

R-2 Uniform Paid Family Leave Policy

Resolved, that the 228th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Virginia recognize and affirm that the birth or adoption of a child is a cause of celebration for parents, families and the entire community; that the entire community has responsibility for supporting a family in raising a child; that family members need to care for one another in sickness; that individuals suffering from illness may not be able to work for a period of time; and that the federal government and the Commonwealth of Virginia have roles in ensuring those who are sick are cared for, so that all have sufficient time to take care of these matters and families are not economically devastated by birth, adoption, or illness, and, be it further resolved

That the 228th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Virginia call on the federal government and the Commonwealth of Virginia to institute mechanisms to fund and administer a uniform paid family leave policy to care for newborns, to promote bonding between newborns and parents or adoptees and parents, and to allow for the care of immediate family members during illness.

Submitted by the Executive Board

Background

The Executive Board per Resolution R7 per the 228th Virginia Convention was tasked with researching and recommending a Family Leave policy to the 229th Virginia Convention.

We studied the Reports to the 80th General Convention by the Task Force to Develop a Mandatory Paid Family Leave Policy. Ms. Bondurant conducted external research with Human Resource professionals, professional HR and legal organizations, government statutory leave plans and the federal Family Medical Leave Act. We also performed a diocesan search for parental leave policies with only the Diocese of Montana responding.

From that search a Paid Family Leave Policy (PFL) was formulated and distributed to the Executive Board at its May, 2022 meeting. The members discussed the policy, stated it was a good start and recommended holding the policy until the 80th General Convention met and voted on Resolution A003 the Uniform Paid Family Leave Policy (UPFLP) and Co65 the Uniform Maternity Disability Coverage policy.

Resolution A003 resolved that the UPFLP will be modeled along the following parameters:

The Church-wide design will have three options: bronze, silver and platinum plans;

The UPFLP plan will provide a thorough cost analysis. Outside consultant(s) will be needed to provide analysis and accurate costs estimates. At this time, it is not possible to share the

cost of a UPFLP nationally through an insurance product. Therefore, each diocese will need to have the discretion to determine how the cost of the UPFLP will be shared among the parishes in that diocese.

The UPFLP will also, in its final version, provide a thorough outline of plan administration considerations in order to assist with developing and maintaining a policy, training supervisors, educating employees, and record keeping.

From these directions a Uniform Paid Family Leave policy was constructed and submitted to the Executive Board during its September meeting. Following discussion, the Board unanimously offered support for a uniform family leave policy, however, a funding and administrative mechanism needs to be in place to go forward.

We express our deep disappointment even unto grief that we have not been able to formulate a comprehensive family leave program for this Diocese. As those who worked on this same issue for 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church recognized, neither the federal government nor state governments have created uniform policies covering this issue. What seems to us as a basic human right to care for newborns, adoptees, and ill family members is not recognized as such in this country. Additionally, insurance providers do not provide products for private entities to insure themselves against the cost of their employees to take extended leave to bond with a newborn or adopted child, or to care for ill family members.