

## **SHORT TERM DISABILITY POLICY**

for Rostered Ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

### **1. DEFINITION**

“Disability” is a condition, certified by a medical doctor licensed to practice medicine under the laws of a province of Canada, that prevents a minister from carrying out the duties for which he/she is qualified by education, training and experience.

### **2. FIRST NINE WEEKS OF DISABILITY**

The minister will be entitled to sick leave for the first nine weeks of disability at full salary and benefits subject to the requirement that the minister provide a physician’s statement if the absence is, or is expected to be, greater than four days.

The physician’s statement shall detail:

- a) the reason(s) for sick leave;
- b) prognosis for a return to work date; and
- c) therapy or any other treatment that is prescribed or recommended to assist the minister to recover and return to work.

The congregation or employer may request a second physician’s statement by a physician chosen by the congregation or employer.

If no physician’s statement is provided, or the physician’s statement is not complete or not acceptable to the congregation or employer, the minister must return to active work.

### **3. WEEKS 10 TO 26 OF DISABILITY**

After the first nine weeks of an approved sick leave, the minister’s salary may be suspended. The minister will be provided with a Record of Employment in order to allow the minister to apply for sick leave benefits in accordance with the Employment Insurance Act. It is anticipated that Employment Insurance sick benefits begin with the beginning of the 10th week of disability and continue to the end of the 26th week of disability.

### **4. BEYOND WEEK 26 OF DISABILITY**

After the 26th week of disability, the minister may be eligible for monthly disability benefits in accordance with the employee benefits plan administered by ELCIC Group Services Inc. under the terms of the group insurance policy.

### **5. RECURRENCE OF DISABILITY**

If following a sick leave during which benefits had been paid under this short term disability policy, the minister returns to work, but for a period of less than six consecutive months and then becomes disabled again due to the same or a related injury or sickness, the disability shall be treated as a continuation of the previous period of disability. (For example: if the minister had been paid for five weeks then returned to work and subsequently in less than six months became disabled again for the same or related cause, then a maximum of another four weeks under point 1 could be paid by the congregation).

However, if following a sick leave during which benefits had been paid under this short term disability policy, the minister returns to work, and more than six consecutive months later, becomes disabled again (whether or not for similar or related causes) the short term disability claim is considered a new claim.

**6. TERMINATION**

In the event the minister becomes totally disabled, meaning that the minister has been unable to resume and continue the customary work activities for the congregation or employer for twelve months, the minister's call may be terminated in accordance with the synod bylaws.

Adopted by National Church Council  
March 5, 2004