupted day off each week. In order to honor this day of Sabbath, the Pastor should designate a regular day in consultation with the Session and communicate this to the congregation. When there has been an unusually heavy week (or weeks),

**Presbytery of Milwaukee Personnel Policies for Pastors  
Amended November 12, 2020**

the Pastor is encouraged to take an extra day off during the next week to compensate. This is not considered a vacation day.

## HOLIDAYS

Churches shall provide the following paid holidays: New

Year's Day  
Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Birthday Easter Monday  
Memorial Day  
Independence  
Day Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday  
Christmas Day and the day after

If the Pastor works on a designated holiday, another day shall be recognized as a day off. When a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, it shall be observed as a holiday as soon as possible. When a holiday occurs on the Pastor's day off, it may be observed either the day before or the day following.

## SABBATICAL LEAVE POLICY

After completing 6 years of service to a particular congregation, the Pastor shall receive up to 3 months of sabbatical leave. They shall receive a minimum of 1 month paid sabbatical leave plus. The Session is strongly encouraged to grant 3 months of paid sabbatical leave. With the agreement of the Session, sabbatical leave may also be combined with study leave. At the Pastors choice, any unused or accumulated vacation and/or continuing education days may be added to the 1 month paid sabbatical. Upon completion of the sabbatical leave, it is expected that the Pastor will continue to serve the same congregation for a period of at least four times the length of the sabbatical leave plus accrued vacation time. In multiple staff situations, congregations may limit sabbatical leave to one staff person per year.

### *Rationale*

A sabbatical will enable the Pastor to be renewed through the pursuit of continuing education, extended time spent in spiritual formation, and/or mentoring/coaching. A sabbatical enables a Pastor to return to parish responsibilities with renewed energy, enhanced spiritual vision and effectiveness.

### *Responsibilities of the Pastor*

1. A minimum of six months prior to the proposed commencement of the sabbatical, bring a sabbatical proposal to the Session for its approval. The proposal shall include a detailed description of the plan including the proposed timeline, the goals to be achieved, the expected results, and a personal statement as to how sabbatical leave will be beneficial to the pastor and the congregation. A copy of the final, mutually agreed upon plan shall be submitted to the Commission on Ministry.

**Presbytery of Milwaukee Personnel Policies for Pastors  
Amended November 12, 2020**

2. Together with the session discuss and make necessary arrangements for coverage of pulpit, pastoral and other responsibilities during the sabbatical leave.
3. Upon return, share an overview of the sabbatical experience with the Session and explore ways to share with the congregation.
4. If additional funding is needed (or desired) explore sabbatical grant options.

*Session Responsibilities*

1. Review the sabbatical leave proposal with the pastor and negotiate any necessary clarifications or changes.
2. Continue terms of call/financial commitments to the pastor during sabbatical leave as determined by the plan.
3. Work with the pastor to make necessary arrangements for coverage of pulpit, pastoral and other responsibilities during the sabbatical leave. Explore options for how the congregation might best utilize the sabbatical leave as well.
4. Communicate the sabbatical leave plan and coverage to the congregation.
5. Receive from the pastor the written overview of the sabbatical upon his or her return and help him/her discern how to share this with the congregation.
6. Make financial and budgetary preparations for the sabbatical period.

*Commission on Pastoral Ministries Responsibilities*

1. Assist the Pastor and Session with any education needed in regards to the importance of pastor sabbaticals in preparation for the sabbatical leave.
2. Review the Pastor's proposal for sabbatical leave and offer any suggestions or aid as needed.
3. Serve as mediator in any concerns of the Session or the Pastor with respect to the sabbatical.
4. Determine who will moderate the Session in the Pastor's absence.
5. Assist the Session and the Pastor as needed in making arrangements for coverage of pulpit, pastoral and other responsibilities during the sabbatical leave.
6. Assist the Session and Pastor in budgeting process and grant inquiries as needed.

## PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

**Eligibility.** Any Pastor employed by a congregation of the Presbytery of Milwaukee is entitled to parental leave upon the birth, adoption, foster placement, or awarding of guardianship of a child under the age of 18. Both part-time and full-time equivalent Pastors are eligible, as are those in call or stated supply.

**Notification.** Pastors seeking to use parental leave shall notify their session(s) and the CPM at least 90 days in advance of taking leave. If such a time period is not possible, then the Pastor shall give notice as soon as possible. Pastors who are actively waiting on a foster or adoption placement, and who wish to take parental leave at the time of placement, shall notify their Session(s) and CPM of their placement eligibility upon completing the foster or adoption certification process.

**Paid Parental Leave.** Paid parental leave shall be granted to Pastors for the equivalent of 8 weeks of regular paid employment (effective salary, BOP, and health care as applicable per the terms of call or contract.) Paid parental leave may be taken anytime, consecutively or nonconsecutively, within the first eight months of a birth,

**Presbytery of Milwaukee Personnel Policies for Pastors  
Amended November 12, 2020**

adoption, foster placement, or awarding of guardianship in order to provide needed flexibility. Paid parental leave may also be applied to a Pastor's schedule to reduce a full-time workload to part-time workload for up to the equivalent of 8 weeks of their normal terms of call or contract. Sessions may grant additional parental leave, providing payment through the Pastor's accrued annual vacation time, sick leave, or as a period of unpaid leave.

**Medical Leave for Birthing Mothers.** Pastors who are pregnant or have given birth are entitled to paid medical leave of at least four weeks beyond the standard parental leave. Medical leave shall begin when a physician has certified that the Pastor can no longer perform her duties due to her pregnancy or at the time of birth and shall extend past the standard 8 weeks of paid parental leave upon the physician's recommendation. If the expectant mother's physician determines that it is medically necessary for her to stop working prior to the anticipated delivery date, she will be permitted to use personal leave, accrued sick time, or accrued vacation time to cover the absence. If the expectant mother needs to be cared for by her spouse/partner, the employee may use accrued vacation time before the birth of the child.

**Additional Considerations**

- **Study Leave.** Study leave shall not be applied to parental leave.
- **Dissolution of a Call.** If a Pastor initiates dissolution within one year following parental leave, any unused vacation time shall be credited against the leave.
- **Miscarriage or Still Birth.** Should a Pastor or spouse/partner experience a miscarriage or still birth, the Pastor shall be given the parental leave they would have received had the pregnancy been carried to term with no complications. Failed placement for adoption shall also receive leave.
- **Annual Benefit.** The time periods listed are intended to be an annual benefit, not to be accrued.

**COMPASSIONATE LEAVE POLICY**

A Pastor who must be absent because of the death of a member of their immediate family may be allowed a paid absence of up to seven days.