

§523 BENEFITS

This policy is intended to give an overview of the general benefits, benefit plans, and the guiding principles governing benefits of the Diocese, and in which her parishes and agencies participate. The specifics of several of these benefit plans are described in the official plan documents, kept by the Office for Insurance and Benefits. Likewise, Illinois law can, from time to time, affect these benefits. Further, this policy is not an exclusive list of every “benefit” that can or is offered to employees. Parishes and agencies are encouraged to contact the Office for Insurance and Benefits, Office for Human Resources, or the Office of the General Counsel for more information or questions. Other relevant policies related to this one include Book II, Policy §524, Leaves of Absence, Policy §525, Parental Leave, and Policy §1150, Employment Issues. Clergy benefits are provided for and governed by the policies that apply to them.

As a general rule, the Diocese intends to provide appropriate benefits for her employees in keeping with Canon 231 §2 of the Code of Canon Law, which states that “...with the prescripts of civil law having been observed, lay persons have the right to decent remuneration appropriate to their condition so that they are able to provide decently for their own needs and those of their family. They also have a right for their social provision, social security, and health benefits to be duly provided.”

Nothing in this policy is intended to affect the religious liberty rights of the Diocese, her parishes, or her agencies under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution or the Illinois Religious Freedom Restoration Act. 775 ILCS 35/. The Diocese of Springfield in Illinois sponsors non-ERISA Church plans where such status is possible and applicable.

§523.01 GENERAL

§523.01.1. Guiding principle

523.01.1. Policy All benefits and benefit plans shall be offered and operated in such a way that respects, honors, and obeys the natural law and the moral teaching of the Catholic Church. Conversely, no benefit plans, features, or covered services shall conflict with such teachings.

§523.01.2 Eligibility

523.01.2.1. Policy Eligibility for insurance and retirement benefits shall be defined in the plan summary documents. Conditions for coverage by these benefits varies according to the specific benefit as defined in the plan summary documents.

523.01.2.2. Policy Employee benefits shall not be offered or withheld on a selective or otherwise improper basis.

523.01.2.3. Policy No parish, school or agency may pay the employee's share or cost of benefits.

Procedures

- a) Parishes, schools, and agencies may, of course, consider the employee's cost of benefits when determining an appropriate salary or wage for the individual.

§523.02 INSURANCE

§523.02.1. Medical Insurance

523.02.1.1. Policy Eligibility and plan design for medical insurance benefits shall be defined in the plan summary documents.

523.02.1.2. Policy The Diocesan Committee for Insurance shall advise the Bishop on and make recommendations concerning eligibility, plan design, coverage, service providers, networks, contributions, pricing, and other elements of the health benefit offering. All diocesan parishes, schools, and agencies are required to follow the parameters of the plan as defined in the plan summary documents.

Procedures

- a) Additional information is available from the Office for Insurance and Benefits.
- b) For men and women religious who are covered through their religious congregation, the congregation will be reimbursed per the current *Decree for Compensation for Religious*.

§523.02.2. Extended Coverage Options

523.02.2 Policy Eligibility and plan design for extended coverage options, if any, shall be defined in the plan summary documents.

§523.02.3. Dental Insurance

523.02.3. Policy Eligibility and plan design for dental insurance benefits shall be defined in the plan summary documents.

§523.02.4. Vision Insurance

523.02.4. Policy Eligibility and plan design for vision insurance benefits shall be defined in the plan summary documents.

§523.02.5. Life Insurance Benefits

523.02.5. Policy Eligibility and plan design for life insurance benefits (including additional term life insurance benefits) shall be defined in the plan summary documents.

Procedures

- a) Check with the Office for Insurance and Benefits for specific qualifications.

§523.02.6. Short Term and Long Term Disability

523.02.6. Policy Eligibility and plan design for Short Term and Long Term Disability, where offered, shall be defined in the plan summary documents.

§523.02.7. Section 125 Plan

523.02.7 Policy All lay employees who select benefit options requiring payroll deductions for health, dental, and/or vision premiums shall have the option to have those deductions taken out on a pre-tax or post-tax basis.

- a) The employee makes this election through an on-line third-party vendor for enrollment.
- b) An employee who has pre-tax deductions will have his/her gross pay reduced by the amount of eligible premiums before state, federal and FICA taxes are calculated. The result will be a greater amount of net pay each payday, but this may reduce the amount of future social security benefits which are based on W-2 earnings.
- c) An employee who chooses post-tax deductions will have his/her net pay reduced by the amount of eligible premiums after state, federal and FICA taxes are calculated.
- d) Benefits-eligible lay employees who choose pre-tax benefit deductions will be required to make this selection through our third-party enrollment vendor.
- e) Employees are encouraged to consult with their own legal, tax, and financial advisors to determine the option that is best for them.

§523.02.8. Open Enrollment

523.02.8. Policy Employees who participate in one of the health, dental, vision or life insurance plans offered by the Diocese shall be given the option to make changes to their coverage during the annual open enrollment period or due to a qualifying event. At that time, employees shall also have the opportunity to enroll in health, dental and vision benefits under the procedures outlined in the plan documents.

§523.03 RETIREMENT BENEFITS

523.03.1. Policy Eligibility, plan design, procedure, compensation and other aspects of retirement programs offered by the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois shall be defined in the plan summary documents.

523.03.2. Policy The parish, school or agency shall make payment to the congregation for each religious staff member in the amount indicated in the *Decree for Compensation for Religious*.

523.03.3. Policy The Diocese of Springfield in Illinois shall not require mandatory retirement at any age.

Procedures

- a) Employees can obtain a copy of the Summary Plan Description which contains the details of the plan including eligibility and benefit provisions from the Office for Insurance and Benefits. This benefit may be canceled or changed at the discretion of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois unless otherwise required by law.
- b) Retirement benefits may include a pension plan and/or 403(b) plan as determined by the needs of the Diocese and subject to the provision of law.

§523.04 PAID TIME OFF

523.04.1. Policy Individual parishes, schools, and agencies shall develop their own paid time off benefits which include vacation, personal, and sick time. Paid time off benefits should be administered and governed without discrimination to any individual or group.

523.04.2. Policy Paid time off benefits shall not be taken in the form of additional cash benefits at the end of the benefit year.

Procedures

- a) Paid time off benefit policies should clearly define the time frame for which paid time off is earned, how it is earned, and any other necessary parameters.
- b) The benefit year must be applied equally and with equity, based on position and length of service, for all employees at the particular parish, school or agency, and must be clearly communicated to the staff.
- c) Earned vacation time must be paid in a lump sum to the employee at the end of his/her employment. This amount is subject to all applicable withholdings. For benefit's purposes, the last day of work performed will be considered the termination date. *See also, Book II, Policy §1150, Employment Issues, at §1154.5.*

- d) If the parish, school, or agency provides “paid time off” rather than separate vacation, sick or personal time, the parish, school or agency must pay the employee the entire accrued paid time off amount at the end of employment.
- e) The Office for Human Resources is available to assist parishes, school, and agencies in developing these plans and answering any questions.

§523.05 HOLIDAYS

523.05.1. Policy The number and choice of paid holidays shall be determined locally by the parish, school, or agency, and shall be made available to all full-time and eligible part-time employees.

Procedures

- a) Holidays for benefits part-time employees shall be compensated in accordance with their regular work schedules for those days.
- b) The holiday schedule should minimally include the following standard national holidays: New Years Day/The Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

§523.06 OTHER BENEFITS

§523.06.1. Jury Duty

523.06.1. Policy Employees receiving court summons for jury duty shall notify their supervisor immediately so that necessary arrangements for substitute personnel can be made while they are serving. Employers shall not terminate or penalize an employee for serving on a jury.

Procedure

- a) While serving on jury or witness duty, employees shall report to work any time they are released by the court early enough to do so.
- b) The employee may be required to provide proof of jury duty services to the extent authorized by law.
- c) Parishes, schools, and agencies may adopt a policy that employees can be paid for jury duty up to the equivalent of two week’s salary or wages per year for jury service. Any policy should be applied equally and fairly. The employee may be asked to sign over any jury duty pay received from the court for days that the employer paid the employee.

§523.06.2. Court Attendance and Subpoenas

523.06.2. Policy Employees will be given the necessary time off without pay to attend or participate in court proceedings in according with state law. Employees should notify the immediate supervisor immediately, and may be required to provide proof of the need to appear in court to the extent authorized by law.

Procedure

- a) If an employee has been subpoenaed or otherwise must attend a court proceeding related to the employee's job and pursuant to the employee's job duties, the employee should be paid his or her normal wage.

§523.06.3. Election Time Benefits

523.06.3. Policy The Diocese shall comply with all applicable voting and election law benefit provisions.

Procedure

- a) Current law provides for up to two hours off without pay to vote if the employee requests it and does not have at least two consecutive hours off outside the regular workday when the polls are open.
- b) The time when an employee can go to vote will be at the discretion of the appropriate supervisor and consistent with applicable legal requirements.
- c) Employees appointed election judges will be granted an unpaid leave on the day of the election. The employee must provide at least 20 days written notice of the need for leave and provide documentation demonstrating the appointment and the dates of the required service.

§523.06.4. Worker's Compensation

523.06.4. Policy The Diocese, it's parishes, schools and agencies shall comply with the Worker's Compensation Act of Illinois.

Procedures

- a) Employees must report all work-related illnesses and injuries to the local administrator as soon as possible. Employees must provide the administrator with a written account of the injury, including date, time, where and how the injury occurred, details of the injury, and, if applicable, the names of any witnesses to the injury.

- b) Parishes, schools, and agencies should notify the Office for Insurance and Benefits as soon as possible after a report of work-related illness or injury, and should use the claims hotline provided by the same. The local administrator is to conduct an investigation of the complaint and gather and preserve all relevant statements, evidence, and materials concerning the illness or injury.
- c) Bills for medical treatment resulting from a work-related illness or injury must be given to the local administrator for submission to the workers compensation administrator.
- d) Bills for such treatment arising from work related illness or injury must not be submitted to the employees' group-health provider.

§523.07 BENEFITS FOR SHARED EMPLOYEES

523.07.1. Policy Employees who meet the eligibility requirements under the summary plan documents by working at multiple diocesan parish, school, or agency locations shall be offered the same benefit options as are provided for employees at one location.

Procedures

- a) Acknowledgment and approval of all participating pastors, parochial administrators, principals and agency directors is required for shared employee arrangements. *See also*, Book II, Policy §1150, Employment Issues, at §1155.
- b) If a pastor, parochial administrator, principal or agency director declines such an arrangement, the employee has the option to terminate from one or the other position.