

MATERNITY/PREGNANCY AND PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

PURPOSE:

The Eastern Synod provides that congregations, through their congregational council ("Congregational Council") shall provide maternity, pregnancy or parental leave of absence ("Maternity/Pregnancy and/or Parental Leave") to Rostered Ministers for the care of newborn or newly adopted children in accordance with the applicable employment standards legislation.

The Eastern Synod:

- 1. Where applicable, eligibility for Maternity/Pregnancy and/or Parental Leave from responsibilities to the Eastern Synod will be governed by the applicable employment standards legislation of the province where the Rostered Minister resides (the "Provincial Standards").
- 2. Extended/Long Term parental Leave A Rostered Minister may choose to resign from their call with the Congregational Council and apply for the status of "on leave from call" as reflected in the ELCIC guidelines:
 - a. A Rostered Minister on leave from call may apply to be retained on the Roster of Ordained Ministers of the church according to the procedure outlined in the CHCON VII, 6 and CHBYLAWA III, 11 for an additional five (5) years beyond the three year "on leave from call" provision.
 - b. Should a longer period be desired the Rostered Minister should voluntarily resign from the ministry. Subsequent reinstatement to the Roster of Ordained Ministers would take place according to the provisions of CHCON VII, 2 and CHBYLAWS III, 9.
 - c. Years spent on long term parental leave which exceeds the length of leave allowed by Provincial Standards shall not apply in the consideration of years of experience when placing a Rostered Minister on the salary scale upon reinstatement.

Congregational Councils:

- 1. Eligibility for Maternity/Pregnancy and/or Parental Leave from responsibilities to Congregational Council will be governed by the Provincial Standards.
- 2. The Congregational Council shall:
 - a. Provide a supplemental employment benefit of 95% of the salary (excluding professional expenses as outlined in Eastern Synod Compensation Schedule) for the 2-week waiting period before Employment Insurance ("EI") begins, and;

- **b.** Provide a supplemental employment benefit to top-up EI to 95% of salary (excluding professional expenses) for the following 15 weeks of Maternity Benefits paid through Employment Insurance, **provided however**;
- c. A Rostered Minister who has utilized the supplemental employment benefit provisions in this policy shall agree to return to work for a period of at least 6 months after the end of the Maternity/Pregnancy and/or Parental Leave/s, and;
- d. Supplementary employment benefits shall not be paid by the Congregational Council if the Rostered Minister has not applied for Employment Insurance benefits or is disentitled or disqualified from receiving Employment Insurance benefits.
- 3. The Rostered Minister is responsible for reporting to their Congregational Council the details of their EI benefits so that the supplementary employment benefit can be calculated and paid.
- 4. Unpaid parental leave is provided in accordance with the Provincial Standards and the Eastern Synod Compensation Schedule up to an additional 35 weeks.
- 5. Based on eligibility, EI parental benefits may be provided by EI to parents who are caring for a newborn or newly adopted child. A maximum of 35 weeks of parental benefits may be available to biological or adoptive parents.
- 6. Housing arrangements provided to the Rostered Minister shall continue for the duration of Maternity/Pregnancy and/or Parental Leave.
- 7. Vacation entitlements will continue to accrue while the Rostered Minister is on Maternity/Pregnancy and/or Parental Leave. The Rostered Minister has the option of taking this time in conjunction with the end of their Maternity/Pregnancy and/or Parental Leave or after they return to work. The chosen option should be discussed with Mutual Ministry and approved by Congregational Council prior to returning to work.
- 8. Rostered Ministers will not receive reimbursement of Professional Expenses (car, book, and continuing education) during Maternity/Pregnancy and/or Parental Leave.
- 9. ELCIC Pension, Health and Dental, and Life and Disability Benefits will be administered by ELCIC Group Services. (www.elcicgsi.ca/Members/Group_Benefits.html)

Procedure

- 1. At such time as a Rostered Minister wishes to have Maternity/Pregnancy and/or Parental Leave, the Congregational Council and the Bishop of the Eastern Synod shall be notified in writing at least 13 weeks prior to the start date of the anticipated leave. This notice shall include the estimated date of delivery as well as an estimated return to work date. If the Rostered Minister cannot give 13 weeks of notice of leave because of unforeseen circumstances, then the Rostered Minister must give as much notice as possible.
- 2. If a Rostered Minister chooses to return to work before their Maternity/Pregnancy and/or Parental Leave period is concluded, 4 weeks advance written notice must be given.

General Provisions

- 1. Maternity/Pregnancy Leave and/or Parental Leave granted under this policy will be counted as "service" for purposes of salary calculations, length of employment, seniority and other such rights, obligations and benefits as provided by the Provincial Standards.
- 2. Please note that the recitation of the Provincial Standards or any applicable federal legislation, such as the Employment Insurance provisions, are for convenience and information only and Congregational Councils or Rostered Ministers wishing to know more about this Maternity/Pregnancy and Parental Leave Policy and the Provincial Standards are encouraged to review the Provincial Standards and any applicable federal legislation to determine their rights and obligations.
- 3. If any part or parts of this policy contravene the Provincial Standards or any applicable federal legislation, the minimum standard required by the applicable Provincial Standards or federal legislation shall apply.

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