

7.4 LONG SERVICE LEAVE

1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of Ministers Long Service Leave is to provide refreshment after an extended period of service and to prepare for future ministry.

Normally ministers will take their full long service leave entitlements as and when they fall due.

This policy addresses the application of Long Service Leave for Ministers of the Word, Deacon, Deaconess, and those in Specified Ministry and Ministry of Pastor in agreed placements, hereafter called Ministers. This policy may not apply to separately incorporated bodies or non-Uniting Church bodies.

Long Service Leave for Ministers will at a minimum be consistent with the Western Australian Long Service Leave Act 1958 as amended from time to time.

This policy is effective from 1 January 2011 according to decisions of the annual Synod meeting 2010.

A full actuarial review of the Long Service Leave Fund is to be taken every three years.

2 DEFINITIONS

Continuity of Service - "Service" is the **time** during a placement that is counted for the purpose of determining a minister's entitlement to long service leave (i.e. time spent in placement or on paid leave or on military service or on jury duty). "Continuity" refers to the unbroken period of service for which the minister earns an entitlement to long service leave.

Entitlement to Long Service Leave - may be maintained by either continuity of service or by the making of payments into the Long Service Leave Fund.

3 ENTITLEMENTS

- (a) A minister is entitled to long service leave after completing 10 years of continuous service. The rate of accrual is 8.6667 weeks for the first 10 years.
- (b) The minister is entitled to take further long service leave after subsequent five years of continuous service. The rate of accrual after the first 10 years of continuous service is one (1) week per annum.
- (c) A minister who concludes their ministry and who has completed at least 7 years continuous service is entitled to a proportionate payment of long service leave entitlements. If the minister's service ceases due to the minister's death, all long service leave accruals are paid out.
- (d) Long service leave is exclusive of public holidays that fall during the period of the leave.

- (e) A minister may break their first period of entitlement up into two periods of leave of a minimum of four weeks each.
- (f) Long Service Leave is to be taken within two years of falling due. If the leave is not taken within this timeframe it will be paid at the rate applicable when the leave became due.
- (g) Part-time ministers are entitled to pro-rata long service leave.
- (h) A minister who is without placement may be permitted by the Pastoral Relations & Placement Committee (PR&PC) to make contributions to the Long Service Leave Fund and accrue a credit of service towards Long Service Leave, on the understanding that the minister will be able to take Long Service Leave only on return to a placement or at the discretion of the PR&PC.

4 CONTINUITY OF SERVICE

- (a) Continuity of service is deemed to be broken by:
 - (i) Leave of absence of more than two years;
 - (ii) Contributions made to an alternative fund even when in a placement;
 - (iii) Withdrawal of ministry recognition.
- (b) Continuity of service will not be broken if a minister is without a placement due to:
 - (i) the disbanding of a Congregation; or
 - (ii) the placement no longer being viable.
- (c) The period the minister is not in placement will not be credited as service for long service leave accrual, but these times without placement will not break continuity of service.
- (d) A minister may make a full contribution to the WA Long Service Leave Fund to ensure continuity of long service leave entitlements when not in a placement and contributions are not being made elsewhere for up to five years.
- (e) An Assembly, Synod or Ecumenical placement which makes contributions to the WA Long Service Leave Fund does not break continuous service.
- (f) A minister without a placement is encouraged to speak to the PR&PC.

5 PROCEDURES FOR LONG SERVICE LEAVE

The process for taking Long Service Leave is as follows:

- (i) PR&PC shall notify ministers who are eligible for leave during the year preceding the due date.
- (ii) PR&PC will issue a letter at the time Long Service Leave becomes due to state that if the leave is not taken within two years it will be paid at the rate applicable when it becomes due, rather than the rate applicable when it is taken.

- (iii) Ministers need to consult with the PR&PC in regards to suitable period to take leave for both the placement body and the Minister.
- (iv) A minister applying for Long Service Leave is to complete the Long Service Leave Application form and apply formally to their placement body.
- (v) On approval, the placement body shall forward the application to the PR&PC.
- (vi) Subject to approval by the PR&PC of the minister and period, the placement body then arrange for the pastoral duties to be fulfilled during the absence of the minister on leave.
- (vii) Where Long Service Leave has not been taken within two years of it becoming due the PR&PC shall work with the Minister to put a plan in place to take the leave as soon as is practicable.

6 CALCULATION OF LONG SERVICE LEAVE

The minister will get paid at the time of long service leave from the Long Service Leave Fund. The remuneration level for LSL purposes will incorporate the following amounts being paid to the minister immediately before the leave is taken:

1. Base Stipend
2. Housing Allowance
3. Motor Vehicle Depreciation Fund Allowance
4. Motor Vehicle Fixed Cost Allowance
5. Personal Resource & Development Grant

If, during the minister's leave the base stipend is increased the Long Service Leave Fund must pay the minister at the increased stipend for the part of the leave period that the increased stipend applies to.

A Minister in a manse is entitled to live in the manse throughout the period of leave. If a car is provided, the use of the car during the period of leave is to be negotiated with the placement body. If no car is provided then the travel allowance is not paid during the period of leave.

7 ADMINISTRATION OF LONG SERVICE LEAVE FUND

- (a) Congregations and other bodies pay a levy of 2.2% of the base Stipend plus allowances to the Long Service Leave Fund.
- (b) Ministers at the time of taking long service leave would be paid stipend plus allowances from the fund.
- (c) Congregations and other bodies are responsible for any relief ministry and associated costs.

8 OTHER

- (i) **Ministers who take leave of absence**
 - a) Upon reaching the five year period or retiring, the entitlement is paid out at the rate applicable at the time the Long Service Leave Fund levy for that minister closed.
- (ii) **Ministers moving between Synods**
 - a) When a minister transfers between Synods continuity of service is transferred between Synods.

- b) By current arrangement between Synods, the Synod where the minister is serving at the time of Long Service Leave eligibility will cover any Long Service Leave liability.