

SABBATICAL LEAVE GUIDELINES

Adopted by the 1990 Synod Assembly
For Pastors and Associates in Ministry
Serving in Congregations and Other
Employing Agencies in the
Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church of America



Procedural Guidelines

- 1. A sabbatical (an extended study leave) is understood to be a time away from normal duties in order that a rostered leader may devote time to rest and renewal.**

Procedural Guideline

The Congregation/Agency should:	The Pastor/AiM should:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand that a sabbatical is a benefit and is not to be considered a vacation• understand that a sabbatical is to benefit the professional as well as the congregation/agency• discuss and understand what normal duties must be done while the professional leader is on a sabbatical• determine if the sabbatical is in place of continuing education for the year the sabbatical is taken• identify what situation, if any, would require the professional to return from the sabbatical	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand that a sabbatical is not a vacation and needs to be seen as a way to benefit you professionally as well as the congregation/agency• determine whether or not there might be situations that warrant your returning from the sabbatical to perform professional services (In determining this, consider what, if any, are the implications of coming back to perform professional services)

- 2. A sabbatical may be granted for a period of 8-15 weeks.**

Procedural Guideline

The Congregation/Agency and Pastor/AiM should:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• decide how long a period is to be taken for the sabbatical• decide if the time taken can be divided• consider the timing of the sabbatical in terms of congregation/agency program needs/concerns

3. Eligibility for a sabbatical begins after 7 continuous years of service in the same setting. During the sabbatical, the individual will be compensated in the regular manner.

Procedural Guideline

<p>The Congregation/Agency should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand that funds set aside for this benefit are the congregation/agency's and not transferable to another congregation/agency • consider the Episcopal Church's model that sets monies aside by using a 13 month budget for professional compensation with the 13th month being set aside for the sabbatical • spell out the "regular manner" of compensation 	<p>The Pastor/AiM should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand that the benefit of a sabbatical is offered by the congregation/agency and is not transferable • understand that any remuneration received during the sabbatical is to be considered part of the total sabbatical compensation covenant • be clear about everything to be included in compensation while on sabbatical
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4. Those who are granted a sabbatical are expected to continue to serve the congregation or employing agency for at least one year after the sabbatical leave.

Procedural Guideline

<p>The Congregation/Agency should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gain something in return for the investment of a sabbatical for the professional • define "year" • negotiate what happens if the person terminates the relationship with the congregation/agency before completing the year 	<p>The Pastor/AiM should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand that the sabbatical is not extended leave time • understand that the sabbatical is not a time to look for another call/ appointment • realize that the congregation/agency offering this benefit needs to be assured of the value of the sabbatical for both the congregation/agency and the professional • spell out how the congregation/agency will benefit from this investment • negotiate, if leaving before completing the year, what reimbursement the investing congregation/agency will receive (perhaps on a prorated basis)
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5. Normally 6 months prior to the requested beginning of the leave, a sabbatical request, developed in cooperation with the appropriate committee, is presented to the congregation council or board of the employing agency. This will allow sufficient advance notice for arrangements to be made for replacement services, if the request is granted. This request should include a proposal for how the sabbatical is to be used and how it relates to that person's ministry and professional development. In cases where the sabbatical is spent in independent study or reflection, a mentor is helpful; if a mentor is to be used, arrangements should be made in advance so that this mentor can be named in the proposals.

Procedural Guideline

<p>The Congregation/Agency should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make sure that the proposal spells out <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ purpose of sabbatical ○ plan of implementation ○ timing involved ○ arrangements, in consultation with the bishop's office, to be made while person is on sabbatical (this means who is responsible for funerals, weddings, etc., and who is responsible financially for these compensation arrangements) ○ compensation arrangements ○ reporting to congregation/agency the expectations of the professional and congregation/agency ○ plan for evaluation of sabbatical several months after the sabbatical ○ any other details needed to clarify the sabbatical agreement/plan • understand that the request/plan for the sabbatical should be recommended to the council/board by the appropriate committee within the congregation/agency • understand that the appropriate committee will want to coordinate/consult with other committees of the congregation/agency in developing the sabbatical request/plan. This will help identify potential problems other committees may experience with the absence of the professional 	<p>The Pastor/AiM should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when beginning to develop a plan for a sabbatical consult with the bishop's office regarding intention of a sabbatical • spell out what a mentor is and will do • identify costs for a mentor and who: will pay this cost • identify a plan that deals with unexpected circumstances, such as sickness, family crises, etc; this plan would include what happens with future sabbaticals, compensation, financial arrangements/obligations, or other arrangements
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6. The costs of the necessary replacement assistance are the responsibility of the congregation or employing agency.

Procedural Guideline

In terms of replacement arrangements, the congregation/agency can refer to appropriate guidelines available through the synod staff or mission district dean.

7. The individual on sabbatical is responsible for the costs of his/her own tuition, books, supplies, travel and living expenses. (This is an appropriate use for PACE funds.)

Procedural Guideline

The Congregation/Agency should: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• define "living expenses" and how living expenses are different from housing allowances• agree that any housing equity allowance would continue• understand "travel" to mean "to" and "from"	The Pastor/AiM should: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• spell out any "mentor" costs/ expenses and who pays for them
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8. Within a month after returning, the Pastor/AiM will submit a report of the sabbatical experience to the congregation council or the employing agency's appropriate supervisor.

Procedural Guideline

The benefit to the congregation/agency should also be evaluated (possibly six months after the sabbatical).

OTHER CONCERNS/PROCEDURES

Notify the bishop's office of the sabbatical plan upon approval by the congregation/agency. It will be helpful for the bishop to know that a professional is taking a sabbatical and the details of the sabbatical (which may help other professionals in developing their sabbatical plans).

At the conclusion of the sabbatical the pastor/AiM will notify the bishops office of completion and provide the bishop's office with a copy of the sabbatical report given to the congregation/agency.