

# Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church

## Employee Handbook

(IL)



*Shepherd*  
OF THE PRAIRIE  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

**Effective Date: February 1, 2016**

## **ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK / DISCLAIMER**

We prepared this handbook to assist you in finding the answers to many questions that you may have regarding your employment with Shepherd of the Prairie Evangelical Lutheran Church. Please take the necessary time to read it.

We do not expect this handbook to answer all of your questions. Your Supervisor and Human Resources Director also will be a major source of information.

The Church refers to Shepherd of the Prairie Evangelical Lutheran Church, a nonprofit corporation, located at 10805 Main St, Huntley, Illinois 60142.

Neither this handbook nor any other verbal or written communication by a management representative is, nor should it be considered to be, an agreement, contract of employment, express or implied, or a promise of treatment in any particular manner in any given situation, nor does it confer any contractual rights whatsoever. The Church adheres to the policy of employment at will, which permits The Church or the employee to end the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice.

Employment at-will may only be altered **IN AN INDIVIDUAL CASE OR GENERALLY** in writing signed by the Congregational Council of The Church.

Many matters covered by this handbook, such as benefit plan descriptions, are also described in separate Church documents. These Church documents are always controlling over any statement made in this handbook or by any member of management.

This handbook states only general Church guidelines. The Church may, at any time, in its sole discretion, modify or vary from anything stated in this handbook, with or without notice, except for the rights of the parties to end employment at will.

This handbook supersedes all prior handbooks.

This Employee Handbook was drafted by the Human Resources Committee, working in conjunction with The Congregational Council and the Pastor. Adoption of this Employee Handbook and the policies contained herein are by the Congregation Council, under the authority granted in the Constitution and to Bylaws. All policies contained herein and any conflicts stemming from them will be subject to The Church Constitution and Bylaws.

This Employee Handbook is applicable to all those who are employed by The Church.

The Human Resources Committee will serve as the Personnel Committee of The Church. The Human Resources Committee, working in conjunction with the Congregation and the Congregation Council, will coordinate all administrative practices relating to personnel so as to maintain consistency and equity in dealing with the employees of The Church.

No rights or privileges will accrue to any employee by reason of this Employee Handbook which in any way would limit or restrict the authority of the Congregation Council to make amendments, corrections, additions or changes to the policies contained herein and their effective application to all such employees of The Church.

Employing Unit refers to the Congregation Council which officially acts to engage the services of employees in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of The Church, with the exception of Pastors and Associates in Ministry (AIM), who are called by the congregation.

# Table of Contents

---

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK / DISCLAIMER .....	1
Section 1 - Governing Principles of Employment .....	<a href="#">666</a>
1-1. Welcome Statement .....	<a href="#">666</a>
1-2. Equal Employment Opportunity .....	<a href="#">666</a>
1-3. Non-Harassment .....	<a href="#">777</a>
1-4. Sexual Harassment .....	<a href="#">888</a>
1-5. Illinois: Pregnancy Accommodations .....	<a href="#">888</a>
1-6. Workplace Violence .....	<a href="#">101010</a>
Prohibited Conduct .....	<a href="#">101010</a>
Procedures for Reporting a Threat .....	<a href="#">101010</a>
Section 2 - Operational Policies .....	<a href="#">121212</a>
2-1. Employee Classifications .....	<a href="#">121212</a>
2-2. Trial Period .....	<a href="#">121212</a>
2-3. Employee Service Credit .....	<a href="#">131313</a>
2-4. Your Employment Records .....	<a href="#">131313</a>
2-5. Working Hours and Schedule .....	<a href="#">131313</a>
2-6. Timekeeping Procedures .....	<a href="#">131313</a>
2-7. Overtime .....	<a href="#">141414</a>
2-8. Travel Time for Non-Exempt Employees .....	<a href="#">141414</a>
2-9. Safe Harbor Policy for Exempt Employees .....	<a href="#">161616</a>
2-10. Your Paycheck .....	<a href="#">171717</a>
2-11. Direct Deposit .....	<a href="#">171717</a>
2-12. Salary Advances .....	<a href="#">181818</a>
2-13. Performance Reviews .....	<a href="#">181818</a>
2-14. Record Retention .....	<a href="#">181818</a>
2-15. Job Postings .....	<a href="#">181818</a>
Section 3 - Benefits .....	<a href="#">202020</a>
3-1. Benefits Overview .....	<a href="#">202020</a>
3-2. Holidays .....	<a href="#">212121</a>

3-3. Vacations .....	<a href="#">212121</a>
3-4. Sick Days .....	<a href="#">232323</a>
3-5. Termination of Compensation Upon Death.....	<a href="#">242424</a>
3-6. Housing Allowance .....	<a href="#">242424</a>
3-7. Illinois Lactation Breaks.....	<a href="#">242424</a>
3-8. Workers' Compensation.....	<a href="#">252525</a>
3-9. Illinois: Jury Duty Leave .....	<a href="#">252525</a>
3-10. Bereavement Leave .....	<a href="#">252525</a>
3-11. Illinois: Witness Leave .....	<a href="#">262626</a>
3-12. Illinois: Voting Leave.....	<a href="#">262626</a>
3-13. Salary Continuation .....	<a href="#">262626</a>
3-14. Employee Assistance Program .....	<a href="#">262626</a>
Section 4 - Leaves of Absence.....	<a href="#">272727</a>
4-1. Personal Leave.....	<a href="#">272727</a>
4-2. Education Leave .....	<a href="#">272727</a>
4-3. Seminars, Conventions and Conferences .....	<a href="#">282828</a>
4-4. Sabbatical Leave (Ordained Clergy & Rostered Professional Leaders only) .....	<a href="#">282828</a>
4-5. Short Term Disability .....	<a href="#">292929</a>
4-6. Paternity, Maternity and Adoption Child Care Leave.....	<a href="#">292929</a>
4-7. Military Leave .....	<a href="#">303030</a>
4-8. Illinois: Voluntary Emergency Workers Leave.....	<a href="#">303030</a>
Section 5 - General Standards of Conduct.....	<a href="#">313131</a>
5-1. Workplace Conduct .....	<a href="#">313131</a>
5-2. Punctuality and Attendance .....	<a href="#">333333</a>
5-3. Use of Communication and Computer Systems.....	<a href="#">333333</a>
5-4. Use of Social Media .....	<a href="#">343434</a>
5-5. Personal and Church-Provided Portable Communication Devices .....	<a href="#">353535</a>
5-6. Smoking.....	<a href="#">373737</a>
5-7. Personal Visits and Telephone Calls .....	<a href="#">373737</a>
5-8. Solicitation and Distribution.....	<a href="#">373737</a>
5-9. Bulletin Boards .....	<a href="#">373737</a>

5-10. Confidential Church Information .....	<a href="#">383838</a>
5-11. Conflict of Interest and Business Ethics .....	<a href="#">383838</a>
5-12. Use of Facilities, Equipment and Property, Including Intellectual Property.....	<a href="#">393939</a>
5-13. Health and Safety.....	<a href="#">393939</a>
5-14. Hiring Relatives/Employee Relationships.....	<a href="#">404040</a>
5-15. Employee Dress and Personal Appearance .....	<a href="#">404040</a>
5-16. Publicity/Statements to the Media.....	<a href="#">414141</a>
5-17. Operation of Vehicles .....	<a href="#">414141</a>
5-18. References .....	<a href="#">424242</a>
5-19. If You Must Leave Us .....	<a href="#">424242</a>
5-20. Exit Interview .....	<a href="#">424242</a>
5-21. A Few Closing Words .....	<a href="#">434343</a>
General Handbook Acknowledgment.....	<a href="#">444444</a>
Receipt of Sexual Harassment Policy.....	<a href="#">454545</a>
Receipt of Non-Harassment Policy.....	<a href="#">464646</a>

## **Section 1 - Governing Principles of Employment**

### **1-1. Welcome Statement**

For employees who are commencing employment with The Church, on behalf of The Church, welcome.

For employees who have been with us, thanks for your past and continued service.

We understand that it is our employees who provide the services that our members rely upon, and who will enable us to create new opportunities in the years to come.

### **1-2. Equal Employment Opportunity**

The Church is an Equal Opportunity Employer that does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, creed, color, religion, alienage or national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, age, disability or handicap, sex, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, arrest record, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state or local laws. Our management team is dedicated to this policy with respect to recruitment, hiring, placement, promotion, transfer, training, compensation, benefits, employee activities and general treatment during employment.

The Church will endeavor to make a reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of qualified employees with disabilities unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of our business. If you need assistance to perform your job duties because of a physical or mental condition, please let The Human Resource Committee know.

The Church will endeavor to accommodate the sincere religious beliefs of its employees to the extent such accommodation does not pose an undue hardship on The Church's operations. If you wish to request such an accommodation, please speak to the Human Resource Committee.

Special Requirements for Positions of Spiritual Ministry:

For positions involved with the spiritual ministry of the congregation, whether called or hired, a bona fide requirement for employment is training in and commitment to the teachings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, with a firm commitment to Jesus Christ and His Church, and with the ability to articulate this faith.

## **Special Requirements for All Other Positions:**

For positions not involved with the spiritual ministry of the congregation, a bona fide requirement for employment is a commitment to Jesus Christ and His Church, as evidenced through active membership in any Christian church.

Any employees with questions or concerns about equal employment opportunities in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of the Human Resource Committee. The Church will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who raise issues of equal employment opportunity. To ensure our workplace is free of artificial barriers, violation of this policy will lead to discipline, up to and including discharge. All employees must cooperate with all investigations.

### **1-3. Non-Harassment**

It is The Church's policy to prohibit intentional and unintentional harassment of any individual by another person on the basis of any protected classification including, but not limited to, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation or age. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate our employees' personal morality, but to ensure that in the workplace, no one harasses another individual.

If you feel that you have been subjected to conduct which violates this policy, you should immediately report the matter to your Supervisor. If you are unable for any reason to contact this person, or if you have not received a satisfactory response within five (5) business days after reporting any incident of what you perceive to be harassment, please contact The Human Resource Committee. If the person toward whom the complaint is directed is one of the individuals indicated above, you should contact any higher-level manager in your reporting hierarchy. Every report of perceived harassment will be fully investigated and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible, but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In addition, The Church will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report unwelcome conduct to management or who cooperate in the investigations of such reports in accordance with this policy. Employees who make complaints in bad faith may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All employees must cooperate with all investigations.



## **1-4. Sexual Harassment**

It is The Church's policy to prohibit harassment of any employee by any Supervisor, employee, customer or vendor on the basis of sex or gender. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate personal morality within The Church. It is to ensure that at The Church all employees are free from sexual harassment. While it is not easy to define precisely what types of conduct could constitute sexual harassment, examples of prohibited behavior include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, obscene gestures, displaying sexually graphic magazines, calendars or posters, sending sexually explicit e-mails, text messages and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as uninvited touching of a sexual nature or sexually related comments. Depending upon the circumstances, improper conduct also can include sexual joking, vulgar or offensive conversation or jokes, commenting about an employee's physical appearance, conversation about your own or someone else's sex life, or teasing or other conduct directed toward a person because of his or her gender which is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create an unprofessional and hostile working environment.

If the employee feels that he or she has been subjected to conduct which violates this policy, the employee should immediately report the matter to your Supervisor. If unable for any reason to contact this person, or if the employee has not received a satisfactory response within five (5) business days after reporting any incident of perceived harassment, the employee should contact The Human Resource Committee. If the person toward whom the complaint is directed is one of the individuals indicated above, the employee should contact any higher-level manager in his or her reporting hierarchy. Every report of perceived harassment will be fully investigated and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible, but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In addition, The Church will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report unwelcome conduct to management or who cooperate in the investigations of such reports in accordance with this policy. Employees who make complaints in bad faith may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All employees must cooperate with all investigations.

## **1-5. Illinois: Pregnancy Accommodations**

In compliance with Illinois law, The Church will not discriminate against an employee because of pregnancy; will engage in a timely, good faith, and meaningful exchange with employees affected by pregnancy, childbirth or related conditions; and will endeavor to provide a reasonable accommodation unless doing so will impose an undue hardship on the ordinary operation of The Church business.

Such accommodations include modifications or adjustments to the work environment or circumstances under which the employee's position is customarily performed, including but not limited to more frequent or longer bathroom, water intake, or rest breaks; private non-bathroom space for expressing breast milk and breastfeeding; seating accommodations or acquisition or modification of equipment; assistance with manual labor, light duty, or a temporary transfer to a less strenuous or non-hazardous position; job restructuring or a part-time or modified work schedule; appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations or training materials; assignment to a vacant position; or providing leave.

An employee will not be required to accept an accommodation that she did not request or to which she did not agree, nor will an employee be forced to take leave if another reasonable accommodation is available.

The employee may be required to provide certification from the employee's health care provider concerning her need for a reasonable accommodation to the same extent such a certification is required for other conditions related to a disability. A certification should include:

- medical justification for the requested accommodation(s);
- a description of the reasonable accommodation(s) medically advisable;
- the date the accommodation(s) became advisable; and
- the probable duration of the reasonable accommodation(s).

The Church will not deny employment opportunities or take adverse employment action against employees if such decision is based on the employer's need to make a reasonable accommodation, and the Church will not retaliate against an employee who requests an accommodation or otherwise exercises her rights under the Illinois Human Rights Act.

Illinois Human Rights Act is enforced by the Illinois Department of Human Rights ("IDHR"). The charge process for violations of the law can be initiated by contacting the IDHR at any of the offices shown below or by completing the form at <http://www.illinois.gov/dhr>.

Chicago Office 100 W. Randolph St.	Springfield Office 222 South College	Marion Office 2309 West Main St.
10th Floor	Room 101-A	Suite 112
Intake Unit Chicago, IL 60601 (312) 814-6200	Intake Unit Springfield, IL 62704 (217) 785-5100	Intake Unit Marion, IL 62959 (618) 993-7463

Employees with questions or concerns regarding this policy or who would like to request an accommodation should contact The Human Resource Committee.

## 1-6. Workplace Violence

The Church is strongly committed to providing a safe workplace. The purpose of this policy is to minimize the risk of personal injury to employees and damage to The Church and personal property.

We do not expect employees to become experts in psychology or to physically subdue a threatening or violent individual. Indeed, we specifically discourage employees from engaging in any physical confrontation with a violent or potentially violent individual. However, we do expect and encourage employees to exercise reasonable judgment in identifying potentially dangerous situations.

Experts in the mental health profession state that prior to engaging in acts of violence, troubled individuals often exhibit one or more of the following behaviors or signs: over-resentment, anger and hostility; extreme agitation; making ominous threats such as bad things will happen to a particular person, or a catastrophic event will occur; sudden and significant decline in work performance; irresponsible, irrational, intimidating, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate behavior; reacting to questions with an antagonistic or overtly negative attitude; discussing weapons and their use, and/or brandishing weapons in the workplace; overreacting or reacting harshly to changes in The Church policies and procedures; personality conflicts with co-workers; obsession or preoccupation with a co-worker or Supervisor; attempts to sabotage the work or equipment of a co-worker; blaming others for mistakes and circumstances; or demonstrating a propensity to behave and react irrationally.

### Prohibited Conduct

Threats, threatening language or any other acts of aggression or violence made toward or by any The Church employee **WILL NOT BE TOLERATED**. For purposes of this policy, a threat includes any verbal or physical harassment or abuse, any attempt at intimidating or instilling fear in others, menacing gestures, flashing of weapons, stalking or any other hostile, aggressive, injurious or destructive action undertaken for the purpose of domination or intimidation. To the extent permitted by law, employees and visitors are prohibited from carrying weapons onto The Church premises.

### Procedures for Reporting a Threat

All potentially dangerous situations, including threats by co-workers, should be reported immediately to any member of management with whom you feel comfortable. Reports of threats may be maintained confidential to the extent maintaining confidentiality does not impede our ability to investigate and respond to the complaints. All threats will be promptly investigated. All employees must cooperate with all investigations. No employee will be subjected to retaliation, intimidation or disciplinary action as a result of reporting a threat in good faith under this policy.

If The Church determines, after an appropriate good faith investigation, that someone has violated this policy, The Church will take swift and appropriate corrective action.

If an employee is the recipient of a threat made by an outside party, that employee should follow the steps detailed in this section. It is important for us to be aware of any potential danger in our offices. Indeed, we want to take effective measures to protect everyone from the threat of a violent act by an employee or by anyone else.

## Section 2 - Operational Policies

### 2-1. Employee Classifications

For purposes of this handbook, all employees fall within one of the classifications below.

**Full-Time Employees** - Employees who regularly work at least 40 hours per week who were not hired on a short-term basis.

**Part-Time Employees** - Employees who regularly work fewer than 40 hours per week who were not hired on a short-term basis.

**Short-Term Employees** - Employees who were hired for a specific short-term project, or on a short-term freelance, per diem or temporary basis. Short-Term Employees generally are not eligible for The Church benefits, but are eligible to receive statutory benefits.

Called employees are those professionals who receive a formal call to ministry according to procedures outlined in the synod and congregation constitution and by-laws. This includes ordained clergy.

Human Resource Committee will coordinate with Council for the purpose of recruiting, interviewing, and selecting applicants. The Senior Pastor will also participate during the hiring process. Final acceptance of a candidate resides with the Council.

In addition to the above classifications, employees are categorized as either "**exempt**" or "**non-exempt**" for purposes of federal and state wage and hour laws. Employees classified as exempt do not receive overtime pay; they generally receive the same weekly salary regardless of hours worked. Such salary may be paid less frequently than weekly. The employee will be informed of these classifications upon hire and informed of any subsequent changes to the classifications.

### 2-2. Trial Period

The first three months of your employment is an introductory period. This is an opportunity for The Church to evaluate the employee's performance. It also is an opportunity for the employee to decide whether he or she is happy being employed by The Church. The Church may extend the introductory period if it desires. Completion of the introductory period does not alter an employee's at-will status.

The Church will conduct a formal performance review at the end of the introductory period.

### **2-3. Employee Service Credit**

"Length of service" refers to the length of time that our employees spend as active full-time or part-time employees with The Church. Service begins on the day you become a full-time or part-time Employee. Length of service may be used in determining certain employee benefits, such as time-off benefits. Employees will not lose credit for service with The Church provided their last day of service was within 180 days of again becoming an active employee. Human Resources will discuss this issue with any rehired employee upon hire.

### **2-4. Your Employment Records**

In order to obtain their position, employees provided us with personal information, such as address and telephone number. This information is contained in the employee's personnel file.

The employee should keep his or her personnel file up to date by informing The Human Resource Committee of any changes. The employee also should inform The Human Resource Committee of any specialized training or skills he or she may acquire in the future, as well as any changes to any required visas. Unreported changes of address, marital status, etc. can affect withholding tax and benefit coverage. Further, an "out of date" emergency contact or an inability to reach the employee in a crisis could cause a severe health or safety risk or other significant problem.

### **2-5. Working Hours and Schedule**

The Church normally is open for business from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Sunday. However, The Church is open on weekends and weekend hours are expected. The employee will be assigned a work schedule and will be expected to begin and end work according to the schedule. To accommodate the needs of our business, at some point we may need to change individual work schedules on either a short-term or long-term basis.

Employees will be provided meal and rest periods as required by law. A Supervisor will provide further details.

### **2-6. Timekeeping Procedures**

Employees must record their actual time worked for payroll and benefit purposes. Non-exempt employees must record the time work begins and ends, as well as the beginning and ending time of any departure from work for any non-work-related reason, on forms as prescribed by management.

Altering, falsifying or tampering with time records is prohibited and subjects the employee to discipline, up to and including discharge.

Exempt employees are required to record their daily work attendance and report full days of absence from work for reasons such as leaves of absence, sick leave or personal business.

Non-exempt employees may not start work until their scheduled starting time.

It is the employee's responsibility to sign time records to certify the accuracy of all time recorded. Any errors in the time record should be reported immediately to a Supervisor, who will attempt to correct legitimate errors.

## **2-7. Overtime**

Like most successful companies, we experience periods of extremely high activity. During these busy periods, additional work is required from all of us. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring business activity and requesting overtime work if it is necessary. Effort will be made to provide employees with adequate advance notice in such situations.

Any non-exempt employee who works overtime will be compensated at the rate of one and one-half times (1.5) his/her normal hourly wage for all time worked in excess of forty (40) hours each week, unless otherwise required by law.

If the completion of any employee's task will require that employee to exceed his or her normal work hours resulting in overtime compensation, those additional hours MUST be pre-approved by their supervisor prior to initiating that task.

For purposes of calculating overtime for non-exempt employees, the workweek begins at 12 a.m. on Monday and ends 168 hours later at 12 a.m. on the following Monday.

## **2-8. Travel Time for Non-Exempt Employees**

### **Overnight, Out-of-Town Trips**

Non-exempt employees will be compensated for time spent traveling (except for meal periods) during their normal working hours, on days they are scheduled to work and on unscheduled work days (such as weekends). Non-exempt employees also will be paid for any time spent performing job duties during otherwise non-compensable travel time; however, such work should be limited absent advance management authorization.

## **Out-of-Town Trips for One Day**

Non-exempt employees who travel out of town for a one-day assignment will be paid for all travel time, except for, among other things: (i) time spent traveling between the employee's home and the local railroad, bus or plane terminal; and (ii) meal periods.

## **Reimbursable Expenses**

### General Principle

Employees of The Church who are authorized to travel in connection with the performance of their work will be reimbursed for reasonable and documented expenses incurred for transportation, food and lodging.

### Use of Personal Automobile

Where extensive local travel is an expected part of an employee's routine work duties, an auto allowance will be budgeted based on anticipated expenses. Procedures for drawing on this allowance will be explained at the time of budget approval.

When an employee is occasionally required or authorized to use his or her personal automobile for travel in the performance of his or her work, reimbursement will be made at a rate set by the Internal Revenue Service, plus toll and parking charges. Prior approval by the Pastor is required and adequate substantiating documentation will be provided for all amounts requested for reimbursement.

When an employee uses his or her personal automobile as a matter of convenience rather than as a matter of necessity, reimbursement will be based upon the least expensive method of travel (by air, rail, bus, or auto) rather than on the prescribed mileage basis. Prior approval by the Pastor is required and adequate substantiating documentation will be provided for all amounts requested for reimbursement.

### Restrictions

Expenses incurred for travel which are not required in performance of an employee's duties are not considered to be reimbursable expenses.

## **Local Travel**

Non-exempt employees will be compensated for time spent traveling from one location to another location during a workday. The trip home, however, is non-compensable when an employee goes directly home from his/her final job site, unless it is much longer than his/her regular commute home from the regular worksite. In such case, the portion of the trip home in excess of the regular commute is compensable.



## **Commuting Time**

Under the Portal to Portal Act, travel from home to work and from work to home is generally non-compensable. However, if a non-exempt employee regularly reports to a worksite near his/her home, but is required to report to a worksite farther away than the regular worksite, the additional time spent traveling is compensable.

If compensable travel time results in more than 40 hours worked by a non-exempt employee, the employee will be compensated at an overtime rate of one and one-half times the regular rate.

To the extent that applicable state law provides greater benefits, state law applies.

## **2-9. Safe Harbor Policy for Exempt Employees**

It is our policy and practice to accurately compensate employees and to do so in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws. To ensure proper payment and that no improper deductions are made, employees must review pay stubs promptly to identify and report all errors.

Employees classified as exempt salaried employees will receive a salary which is intended to compensate them for all hours they may work for The Church. This salary will be established at the time of hire or classification as an exempt employee. While it may be subject to review and modification from time to time, such as during salary review times, the salary will be a predetermined amount that will not be subject to deductions for variations in the quantity or quality of the work performed.

Under federal and state law, salary is subject to certain deductions. For example, unless state law requires otherwise, salary can be reduced for the following reasons:

- Full-day absences for personal reasons.
- Full-day absences for sickness or disability.
- Full-day disciplinary suspensions for infractions of our written policies and procedures.
- Family and Medical Leave absences (either full- or partial-day absences).
- To offset amounts received as payment from the court for jury and witness fees or from the military as military pay.
- The first or last week of employment in the event the employee works less than a full week.
- Any full work week in which the employee does not perform any work.

Salary may also be reduced for certain types of deductions such as a portion of health, dental or life insurance premiums; state, federal or local taxes; social security; or voluntary contributions to a 401(k) or pension plan.

In any work week in which the employee performed any work, salary will not be reduced for any of the following reasons:

- Partial day absences for personal reasons, sickness or disability.
- An absence because the employer has decided to close a facility on a scheduled work day.
- Absences for jury duty, attendance as a witness, or military leave in any week in which the employee performed any work (subject to any offsets as set forth above).
- Any other deductions prohibited by state or federal law.

However, unless state law provides otherwise, deductions may be made to accrued leave for full- or partial-day absences for personal reasons, sickness or disability.

If the employee believes he or she has been subject to any improper deductions, the employee should immediately report the matter to a supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable or if the employee believes it would be inappropriate to contact that person (or if the employee has not received a prompt and fully acceptable reply), he or she should immediately contact The Human Resource Committee or any other supervisor in The Church with whom the employee feels comfortable.

## **2-10. Your Paycheck**

The employee will be paid bi-weekly for all the time worked during the past pay period.

Payroll stubs itemize deductions made from gross earnings. By law, The Church is required to make deductions for Social Security, federal income tax and any other appropriate taxes. These required deductions also may include any court-ordered garnishments. Payroll stubs also will differentiate between regular pay received and overtime pay received.

If there is an error in an employee's pay, the employee should bring the matter to the attention of The Human Resource Committee immediately so The Church can resolve the matter quickly and amicably.

Paychecks will be given only to the employee, unless he or she requests that they be mailed, or authorize in writing another person to accept the check.

## **2-11. Direct Deposit**

The Church strongly encourages employees to use direct deposit. Authorization forms are available from The Human Resource Committee. Employees can also access pay information on [www.MyADPResource.com](http://www.MyADPResource.com) or by contacting the Employee Service Center at 800-416-6131 or [ESC.Resource@adp.com](mailto:ESC.Resource@adp.com)

## **2-12. Salary Advances**

The Church does not permit advances on paychecks or against accrued paid time off. Advance pay for vacation must be requested in writing at least two weeks prior to the vacation period.

## **2-13. Performance Reviews**

Depending on the employee's position and classification, The Church endeavors to review performance annually. However, a positive performance evaluation does not guarantee an increase in salary, a promotion, or continued employment. Compensation increases and the terms and conditions of employment, including job assignments, transfers, promotions, and demotions, are determined by and at the discretion of management.

In addition to these formal performance evaluations, The Church encourages employees and Supervisors to discuss job performance on a frequent and ongoing basis.

## **2-14. Record Retention**

The Church acknowledges its responsibility to preserve information relating to litigation, audits and investigations. Failure on the part of employees to follow this policy can result in possible civil and criminal sanctions against The Church and its employees and possible disciplinary action against responsible individuals (up to and including discharge of the employee). Each employee has an obligation to contact the Human Resource Committee to inform him or her of potential or actual litigation, external audit, investigation or similar proceeding involving The Church that may have an impact on record retention protocols.

## **2-15. Job Postings**

The Church is dedicated to assisting employees in managing their careers and reaching their professional goals through promotion and transfer opportunities. This policy outlines the on-line job posting program which is in place for all employees. To be eligible to apply for an open position, employees must meet several requirements:

- Should be a current, regular, full-time or part-time employee
- Been in your current position for at least six months
- Maintain a performance rating of meets or above
- Should not be on an employee conduct/performance-related probation or warning
- Must meet the job qualifications listed on the job posting
- Required to provide the employee's manager with notice prior to applying for the position

If the employee finds a position of interest on the job posting website and meet the eligibility requirements, an on-line job posting application must be completed in order to be considered for the position. Not all positions are guaranteed to be posted. The Church reserves the right to seek applicants solely from outside sources or to post positions internally and externally simultaneously.

For more specific information about the program, please contact the Human Resources Department.

## Section 3 - Benefits

### 3-1. Benefits Overview

In addition to good working conditions and competitive pay, it is The Church's policy to provide a combination of supplemental benefits to all eligible employees. In keeping with this goal, each benefit program has been carefully devised. These benefits include time-off benefits, such as vacations and holidays, and insurance and other plan benefits. We are constantly studying and evaluating our benefits programs and policies to better meet present and future requirements. These policies have been developed over the years and continue to be refined to keep up with changing times and needs.

The next few pages contain a brief outline of the benefits programs The Church provides employees and their families. Of course, the information presented here is intended to serve only as guidelines.

The descriptions of the insurance and other plan benefits merely highlight certain aspects of the applicable plans for your general information only. The details of those plans are spelled out in the official plan documents, which are available for review upon any employee's request from The Human Resource Committee. Additionally, the provisions of the plans, including eligibility and benefits provisions, are summarized in the summary plan descriptions ("SPDs") for the plans (which may be revised from time to time). In the determination of benefits and all other matters under each plan, the terms of the official plan documents shall govern over the language of any descriptions of the plans, including the SPDs and this handbook.

Further, The Church (including the officers and administrators who are responsible for administering the plans) retains full discretionary authority to interpret the terms of the plans, as well as full discretionary authority with regard to administrative matters arising in connection with the plans and all issues concerning benefit terms, eligibility and entitlement.

While The Church intends to maintain these employee benefits, it reserves the absolute right to modify, amend or terminate these benefits at any time and for any reason.

If employees have any questions regarding benefits, they should contact The Human Resource Committee.

## **Pension Plan and Major Medical Coverage**

The Church participates in the Ministerial Pension and Health Benefits Plan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for the benefit of its full-time professional employees. The plan provides for retirement, disability, survivor and major medical benefits. Part-time employees may be eligible for benefits depending on hours worked; these benefits are available at cost to the employee. (See ELCA Board of Pension guidelines for more detail on benefits at [www.porticobenefits.org](http://www.porticobenefits.org)).

### **3-2. Holidays**

Holidays will be established for each individual year by the Senior Pastor, working in conjunction with the Human Resources Committee. This will be done at the beginning of each year. The decision as to which holidays are chosen for a particular year will be based upon the input, desire and advice of the collective church staff with the Senior Pastor and/or the Human Resources Committee making the final determination. The particular holidays that are established at the beginning of each calendar year will be observed as holidays during that year and are to be considered days for which full pay is earned for all full-time employees. The Church facilities and offices will normally be closed on these days except for services of worship or preparation for services of worship. In the case of Easter and other holidays falling on Sunday, the holiday will be observed on the following Monday.

Part-time employees are not given paid holidays. However, if their normal work hours fall on an observed holiday, they have the option of either taking the day off without pay or scheduling their hours for a different day of the week.

In addition to the 10 (ten) holidays established each year, each full-time employee will be entitled to one additional non-Sunday holiday annually of the employee's own choosing. This Personal Holiday must be selected in advance and approved by the Senior Pastor. Ordained clergy will be entitled to duty free Sundays during the year in addition to specified holidays as recommended and approved by Council.

### **3-3. Vacations**

Permanent employees of The Church will be granted paid vacation at their base rate, which will be determined in the following manner. Vacation is granted to an individual employee and is not based on position/positions held or duties performed.

Called Staff — Full-Time and Part-Time

Vacation is determined by the Letter of Call. The Congregational Council may recommend that the amount of vacation be adjusted based on longevity and performance.

## Hired Staff

For the purposes of taking vacation, one “week” of vacation consists of five (5) business days (Monday through Friday). These days may be taken as a block, or individually.

Regular full-time and regular part-time earn vacation benefits according to the schedule of steps shown below. The vacation benefits are earned for the current calendar year. Both exempt and non-exempt (hourly) employees earn vacation based on their years of service. Years of service for vacation purposes will be calculated as of January 1 of each year. An employee steps up to the next level of vacation beginning January 1 of the year of the employee's anniversary date.

Vacation Step Levels for Full-Time Hired Staff (Prorated for part-time staff based on hours worked per week)	
Year 1	1 week (after 6 months)
Year 2-4	3 weeks
Year 5 +	4 weeks
	Vacation capped at 4 weeks

### Hired Staff — Part-Time

Vacation hours will be prorated based on the weekly hours worked as specified in the employment offer letter. See steps outlined above.

### Vacation Benefit Notification

Vacation entitlement will be disclosed with the annual “Approved Staff Compensation & Benefits Plan” form given to each employee after the budget is approved.

### Holidays Falling Within a Vacation Period

Vacation time as outlined in Section 3-3 will be construed to exclude holidays as authorized in Section 3-2. Should vacation be approved and a holiday fall within that period, the holiday will not be counted as a vacation day and the employee will be entitled to an additional day at some other date, subject to the approval of the supervisor.

## Use of Vacation

Vacation is intended to serve a restorative purpose, and is seen as aiding the overall effectiveness of employees. All employees will be encouraged to fully utilize the vacation they have earned. Vacation is to be used within the calendar year. However, with the approval of the Senior Pastor, an employee may carry over up to five days of vacation time. This must be taken within the first 90 days of the new calendar year.

## Scheduling of Vacation

Vacation request forms are available in The Church Office. All vacation time is subject to the approval of the Senior Pastor. Every effort will be made to grant the vacation at the time of the employee's first choice. However, work requirements must be taken into consideration as well as the vacation requests of other employees. In the event that vacation cannot be granted to two employees requesting the same time, seniority will be the governing factor.

## Pay in Lieu of Vacation

The Church will not make any payment of additional salary to an employee in lieu of unused vacation, except upon termination. At time of separation, an employee will be entitled to salary in lieu of vacation to which he or she is entitled, but which has not been taken.

Advanced but accrued vacation will be deducted from your final paycheck, to the extent permitted by law.

## **3-4. Sick Days**

After 90 days Full-time employees are eligible to accrue up to five (5) paid sick days each year.

After 90 days Part time employees routinely scheduled to work 20 or more hours per week will be granted sick leave with full pay at the rate of 20 hours per year from the date of employment.

Part Time Employees routinely scheduled to work less than 20 hours per week will not be granted sick leave with pay.

An employee will be out of work due to illness, he or she must verbally call into advise his or her supervisor as early as possible, prior to the scheduled start of their workday. If the employee calls in sick for three (3) or more consecutive days, he or she may be required to provide their supervisor with a doctor's note on the day he or she returns to work.



Unused sick time will not be allowed to carry over to the next year. Unused accrued sick time is not paid out at separation.

Sick days may be used in 4 hour increments.

While sick days are intended to cover only an employee's own illnesses, if required by applicable state or local law, sick days may be used to care for a family member's (including civil union partners') illness or for any other reason required by applicable state or local law.

### **3-5. Termination of Compensation Upon Death**

In the event of death of a full-time employee, compensation will be paid to the employee's designated beneficiary for up to three months, except that compensation will cease within that three-month period if death benefits payable through the Ministerial Pension and Health Benefits Plan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America begin. In the event of death of a part-time employee, compensation will be paid to employee's designated beneficiary for the pay period in which the death occurs, plus one additional pay period. All compensation outlined in this section will be paid in addition to payment for any accrued vacation time. Where no designated beneficiary survives, payment will be made to the beneficiary specified in the Ministerial Pension and Health Benefits Plan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or to the estate.

### **3-6. Housing Allowance**

The Church will designate upon written request, a reasonable and appropriate dollar amount for the compensation of ordained clergy as a housing allowance. This amount will include housing, furnishings and utilities. This section applies to members of the ordained clergy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, in conformity with the Internal Revenue Code.

#### **Resettlement Expenses**

Moving expenses for ordained clergy will be negotiated at the time of employment and coverage will be described in his or her Call Letter.

### **3-7. Illinois Lactation Breaks**

Employees who are nursing are provided with reasonable unpaid break time to express breast milk after the birth of a child. The Church will make reasonable efforts to provide a private location. Employees will not be retaliated against for exercising their rights under this policy

### **3-8. Workers' Compensation**

On-the-job injuries are covered by our Workers' Compensation Insurance Policy, which is provided at no cost. If employees are injured on the job, no matter how slightly, they should report the incident immediately to their Supervisor. Failure to follow The Church procedures may affect the ability of the employee to receive Workers Compensation benefits.

This is solely a monetary benefit and not a leave of absence entitlement. Employees who need to miss work due to a workplace injury must also request a formal leave of absence. See the Leave of Absence sections of this handbook for more information.

### **3-9. Illinois: Jury Duty Leave**

The Church realizes that it is the obligation of all U.S. citizens to serve on a jury when summoned to do so. All employees will be allowed time off to perform such civic service as required by law.

The Church is not obligated to compensate employees for time taken off for jury duty. Employees summoned for jury duty must deliver a copy of the summons to The Church within 10 days of the date of issuance of the summons to the employee.

### **3-10. Bereavement Leave**

We know the death of a family member is a time when employees wish to be with their families. If the employee is a full-time or part-time employee and loses a close relative, he or she will be allowed paid time off of up to five (5) days to assist in attending to his or her obligations and commitments. For the purposes of this policy, a close relative includes a spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, sibling or any other relation required by applicable law.

In instances of the death of other family members or friends, the employee will take appropriate time off with the approval of the individual employee's supervisor. Funeral Leave is available to all employees. The amount of time granted will be based upon the employee's actual need, taking into consideration any substantial travel involved. Each individual employee's supervisor will determine the amount of time allowed. In the case of the Senior Pastor, the Human Resources Committee will determine the amount of time allowed. With the approval of each individual employee's supervisor, the employee may extend this time off by using earned, unused vacation days. Additional paid and/or unpaid leave in excess of the suggested guidelines may also be approved by the Human Resources Committee upon request of the employee.

Paid leave days only may be taken on regularly scheduled, consecutive workdays following the day of death. Employees must inform their Supervisors prior to commencing bereavement leave. In administering this policy, The Church may require verification of death.

### **3-11. Illinois: Witness Leave**

An employee called to serve as a witness in a judicial proceeding must notify his/her supervisor as soon as possible.

Employees will not be compensated for time away from work to participate in a court case, but may use available vacation and personal time to cover the period of absence.

Employees attending judicial proceedings in response to a subpoena will not be disciplined for their absence.

### **3-12. Illinois: Voting Leave**

Employees who are eligible to vote in an election may request up to two hours with pay to vote while polls are open.

Employees must notify The Church of their intention to vote at least one week prior to Election Day.

### **3-13. Salary Continuation**

The Church provides enhanced monetary short-term disability benefits to full-time employees. These enhanced monetary benefits are inclusive of any monetary workers' compensation or statutory short-term disability benefits.

This is not a leave of absence provision. Employees who will be out of work must request a leave of absence. See the Leave of Absence sections of this handbook for more information. Employees will be required to submit medical certification as requested by The Church. Required medical certification under this policy may differ from the medical certification required for any leave of absence requested.

### **3-14. Employee Assistance Program**

The Church provides an employee assistance program for employees. This program offers qualified counselors to help you cope with personal problems you may be facing. Further details can be obtained by contacting an EAP counselor at ADP at (888) 231-7015.

## **Section 4 - Leaves of Absence**

### **4-1. Personal Leave**

If employees are ineligible for any other leave of absence, The Church, under certain circumstances, may grant a personal leave of absence without pay. A written request for a personal leave should be presented to management at least two (2) weeks before the anticipated start of the leave. If the leave is requested for medical reasons and employees are not eligible for leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or any state leave law, medical certification also must be submitted. The request will be considered on the basis of staffing requirements and the reasons for the requested leave, as well as performance and attendance records. Normally, a leave of absence will be granted for a period of up to six (6) weeks. However a personal leave may be extended if, prior to the end of leave, employees submit a written request for an extension to management and the request is granted. During the leave, employees will not earn vacation, personal days or sick days. We will continue health insurance coverage during the leave if employees submit their share of the monthly premium payments to The Church in a timely manner, subject to the terms of the plan documents.

When the employee anticipates returning to work, he or she should notify management of the expected return date. This notification should be made at least one week before the end of the leave.

Upon completion of the personal leave of absence, The Church will attempt to return employees to their original job or a similar position, subject to prevailing business considerations. Reinstatement, however, is not guaranteed.

Failure to advise management of availability to return to work, failure to return to work when notified or a continued absence from work beyond the time approved by The Church will be considered a voluntary resignation of employment.

Personal leave runs concurrently with any The Church-provided Short-Term Disability Leave of Absence.

### **4-2. Education Leave**

Recommendations for continuing education are developed by the Human Resources Committee in conjunction with the respective staff members during the performance review process. Budget impact items must be approved by both the Congregation Council and the entire Congregation at its annual budget approval meeting.

Once funds for continuing education have been approved, requests to attend specific education offerings must be approved by the Human Resources Committee. Approved funds may be expended toward tuition, fees and/or books as required by the specific educational institution that will be providing instruction.

Requests to attend non-budgeted continuing education must be approved by The Church Council.

### **Definition of Education Leave**

Unless an exception is made by the Human Resources Committee, education leave will be understood to include courses of study at a recognized college, seminary, university, continuing education center, educational training event or conference. Education leave is to be considered on its individual merits and its potential benefit to both the staff member and the congregation. Assemblies are not included as Education Leave.

### **Accumulation of Education Leave**

At the time of separation, an employee will have no claim for pay in lieu of unused Education Leave.

## **4-3. Seminars, Conventions and Conferences**

Employees will be reimbursed for reasonable and documented expenses incurred for attendance at budgeted seminars, conventions and conferences related to their work as approved by the Human Resources Committee. This reimbursement will include the cost of the session itself, if any, plus transportation, lodging and meals. The employee will be expected to pay the difference between least expensive transportation mode and actual costs.

## **4-4. Sabbatical Leave (Ordained Clergy & Rostered Professional Leaders only)**

It is the intent of The Church to comply with the “Guidelines for Sabbatical Leave” as published by the Northern Illinois Synod of the ELCA in the current edition of the “Salary Guidelines for Rostered People” This intent notwithstanding, the financial health of The Church may preclude granting a requested sabbatical leave. Denial of leave will only be done after thoroughly exploring available options with the staff member, Human Resources Committee, Congregation Council, and Northern Illinois Synod officials.

## **4-5. Short Term Disability**

It is the intention of this Section to bridge full-time employees from accrued sick leave to the Disability Benefits Plan as detailed in the Ministerial Pension and Health Benefits Plan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Currently, ELCA Board of Pensions, total disability is “if you are unable to perform the material duties of your normal occupation for any employer as a direct result of injury or physical or mental disorder substantiated by objective medical information from a qualified health care provider. Your normal occupation is the job you performed immediately prior to the onset of your disability.”

### **Full-Time Employees**

In the event of disability to a full-time employee, salary will be paid to the employee, employee's spouse or dependents for up to three months, except that compensation will cease within that three month period if disability benefits payable through the Ministerial Pension and Health Benefits Plan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America begin.

When returning to work, leave time not covered by the Ministerial Pension and Health Benefits Plan will be deducted against accrued sick leave first, then unused vacation. Sick leave and vacation leave are not accrued while an employee is out on short term disability.

### **Part-Time Employees**

Requests for disability leave for part-time employees will be considered on an individual basis and will be submitted to the Congregational Council with the recommendation of the Pastor and Human Resources Committee. Any leave granted that extends beyond accrued sick leave will be without pay.

## **4-6. Paternity, Maternity and Adoption Child Care Leave**

All full-time employees will be granted up to six weeks of maternity, paternity or adoption child care leave with full pay (with the exception of car allowance) after the birth or adoption of a child. This leave is chargeable against accrued sick leave first, and then against unused vacation.

#### **4-7. Military Leave**

If employees are called into active military service or enlist in the uniformed services, they will be eligible to receive an unpaid military leave of absence. To be eligible for military leave, employees must provide management with advance notice of service obligations unless they are prevented from providing such notice by military necessity or it is otherwise impossible or unreasonable to provide such notice. Provided the absence does not exceed applicable statutory limitations, employees will retain reemployment rights and accrue seniority and benefits in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. Employees should ask management for further information about eligibility for Military Leave.

If employees are required to attend yearly Reserves or National Guard duty, they can apply for an unpaid temporary military leave of absence not to exceed the number of days allowed by law (including travel). They should give management as much advance notice of their need for military leave as possible so that we can maintain proper coverage while employees are away.

#### **4-8. Illinois: Voluntary Emergency Workers Leave**

The Church will not discharge employees who serve as volunteer emergency workers and are absent from or late to work due to their participation in an emergency situation. Volunteer emergency workers include volunteer firefighters, emergency medical technicians, ambulance drivers or attendants, first responders, members of county municipal emergency services and disaster agencies, and auxiliary policemen or deputies. Employees must make a reasonable effort to notify The Church that they may be absent from or late to work.

## Section 5 - General Standards of Conduct

### 5-1. Workplace Conduct

The Church endeavors to maintain a positive work environment. Each employee plays a role in fostering this environment. Accordingly, we all must abide by certain rules of conduct, based on honesty, common sense and fair play.

Because everyone may not have the same idea about proper workplace conduct, it is helpful to adopt and enforce rules all can follow. Unacceptable conduct may subject the offender to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, at The Church's sole discretion. The following are examples of some, but not all, conduct which can be considered unacceptable:

1. Obtaining employment on the basis of false or misleading information.
2. Stealing, removing or defacing The Church's property or a co-worker's property, and/or disclosure of confidential information.
3. Completing another employee's time records.
4. Violation of safety rules and policies.
5. The unlawful or unauthorized use, abuse, solicitation, distribution, theft, possession, transfer, purchase, or sale of drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcohol by an individual anywhere on Church premises, while on Church business (whether or not on Church premises) or while representing The Church or reporting to work or remaining on duty after using drugs or alcohol in any amount that adversely affects the employee's ability to perform the functions of the job. Please refer to your Church's specific policy (if any) for additional information.
6. Fighting, threatening or disrupting the work of others or other violations of The Church's Workplace Violence Policy.
7. Failure to follow lawful instructions of a supervisor.
8. Failure to perform assigned job duties.
9. Violation of the Punctuality and Attendance Policy, including but not limited to irregular attendance, habitual lateness or unexcused absences.
10. Gambling on The Church's property.
11. Willful or careless destruction or damage to Church assets or to the equipment or possessions of another employee.
12. Wasting work materials.
13. Performing work of a personal nature during working time.
14. Violation of the Solicitation and Distribution Policy.
15. Violation of The Church's Harassment or Equal Employment Opportunity Policies.
16. Violation of the Communication and Computer Systems Policy.
17. Unsatisfactory job performance.
18. Any other violation of Church policy.



Obviously, not every type of misconduct can be listed. Note that all employees are employed at-will, and The Church reserves the right to impose whatever discipline it chooses, or none at all, in a particular instance. The Church will deal with each situation individually and nothing in this handbook should be construed as a promise of specific treatment in a given situation. However, The Church will endeavor to utilize progressive discipline but reserves the right in its sole discretion to terminate an employee at any time for any reason.

The observance of these rules will help to ensure that our workplace remains a safe and desirable place to work.

### Voluntary Termination

Employees with a Congregational Call (see section 2-1) are expected to give a minimum of 30 (thirty) days written notice of resignation to the congregation through the Congregation Council.

Rostered Professional Leaders seeking Synod “Retired Status” should consult current Synod policies and procedures. Personnel officially retiring under the ELCA Retirement Plan should consult that plan for benefits, eligibility, procedures, and other details.

All other employees are expected to give 30 (thirty) days written notice of resignation to the congregation through the Senior Pastor.

### Involuntary Termination for Ordained Clergy

Involuntary termination of ordained clergy will be in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the congregation.

### Involuntary Termination for Non-Clergy

#### Termination for Unsatisfactory Performance

The Church may terminate the employment of any employee on the recommendation of the Human Resources Committee and ratification by the Congregation Council if the employee's job performance is unsatisfactory; or the employee’s attitude or behavior is consistently disruptive to a harmonious workplace;

#### Discharge for Cause

Discharge (termination of employment) in such cases will be effective as of the time written notice is given by the President of the Congregation, and no payment will be made except for salary due the employee for actual time worked plus accrued (earned) vacation pay.

## **5-2. Punctuality and Attendance**

Employees are hired to perform important functions at The Church. As with any group effort, operating effectively takes cooperation and commitment from everyone. Therefore, attendance and punctuality are very important. Unnecessary absences and lateness are expensive, disruptive and place an unfair burden on fellow employees and Supervisors. We expect excellent attendance from all employees. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness will result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

We do recognize, however, there are times when absences and tardiness cannot be avoided. In such cases, employees are expected to notify Supervisors as early as possible, but no later than the start of the work day. Asking another employee, friend or relative to give this notice is improper and constitutes grounds for disciplinary action. Employees should call, stating the nature of the illness and its expected duration, for every day of absenteeism.

Unreported absences of three consecutive work days generally will be considered a voluntary resignation of employment with The Church.

## **5-3. Use of Communication and Computer Systems**

The Church's communication and computer systems are intended primarily for church purposes; however limited personal usage is permitted if it does not hinder performance of job duties or violate any other The Church policy. This includes the voice mail, e-mail and Internet systems. Users have no legitimate expectation of privacy in regard to their use of the The Church system.

The Church may access the voice mail and e-mail systems and obtain the communications within the systems, including past voice mail and e-mail messages, without notice to users of the system, in the ordinary course of business when The Church deems it appropriate to do so. The reasons for which The Church may obtain such access include, but are not limited to: maintaining the system; preventing or investigating allegations of system abuse or misuse; assuring compliance with software copyright laws; complying with legal and regulatory requests for information; and ensuring that The Church operations continue appropriately during an employee's absence.

Further, The Church may review Internet usage to ensure that such use with The Church property, or communications sent via the Internet with The Church's property, are appropriate. The reasons for which The Church may review employees' use of the Internet with The Church property include, but are not limited to: maintaining the system; preventing or investigating allegations of system abuse or misuse; assuring compliance with software copyright laws; complying with legal and regulatory requests for information; and ensuring that The Church operations continue appropriately during an employee's absence.

The Church may store electronic communications for a period of time after the communication is created. From time to time, copies of communications may be deleted.

The Church's policies prohibiting harassment, in their entirety, apply to the use of The Church's communication and computer systems. No one may use any communication or computer system in a manner that may be construed by others as harassing or offensive based on race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious beliefs or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law.

Further, since The Church's communication and computer systems are intended for business use, all employees, upon request, must inform management of any private access codes or passwords.

Unauthorized duplication of copyrighted computer software violates the law and is strictly prohibited.

No employee may access, or attempt to obtain access to, another employee's computer systems without appropriate authorization.

Violators of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

#### **5-4. Use of Social Media**

The Church respects the right of any employee to maintain a blog or web page or to participate in a social networking, Twitter or similar site, including but not limited to Facebook and LinkedIn. However, to protect The Church interests and ensure employees focus on their job duties, employees must adhere to the following rules:

Employees may not post on a blog or web page or participate on a social networking platform, such as Twitter or similar site, during work time or at any time with The Church equipment or property.

All rules regarding confidential and proprietary business information apply in full to blogs, web pages and social networking platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn or similar sites. Any information that cannot be disclosed through a conversation, a note or an e-mail also cannot be disclosed in a blog, web page or social networking site.

Whether an employee is posting something on his or her own blog, web page, social networking, Twitter or similar site or on someone else's, if the employee mentions The Church and also expresses either a political opinion or an opinion regarding The Church's actions, the poster must include a disclaimer. The poster should specifically state that the opinion expressed is his/her personal opinion and not The Church's position. This is necessary to preserve The Church's good will in the marketplace.

Computer systems and equipment are intended for church-related use only. It is the responsibility of all employees to see that these information systems are used in an efficient, ethical, and lawful manner. In addition, the potential to expose Church computers to viruses, spyware, spam and other unwanted digital intrusions must be carefully prevented.

E-mail and Internet access are not intended for personal use, although limited use which does not interfere with or conflict with Church business is allowed. Use of a Church computer in any of the following manners is considered abuse of this privilege:

Shopping online for personal items (unrelated to job responsibilities); Conducting political activity; accessing, sending, or receiving pornography; accessing, sending, or receiving sexist material; accessing, sending, or receiving racist material; performing an illegal act; spending excessive time on non-Church related computer activities; or taking any other inappropriate behavior.

Violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

Any conduct that is impermissible under the law if expressed in any other form or forum is impermissible if expressed through a blog, web page, social networking, Twitter or similar site. For example, posted material that is discriminatory, obscene, defamatory, libelous or threatening is forbidden. The Church's policies apply equally to employee social media usage. Employees should review their Employee Handbook for further guidance.

The Church encourages all employees to keep in mind the speed and manner in which information posted on a blog, web page, and/or social networking site is received and often misunderstood by readers. Employees must use their best judgment. Employees with any questions should review the guidelines above and/or consult with their manager. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in discipline, up to and including discharge.

## **5-5. Personal and Church-Provided Portable Communication Devices**

The Church-provided portable communication devices (PCDs), including cell phones and personal digital assistants, should be used primarily for church purposes. Employees have no reasonable expectation of privacy in regard to the use of such devices, and all use is subject to monitoring, to the maximum extent permitted by applicable law. This includes as permitted the right to monitor personal communications as necessary.

Some employees may be authorized to use their own PCD for church purposes. These employees should work with the IT department to configure their PCD for business use. Communications sent via a personal PCD also may subject to monitoring if sent through The Church's networks and the PCD must be provided for inspection and review upon request.

All conversations, text messages and e-mails must be professional. When sending a text message or using a PCD for church purposes, whether it is a The Church-provided or personal device, employees must comply with applicable guidelines, including policies on sexual harassment, discrimination, conduct, confidentiality, equipment use and operation of vehicles. Using The Church-issued PCD to send or receive personal text messages is prohibited at all times and personal use during working hours should be limited to emergency situations.

If an employee who uses a personal PCD for business resigns or is discharged, the employee will be required to submit the device to the IT department for resetting on or before his or her last day of work. At that time, the IT department will reset and remove all information from the device, including but not limited to, The Church information and personal data (such as contacts, e-mails and photographs). The IT department will make efforts to provide employees with the personal data in another form (e.g., on a disk) to the extent practicable; however, the employee may lose some or all personal data saved on the device.

Employees may not use their personal PCD for business unless they agree to submit the device to the IT department on or before their last day of work for resetting and removal of The Church information. This is the only way currently possible to ensure that all The Church's information is removed from the device at the time of termination. The removal of The Church information is crucial to ensure compliance with The Church's confidentiality and proprietary information policies and objectives.

Please note that whether employees use their personal PCD or a The Church-issued device, The Church's electronic communications policies, including but not limited to, proper use of communications and computer systems, remain in effect.

### **Portable Communication Device Use While Driving**

Employees who drive on The Church business must abide by all state or local laws prohibiting or limiting PCD (cell phone or personal digital assistant) use while driving. Further, even if usage is permitted, employees may choose to refrain from using any PCD while driving. "Use" includes, but is not limited to, talking or listening to another person or sending an electronic or text message via the PCD.

Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, if any use is permitted while driving, employees should proceed to a safe location off the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call. If acceptance of a call is absolutely necessary while the employee is driving, and permitted by law, the employee must use a hands-free option and advise the caller that he/she is unable to speak at that time and will return the call shortly.

Under no circumstances should employees feel that they need to place themselves at risk to fulfill business needs.

Since this policy does not require any employee to use a cell phone while driving, employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their PCDs while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.

Texting and e-mailing while driving is prohibited in all circumstances.

## **5-6. Smoking**

Smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes, is prohibited on The Church premises including all Church property and in all The Church vehicles.

## **5-7. Personal Visits and Telephone Calls**

Disruptions during work time can lead to errors and delays. Therefore, we ask that personal telephone calls be kept to a minimum, and only be made or received after working time, or during lunch or break time.

For safety and security reasons, employees are prohibited from having personal guests visit or accompany them anywhere in our facilities other than the reception areas.

## **5-8. Solicitation and Distribution**

To avoid distractions, solicitation by an employee of another employee is prohibited while either employee is on work time. "Work time" is defined as the time an employee is engaged, or should be engaged, in performing his/her work tasks for The Church. Solicitation of any kind by non-employees on The Church premises is prohibited at all times.

Distribution of advertising material, handbills, printed or written literature of any kind in working areas of The Church is prohibited at all times. Distribution of literature by non-employees on The Church premises is prohibited at all times.

## **5-9. Bulletin Boards**

Important notices and items of general interest are continually posted on our bulletin board. Employees should make it a practice to review it frequently. This will assist employees in keeping up with what is current at The Church. To avoid confusion, employees should not post or remove any material from the bulletin board.

## **5-10. Confidential Church Information**

During the course of work, an employee may become aware of confidential information about The Church's business, including but not limited to information regarding The Church finances, pricing, products and new product development, software and computer programs, marketing strategies, suppliers, members and potential members. An employee also may become aware of similar confidential information belonging to The Church's clients. It is extremely important that all such information remain confidential, and particularly not be disclosed to our competitors. Any employee who improperly copies, removes (whether physically or electronically), uses or discloses confidential information to anyone outside of The Church may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Employees may be required to sign an agreement reiterating these obligations.

## **5-11. Conflict of Interest and Business Ethics**

It is The Church's policy that all employees avoid any conflict between their personal interests and those of The Church. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that The Church's honesty and integrity, and therefore its reputation, are not compromised. The fundamental principle guiding this policy is that no employee should have, or appear to have, personal interests or relationships that actually or potentially conflict with the best interests of The Church.

It is not possible to give an exhaustive list of situations that might involve violations of this policy. However, the situations that would constitute a conflict in most cases include but are not limited to:

1. Holding an interest in or accepting free or discounted goods from any organization that does, or is seeking to do, business with The Church, by any employee who is in a position to directly or indirectly influence either The Church's decision to do business, or the terms upon which business would be done with such organization;
2. holding any interest in an organization that competes with The Church
3. being employed by (including as a consultant) or serving on the board of any organization which does, or is seeking to do, business with The Church or which competes with The Church and/or
4. profiting personally, e.g., through commissions, loans, expense reimbursements or other payments, from any organization seeking to do business with The Church.

A conflict of interest would also exist when a member of an employee's immediate family is involved in situations such as those above.

This policy is not intended to prohibit the acceptance of modest courtesies, openly given and accepted as part of the usual business amenities, for example, occasional business-related meals or promotional items of nominal or minor value.

It is your responsibility to report any actual or potential conflict that may exist between you (and your immediate family) and The Church.

## **5-12. Use of Facilities, Equipment and Property, Including Intellectual Property**

Equipment essential in accomplishing job duties is often expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines.

Employees should notify their Supervisor if any equipment, machines, or tools appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of loss, damages, defects, and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others. The Supervisor can answer any questions about an employee's responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment used on the job.

Employees also are prohibited from any unauthorized use of The Church's intellectual property, such as audio and video tapes, print materials and software.

Improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment can result in discipline, up to and including discharge.

Further, The Church is not responsible for any damage to employees' personal belongings unless the employee's Supervisor provided advance approval for the employee to bring the personal property to work.

## **5-13. Health and Safety**

The health and safety of employees and others on The Church property are of critical concern. The Church intends to comply with all health and safety laws applicable to our business. To this end, we must rely upon employees to ensure that work areas are kept safe and free of hazardous conditions. Employees are required to be conscientious about workplace safety, including proper operating methods, and recognize dangerous conditions or hazards. Any unsafe conditions or potential hazards should be reported to management immediately, even if the problem appears to be corrected. Any suspicion of a concealed danger present on The Church's premises, or in a product, facility, piece of equipment, process or business practice for which The Church is responsible should be brought to the attention of management immediately.

Periodically, The Church may issue rules and guidelines governing workplace safety and health. The Church may also issue rules and guidelines regarding the handling and disposal of hazardous substances and waste. All employees should familiarize themselves with these rules and guidelines, as strict compliance will be expected.



Any workplace injury, accident, or illness must be reported to the employee's Supervisor as soon as possible, regardless of the severity of the injury or accident.

#### **5-14. Hiring Relatives/Employee Relationships**

A familial relationship among employees can create an actual or at least a potential conflict of interest in the employment setting, especially where one relative supervises another relative. To avoid this problem, The Church may refuse to hire or place a relative in a position where the potential for favoritism or conflict exists.

In other cases, such as personal relationships where a conflict or the potential for conflict arises, even if there is no supervisory relationship involved, the parties may be separated by reassignment or discharged from employment, at the discretion of The Church. Accordingly, all parties to any type of intimate personal relationship must inform management.

If two employees marry, become related, or enter into an intimate relationship, they may not remain in a reporting relationship or in positions where one individual may affect the compensation or other terms or conditions of employment of the other individual. The Church generally will attempt to identify other available positions, but if no alternate position is available, The Church retains the right to decide which employee will remain with The Church.

For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

#### **5-15. Employee Dress and Personal Appearance**

You are expected to report to work well groomed, clean, and dressed according to the requirements of your position. Some employees may be required to wear uniforms or safety equipment/clothing. Please contact your Supervisor for specific information regarding acceptable attire for your position. If you report to work dressed or groomed inappropriately, you may be prevented from working until you return to work well-groomed and wearing the proper attire.

## **5-16. Publicity/Statements to the Media**

All media inquiries regarding the position of The Church as to any issues must be referred to Senior Pastor. Only Senior Pastor is authorized to make or approve public statements on behalf of The Church. No employees, unless specifically designated by Senior Pastor, are authorized to make those statements on behalf of The Church. Any employee wishing to write and/or publish an article, paper, or other publication on behalf of The Church must first obtain approval from Senior Pastor.

## **5-17. Operation of Vehicles**

All employees authorized to drive The Church-owned or leased vehicles or personal vehicles in conducting The Church business must possess a current, valid driver's license and an acceptable driving record. Any change in license status or driving record must be reported to management immediately.

An employee must have a valid driver's license in his or her possession while operating a vehicle off or on The Church property. It is the responsibility of every employee to drive safely and obey all traffic, vehicle safety, and parking laws or regulations. Drivers must demonstrate safe driving habits at all times.

The Church-owned or leased vehicles may be used only as authorized by management.

### **Portable Communication Device Use While Driving**

Employees who drive on The Church business must abide by all state or local laws prohibiting or limiting portable communication device (PCD) use, including cell phones or personal digital assistants, while driving. Further, even if use is permitted, employees may choose to refrain from using any PCD while driving. "Use" includes, but is not limited to, talking or listening to another person or sending an electronic or text message via the PCD.

Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, if any use is permitted while driving, employees should proceed to a safe location off the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call. If acceptance of a call is absolutely necessary while the employee is driving, and permitted by law, the employee must use a hands-free option and advise the caller that he/she is unable to speak at that time and will return the call shortly.

Under no circumstances should employees feel that they need to place themselves at risk to fulfill business needs.

Since this policy does not require any employee to use a PCD while driving, employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their PCDs while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.

Texting and e-mailing while driving is prohibited in all circumstances.

## **5-18. References**

The Church will respond to reference requests through the Human Resources Department. The Church will provide general information concerning the employee such as date of hire, date of discharge, and positions held. Requests for reference information must be in writing, and responses will be in writing. Please refer all requests for references to the Human Resources Department.

**Only the Human Resources Department may provide references.**

## **5-19. If You Must Leave Us**

Should an employee decide to leave The Church, we ask that he or she provide a Supervisor with at least two (2) weeks advance notice of departure. Thoughtfulness will be appreciated.

All The Church property including, but not limited to, keys, security cards, parking passes, laptop computers, fax machines, uniforms, etc. must be returned at separation. Employees also must return all of The Church's Confidential Information upon separation. To the extent permitted by law, employees will be required to repay The Church (through payroll deduction, if lawful) for any lost or damaged The Church property.

As noted previously, all employees are employed at-will and nothing in this handbook changes that status.

## **5-20. Exit Interview**

Employees who resign are requested to participate in an exit interview with Human Resources, if possible.

## 5-21. A Few Closing Words

This handbook is intended to give employees a broad summary of things they should know about The Church. The information in this handbook is general in nature and, should questions arise, any member of management should be consulted for complete details. While we intend to continue the policies, rules and benefits described in this handbook, The Church, in its sole discretion, may always amend, add to, delete from or modify the provisions of this handbook and/or change its interpretation of any provision set forth in this handbook. Employees should not hesitate to speak to management if they have any questions about The Church or its personnel policies and practices.

## General Handbook Acknowledgment

This Employee Handbook is an important document intended to help you become acquainted with The Church. This document is intended to provide guidelines and general descriptions only; it is not the final word in all cases. Individual circumstances may call for individual attention.

Because The Church's operations may change, the contents of this Handbook may be changed at any time, with or without notice, in an individual case or generally, at the sole discretion of management.

Please read the following statements and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgment of this Employee Handbook.

**I have received and read a copy of The Church's Employee Handbook. I understand that the policies, rules and benefits described in it are subject to change at the sole discretion of The Church at any time.**

**I further understand that my employment is terminable at will, either by myself or The Church, with or without cause or notice, regardless of the length of my employment or the granting of benefits of any kind.**

**I understand that no contract of employment other than "at will" has been expressed or implied, and that no circumstances arising out of my employment will alter my "at will" status except IN AN INDIVIDUAL CASE OR GENERALLY in a writing signed by The Human Resource Committee of The Church.**

**I understand that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand the above statements and that I have received a copy of The Church's Employee Handbook.**

Employee's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The signed original copy of this acknowledgment should be given to management - it will be filed in your personnel file.

## Receipt of Sexual Harassment Policy

It is The Church's policy to prohibit harassment of any employee by any Supervisor, employee, customer or vendor on the basis of sex or gender. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate personal morality within The Church. It is to ensure that at The Church all employees are free from sexual harassment. While it is not easy to define precisely what types of conduct could constitute sexual harassment, examples of prohibited behavior include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, obscene gestures, displaying sexually graphic magazines, calendars or posters, sending sexually explicit e-mails, text messages and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as uninvited touching of a sexual nature or sexually related comments. Depending upon the circumstances, improper conduct also can include sexual joking, vulgar or offensive conversation or jokes, commenting about an employee's physical appearance, conversation about your own or someone else's sex life, or teasing or other conduct directed toward a person because of his or her gender which is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create an unprofessional and hostile working environment.

If the employee feels that he or she has been subjected to conduct which violates this policy, the employee should immediately report the matter to your Supervisor. If unable for any reason to contact this person, or if the employee has not received a satisfactory response within five (5) business days after reporting any incident of perceived harassment, the employee should contact The Human Resource Committee. If the person toward whom the complaint is directed is one of the individuals indicated above, the employee should contact any higher-level manager in his or her reporting hierarchy. Every report of perceived harassment will be fully investigated and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible, but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In addition, The Church will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report unwelcome conduct to management or who cooperate in the investigations of such reports in accordance with this policy. Employees who make complaints in bad faith may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All employees must cooperate with all investigations.

I have read and I understand The Church's Sexual Harassment Policy.

Employee's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The signed original copy of this receipt should be given to management - it will be filed in your personnel file.

## Receipt of Non-Harassment Policy

It is The Church's policy to prohibit intentional and unintentional harassment of any individual by another person on the basis of any protected classification including, but not limited to, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation or age. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate our employees' personal morality, but to ensure that in the workplace, no one harasses another individual.

If you feel that you have been subjected to conduct which violates this policy, you should immediately report the matter to your Supervisor. If you are unable for any reason to contact this person, or if you have not received a satisfactory response within five (5) business days after reporting any incident of what you perceive to be harassment, please contact The Human Resource Committee. If the person toward whom the complaint is directed is one of the individuals indicated above, you should contact any higher-level manager in your reporting hierarchy. Every report of perceived harassment will be fully investigated and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible, but confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In addition, The Church will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report unwelcome conduct to management or who cooperate in the investigations of such reports in accordance with this policy. Employees who make complaints in bad faith may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. All employees must cooperate with all investigations.

Employee's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The signed original copy of this receipt should be given to management - it will be filed in your personnel file.