

# Proposed Overture - Classification of Administrative Leave – D-7.0905

## Recommendation

The Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey overtures the 227th General Assembly (2026) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

To amend D-7.0905 as follows:

(Text to be added is [in brackets and underlined]. Text to be deleted is [in brackets and struck through.]

**Nothing in this section shall preclude a presbytery from establishing its own rules for administrative leave or other restrictions on a minister's service~~[-]~~ [when there are allegations of financial malfeasance, any criminal allegations, medical need, or any other causes specified in the council's policy.]**

## Rationale

Administrative leave is an instrument available to an employer that temporarily removes an employee from their workplace, for the benefit of the employer, employee, or both. It is a neutral action, not a disciplinary measure, meant to provide space for one or both parties to examine a situation and discern next steps, without premature decision-making.

In Remedial Case 2024-02, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission Decision and Order notes that while a presbytery may seek to impose administrative leave for reasons other than disciplinary, “the historic restriction on administrative leave to cases of alleged sexual abuse, complicates a presbytery’s authority to utilize leave as a valid form of support for a minister who needs it.”

At the same time, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission observes that the July 2023 addition to D-7.0905, reads: “Nothing in this section shall preclude a presbytery from establishing its own rules for administrative leave or other restrictions on a minister’s service.”

The Note to the Decision and Order then concludes,

Because this new constitutional revision appears to address the use of administrative leave outside the disciplinary process, this Commission suggests that a further corresponding amendment to the Form of Government would be helpful to define and clarify the scope and use of administrative leave beyond the provisions of Church Discipline.

This amendment to D-7.0905 would maintain the necessary function of administrative leave as currently found in Church Discipline, while providing new and needed flexibility for a presbytery to use that same instrument for matters such as pastoral care.