



Diocese of Quebec – Policy for leaves of absence

In the following policy the term “staff” refers to both ordained persons and lay persons employed by the diocese. The term “supervisor” refers to the Bishop in the case of a cleric and the Director General in the case of a diocesan lay employee.

It is the policy of the Diocese of Quebec to permit clergy and lay staff to take a leave of absence from their area of responsibility, provided suitable alternative arrangements can be made to continue the activities of the parish or synod office. No leave of absence shall be granted for longer than two (2) years duration except for those elected to provincial or federal governments. Leave of absence may be renewed by the bishop upon receipt of a letter of application.

ELIGIBILITY

Clergy and lay staff are eligible after completion of one year of service in the diocese except as otherwise required by law or specified under the specific type of leave for example the national church policy for sabbatical leave funding is that you have to have worked for at least 5 years.

APPROVAL

- Parish clergy requests for leave of absence require concurrence of the churchwardens and the approval of the Bishop.
- Diocesan lay staff requires the concurrence of the Director General.
- The Director General’s request requires the concurrence of the Bishop.
- The Bishop’s request requires the concurrence of the Officers of Synod.

REQUEST PROCESS

This process exists to facilitate good communication and provide the best support possible to staff when requesting leaves of absence. A request for absence is made by the staff within the time frame specified under each type of leave, and will specify the amount of time being requested.

A status of request is confirmed to staff member within two weeks by the direct supervisor. If absence request is denied, reasons must be clearly stated in writing, and the supervisor must speak with the employee directly.

EFFECT OF ABSENCE ON:

Salary

As a general rule a leave of absence shall be without salary, housing or travel allowance, except as provided for under the specific type of leave of absence. Full or partial salary/stipend, housing and/or travel allowance may be granted after consultation with those listed in the approval process; any of these would be the responsibility of the original paying source.

General Synod Pension Plan

The individual remains a member of the General Synod Pension Plan during the period of leave of absence subject to the following provisions:

- If the individual received salary/stipend during a leave of absence, the relative contributions of the individual and the parish or diocese shall continue to be made during the period of absence and such an individual shall be and remain entitled to all benefits provided under the plan.
- If an individual does not receive pay during a leave of absence, contributions shall cease for the period of such leave of absence unless otherwise arranged between the Director General and the individual. If contributions are discontinued during such leave of absence, the period thereof shall be excluded in determining the relative benefits conferred by this plan. Upon returning to work, the contributions of the individual and of the parish or diocese shall be resumed.

Medical and Insurance Plans

Arrangements to continue these plans must be made prior to commencement of leave of absence.

Vacation

Leave of absence in no way affects an individual's vacation entitlement.

Return

Employees must return to work on the day scheduled. Failure to do so may lead to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

Every effort will be made to arrange for an individual granted leave of absence to return to a position comparable to the position held prior to taking the leave. In the case of maternity/parental leave Provincial laws will apply.

If the staff person is out on LTD and medical information indicates the employee is fit to work on a part-time basis for rehabilitation purposes the staff person may be entitled, on a temporary basis, to a combination of part-time and disability salary to a maximum of 100% of the pre-disability gross salary as per the rules governing the Long-Term Disability Plan (LTD).

Replacement

The supervisor may fill, on a temporary basis, a position vacated by an employee on leave.

REASONS FOR GRANTING:

The diocese recognizes the following types of leave of absence.

- Illness (includes sick leave, short and long term disability)
- Pregnancy and Parental Leave
- Emergency Leave
- Annual Professional Development
- Educational Leave of Absence
- Sabbatical Leave
- Jury Duty/Court Witness
- Participation in Political Process

ILLNESS

The Diocesan Sick Leave Policy for staff ensures financial support when they are unable to perform their responsibilities as a result of injury or illness. In the case of clergy the Bishop may arrange for a temporary appointment to the parish and will consider appropriate action to assist clerics, such as appointing assistant curates, assistant priests and/or vocational deacons. Clergy should inform their churchwardens if they require sick leave. In the case of absences of five consecutive days the synod office may require a doctor's certificate..

SHORT TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE

Staff with more than three months are eligible for short term disability. The Bishop must be informed immediately if the illness of an individual is expected to result in absence from duties for a month or more. The parish or diocese will provide support for up to 119 days. In the event that an illness will extend beyond this period, the individual if registered for the General Synod Pension Plan must apply for Long-Term Disability. Appropriate medical documentation must be given, in conjunction with consultation with the Bishop. The individual's benefits will continue unchanged during sick leave and short-term disability (119 days).

LONG-TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE

Benefits cover absences of over 119 days, for members of the General Synod Pension Plan and under the age of 65 are provided through the Long-Term Disability plan administered by the national Pension Office upon approval of the insurance provider.. Long-Term Disability forms from the General Synod Pension Plan will be completed no later than six weeks before eligibility for LTD is to commence. Full details of the plan can be found at <http://www.anglicanpension.ca/wp-content/uploads/LTD-Plan-Regulations-Dec-22-2015.pdf>

PREGNANCY & PARENTAL LEAVE

Pregnancy and Parental Leave is according to the Laws of the Province of Quebec.

EMERGENCY LEAVE

An emergency leave, with or without full pay, may be granted for personal emergencies or bereavement.

Under Quebec Legislation a staff member is automatically entitled to:

1. On the death of an immediate family to five days of bereavement leave, one of which is paid. All diocesan staff will have 5 days paid bereavement leave; that leave may be extended by the Bishop.
2. Leave of 10 days a year for such things as care or medical attention of a family
3. Provided they have a minimum three months of service with the diocese, staff is entitled to a leave of up to 12 weeks a year to meet obligations resulting from an accident or serious illness of a family member.
4. If you are sick or recovering from an accident, you may take up to 26 weeks leave in a 12-month period, the later would normally be considered as paid short term sick leave.

Emergency leave in the case of numbers 1, 2 and 4 above would be paid. In the case of # 3 above it is at the discretion of the supervisor. Staff must inform the supervisor of the reason for and the length of the leave being requested as soon as possible. The supervisor will document the leave and place it in the staff member's file.

For the diocese of Quebec listed family members of the staff or of the staff's spouse/partner are as follows:

- Parent, step-parent, foster parent, grandparent, or step-grandparent
- Child, step-child, foster child, grandchild, or step-grandchild
- Brother or sister of employee
- Spouse of child
- Relative who depends on the employee for care or assistance

ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Diocese of Quebec has established a process to assist the clerical and lay members of the plan to develop their professional skills. This assistance is in the form leaves of absence. Permission from one's supervisor must be sought for all annual professional development leaves.

Staff are entitled to three weeks paid leave of absence annually to enable them to undertake professional development. Such leaves of absence are in addition to the annual vacation

Key to a vibrant Anglican organization is the ability to effectively equip ordained and lay leaders to meet the demands for ministry in ways that effectively respond to the rapid changes taking place in society and the world and their impact on ministry. Our goal as a Diocese is to create a culture in which professional lay and ordained leaders together build a commitment to lifelong learning and renewal in ministry.

There are many sources to draw from:

1. *Continuing Education Plan (CEP)*

The Continuing Education Plan is administered through the Pension Office, who can be contacted for more information about the plan or details on a personal account.

- a. Each participant in the Professional Development Plan may accumulate funds in his/her individual account to a maximum amount (set by the Plan). Funds not used after this amount has been reached are directed to the general assistance account.
- b. Participants in the plan may use money from their individual accounts for a wide variety of programs, courses, events, retreats, degrees, career assessment, conferences, conventions, tapes, software, books, magazine subscriptions, and resources that will contribute to their effectiveness in ministry.
- c. Participants who go on leave or transfer from the diocese may continue to draw from their personal account for a period determined by the Pension Office.

2. *Anglican Foundation*

Clergy may apply to the Anglican Foundation for a grant to assist them in their continuing Education.

EDUCATIONAL LEAVE

The term “sabbatical” can be a word that evokes various interpretations. For some it is associated with the academic world, while for others, it simply means time off. It may or may not involve hard work and productivity.

The Diocese of Quebec recognizes two broad classifications of sabbatical leave. The first, referred to as “Educational Leave” is primarily concerned with a period of time (usually one year) focusing on a major study or educational component. The second category is referred to as “Sabbatical Leave” and is primarily concerned with a shorter period of time (8-12 weeks) focusing on the rest, travel and study by the individual.

The understanding of an Educational Leave is a period of time where the individual may be enrolled as a full-time student at an accredited university or college, in order to complete previous studies or undertake new learning. During this period, the individual normally resigns his/her position and goes “on leave.” Upon completion of the Educational Leave, an accounting of the leave’s content and new learning will be expected.

The concept of an Educational Leave has its roots in scripture. Study time was exercised by the teachers of the Law and Jesus was found to be in the temple listening to the teachers. Because study was an integral part of the ministry of Jesus’ disciples, periods of extended study time may be necessary in a vocation that seeks to continue the teaching ministry of Christ and the apostles.

There are four types of educational leave:

1. **Post Secondary/Undergraduate Courses**

Educational Leave up to two school years may be granted to an individual for the purpose of returning to university to continue his or her education. Leave may be once renewed for a period not exceeding a further two years. Variations in the above policy may be considered to meet semester requirements. The total leave of absence time is not to exceed four academic years.

2. **Graduate Courses**

Educational Leave may be granted to an individual to complete a graduate degree.

- a. Each request will be considered on its individual merits.
- b. The leave of absence may not exceed two years.

3. **Short Courses**

Individuals may apply for an Educational Leave to take courses either of his/her own choosing or upon the request of the diocese.

4. **Subsidies for Courses**

Where subsidies are available, payment is based on consideration of the following factors:

- Courses taken at the direction of the diocese – up to 100%
- Courses requested by staff and clearly related to his/her work – up to 75% through the CEP

As an accountability measure, educational Leave is dependent on successful completion of the course, or full attendance any exceptions will be reviewed and discussed with the Bishop.

Procedure for taking Educational Leave

1. Eligibility and Granting

- a. All clergy who have been ordained for a minimum of five years, in the diocese for five years and in their current appointment for a minimum of three and lay employees working for the diocese for a minimum of five years, in consultation with the Bishop and churchwardens or supervisor, may be considered for Educational Leave.
- b. After the initial Educational Leave of Absence, an individual may apply for an Educational Leave of Absence subsequent to each period of ten years in ministry or employment in the diocese.

2. Duration

- a. The time period covered by an Educational Leave varies depending on type of leave granted, but cannot exceed a period of two years, with the potential for renewal at the review and discretion of the Bishop.
- b. Professional development time cannot be added to the duration of leave.
- c. Annual holiday time may be added to the duration of the leave; however an Educational Leave and a Sabbatical Leave may not be taken within the same year.

3. Funding

Partial financial assistance for the educational component of all leaves may be available from the Continuing Educational Plan of the national church Pension Plan members may apply to the Pension Office for a grant of up to \$3,000 for a sabbatical leave of 8 weeks or more continuous leave for study. Also, clergy may apply for funding through “Sabbatical Grants for Pastoral Leaders”, available from the Lilly Foundation, Louisville Seminary (please see their website for details/deadlines). Parishes may also wish to make a financial contribution to the leave.

4. Return

- a. Every effort will be made to arrange, in consultation with the Bishop, for the individual granted leave to return to an appropriate position.
- b. Upon return from Educational Leave, the individual reports to the Bishop.

5. Application

- a. Written application to the Bishop about a proposed Educational Leave must be made at least six months prior to the leave taking place.
- b. The letter of application will outline the educational programme proposed. This outline will include the following:
 - full description of the proposed leave including places of study and intended courses,
 - personal goals for taking the leave,
 - procedures for supervision and reporting of the progress of the leave,
 - if there is to be an evaluation of the work, how such will be accomplished,
 - the relationship of this programme to future employment in the church.

6. Stipend and Benefits

As a general rule Educational Leave will be without salary, travel allowance or housing or housing allowance. During the leave, pension and long-term disability contributions may continue, as may the extended health care, dental care, and group insurance. The participant will pay all the premiums for these benefits and they must be deposited before the leave commences

SABBATICAL LEAVE

Sabbatical Leave is considered a combination of rest, travel and study. The time away from the usual work surroundings and routine can be used in a variety of ways to meet individual needs and as such the Sabbatical Leave allows for a fair degree of flexibility. In the case of clergy Sabbatical Leave is a parish (salary paying source) leave that is granted with the churchwardens' and Bishop's approval.

The concept of Sabbatical Leave also has its roots in scripture. Sabbath time and Sabbath day are about periods of rest, refreshment and renewal. Because the Sabbath was an integral part of the process of creation, not an afterthought, periods of Sabbath time which vary in length are necessary in a vocation that seeks to continue the creating work of God.

Procedure for taking Sabbatical Leave

1. Eligibility and Granting

- a. All clergy who have been ordained for a minimum of five years and in their current appointment for a minimum of three and lay employees in their current position for five years, in consultation with the Bishop and churchwardens or Supervisor, may be considered for Sabbatical Leave. Senior diocesan staff, in consultation with the diocesan bishop may also be considered.
- b. After initial Sabbatical Leave, an individual priest may apply for a Sabbatical Leave subsequent to each period of seven years in ministry.

2. Duration

- a. Sabbatical Leave is usually granted for a period up to 12 weeks.
- b. Annual holiday time may be added to the duration of the leave; however an Educational Leave and a Sabbatical Leave cannot be taken within the same year.

3. Funding

Partial financial assistance for the educational component of all leaves may be available from the Continuing Educational Plan of the National Church. Applications for grants from the Enabling of Clergy are available from the Diocese. Clergy may apply to the National Church for a grant of up to \$3,000 for a sabbatical leave of 8 weeks or more of continuous leave for study. Also, clergy may apply for funding through "Sabbatical Grants for Pastoral Leaders", available from the Lilly Foundation, Louisville Seminary (please see their website for details/deadlines). Parishes may also wish to make a financial contribution to the leave.

4. Return

- a. Upon return from Sabbatical Leave, the individual reports to the Bishop.
- b. For Sabbatical Leave, it is expected the individual granted leave will return to his/her same position and remain in this position for a period of not less than one year.

5. Application

- a. Written application to the Bishop about a proposed Sabbatical Leave must be made at least six months prior to the leave taking place.
- b. If the person applying is a cleric then the letter of application to the Bishop will include a supporting letter from the churchwardens of the applicant's parish. This letter from the churchwardens should provide details concerning the parish's ministry coverage and financial arrangements agreed to for the duration of the leave.
- c. The letter of application will outline the Sabbatical Leave programme proposed. This outline

- will include the following:
- full description of the proposed leave including places of study and intended courses,
 - personal goals for taking the leave,
- d. The arrangements for supply to replace the applicant during the leave shall be made according to the mutual consent of the applicant, salary paying source and the Bishop.

6. Stipend and Benefits for clergy on Sabbatical Leave

- a. The parish or the employer of a non-parochial staff member will pay 50% of stipend to the priest and 50% to the diocese to arrange for replacement costs. Pension contributions will continue-unless negotiated with the Bishop otherwise.
- b. The salary paying source is encouraged to establish a fund to meet the cost of clergy and/or employee replacement during the period of Sabbatical Leave.
- c. The salary paying source will pay replacement clergy and/or lay readers according to the diocesan policy in effect at the time of the Sabbatical Leave.

JURY DUTY/COURT WITNESS

The Diocese recognizes that jury duty is a responsibility of citizenship, and hopes that staff called will respond willingly. A staff member who is not a party and is requested to act as a juror or as a witness in a legal proceeding where he/she is not a party shall maintain their regular salary as if they were working during the period of the absence, provided the compensation, excluding reimbursed expenses, received as a witness or juror is remitted to tier normal paying source ie. diocese or parish.

Under Quebec legislation “ministers of religion” can apply for an exemption to serve. This exemption is not normally withheld and due to nature and role of a cleric within the community it is expected that licensed diocesan clergy will apply for this exemption if summoned for jury duty.

PARTICIPATION IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

The Diocese of Quebec recognizes that clergy and lay staff may wish to take an active part in community affairs. Accordingly, the diocese will provide the opportunity for individual to participate in the political process regardless of the political affiliation of the individual.

PROCEDURE

Individuals seeking elective public office or wishing to participate as a campaign manager, will notify their immediate superior (and, in the case of a cleric, the churchwardens) as soon as possible of their intention. As soon as such candidacy is official or the appointment as campaign manager is made, leave of absence must be requested. These leaves are without pay.

PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL ELECTIONS - CANDIDATES

In the case of appointments held by license from the Bishop, the application for unpaid leave of absence must be accompanied by a statement of intention to resign from such appointment if elected.

The leave of absence will normally be granted on the following terms:

- a. **Campaign** The leave of absence will cover the period from the date of the issuance of the election writ to the date of the election.
- b. **On election** If elected, the intended resignation will become effective and the leave of absence will be extended for the initial term of office in the elected position. The individual will be entitled to maintain his/her rights to any benefits accrued during the prior service in the diocese. Further leaves of absence on similar conditions may be granted at the discretion of the diocese for a further period if elected beyond the first.
- c. **Return to Employment** When the individual resigns from public office, does not seek re-election, or is not re-elected, and the leave of absence ceases, every effort will be made to return the individual to a position comparable to that which he/she enjoyed prior to his/her election.

MUNICIPALOR SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS - CANDIDATES

Even in the event that only part-time responsibilities are involved, the individual must apply for the necessary unpaid time away from diocesan or parish responsibilities. A staff member elected to a School Board or Municipal Council is entitled to leave without pay for meetings or official activities of their function. If the demands upon the individual's time, created by public service responsibility, require full-time participation, or are such that the individual is unable to discharge properly his/her position in the diocese, the individual will resign and apply for leave of absence.

CAMPAIGN CHAIRPERSON, POLLING OFFICERS

An individual may be granted an unpaid leave of absence for up to eight weeks to act as a campaign chairperson for a prospective federal or provincial member or a municipal representative. An individual may be granted leave of absence without pay on an election day to act as an electoral officer, poll captain, or other office connected with an election.