

Amend ¶651 as follows:

¶651. **Each annual conference shall establish a procedure by which it will manage incapacity of clergy. The annual conference may establish a** ~~There shall be a~~ joint committee on incapacity. **If the annual conference establishes such a committee it** ~~in each annual conference. It shall~~ **should** be composed of **at least** ~~a minimum of two~~ representatives each from the board of ordained ministry and the conference board of pensions, who may be elected by those boards at the beginning of each quadrennium and at other times when vacancies occur, and a district superintendent appointed from time to time by the bishop to represent the cabinet. The joint committee shall be encouraged to include in its composition a person with a disability, preferably someone under appointment. Unless and until other members are elected, the chairperson and registrar of the board of ordained ministry and the chairperson and secretary of the conference board of pensions, or others designated by them, shall be authorized to represent their respective boards. The committee shall organize at the beginning of each quadrennium by the election of a chairperson and a secretary. **If the annual conference does not establish a joint committee, the annual conference's established policy and process for managing incapacity of clergy nonetheless should involve the board of ordained ministry, the conference board of pensions and representation from the cabinet.**

The duties of **the annual conference, with respect to incapacity, or the joint committee on incapacity, or its equivalent,** shall be:

- a) To study the problems of incapacity **of clergy** in the annual conference.

b) To provide for a continuing personal ministry to any disabled clergy of the conference and to aid them in maintaining fellowship with the members of the conference.

~~c) To determine what medical doctor or doctors it will approve for medical examinations and reports regarding disabled clergy, and what medical doctor or doctors it will recommend to the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits for that purpose.~~

**To provide advice and support to and, where appropriate, advocacy for, clergy on incapacity in (i) applying for and securing disability benefits from the Comprehensive Protection Plan and government programs, (ii) exploring possible sources of interim financial assistance before disability benefits can be obtained, and (iii) undertaking rehabilitation and return-to-service programs.**

d) To make recommendations to the board of ordained ministry, the conference board of pensions, and the cabinet on matters related to incapacity, including steps for its prevention, incapacity leave, benefits, **grants or other assistance**, and programs of rehabilitation.

e) To cooperate with and give assistance to the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits in its administration of ~~incapacity benefits through the Ministerial Pension Plan, amended and restated effective January 1, 2007, as the Clergy Retirement Security Program, or the Comprehensive Protection Plan~~ **and other benefit plans for clergy on incapacity, and to the extent applicable, assist with the disability benefits and other benefits provided under those plans.**

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*Suggested Title:* Incapacity Leave in Annual Conferences

*Discipline Paragraph:* 651

*Financial Implications:* None

*Agency Name:* General Board of Pension and Health Benefits

**RATIONALE:** Annual conferences should have greater flexibility and creativity in fulfilling the duties of the joint committee on incapacity. Further, the duties should be revised and updated to reflect new laws governing the privacy of medical and disability information and current disability plan administration.

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**SUBMITTED BY:** Barbara A. Boigegrain, General Secretary

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Bishop Ben R. Chamness, Chairperson

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