

RESOLUTION (4) Paid Family Leave

Resolution on a Paid Family Leave

Presented to the Synod of Province III on May 7 – 8, 2018

If adopted, to be forwarded to the Secretary of General Convention (*see C004*)

Resolved, That the Synod of Province III, meeting in Martinsburg, West Virginia on May 7 – 8, 2018, endorses the following resolution and hereby instructs the Provincial Secretary to forward it to the Secretary of General Convention by no later than May 25, 2018.



Based on the following Resolution adopted by the Diocese of Virginia:

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention urge the Church Pension Group, acting consistently with its fiduciary obligations and with applicable insurance law, to act through appropriate means, including possible provision of an additional benefit through the Denominational Health Plan, to expand the availability of paid family leave for clergy and lay employees. The objective of such family leave benefit is to increase the paid time off available to new mothers for recovery from childbirth and for bonding with the newborn, and to provide for paid leave for covered members of a household to address the adoption of a child, for spousal leave when a new-born or newly adopted child is brought into a covered household, and for paid leave when a covered member of a household is obliged to care for a sick or dying child, parent, or other close relative by blood or marriage; and be it further,

Resolved, That the Church Pension Group report to the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church by January 1, 2020, the detailed results of its analysis, including any efforts it has made and any efforts it is planning to make in order to expand paid family leave provided through the Denominational Health Plan or other means; and be it further,

Resolved, That the Church Pension Group shall make a follow-up detailed report to Executive Council about implementation of any such efforts by January 1, 2021.

Explanation

Clergy and covered lay employees in The Episcopal Church have the same kinds of family obligations as people working in secular jobs. Unlike some large secular employers, which have generous paid family leave policies, many small churches are financially unable to provide for much or any paid family leave. The inability of many churches to provide such help is particularly an impediment to deploying able younger clergy and lay employees who face these family obligations and whose energy and vision are critical to growing the church and connecting with younger people. These issues are also generally an impediment to the movement of clergy, as the absence of such a safety net makes people more reluctant to move away from places able to provide such help, or where long relationships in a community may substitute for such church help.

Accordingly, to the extent permissible with sound financial planning and with the obligations of applicable insurance law, this resolution urges the Church Pension Group to analyze, and to the extent feasible, to expand the availability of such family leave.

The resolution specifically distinguishes the issue of leave for mothers who have delivered children, where current disability insurance products provide for some paid time off, and other issues such as spousal leave, leave to address adoption of a child, and family leave to address care of a sick or dying child, spouse, or other close relative. In the latter cases, disability insurance does not ordinarily address the funding of paid time off, suggesting the need to explore other potential insurance programs to do so. Finally, the resolution requests detailed reports on such expansion efforts, recognizing that there are complex legal, financial, and actuarial issues to address in any such expansion.