



## Sabbatical Policy

### **Purpose**

Biblically, taking a sabbatical is an application of the scriptural principle of rest. It is a time to deliberately trust God with unfinished work. As an act of faith, there is disengagement from regular work for the purpose of worship, rest, renewal, and realignment. Sabbaticals may also be taken for educational purposes, when appropriate.

Sabbaticals may not be in correlation with any other leave of absences. Additionally, sabbaticals cannot be used for outside employment or extended vacations.

### **Eligibility**

Employees who have worked full-time for YFC for at least 7 years, including working at the National Service Center for the last three years, are eligible for a sabbatical leave, if relevant to their specific position and job responsibilities within YFC. Eligible employees must have a performance record that is continuously exceeding job expectations in order to qualify for sabbatical leave.

Submitting an application for a sabbatical leave does not guarantee approval.

### **Procedure**

1. A sabbatical "plan" must be submitted, at least six months prior to the planned sabbatical leave, detailing the intention of the sabbatical. The employee requesting the sabbatical leave should work closely with their supervisor and/or department head to create the sabbatical plan. The proposed sabbatical plan must be submitted to HR for review and approval by Executive Cabinet.

Creating a sabbatical support group/care team is recommended as support for the employee while on sabbatical leave.

It is highly recommend that the employee and supervisor utilize the Navigator's sabbatical guidelines as they create this plan. The guidelines are available at [www.training.yfc.net](http://www.training.yfc.net) under the sabbatical resources tab.

2. Sabbaticals are typically scheduled after the first 7 years of employment with YFC, and then every 7 years subsequently, based on the eligibility criteria above. The length of the sabbatical is typically three months in duration.
3. The employee will be paid at his/her regular full-time salary with benefits during the defined sabbatical leave period.
4. The employee and supervisor must outline who will cover the employee's responsibilities while on sabbatical leave. This outline must be submitted to HR prior to the employee's sabbatical leave.

If undue hardship would occur to YFC due to the request for sabbatical leave, an employee may not be given approval until such concerns are addressed and resolved to the department's and YFC's satisfaction.

5. A sabbatical should not be taken by an employee who is already planning to leave their employment with YFC. The purpose of a paid sabbatical should not be to plan this transition.
6. At the conclusion of the sabbatical the employee will share with the supervisor (and others) the results of the sabbatical as it relates to their original plan. The expectation is that as the employee returns rested, refreshed and reengaged, their health will be a positive for all involved.

## **Central Minnesota Youth For Christ Sabbatical Policy**

### **Purpose:**

Biblically, taking a sabbatical is an application of the scriptural principle of rest. It is a time to deliberately trust God with the unfinished. As an act of faith, there is disengagement from regular work for the purpose of worship, rest, renewal and repair.

### **Who:**

Sabbaticals will be considered for full-time ministry staff members at Central Minnesota Youth for Christ (CMYFC).

### **Timing and Length:**

The timing of a staff sabbatical will take the following information into consideration.

1. Seven to ten years of full-time ministry staff commitment to CMYFC.
2. The ministry staff member and the CMYFC Executive Director will determine the timing of the sabbatical by taking the following into consideration (this is not an all inclusive list):
  - a. Needs of the individual
  - b. Needs of YFC
  - c. Current staff duties/commitments
  - d. Other pending staff sabbaticals
3. The timing of the sabbatical will require Board approval.
4. The length of the sabbatical will be between two and three months
5. A sabbatical should not be taken by a staff member who is already planning a transition out of CMYFC. The purpose of a paid sabbatical would not be to plan that transition.
6. Upon completion of the sabbatical it is expected that the staff member will continue employment at CMYFC for two years, barring any extenuating circumstances.

### **Funding:**

A sabbatical will be a paid leave of absence. Other funding for workshops, etc. during the sabbatical need prior planning and approval (see 3.m. and 8.a-d. under "Process")

### **Process:**

1. The staff member will meet with the CMYFC Executive Director (the CMYFC Board chair will serve in this role when the CMYFC Executive Director is scheduling a sabbatical) and the SEED representative to discuss the timing of the sabbatical.
2. This group will also work with the staff member to identify a sabbatical advisor. The following should be considered when selecting a sabbatical advisor:
  - a. Someone that has successfully completed a sabbatical
  - b. Lives in the same geographic location
  - c. Understands the critical role of a sabbatical advisor
  - d. Is willing to take the initiative and commit the time necessary to serve in the role

3. The staff member should work with the CMYFC Executive Director (the CMYFC Board chair will serve in this role when the CMYFC Executive Director is scheduling a sabbatical), the SEED representative and the sabbatical advisor to develop a written plan for the sabbatical. It should take into consideration the following important components (not all are required but they should be considered- required components are marked with an \*). Appendix A to this policy provides some excellent guidance and direction for planning a sabbatical.
  - a. Sabbatical timing\*
  - b. Choice of sabbatical advisor\*
  - c. Monthly meetings with the sabbatical advisor\*
  - d. Mid-sabbatical report\*
  - e. End of sabbatical report\*
  - f. Goals for the sabbatical\*
  - g. Sabbatical care interview/inventory
  - h. Sabbatical support group
  - i. Marriage retreat (if married)
  - j. Consider how to include your spouse/family in the sabbatical
  - k. Spiritual transformation
  - l. Personal contribution assessment
  - m. Budget (details should be shared with the CMYFC Executive Director or the sabbatical advisor but need not be shared with others)—any anticipated reimbursable expenses during the sabbatical need to be reviewed and approved by the CMYFC Executive Director and the Board.\*
  - n. Consider the different sabbatical phases
  - o. Sabbatical debriefing questions (this could be used as your end of sabbatical report to the Board)
4. The written sabbatical plan will need Board review and approval. It should be presented by the staff member with support from the CMYFC Executive Director and the SEED representative. The purpose for Board review and approval is to assure that sabbatical preparation has been well planned and according to guidelines. The specific sabbatical plan will be different for each staff member. While the Board will provide oversight it will be careful to allow the staff member, CMYFC Executive Director, SEED representative and the sabbatical advisor to prayerfully develop an appropriate sabbatical plan without undue interference.
5. Once approved, the sabbatical may be scheduled.
6. Monthly meetings must occur with your sabbatical advisor.
7. A mid-sabbatical and end of sabbatical report needs to be provided to the CMYFC Executive Director and the SEED representative. The report will be shared with the Board. The mid-sabbatical report can be verbal. The end of sabbatical report should be written and should be presented to Board by the staff member within two months of return from the sabbatical. The contents of the report are left up to the individual staff member but should include a summary of how your goals for the sabbatical were met.

8. Sabbatical Expense Guidelines- need prior discussion and approval by CMYFC Executive Director/Board:
  - a. You may raise extra ministry funds to meet additional ministry expenses expected during sabbatical.
  - b. Expenses for rest, relaxation and recreation are considered personal and not ministry related.
  - c. Expenses for retreats, workshops, etc. may be ministry related expenses. This may also include meals and travel expenses for you and your spouse.
  - d. When reporting sabbatical ministry expenses, fill in the ministry purpose with the “why” of the expense (spiritual/prayer retreat, met with sabbatical support group, professional development, etc.). Include comments on how this relates to your sabbatical.

## **SABBATICAL POLICY**

### **GREATER CLEVELAND YOUTH FOR CHRIST**

After 7 years as a **full-time ministry** staff member with Cleveland Youth for Christ, the Board of Directors authorizes a two month leave, with pay.

#### **The purpose of this leave is to:**

- Recognize and acknowledge a major contribution to the Cleveland YFC ministry
- Provide an incentive to keep up the demanding pace of this job
- Provide the staff person with an opportunity to totally get away from the burden and responsibility of ministry
- Provide a time for staff to hear from the Lord in a special way concerning ministry and direction

#### **The following conditions apply:**

- The staff must take all leave in the year offered; it cannot be banked into the next year without Board approval.
- The staff member must be raising 100% of his personal support to take advantage of this opportunity.
- No ministry responsibilities will be expected of the staff member during sabbatical, with the exception of personalizing his/her donor receipts.
- The staff member is required to receive some type of formal spiritual input, of their own choosing during the sabbatical period. The Board will make it their responsibility to try to raise the cost of any such training or education.
- The staff member is encouraged to have an outside mentor during sabbatical time.

**Last approved by GCYFC Board, 10/15/2012**

## Appendix A

Why take a Sabbatical? – Biblically, taking a Sabbatical is an application of the scriptural principle of rest – times we deliberately trust God with the unfinished. As an act of faith we disengage from our regular work for the purpose of worship, rest, renewal, and repair.

Definition of Sabbatical: When using the word “sabbatical”, we’re not talking about a vacation but a guided process where we deliberately trust God for the unfinished as we disengage from our normal ministry and leadership involvement to allow for serious evaluation of life and ministry, Eugene Peterson’s paraphrase on Matthew 11:28-30 in *The Message* captures this thought:

*Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me – watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and learn to live freely and lightly.*

This is a time to quiet the noise of life and hear the voice of Jesus.

### What should be done during a sabbatical?

1. Release & Relinquish - Disengage & establish a plan for the sabbatical – initial framework for direction reflecting priority needs.
2. Rest & Recovery – not the ceasing of activity but stopping ministry activities and, where possible, other areas of stress. You consider what restores you emotionally and feeds you spiritually. This phase requires sensitivity to feelings of isolation or lack of significance. One should be out of regularly scheduled ministry activity but not out of fellowship.
3. Reflect & Refocus – In this phase you are asking, “Lord, is there anything you want to say to me?” Consider how God has spoken to you in the past and posture oneself to hear His voice. Scheduling extended time alone with God is a priority.
4. Realignment and/or Reassignment – This doesn’t necessarily imply a change of roles. During this phase it is important to review and reaffirm calling. The goal is to experience maximum contribution in this next season of life.
5. Re-Entry/Re-Engagement – In this phase you transition back into ministry. Expect emotional stresses, pace issues, spiritual warfare, and struggles in working out desired changes in life and ministry. Also expect the joy of being refreshed physically, reaffirming His vision for you, and gaining renewed perspective!