**Presbyteries of Grand Canyon and de Cristo**

**Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) Policy[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**OPENING SENTENCES**

The Book of Order at G-2.0804 requires that terms of call[[2]](#footnote-2) provide a minimum of twelve weeks of PFML. This requirement applies to both permanent and temporary positions, as defined in the Book of Order (G-2.\_\_\_\_). To embrace the caring, supportive mission of the Presbyterian Church USA, the Presbytery[[3]](#footnote-3) will grant a minimum of 12 weeks[[4]](#footnote-4) of paid family medical leave during any 12-month period for its Pastors and Presbytery staff.

**ELIGIBILITY FOR PAID FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE**

This policy applies to all pastors with terms of call serving a congregation of the Presbytery. In addition, all employees of the Presbytery are eligible for PFML based on effective date of hire.[[5]](#footnote-5)

**TYPES OF LEAVES**

Qualifying reasons for requesting PFML include:

1. Birth of child (during first year after birth).
2. Care of a newly placed adopted child or foster child under age 18 (during first year after

adoption event).[[6]](#footnote-6)

1. Care for a spouse, partner, parent(s), parent-in-law, or child (under the age of 18) with a serious health condition

d) To recover from or seek treatment for the employee’s own serious health condition, (Pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions are treated like any other disability, and an employee on leave will be eligible for temporary disability benefits in the same amount and to the same degree as any other employee on leave).

e) Personal Loss: in the event of the death of a family member, pregnancy loss, or a catastrophic event not covered above.

**NOTICE REQUIREMENTS**

If the need for PFML is foreseeable, the employee must provide written notice to the Stated Clerk and Presbytery Pastor in advance of the leave. If the leave is an emergency, notification is required as proximate as possible to the initiating event(s).

If PFML is requested by either the Stated Clerk or Presbytery Pastor, notification should be sent to their senior executive colleague, and the chairs of Leadership and COM in both presbyteries.[[7]](#footnote-7)

**PFML PARAMETERS**

1. PFML salary will be paid without loss of vacation or sick leave.[[8]](#footnote-8)
2. PFML will be for up to 12 weeks unless, in the case of a serious illness, the employee or immediate family member is released from care by their physician in less than 12 weeks.[[9]](#footnote-9)
3. Approved PFML may be either continuous or intermittent. If PFML is taken intermittently, plans to cover employee responsibilities shall be made with the appropriate committees, commissions, and teams.
4. The Presbytery will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations to requests for light duty in cases of its employee’s own illness.
5. PFML benefits will be measured in a rolling 12-month period.

1. During PFML, the employee will continue to receive all benefits of their terms of call or contract, including dues paid to and benefits provided by the Board of Pensions or other insurer.
2. Following PFML, the employee shall be entitled to return to the same position with the same title, salary terms, hours worked, and job description.

**Appendix A**

**Church Support**

1. While the church is responsible for the funding and administration of PFML, state-provided disability and paid leave benefits, Board of Pensions financial protection programs, and/or private insurance or privately funded programs may be considered to help offset income continuation costs.
2. Whenever possible, the Presbytery encourages congregations to offer flexible scheduling and/or remote work arrangements for its pastors or staff utilizing PFML.
3. Where possible, communication of mutual needs and planning is vital to minimize disruption for the church. Employees are encouraged to anticipate leave with sensitivity around the needs of the church, including but not limited to temporary replacement and fulfillment of duties. As well, employers are encouraged to collaborate and plan with their employees with sensitivity to their personal situation.
4. In humility and gratitude, the Presbytery acknowledges the challenges created by enacting this policy. With respect for the diligence of Sessions and congregations, we pray and trust this PFML will be a source of joy as churches encourage employees to take time for the good of their families. In the spirit of Christian compassion and the connectional church, churches and employees are encouraged to work together to assist in the development of funding PFML in order best to serve the kin-dom of God. Presbyteries, synods, and individual sessions and congregations are all encouraged to facilitate conversations regarding how individual churches and employees, with the support of Presbytery, might fund PFML. To God be all Glory!

NOTE: Similar subject matter in the current policy for the Combined Presbyteries Personnel Policy (3/12/15) is found on pages 10-11 in sections entitled “Maternity/Paternity Leave of Absence,” “Family Medical Leave,” and “Family Bereavement Leave.” Authority to edit the current personnel policy to include the material contained in this document will be delegated to the Combined Personnel Team.

1. Footnotes suggest ways a session could adapt this policy to create a PFML policy for its church. Appendix A provides additional guidance for individual sessions and churches. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Terms of call” may be changed to “full-time employees,” “part-time employees,” or “any employee” for a church policy. Key point: define for whom the term applies. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Or name of church. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Twelve weeks is the minimum required by the Book of Order for those under terms of call. Individual sessions may shorten or lengthen the duration of PFML for positions not under terms of call. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Possible textual variations for sessions to consider in order to provide PFML to all staff: “Employees generally are eligible to apply for PFML after one year of employment at (name of church).” Or, “Employees generally are eligible to apply for PFML after 90 days of employment at (name of church).” Or, “Employees generally are eligible to apply for PFML after satisfactory completion of any employment probationary period at (name of church).” [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. A possible textual variation for b, c, d, and e is to require certification of reason for leave, *e.g.,* from the courts or medical doctor). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Sessions would need to define who needs to be notified, for example, pastors may call any combination of the Clerk of Session, Chair of Personnel, or other individuals as indicated. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The Presbytery encourages congregations to provide the full benefit without requiring use of vacation, sick leave, or PTO. Possible variations: (1) in place of “vacation and sick leave,” PTO can be referenced; (2) use of vacation or sick leave may be required. In such situations, Presbytery staff should be included in conversations about alternatives for resourcing the congregation. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. For an employee’s own illness or medical condition, a release from a medical provider may be required prior to returning to work. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)