



## SABBATICAL LEAVE POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

The concept of sabbatical is rooted in the biblical concept of “Sabbath” which God modeled (Genesis 2:1-4a) and commanded (Exodus 20:8-11). Sabbaticals have often been used in church and academia to provide a time of rest, recovery, renewal and re-education for the individual staff member.

The intent for a sabbatical at InFaith is to further the ministry objectives of the Mission through professional growth activities or to provide for physical, spiritual or relational renewal and refreshment beyond what a time of vacation would provide.

### POLICY

#### Eligibility

A sabbatical may be granted to full-time, exempt employees of the Mission after the completion of seven consecutive years of full-time ministry and every fifth year thereafter. Internship years are not counted as part of the total years of service.

#### Sabbatical Activities

Personal renewal may include time of both individual renewal of the spiritual life (e.g., retreat, time of solitude) and family renewal with a focus on the marriage relationship (if applicable).

Professional growth may include a topic or goal of interest that will give opportunity for growth and learning with some concentrated energy. The purpose should be to grow and learn in an area that will benefit the ministry.

Sabbatical activities could include:

- a. Cross-cultural experiences. Short term missions experience.
- b. Marriage enrichment activities with a trained counselor.
- c. Engaging in an extensive physical examination
- d. Studying a topic of interest that will also benefit the ministry such as a seminary continuing education course, extensive reading, program planning, or writing for publication
- e. Times of extended solitude
- f. Visiting family members, mentors, former colleagues for the purpose of resting and relaxing.

#### Application

A Sabbatical Leave form must be completed and approved by the field director, executive director, and the director of human resources. Sabbatical applicants must:

- a. Have completed seven consecutive years of full-time ministry with InFaith
- b. Not have taken a paid or unpaid leave of absence in the previous five years
- c. Request the sabbatical leave with a minimum of three months’ advance notice. Extenuating circumstances requiring less than three months’ notice will be evaluated on an individual basis.
- d. Provide the following information on the form:
  - 1) The dates for the sabbatical leave
  - 2) A description of the desired sabbatical activities

- 3) A statement of how these activities will benefit the employee or InFaith
  - 4) How the ministry will be carried out during the time of sabbatical
- e. Understand that any time taken beyond the initial approved time off must be approved by the field director, executive director and director of human resources, with a minimum of two weeks advance notice of the extension request.
  - f. Understand that any time taken beyond the maximum allowed time off may require a letter to the employee's donors from the home office alerting them of extended time away from ministry.

#### Timing

- A sabbatical may be approved for up to six weeks in duration.
- Sabbatical leave is not intended to be an extension of vacation, short or long term disability leave, and cannot be combined with vacation.
- If possible, the leave should be scheduled at a time that will minimize the disruptive effect on the employee's field.

#### Financial Agreement

- During the approved sabbatical leave, regular salary and benefits currently received will continue to be paid.
- Reimbursable expenses will be determined on the basis of the written statement of sabbatical activities showing qualification for reimbursement and falling within IRS guidelines.
- Employee understands that worker's compensation and liability insurance are not in effect during a sabbatical leave.
- Requests for extended leaves will require approval by the field director, executive director and director of human resources. This may result in a letter from the home office to the employee's donors notifying them of the employee's need for extended leave from ministry.
- Sabbatical leave time does not accrue and is available on a calendar year basis only.
- Sabbatical leave is not earned time. Any unused sabbatical leave is therefore not payable at the time an employee retires or terminates employment with InFaith.

#### Reports

Upon returning from sabbatical leave, employee will make a written or oral report to their field director or supervisor within 30 days recapping how the time was spent and the benefit gained.

#### Continued Employment

The employee and InFaith understand that the employee's position will remain open and available when the employee returns. Should the employee fail to return to work at the end of the agreed period of time, the employee will be terminated.

This Sabbatical Leave Policy does not constitute a guarantee of continued employment. Rather, employment with the Mission is on an at-will basis.