



EASTERN SYNOD of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

GUIDELINES RELATED TO ON LEAVE FROM CALL STATUS

1. Definition and Criteria for On Leave From Call Status

- A. At the termination of a call of a pastor or diaconal minister, and if the pastor or diaconal minister has not received and accepted a subsequent call, the following procedure is to be followed:
1. At the termination of a call the synod bishop will write to the rostered minister, providing information and guidelines for on leave from call status. The minister will be listed as Temporarily Without Call until such time the Synod Council grants On Leave from Call status.
 2. A rostered minister seeking on leave from call status must make a written request to the synod bishop. The granting of leave from call is not automatic or a right. It must be requested and a rationale provided by the rostered minister as to why the status should be granted. Failure to apply for on leave from call status within 6 months of the termination of a prior call may result in removal from the roster.
 3. The request for on leave from call status should include a statement of the following:
 - a. the rostered minister's vocational plan while on leave from call;
 - b. the anticipated date when the rostered minister will be available for a letter of call;
 - c. a statement describing the ability and willingness of the rostered minister to provide ministry services while on leave from call at the direction of the synod bishop;
 - d. a statement of how the rostered minister's gifts and abilities can contribute to the mission of this church; and
 - e. a statement describing the rostered minister's current and intended participation in a congregation of this church.
 4. A rostered minister on leave from call must be an active member of a congregation of this church.
 5. A rostered minister on leave from call is accountable to the synod bishop and must be willing to meet the criteria and standards of this church for its rostered ministers.
 6. If a rostered minister requesting on leave from call status desires to make a personal statement relative to the request, the Synod Council may, at its discretion and in the manner of its determination, allow for a personal appearance by the rostered minister.
 7. Action granting or denying on leave from call is to be taken by the Synod Council upon recommendation by the synod bishop.
 8. The effective date for on leave from call status shall be granted by the Synod Council. Synod Council action related to a rostered minister's leave from call is reported as

- information to the next Synod Convention in the report of the bishop or Synod Council.
9. Written notification of Synod Council action is sent to the rostered minister requesting leave from call.
 10. The Secretary of this church and ELCIC Group Services Inc. are notified of the action of Synod Council granting on leave from call status. Similar notification is made to the Secretary of this church and ELCIC Group Services Inc. when such status is ended.
 11. Prior to each anniversary of the effective date of the Synod Council's decision granting on leave from call status, the rostered minister on leave will need to request renewal of the request for leave from call. Annual action by Synod Council is necessary for the continuation of that status.
- B. On leave from call status normally terminates at the end of three years.
- C. A rostered minister engaged in full-time graduate study or specialized ministry training, in a field that will enhance service in the rostered ministry of this church, may be retained on the roster of this church for an additional five consecutive years by annual action of Synod Council.
- D. A rostered minister, engaged in raising young children, may be retained on the roster of this church for an additional five consecutive years by annual action of Synod Council.
- E. With the approval of Synod Council, the synod bishop may place restrictions or limitations upon the availability of service of a rostered minister who is on leave from call.
- F. Prior to the end of the third year of On Leave From Call status, the synod bishop will contact the rostered minister on leave from call to review:
1. the implications and expectations of being in a non-rostered status;
 2. the criteria for continuation of on leave from call status beyond three years;
 3. the process for reinstatement to the roster.
- G. Ordinarily, a rostered minister may not be transferred to another synod while on leave from call. In the case of a married minister, whose spouse becomes employed on the territory of another synod, the transfer of a rostered minister who is on leave from call may be authorized upon mutual agreement by the two respective bishops. Notification is made to the Secretary of this church and ELCIC Group Services Inc. when a rostered minister on leave from call is transferred to another synod.

2. Criteria for Continuation of On Leave From Call Status Beyond Three Years

- A. A rostered minister who seeks to remain on leave from call beyond three years, for study or parental leave, must provide a written request to the synod bishop and Synod Council

for continuation of that status. This request should be received no later than three months prior to the end of the third year of on leave from call status.

- B. The request must include the following information:
1. the rationale for the rostered minister's remaining on leave from call;
 2. an articulation of how the rostered minister's gifts and circumstances can contribute to the ministry and mission of this church;
 3. the anticipated date when the rostered minister will be available for a call;
 4. a statement describing the ability and willingness of the rostered minister to provide ministry services at the direction of the synod bishop, consistent with the ministry and mission needs of the synod; and
 5. a statement describing the rostered minister's current participation in a congregation of this church.
- C. Study: The request for continuation beyond three years, for a program of studies, must indicate clearly the educational goals of the rostered minister, the time line for anticipated completion of study, and a statement of commitment that the rostered minister intends to be available for a letter of call within this church upon completion of the program.
- D. Parental Leave: The request for continuation beyond three years for parental leave must indicate clearly the circumstances and anticipated time line when the rostered minister intends to be available for a letter of call within this church.
- E. Action by the synod bishop and Synod Council.
1. The synod bishop reviews the request for continuation beyond three years of on leave from call status and forwards the request to Synod Council along with a recommendation for action.
 2. At the request of the synod bishop, Synod Council considers the request of the rostered minister and how it relates to the ministry and mission of the synod.
 3. Synod Council action related to a rostered minister's continuing leave from call is reported as information to the next Synod Convention in the report of the bishop or Synod Council.
 4. Written notification of Synod Council's action is sent to the rostered person requesting extended leave from call.
 5. The Secretary of this church and ELCIC Group Services Inc. are notified of the action of Synod Council granting extended on leave from call status. Similar notification is made to the Secretary of this church and ELCIC Group Services Inc. when such status is ended.
 6. A rostered minister on extended on leave from call status must provide an annual, written request to the synod bishop for recommendation to Synod Council for continuation of that status.
 7. Synod Council must review and act annually on requests for continuance of on leave from call status beyond three years.

- F. Prior to the end of the last year of extended on leave from call status, the synod bishop will contact the rostered minister on leave from call to review:
1. the implications and expectations of being in a non-rostered status; and,
 2. the process for reinstatement to the roster.

Adopted: ELCIC National Church Council – March, 2001
Format Revised: May, 2001