

Sabbatical and Study Break Policy

Purpose

Greensburg Alliance Church recognizes the dedication and commitment of our ministry staff to shepherding the church. This sabbatical and study break policy has been established to honor, support, and encourage our staff as they continue serving our congregation and community.

Sabbatical Policy for Full-Time Exempt Ministry Staff

1. **Approval Process:** The Board of Elders must approve all sabbaticals for full-time exempt ministry staff. Applications must be submitted at least six months prior to the desired start date.
2. **Eligibility:** Staff members must complete a minimum of five consecutive years of service at Greensburg Alliance Church before requesting a sabbatical. Subsequent sabbaticals may be requested every sixth year thereafter.
3. **Duration:** The sabbatical period is one month and must be taken as a continuous block. With advance approval, up to one additional week of vacation time may be added to extend the leave.
4. **Compensation:** Full salary and benefits will continue during the sabbatical period. Additional sabbatical-related expenses may be requested through the Sabbatical Team.
5. **Planning Requirements:** The staff member must develop a comprehensive plan in collaboration with the Sabbatical Team (appointed by the Elder Board). This plan should address:
 - Personal refreshment
 - Marriage refreshment
 - Spiritual refreshment
 - Ministry refreshment
6. **Reporting Obligation:** Upon return, the staff member must report to the Elder Board on what was accomplished during the sabbatical.
7. **Service Commitment:** The staff member agrees to serve the church for at least one full year following the sabbatical. Otherwise, the sabbatical may be counted as part of their severance.
8. **Resignation Clause:** Any accrued sabbatical leave is forfeited upon resignation.

Sabbatical Policy for Lead Pastor

1. **Approval Process:** The Board of Elders must approve the Lead Pastor's sabbatical. Applications must be submitted at least 12 months prior to the desired start date.
2. **Eligibility:** The Lead Pastor must complete a minimum of ten consecutive years of service before requesting a sabbatical. Subsequent sabbaticals may be requested every tenth year thereafter.
3. **Duration:** The sabbatical period is three months and must be taken as a continuous block. This is not in addition to the annual Study Break.

4. **Compensation:** Full salary and benefits will continue during the sabbatical period. Additional sabbatical-related expenses may be requested through the Sabbatical Team.
5. **Planning Requirements:** The Lead Pastor must develop a comprehensive plan in collaboration with the Sabbatical Team. This plan should address:
 - Personal refreshment
 - Marriage refreshment
 - Spiritual refreshment
 - Ministry refreshment
 - A church-related project approved by the Elders
6. **Reporting Obligation:** Upon return, the Lead Pastor must report to both the Elder Board and the Church Body on what was accomplished during the sabbatical.
7. **Service Commitment:** The Lead Pastor agrees to serve the church for at least one full year following the sabbatical. Otherwise, the sabbatical may be counted as part of their severance.
8. **Resignation Clause:** Any accrued sabbatical leave is forfeited upon resignation.

Sabbatical Policy for Part-Time Exempt Ministry Staff

1. **Approval Process:** The Board of Elders must approve all sabbaticals for part-time exempt ministry staff. Applications must be submitted at least six months prior to the desired start date.
2. **Eligibility:** Staff members must complete a minimum of five consecutive years of service before requesting a sabbatical. Subsequent sabbaticals may be requested every sixth year thereafter.
3. **Duration:** The sabbatical period is two weeks for half-time staff and three weeks for three-quarter time staff. This time must be taken as a continuous block. With advance approval, up to one additional week of vacation time may be added.
4. **Compensation:** Full salary will continue during the sabbatical period. Additional sabbatical-related expenses may be requested through the Sabbatical Team.
5. **Planning Requirements:** The staff member must develop a comprehensive plan in collaboration with the Sabbatical Team. This plan should address:
 - Personal refreshment
 - Marriage refreshment
 - Spiritual refreshment
 - Ministry refreshment
6. **Reporting Obligation:** Upon return, the staff member must report to the Elder Board on what was accomplished during the sabbatical.
7. **Service Commitment:** The staff member agrees to serve the church for at least one full year following the sabbatical. Otherwise, the sabbatical may be counted as part of their severance.
8. **Resignation Clause:** Any accrued sabbatical leave is forfeited upon resignation.

Lead Pastor Study Break Policy

Greensburg Alliance Church recognizes the unique responsibilities of the Lead Pastor in shepherding the church. This Study Break policy has been established to provide regular periods of refreshment and planning.

1. **Duration:** The annual Study Break encompasses four weeks, which may be split throughout the year. However, at least two consecutive weeks must be taken together.
2. **Pulpit Responsibility:** The Lead Pastor is responsible for arranging pulpit coverage during Sundays that fall within the Study Break period.
3. **Compensation:** Full salary and benefits will continue during the Study Break. Additional related expenses may be requested.
4. **Purpose:** The Study Break is distinct from a sabbatical and should be used for:
 - Personal refreshment
 - Planning the preaching schedule for the upcoming year
 - Strategic planning
 - Professional and personal development
 - Marriage refreshment every _____ years
5. **Reporting Obligation:** Upon return, the Lead Pastor must present to the elders:
 - The upcoming preaching schedule
 - Details of learning experiences during the break
 - Any strategic planning accomplished

This policy is effective as of _____ and may be reviewed and amended by the Board of Elders as needed.