

7.2 OTHER LEAVE

These policies for Ministers are written from a pastoral perspective. They attempt to bring about fairness to the Minister's work hours, which often can be difficult to keep in perspective with the demands of ministry and also set some points of accountability for the Minister within their placement. It is not meant to convey a heavy handed approach.

Congregational ministry requires a flexible approach to time and place. Flexi-time allows Ministers and the Placement to determine how the Minister will manage their time. Flexi-place allows Ministers and the Placement to determine where the Minister will work.

1 PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Public holidays are Western Australian Government gazetted holidays. Where the minister is required to work on a public holiday, for example Good Friday, an alternative day can be taken, preferably within a fortnight of the holiday. This applies to both full-time and part-time placements.

Where a minister works beyond their two days off, as allowed in their Terms of Placement, an alternative time can be taken, preferably within a fortnight of the scheduled normal time for days off. Such leave is non-cumulative. Advising the Church Council of the time they are taking leave would be good practice. Common sense more than a heavy handed approach needs to apply here.

2 SUNDAYS FREE FROM MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

A Minister in full time placement is entitled to four Sundays per annum free of ministerial duties. The non-preaching Sundays are not cumulative. Where such time is not taken in any year it is automatically forgone.

Part time placements **up to 0.6FTE** are entitled to two Sundays per annum free of ministerial duties. Ministers in part time placements between 0.6FTE and 0.8FTE are entitled to three Sundays per annum free of ministerial duties. Where a Minister in a part time placement is expected to preach every Sunday then they are entitled to four Sundays per annum free of ministerial duties.

The non-preaching Sundays are non-cumulative. Where such time is not taken in any year it is automatically forgone.

3 STUDY LEAVE/CONTINUING EDUCATION

A Minister in a full time placement is entitled to 14 days study leave per year (interpreted as 2 weeks - including Saturdays and Sundays but not public holidays), for agreed courses, taken at a time negotiated with the Church Council or placement body. Part time placements are entitled to study leave according to the ratio of workload being undertaken in the placement, i.e. on a pro-rata basis.

The Personal Resources & Development Grant is provided to assist in the financial cost of taking study leave.

Ordinarily, study leave may be accumulated for up to two years; any further leave beyond this is forgone. A Minister can, however, accumulate study leave with the prior approval of the Minister's placement and the Pastoral Relations & Placements Commission for an agreed course of study.

Study Leave should be approved and recorded by the Church Council or placement body.

4 COMPASSIONATE OR BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Compassionate Leave may be given in circumstances of bereavement or family illness. The Church Council/placement needs to be notified of Compassionate Leave and ministers are encouraged to notify the Associate General Secretary (Pastoral), particularly if more than a week is likely to be envisaged.

5 JURY DUTY

Ministers of Religion may be called upon to do Jury Duty. The Juries Act 1957 was amended on 1 July 2011 and applications for excusal are dealt with differently. Rather than excusing people from jury duty the law allows people to apply for a deferral of jury duty. This allows those with pressing needs to fulfil their civic responsibilities and carry out jury duty at a time that is more suitable. If more than a week is likely to be envisaged, the Presbytery should be consulted.

6 DEFENCE RESERVIST

There are special situations where a Minister is a member of the Australian Army, Navy or Air Force Reserve. Reservists are generally expected to be away a number of times in a year. Ministers in this situation must negotiate any time off in this capacity with their placement. It should be noted that a placement may be eligible, through the Employer Support Payment (ESP) Scheme, to receive financial assistance to help offset the costs of releasing their minister for this type of service.

7 CARER'S LEAVE

From time to time, Ministers in placement may seek to take leave to care for a sick dependant. This information is provided as guidelines for such circumstances. Any leave taken, up until one month, would be treated as an exchange for a Minister's entitlement for sick leave.

Guidelines

Personal leave taken to care for a sick dependent will normally be according to the following guidelines:

- (a) The minister is seeking leave to care for a member of their immediate family or household;
- (b) The minister is primarily responsible for the care of the person concerned;
- (c) The minister will not normally take Carer's Leave where another person has taken leave to care for the same person;
- (d) Where the absence of the minister is expected to be more than 2 days, or precludes the minister from attending pre-arranged commitments, then the minister will advise the Church Council chairperson of their intention to take leave including:
 - the name of the person requiring care;
 - their relationship to the minister;
 - reasons for taking such leave; and
 - the estimated length of absence.

- (e) The minister may be requested to provide suitable written evidence to support the leave.

From time to time ministers may be faced with the unfortunate situation of the long term illness (a month or more) of a household or family member. In such situations the Associate General Secretary (Pastoral) should be advised so that appropriate pastoral care can be provided for the minister and suitable arrangements may be put in place for the congregation.

REFERENCES

1. Jury Duty
(<http://www.courts.dotag.wa.gov.au>)
2. Defence Reservist: Employer Defence Force Support Scheme
(www.defence.gov.au/reserves)