



## Sabbatical Policy

January 2023

---

A “sabbatical” is defined as “a period of paid leave.” Often associated with colleges and universities, more nonprofits and their leaders are realizing the [benefits of sabbaticals](#), including increased leadership skills among those taking a sabbatical and those colleagues who step up during their absence, and staff returning with fresh ideas and energy. Simply put: a sabbatical offers a worker an opportunity for the employee to rest and re-set. It also offers management another way to compensate and recognize long-term service to an organization, in addition to salary and bonus compensation.

All Peace and Security Funders Group (PSFG) employees are entitled to 60 work days (12 weeks) of paid leave after seven years of full-time employment. Additionally:

- Employees are not required to have a specific work-related project in mind; rather, they are encouraged to rest and recover in whatever ways are meaningful to them.
- Sabbatical requests must be submitted to the employee’s supervisor at least five months before the proposed start date; the Executive Director must submit their request to the Steering Committee chair.
- With approval from the Executive Director (or the Steering Committee chair) and based on PSFG’s workload, the sabbatical may be combined with other paid time-off (e.g., vacation).
- The sabbatical time must be taken consecutively.
- Only one PSFG staff member may be on sabbatical at any one time.
- Full salary and benefits are paid during the sabbatical; employees will continue to accrue annual or sick leave during this time.
- The employee must wait at least seven years from the start of their previous sabbatical to begin their next one; an employee is entitled to a sabbatical every seven years.
- On separation from employment, employees are not compensated for sabbaticals that have not been taken.

PSFG’s Executive Director will assess the timing of the sabbatical against current commitments and staff capacity, and plan accordingly.

## APPENDIX

The below are some benefits and costs of sabbaticals, taken from various sources.

### ⊙ Potential Benefits

- Rejuvenates staff by allowing time away from high-stress daily routines, thus increasing the employee's longevity in the role.
- Those who have taken a sabbatical identify improved indicators in well-being, including work/life balance, connections with family, and better physical health.
- Strengthens staff who perform "stretch roles" in the absence of the employee, thus building PSFG's talent pipeline and increasing organizational capacity.
- Acts as a dry run for a future leadership transition (succession planning).

### ⊙ Potential Costs

- Funds contributed by PSFG for a sabbatical.
- Loss of employee's knowledge, skills, and experience during the sabbatical.
- Remaining staff may be overwhelmed.

Here are some of the sources I consulted:

- ⊙ Durfee Foundation's criteria (for their sabbatical application program) and good questions to ask when considering when/how to take a sabbatical:  
<https://durfee.org/our-programs/sabbatical/how-to-apply/>
- ⊙ "[Creative Disruption: Sabbaticals for Capacity Building and Leadership Development in the Nonprofit Sector](#)," 2019 report commissioned by several foundations who fund sabbaticals
- ⊙ Interviews with nonprofit leaders in the PSFG network - both foundations and grantee-partners, and research on existing sabbatical (or executive leave) policies, including:
  - A Philanthropic Partnership for Black Communities
  - [Philanthropy Massachusetts](#)
  - National Committee for Responsible Philanthropy
  - Grantmakers for Effective Organizations
  - Win Without War
  - Just Vision
  - Stanley Center for Peace and Security
  - Rockefeller Brothers Fund