

# 1. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY (to be used by all congregations)

## THE PRESBYTERY OF NEW COVENANT

### POLICY FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In order to assure the on-going professional development of its Ministers, Commissioned Ruling Elders and Certified Christian Educators, ***the Presbytery of New Covenant shall not approve a call which does not provide for professional development.***

Professional development shall include the following:

- a. ***A minimum of two week\*s per year*** for professional development (including two Sundays) accumulative over three years up to six weeks (including six Sundays).
- b. ***A minimum annual monetary allowance*** which shall be designated annually by the presbytery accumulative to up to three years after which the allowance is forfeited.
- c. For contracted ministers, *commissioned ruling elders* and certified educators, professional development time shall be prorated in the first calendar year of service. Unused time is lost when the contract concludes.
- d. For installed ministers, professional development time is banked upon the start-up of the ministry, to be used as agreed by minister and session.
- e. Professional development time that is not used is ordinarily lost at the dissolution of the call, unless COM finds that the use of professional development time has been limited or blocked by the church.
- f. The Presbytery of New Covenant has adopted Guidelines for Sabbatical Leave. Please reference these guidelines when planning for an extended time of personal and professional development.

### CLARIFICATIONS:

Less than Full – Time Service: For calls to less than full- time service, ***the minimum monetary allotment shall be prorated*** and subject to accumulation; however, ***the time allotment shall remain two weeks\* including two Sundays***, also subject to accumulation.

**\*a week is defined as 7 calendar days, including regular day(s) off and a Sunday**

Two weeks of professional development time is paid at the rate of two regular weeks of work, regardless of whether the minister or educator is part-time or full-time.

### PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

The policies regarding professional development are based on the following principles:

1. That the Vision of the Presbytery of New Covenant "...to grow congregations that passionately engage their community to make disciples..." requires the ongoing professional development of its leadership.
2. That ministry is both a vocation and a profession. As a vocation, it is a response to God's call for an individual to use his/her gifts in service to God's people. As professionals, Ministers and Certified Christian Educators have a specialized body of knowledge that they apply in specific ways to attempt to address particular human needs.
3. That this body of knowledge and its application is not static but continues to grow and develop.
4. That seminary is simply the beginning of professional training. Its purpose is to equip Ministers and Certified Christian Educators with the tools for a lifetime of continuing professional development.
5. That it is the responsibility of a professional to update continually his/her professional expertise that s/he might serve his/her constituents better.
6. That professional development is to enhance ministerial skills as well as growth in Christian faith.

Based upon these principles, ***all calls in the Presbytery of New Covenant include minimums of both time and money for professional development.*** These guidelines are intended to assist Ministers, Commissioned Ruling Elders and Certified Christian Educators and churches in using these resources wisely.

#### **PARAMETERS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The paramount purpose of professional development should be the enhancement of personal and professional skills having immediate relevance to the ministry to which the Minister, Commissioned Ruling Elder and Certified Christian Educator is called, and the plans should be designed accordingly. However, this principle should not be so narrowly applied as to preclude acquiring and developing skills for future calls and assignments. The Church has an obvious interest in developing a cadre of competent professionals.

1. Ordinarily, the program for professional development should be pursued away from the Minister's, Commissioned Ruling Elder's or Certified Christian Educator's normal place of service. Professional development opportunities sponsored by universities, seminaries, hospitals, clinics and retreat centers as well as conferences, seminars, workshops and mission study programs offered by the church (broadly defined) would normally fulfill the spirit of these guidelines. However, parts of these programs may include some "on-site" training, provided these are under the supervision of a qualified professional.
2. The content and purpose of the educational components of any professional development plan should be consistent with the Reformed tradition as represented in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Again, this principle should not be so narrowly interpreted as to exclude courses and experiences that contribute to the breadth and enrichment of the professional's ministry.

3. Involvement in Denominational Activities: Participation in the work of Synod or General Assembly as well as other denominationally – sponsored work/mission projects/trips, including serving as a director/leader for a summer camp or as an adult advisor/ leader for youth at camps, conferences, or national or regional events, ***shall normally be considered church service not requiring use of professional development leave or vacation time.*** Professional Development Funds may be used to encourage such participation in service to the larger church.

The following do not normally constitute valid professional development programs for which absence from the congregation would be approved: extended vacations; leaves of absence; or activities such as guiding tours.

#### **UPON THE DISSOLUTION OF THE RELATIONSHIP**

- a. Vacation time, professional development time and allowances are considered by the Committee on Ministry to be a part of the covenant between the employing organization and the employee who shall use them only for the purposes specified. As such, upon dissolution of the relationship, an employee shall be entitled to receive prorated vacation time.
- b. The prorated amount of any unused professional development allowances, ***shall*** be sent to the Treasurer of the next employing organization or the appropriate presbytery, or to the Presbytery of New Covenant, to be held until next Call (or if there is no Call, use may be authorized by the General Presbyter). When a Call is in place, any escrowed funds will be sent directly to the calling church. Ordinarily, unused professional development time is not compensated, unless COM finds that the use of professional development time has been limited or blocked by the church.
- c. If an employee has utilized more than the prorated professional development allowance, it ordinarily should be refunded to the current employing organization. The current organization is free to overlook the overpayment if it so chooses.
- d. When approaching retirement, the retiring professional should utilize his or her unused professional development time and allowance, perhaps in one of the pre-retirement seminars offered by the Board of Pensions. Upon retirement, any unused professional development time and allowances are forfeited.

**ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY: OCTOBER 7, 2008**

**REVISIONS ADOPTED: NOVEMBER 2009, APRIL 2011**