

# Parental Leave Policy

## Bishop's Introduction

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

There are few things more beautiful than the coming of a new child into the world, especially in the context of marriage and the family. Our Lord Jesus chose to be born and dwell among us as a child. The love shared between parents and children reflect the love that God has for each of us.

This Parental Leave Policy is in accordance with Church teaching on married love and family life. As members of the Catholic Church, we are called to be radical examples of what it means to prioritize the family, especially in a world that does not recognize or respect its centrality and importance.

As Pope Francis stated, “We remain firmly convinced that the family is a gift of God, the place where he reveals the power of his saving grace.” It follows that, as the Church’s earthly mission is to lead souls to heaven, we should empower the families under our care.

We acknowledge that parents are the primary caregivers of their children, who will provide for the physical and spiritual needs of their sons and daughters. Parental leave will give parents the chance to set up a firm foundation of care in their relationship with their children from the very beginning.

We read in the Gospel of Matthew, “Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (19:14). As a diocese, let us continue to lead our culture towards the truth, goodness and beauty of our Catholic faith.

In Christ’s love,

**Most Rev. Jacques Fabre-Jeune, CS**

*Bishop of Charleston*

## Policy

Employees are provided up to 8 weeks of paid parental leave following the birth of an employee's child/children or the placement of a child/children with an employee through adoption.

Parental leave enables employees to care for and bond with a newborn or a newly adopted child. This policy will run concurrently with leave guaranteed by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), as applicable. This policy will be in effect for births and adoptions occurring on or after April 1, 2024.

## Eligibility

Eligible employees must meet the following criteria:

- o Be currently employed by the Diocese of Charleston;
- o Have been employed with the Diocese of Charleston as a regular full-time or regular part-time (20+ hours per week) benefit-eligible employee for at least 6 consecutive months immediately preceding the date the leave would begin; and,
- o Have given birth to a child; or,
- o Be the spouse of a woman who has given birth to a child; or,
- o Have adopted a child aged 17 or younger.

## Amount, Compensation, Time Frame, and Duration of Paid Parental Leave

Eligible employees will receive a maximum of 8 weeks of paid parental leave for the birth or adoption of a child. If both parents are diocese employees, they will receive 12 total weeks of paid parental leave. A multiple birth or adoption (e.g., the birth of twins or adoption of siblings) does not increase the maximum amount of paid parental leave granted for that event.

Employees may be granted no more than 8 weeks of paid parental leave in a rolling 12-month period measured from the date an employee used any parental leave, regardless of whether more than one birth or adoption occurs within that 12-month time frame.

Employees are not required to use other accrued paid leave time (i.e. PTO, sick, vacation, etc.) while on the 8 weeks of parental leave.

Each week of paid parental leave is compensated at 100 percent of the employee's regular pay. For these purposes, regular pay is considered as follows:

- For contracted teachers, this equates to 1/26<sup>th</sup> of their annual contracted pay per pay period.

- For non-contract salaried employees, this equates to 1/26<sup>th</sup> of their annual pay.
- For hourly employees, this equates to their weekly standard hours times their hourly rate.
- For all the above, these amounts will be prorated for portions of a pay period as needed.

Employees receiving benefits who make employee contribution must continue to make that contribution during the eight-week parental leave period.

Approved parental leave must be taken immediately following the birth or adoption of a child or children. Time off must also be taken consecutively rather than intermittently.

Any unused paid parental leave per adoption or birth will be forfeited. Unlike accrued vacation time, paid parental leave is not eligible to be cashed out if the employee is terminated or resigns.

An employee may not use any paid parental leave unless they agree in writing, before the leave begins, to work for the diocese for at least 12 weeks upon their return. This 12-week work obligation begins on the employee's first scheduled workday after paid parental leave concludes.

#### Coordination with Other Policies

Paid parental leave will run concurrently with FMLA leave, if applicable, and will be counted toward the maximum of 12 weeks of FMLA in a 12-month period (e.g., paid parental leave extends for 8 of the 12 weeks of FMLA). All other requirements and provisions under FMLA will apply.

After the paid parental leave reaches 8 weeks, the employee can use any additional accrued time off as needed in accordance with other applicable leave policies.

Employees utilizing paid parental leave will remain in benefit-eligible status while on leave. Holidays and scheduled calendar breaks will not extend the paid parental leave entitlement. Employees will not accrue sick or vacation time during their paid parental leave.

#### Request for Paid Parental Leave

The employee will provide his or her Location Coordinator with notice of the request for leave at least 30 days prior to the proposed date of the leave (or if the leave was not foreseeable, as soon as possible). The employee must complete the necessary forms and provide all documentation as required by the Human Resources department to substantiate the request.

# Paid Parental Leave Request

This form initiates the application and qualification process for Paid Parental Leave (PPL). Completion of this form does not guarantee qualification for placement on leave. Certain factors affect whether an employee qualifies for leave. See applicable policies for more information. Employee must submit FMLA paperwork, including the physician certification, before PPL can be considered. Employee portion of benefit premiums must be paid while on leave.

Employee must notify their Supervisor of their need for leave. Employee and supervisor must complete, sign, and submit this form immediately to the Human Resources Department for follow-up. Submission of incomplete/insufficient forms will delay the approval process and may lead to denial of leave.

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**Employee Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Job Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Supervisor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Hire:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Employee personal email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cell #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Employee Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Supervisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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	Anticipated	Actual
<b>Date of birth or placement</b>		
<b>Date use of PPL begins</b>		
<b>Date use of PPL concludes</b>		

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I agree to return to work for at least 12 weeks immediately following the conclusion of PPL.

\*\*placeholder for work obligation.

**Employee Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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# Paid Parental Leave Request

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Anticipated date of 1<sup>st</sup> check: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated date of last check: \_\_\_\_\_

HR Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved

Denied Reason for denial: \_\_\_\_\_

