

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE POLICY

Medical Leave

Medical leave constitutes a special category of Administrative Leave, in that certain illnesses or injuries may require a more extended absence from the church than would be expected in routine absences due to sickness. Examples might include, but not be limited to, serious injuries, operations or surgery, and certain conditions related to mental health. In some of these situations, the pastor may not be able to fulfill her/his work duties, but it may not be necessary to enforce rules concerning staying out of church facilities or refusing to have contact with church members, especially if there is no indication of malfeasance or ethical violations or serious conflict in the church. In fact, where the mutual support of pastor and congregation expected in the pastoral covenant are concerned, it might even be cruel not to allow any contact at all.

If Administrative Leave is employed for medical reasons, Session and COM should evaluate the special circumstances. Ordinarily, most of the foregoing expectations and responsibilities will apply, including the care required in determining if Administrative Leave is called for, matters related the length of leave and compensation, and support for both pastor and congregation during the proposed leave. However, the Session and the COM should consider whether some adjustments to expectations regarding interaction between pastor and church are called for. Any variations to the expectations in the policy should be include in the formal agreement.