

Bereavement Leave Policy for a Priest

It is the intent of the Diocese of Sacramento to accommodate and support a priest at the time of the death of a family member. This policy is established as a guideline for ensuring that a priest is able: (1) to take a reasonable amount of time for bereavement leave, and (2) to leave his assignment in a parish or diocesan position in capable hands.

1. Family Members.

A priest may be granted a bereavement leave to enable him to tend to his family at the time of the death of a parent, grandparent or sibling. (Review lay employee policy).

2. Notification and Permission.

A priest must immediately notify his pastor, the local dean or the Vicar for Priests upon learning of the death or pending death. He shall discuss with his pastor, the local dean or the Vicar for Priests the details of his leave, including departure and return dates. The pastor, local dean or the Vicar for Priests grants the leave after reviewing the matter with the priest making the request.

3. Length of Leave.

One week, with up to two weeks, for special circumstances. E.g. International travel.

4. No Solicitation of Funds.

A priest shall not solicit from the faithful, either directly or indirectly, financial aid to help defray the cost of his trip or for funeral expenses. The custom of assisting brother priests is respected. Solicitation is not encouraged.

5. Temporary Loan.

A priest may apply to the Diocese for a temporary loan to cover the cost of an airline ticket to enable the priest to get home. The repayment of this ticket will be automatically deducted in a proportionate amount from his monthly salary so that the loan is repaid within 12 months.

6. Disciplinary Action.

A priest is subject to disciplinary action by the Bishop if he chooses to disregard this policy or any part of it. Such action may include a reduction in annual vacation time or a reduction in monthly compensation. A priest may also be subject to the other penalties as determined to be appropriate by the Bishop.