

Resolution Regarding the Increase of Parental Leave Guidelines for Rostered Leaders

WHEREAS, According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologist, postpartum recovery normally ranges from a minimum of six to eight weeks, up to 12 weeks or longer depending on birth complications and the mother's overall health; and

WHEREAS, Paid parental leave is associated with decreased rates of infant deaths, low birth weight, and premature births, as well as a 51% reduction in the likelihood of a mother's re-hospitalization, and a 47% reduction in infant re-hospitalization; and

WHEREAS, Several studies have found that the length of paid leave matters for maternal and infant health, including findings that less than eight weeks of paid leave is linked to a reduction in overall maternal health status and increased risk of postpartum depression, findings that every additional week of paid leave that a mother takes reduces the likelihood of reporting poor mental well-being, and findings that longer paid leave significantly increases breastfeeding success and duration, which has innumerable benefits for moms and babies, and reduces the risk of breast and ovarian cancer; and

WHEREAS, The Oregon Synod Care and Compensation Guidelines have no provisions for fully paid parental leave; and

WHEREAS, Paid Leave Oregon covers partial payment to eligible employees who earn more than 65% of the State Average Weekly Wage and Paid Leave Oregon applies to all religious organizations and provides for a minimum of 12 weeks of paid parental leave; and

WHEREAS, 12 weeks of at least partial paid parental leave are provided for all federal employees and military personnel, as well as 12 weeks recommended by several other ELCA Synods around the country,

included but not limited to the Pacifica Synod, Sierra Pacific Synod, Saint Paul Area Synod, Minneapolis Area Synod, North Carolina Synod, and Northern Illinois Synod; therefore be it

RESOLVED, Parental leave shall be available in Oregon Synod congregations, consistent with Paid Leave Oregon provisions, to either caregiver and/or both caregivers of a child. Parental leave shall be available whether care for the child begins at birth, adoption, or by undertaking foster care; and

RESOLVED, Oregon Synod Care and Compensation Guidelines recommend that congregations make up the difference between Paid Leave Oregon distributions and the rostered leader's full pay; and

RESOLVED, That the Oregon Synod support rostered leaders in renegotiating the parental leave allowance in their current letters of call.

Respectfully submitted by:
Rev. John Barton
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