

# **Policy: Sick Leave: Short Term and Long Term Disability**

**Developed by: Ministry and Personnel Committee**

**Approved by Council: May 25, 2009**

**Revised and approved: (date)**

## **SHAUGHNESSY HEIGHTS UNITED CHURCH POLICY**

### **PURPOSE:**

As a church community, we care for each other during times of need. We are responsive to staff needs during times of illness and have set out the following policy and guidelines based on the United Church of Canada's benefits for active members (2009)<sup>1</sup>. It outlines SHUC's policy and procedures regarding sick leave (short-term and long-term disability) as per the UCC core benefits for active members<sup>2</sup> (i.e. ministry personnel and lay employees) and those specific to SHUC. The policy provides an uninterrupted source of income to our employees – one that is as close as possible to their salary level, during a period of absence from work due to illness or accident not covered by third party (e.g. Worksafe BC, ICBC, etc.) As good stewards of the resources entrusted to us, it is important to minimize the financial burden to the church by using the UCC Pension and Group Insurance Plans and various government and insurance plans currently available.

### **UCC PENSION AND GROUP INSURANCE PLANS**

The UCC Pension and Group Insurance Plans core benefits are mandatory for all employees who work at least 14 hours per week with the United Church, with some exemptions (see below). They supplement provincial plan benefits. There is a 3 month waiting period for new Lay Employees. There is no waiting period for new Ministry Employees.

Premiums for Core benefits are paid by SHUC and are considered taxable benefits. The core benefits for **sick leave/disability** include:

- Short-Term Disability (STD) for ministry personnel and lay employees – income support in the event of illness
- Long-Term Disability (LTD) Insurance for ministry personnel and lay employees – income support (tax-free) in the event of long-term illness

### **PLAN SCOPE – ELIGIBILITY AND ENROLLMENT:**

According to UCC policy, Ministry Personnel (ordained and lay ministers) are **ineligible** for short and long term disability benefits<sup>3</sup> who

- are on maternity or parental leave from one of these positions,
- are not members of the Group Insurance Plan,
- are in receipt of a United Church pension.

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<sup>1</sup> United Church Of Canada – Benefits For Active Members (2009)  
[http://www.united-church.ca/files/minstaff/benefits\\_summary\\_active.pdf](http://www.united-church.ca/files/minstaff/benefits_summary_active.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> This policy does not apply to staff on contract

<sup>3</sup> See Section 037, *The Manual*, and related booklet, *Restorative Care Plan*.

## **PLAN COVERAGE & POLICIES**

The attached UCC *Benefits for Active Members Summary of Coverage* booklet is UCC Policy. It describes the principal features of the Group Insurance Plan for Active Members. The current booklet and updates are available at [http://www.united-church.ca/files/minstaff/benefits\\_summary\\_active.pdf](http://www.united-church.ca/files/minstaff/benefits_summary_active.pdf).

The complete terms of coverage are detailed in the guiding document on file in the Ministry and Employment Policies and Services (MEPS) Unit, United Church of Canada's General Council Office.

## **UCC POLICIES – MINISTRY PERSONNEL**

### **037 Disability (*The Manual*)**

The UCC Manual "Remuneration of Ministry Personnel – Section 037 Disability"<sup>4</sup> describes the disability policies for ministry personnel and should be referred to for details. The policy covers short term, long term and recurrent disability and the responsibilities of the Pastoral Charge, the Presbytery, and the United Church providing the Ministry Personnel were employees at the time of the disability. These policies are reflected in the UCC Plan Coverage and Policies.

## **SHUC POLICIES - LAY EMPLOYEES**

The UCC Manual's policy related to lay employees (332g) states "The Presbytery shall ensure that the lay employees of Pastoral Charges hired after 21 December 1988 and meeting hours-of-work criteria are enrolled in the pension and group insurance plans." Therefore, in addition to the UCC Plan Coverage and Policies, the following policies and procedures are applicable to SHUC Lay Employees.

### **Accumulation and Use**

- Employees accumulate sick days at the rate of 1.0 day per month in accordance with the memo of understanding signed at the beginning of their employment<sup>5</sup>.
- The maximum amount of annual sick leave (short term disability) credits that can be accrued is 12 working days.
- Sick leave credits earned can be applied to absences due to emergency room visits, doctor and dentist appointments. Earned sick leave credits can be applied to situations involving illness or emergency care of dependent others (e.g., children, elderly parents, spouse, etc.) to a maximum of five days per calendar year.
- Sick leave credits cease with the termination of employment and are not transferable.

### **Reporting Procedures**

- Employees unable to come to work because of illness are expected to report to the lead minister by telephone each day of their absence – or in the minister's absence to the Chair of the Ministry and Personnel Committee.
- For illnesses lasting more than 5 working days, employees provide a physician's note acceptable to the lead minister - or in the minister's absence to the Chair of the Ministry and Personnel Committee.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.united-church.ca/files/manual/2007\\_manual.pdf](http://www.united-church.ca/files/manual/2007_manual.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Sick leave credits are earned at 1 day per month commencing upon the date of employment (non-accumulating beyond 12 days) – this statement comes from current and previous SHUC letters of agreement with the Church Administrator

- An accurate record is maintained of all sick leave taken by the employee. This record is kept by the Ministry and Personnel Committee.
- Short-term disability with pay is granted whenever employees are unable to perform their duties because of illness, provided they have the necessary sick leave credits. If an employee has not earned enough credits before she/he takes sick day(s), this should be discussed with the Ministry and Personnel Committee liaison person, who confers with the Ministry and Personnel Committee to determine whether future earned credit may be applied retroactively.
- In situations where all short-term disability credits have been used, the treasurer is notified by the Ministry and Personnel Committee and the employee benefits as specified by the Employment Insurance Act are to be exercised.

**Policy Approval:**

Name: Council

Position/Committee: Heather Clarke, Chair, Ministry and Personnel

Date: May 25, 2009

Revisions/updates: