**New York State Paid Family Leave**

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NY State has implemented a new state law starting January 1, 2018 that provides a Paid Family Leave in certain situations.  Although the Federal government law currently allows for Family Medical Leave, the NY State Paid Family Leave is intended to provide workers in NY State with job-protected paid leave to bond with a new child, care for a relative with a serious health condition, or to relieve the pressure of having a loved one called to active duty in the military. Beginning January 1, 2018 all employers are required to add this additional coverage to their current disability policy.  The Upstate New York Synod recommends that all congregations carry short term disability insurance for their employees.  The cost is nominal and it is beneficial in the event of an employee having to take a leave of absence from work.  The new law allows for payroll deductions to cover costs of 0.126% of weekly wages not to exceed the NY State Average Weekly Wage.  For example, if an employee earns $40,000.00 a year, the weekly payment would be 97 cents.

The law dictates that clergy members do not need to be covered by this insurance.  However, we recommend that they are.  The reason why is, when a clergy member needs to take a leave of absence for any of the reasons above, in their compensation agreement, the congregation is required to cover their salary for a period of 8 weeks.  During that 8 weeks, they will also need to pay for pulpit supply on top of continuing the salary of the pastor.  For a cost of 97 cents a week (using the above example), NYS would cover 50% of their pay during that time.  In order to opt-in for coverage for clergy members, the form attached to this message would need to be filled out and submitted to the NY State Workers Compensation Board.

The Synod’s human resource company, HR ONE, has compiled a comprehensive resource for the [Paid Family Leave Law](http://peopletopayroll.com/nys-paid-family-leave/) . Additional information is available on the [NY State Website](https://www.ny.gov/new-york-state-paid-family-leave/paid-family-leave-how-it-works).  If you have any additional questions, please feel free to call the Synod office at (315) 299-4955 or contact me by email at keadon@upstatenysynod.org