



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
IN WESTERN NEW YORK

# Staff Handbook

Revised 2020

For use in congregations of  
The Episcopal Diocese of Western New York

[www.episcopalwny.org](http://www.episcopalwny.org)

**THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE**  
**of**  
**Western New York**  
**Staff Member Handbook**



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<p><b>The Episcopal Church of Western New York</b>  <b>STAFF MEMBER HANDBOOK</b></p>
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### 101 *Definitions*

For the purpose of this staff member handbook, the following terms are defined as follows:

*Anniversary Date* - The date of a staff member's first day of employment with the Church. This date is used to compute certain staff member benefits.

*Church* – The congregation is a constituent member of The Episcopal Diocese of Western New York.

*Church Headquarters* – The headquarters of the congregation is the office designated by the vestry or mission council. The Diocesan headquarters is located at 1064 Brighton Road, Tonawanda, NY 14150.

*Communications Officer* – The individual whom has been designated by the Executive to carry out the responsibilities of the Communications Officer under these policies.

*Executive* – Where the Executive is solely mentioned, Executive means the Executive or the Executive's designee. If there is a Rector or a Vicar, then the Rector or Vicar is the Executive. If there is neither a Rector nor Vicar, then the Wardens shall be the Executive. If there are two Wardens, they must agree amongst themselves, which Warden will assume the supervisory responsibilities.

*Governing Board* – If the congregation is a parish, the governing board is the vestry. If the congregation is a mission, then the governing board is the Bishop's Council.

*Office Manager* - The individual whom has been designated by the Executive to carry out the responsibilities of the Office Manager under these policies.

*Staff Member* - An individual who is employed by the Church as a full-time, part-time, or per diem staff member, but not an independent contractor or any individual employed by a temporary employment agency that has been assigned to work at the Church.

*Supervisor* - An individual who has been designated by the congregation to assign, direct, and/or appraise the work of a designated group of staff members. The Executive will assign a supervisor for each designated group of staff members.

*Immediate Family Member* - An employee's spouse (includes same or opposite sex spouse), domestic or same-sex partner, child, stepchild, parent, stepparent, sibling, and stepsibling.

### 102 *Staff Member Handbook Disclaimer*

**Employment Contract** - Because the Church is unable to anticipate every situation or question a staff member may have about the Church's policies and procedures, this staff member handbook is not all inclusive and is only a set of guidelines for management to follow. In addition, the staff member handbook is not intended to form an express or implied contract of employment.

**Policy Exceptions** - The staff member handbook should not be interpreted as a guarantee that the policies discussed in it will be applied in all cases. At its sole discretion, the Church may make exceptions to its policies from time to time.

**Policy Interpretation** - The Church reserves the right to interpret all information presented in this staff member handbook.

**Government Regulations** - In the event that a federal, state, or local regulation conflicts with any provision contained in this staff member handbook, the regulation shall prevail and the provision deemed amended to the extent necessary to comply with said regulation.

### **103 Purpose of Staff Member Handbook**

**Purpose** - The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize staff members with the Church and to communicate important information about many of the personnel policies that affect employment and guide daily operations. The staff member handbook provides an overview of the Church's policies that relate to rules, regulations, procedures, practices, compensation, and staff member benefits.

**Previous Handbook** - Unless otherwise notified, this staff member handbook supersedes and replaces any previous staff member handbook issued by the Church concerning all policies contained herein.

**Staff Member Responsibility** - The staff member handbook answers many questions about employment with the Church. Each staff member is therefore expected to read, understand, and comply with all provisions of this staff member handbook and to retain it for future reference.

**Questions** - Questions regarding any topic in this handbook should be directed to the Executive.

### **104 Staff Member Handbook Revisions**

**Policy Statement** - The Church strives to maintain up-to-date policies. As the Church grows, new employment regulations are enacted, and technology changes, new policies may be added or current policies may need to be modified or revoked. The Church reserves the right to revise its policies at any time with or without cause or notice, with the exception of the employment-at-will policy.

**Policy Updates** - When the Church adds, revises, or revokes a policy, staff members are generally notified of the change and the new/revised policy is distributed to staff members for their records. A staff member is responsible for updating the staff member's copy of the staff member handbook with any new or revised policies that the Church disseminates.

## **200 EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATIONS**

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**Policy Statement** - Each staff member is classified as full-time, part-time, or per diem. Each position is also designated as exempt or non-exempt from federal and New York State minimum wage and overtime provisions. Staff members are notified of their employment classification and exempt/non-exempt status at the time of hire and if changed during employment.

For the purpose of this staff member handbook, the following terms are defined as follows:

### **201 *Full-Time Staff Members***

A full-time staff member is a staff member who is regularly scheduled to work 40 hours or more per week.

### **202 *Part-Time Staff Members***

A part-time staff member is a staff member who is regularly scheduled to work less than 40 hours per week.

### **203 *Per Diem Staff Members***

A per diem staff member is a staff member who is hired by the Church to supplement its workforce on an as needed basis. A per diem staff member may work varying hours each day or week based on the needs of the Church.

### **204 *Exempt Staff Members***

An exempt staff member is a staff member who qualifies for an exemption from federal and state minimum wage and overtime provisions as an executive, administrative, professional, computer, or highly compensated staff member. In accordance with such regulations, an exempt staff member is not eligible for overtime compensation. To qualify for one of these exemptions, a staff member must generally be paid on a salary basis as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), earn a salary or fee stipulated in the regulations, and meet certain tests relating to job duties.

### **205 *Non-Exempt Staff Members***

A non-exempt staff member is a staff member who is subject to federal and state minimum wage and overtime provisions. In accordance with such regulations, a non-exempt staff member is paid a wage stipulated in the regulations and is compensated for overtime when more than 40 hours are worked during a workweek.



## 300 EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

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### 301 *Employment-at-Will*

**Policy Statement** - The Church follows the practice of employment-at-will. The Church does not promise or guarantee employment for any specified period of time. Either a staff member or the Church may end the employment relationship at any time for any reason with or without cause or notice.

**Letters of Agreement-** A supervisor does not have the authority to enter into a verbal or written employment contract with an applicant or staff member. A letter of agreement must be in writing and signed by both the Executive and the staff member and approved by the congregation's Governing Board. No other oral or written statements or representations can limit the Church's right to terminate employment at-will. A letter of agreement shall not conflict with this staff handbook unless the handbook explicitly allows the letter of agreement to take precedence. However, in the case of a letter of agreement for a Rector or a Vicar, the agreement may vary from the handbook if the agreement is also signed by the Bishop.

### 302 *Hiring Practices*

**Policy Statement** - The Church has implemented policies and procedures to address the hiring of former staff members, individuals under age eighteen, and relatives of current staff members.

**Former Staff members** - A former staff member may be considered for re-employment with the Church based on the reason for the previous separation and the Church's current business needs. A staff member who resigns without giving or completing the requested notice or who is terminated for misconduct is generally not considered for re-employment.

For the purpose of seniority and paid leave benefits, credit for prior service is granted to an individual who is rehired within six months from the most recent date of separation and who had completed at least five years of continuous service with the Church prior to the separation.

**Relatives** - A member of a staff member's immediate family may be considered for employment if the individual possesses the minimum qualifications required for the position. However, in order to avoid an actual or perceived conflict of interest, the lines of supervision must be clear and approved by the Church Council.

### 303 *Orientation Period*

**Policy Statement** - All new staff members participate in an orientation period that is conducted by the staff member's supervisor and various Church representatives. The purpose of the orientation period is to welcome new staff members and to familiarize them with the Church and their jobs. It also gives a staff member's supervisor the opportunity to evaluate the staff member's job performance and potential for development in the position.

**Length** - The orientation period generally extends for up to the first six months of employment. The Church reserves the right to extend or shorten the orientation period at its sole discretion.

**Topics Covered** - The orientation period generally consists of, but is not limited to, a tour of the facility, distribution and review of this staff member handbook, and enrollment in Church-sponsored benefits, if applicable. In addition, the staff member's supervisor is responsible for introducing the staff member to coworkers, scheduling on-the-job training, and reviewing the job description and performance requirements of the position.

**Performance Appraisal** - Throughout the orientation period, the staff member's supervisor monitors and evaluates the staff member's job performance, work habits, attendance, cooperation, and potential for development in the position. Any problems or deficiencies are normally addressed with the staff member. A formal performance appraisal is generally conducted at the completion of the orientation period to ensure that the staff member has received the necessary training and has the basic skills needed to perform the duties of the position. The supervisor also determines if continued employment is appropriate.

**Employment Contract** - The orientation period is not a contract of employment for any set period of time nor does completion of the orientation period change a staff member's status as an at-will staff member.

### **304 Performance Appraisals**

**Policy Statement** - The Episcopal Church has implemented a Mutual Ministry Review Process to evaluate the congregation's effectiveness in pursuit of its mission in ministry. The congregation periodically evaluates each staff member's job performance. The purpose of the program is to recognize a staff member's achievement of established performance standards and goals, identify and correct performance problems, encourage career development and growth, and set goals for the next appraisal period. A staff member's job description may be reviewed and updated, if applicable. A staff member is encouraged to address any questions, concerns, or suggestions with the staff member's supervisor.

**Performance Appraisal Criteria** - The performance appraisal generally takes into consideration the quality and quantity of a staff member's work, job knowledge, initiative, attendance, teamwork, conduct, and other criteria that properly reflects the staff member's job performance.

**Frequency** - Formal performance appraisals are generally conducted on the employee's anniversary date. In addition, informal performance discussions occur on an as needed basis throughout the year.

**Leaves of Absence** - The annual performance appraisal is based on 12 months of active service. If a staff member's service with the Church is interrupted by a leave of absence or temporary layoff, the performance appraisal is generally not conducted during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter but may be delayed by the length of the absence.

## 305 **Separation from Employment**

**Notice of Resignation** - A staff member who elects to resign or retire from employment with the Church is asked to submit a written notice to the staff member's supervisor at least two workweeks before the date of resignation/retirement is to be effective. If a staff member provides more notice than requested, the Church will determine whether the additional notice is necessary for efficient operations. The resignation letter should include the reason for resigning and the exact date it is to take effect.

A staff member is generally not allowed to rescind a verbal or written notice of resignation once it has been submitted to the staff member's supervisor.

**Use of Paid Benefits** - A staff member does not generally receive authorization to use credited, unused vacation and/or personal leave during the notice period unless the time off was approved before the Church received the notice of resignation. This may be negotiated at the discretion of the Executive. To receive paid sick leave during the notice period, a staff member may be required to provide verification of the illness from the staff member's health care provider.

**Exit Interviews** - Exit interviews are conducted in order to discuss cancellation of staff member benefits, COBRA eligibility, return of Church property, and/or the Church's policy regarding employment references. The exit interview also provides a staff member the opportunity to ask any employment-related questions and give suggestions, concerns, and constructive recommendations about the Church and its policies.

**Return of Church Property** - All Church property in the staff member's possession, such as, but not limited to, the staff member's copy of this staff member handbook, lap top, palm pilot, cell phone, keys, parish records, and computer disks must be returned to the staff member's supervisor in good working order when requested, but no later than the staff member's last day of work. If a staff member fails to return any Church property, the Church may initiate legal proceedings.

**Credited Benefits** - Refer to Section 900 to review the Vacation Leave, Sick Leave, and Personal Leave policies for information regarding payment for benefits at the time of separation from the Church.

**Final Paycheck** - A staff member's final paycheck for all hours worked is provided on the next regularly scheduled payday after the staff member's last day of work.

## 400 PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

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### 401 *Personnel Records*

**Policy Statement** - Each staff member is responsible for completing any employment-related forms that are required by government regulation or necessary for efficient Church operations. The Church maintains records and/or confidential personnel files on staff members, former staff members, and applicants in accordance with government record keeping and reporting requirements. Disclosure of confidential or sensitive information via any app or text message is prohibited – including taking or sending pictures of such information.

**Records Maintained** - The records maintained by the Church include, but are not limited to: the *Application for Employment Form*, federal and state tax withholding forms, insurance enrollment/waiver forms, job required licenses and certificates, training records, performance appraisals, compensation records, and disciplinary notices.

**Medical Information** - Staff member medical information is confidential and is maintained separately from staff member personnel files. These files are locked at all times.

**Immigration Forms** - A staff member must complete an *Immigration and Naturalization Service I-9 Form* on the first day of work. *I-9 Forms* are confidential and are maintained separately from staff member personnel files in a secure location.

**Control of Personnel Files** - All personnel records, medical information, and *I-9 Forms* are maintained and controlled by the Office Manager.

**Review of Personnel Files** - Access to personnel files is limited. A supervisor may only review a staff member's personnel file if there is a business reason to review the record. A current staff member may **not** review the contents of the staff member's own personnel file. The personnel file is the property of the Church.

**Changes in Status** - A staff member is responsible for ensuring that the Church receives all information needed to maintain up-to-date personnel records. A staff member must provide written notification to the Office Manager of a change in name, address, telephone number, emergency contact, insurance beneficiary, insurance enrollees, tax withholding status, or marital/dependent status. This list is not all-inclusive. The Church is not responsible for any errors resulting from a staff member's failure to inform the Church of changes in this information in a timely manner.

## 402 *Outside Requests for Information*

**Policy Statement** - All requests for information from outside the Church regarding current and former staff members must be referred to the Office Manager. No other supervisor or staff member is authorized to provide reference or other information to any outside source. The Church is not responsible for information provided by an unauthorized staff member.

**Employment Verification** - If the Church receives an outside request for employment verification of a current or former staff member, the Office Manager will verify dates of employment and position(s) held without the signed consent of the individual.

**Reference Requests** - Outside requests for reference information regarding current and former staff members must be submitted to the Office Manager in writing. The request must include the signed consent of the current/former staff member as well as a signed release or *Hold Harmless Agreement*.

**Reference Letters** - The Executive must review and approve any reference letter (i.e., letter of recommendation) written by a supervisor regarding a current or former staff member. A copy of the letter must be maintained in the individual's personnel file.

**Exceptions** - The Church does not guarantee that it will release employment-related information to an outside source even with written consent of the current/former staff member. Exceptions to this policy are made only if the Church is legally required to provide the information by court order or subpoena.

## 500 COMPLIANCE POLICIES

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### 501 *Equal Employment Opportunity*

**Policy Statement** - The Church is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The Church does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of a person's race, religion, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, arrest/conviction record, disability, genetic predisposition or carrier status, sexual orientation, or any other protected class or status. Likewise, the Church prohibits vendors, suppliers, visitors, parishioners, and any other non-staff member from discriminating against staff members based on these protected groups. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment including, but not limited to, recruiting, hiring, placement, termination, layoff, leave of absence, compensation, benefits, training, and social and recreational programs.

**New York State Labor Regulations** - In compliance with NYS labor regulations, The Church will not discriminate or retaliate against an employee who requests or takes time off to donate blood or vote, displays an American flag on the employee's person or work area, or expresses milk during the workday.

**New York State Human Rights and Labor Regulations** - In compliance with New York State human rights and labor regulations, the Church will not discriminate or retaliate against an employee or intern for opposing prohibited practices or for filing a complaint, testifying or assisting in a proceeding brought under the New York State Human Rights Law, including, any of the following:

- Requesting or taking lactation breaks;
- Donating blood;
- Requesting or taking time off from work to vote;
- Displaying an American flag on the employee's person or in the employee's work area;
- Engaging in lawful, leisure-time recreational activities outside of working hours for recreational purposes (e.g., sports, games, hobbies);
- Being a member in a union;
- Participating in political activities outside of working hours;
- Legally using consumable products during non-working hours unless it violates the Church's substance free workplace policy; or
- Being a victim of a crime *and* requesting time off from work to appear in court as a witness, to consult with a district attorney, or to obtain an order of protection.

**Diversity and Fair Treatment** - The Church recognizes the rich diversity of its staff members and the varying cultures, backgrounds, and experiences they each bring to the workplace. The Church is committed to maintaining and promoting a work environment where staff members' similarities and differences are respected and valued. The Church however may take into consideration the staff member's call to the common mission of the Church. A staff member is expected to treat coworkers, parishioners, vendors, suppliers, and other non-staff members with fairness, dignity, and respect. The Church prohibits a staff member from engaging in any form of discrimination, harassment, or other offensive behavior targeted towards an individual based on any of the protected groups listed above.

**Reasonable Accommodation** – The Church does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the employment position held or desired. The Church will provide a reasonable accommodation to an employee or applicant with a disability, unless it imposes an undue hardship on the Church. An employee who believes an accommodation is needed to perform the essential functions of the employee's job should contact the Executive. If the need for accommodation is not obvious, the Church may require medical documentation verifying the existence of a disability and the reason(s) why the requested accommodation is needed. When more than one accommodation would benefit an employee, the Church reserves the right to choose the accommodation that is less costly or that is easier to provide.

**Complaint Procedure** - A staff member who believes that the actions or words of a staff member or non-staff member have violated this policy is required to report the behavior to the Executive immediately. Refer to Policy 505 Complaint Procedure and Investigations for information regarding how to file a complaint.

**Policy Violations** - Any staff member who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any vendor, supplier, visitor, parishioner, or other non-staff member who violates this policy will be subject to remedial action, as determined by management.

## **502 Anti-Harassment and Sexual Harassment**

**Policy Statement** - The Church is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which all persons who participate in Church programs and activities can work together in an atmosphere free from any form of harassment, including sexual harassment. The Church takes all necessary measures to prevent sexual harassment or, in the event it

occurs, to stop the conduct immediately. The congregation uses the diocesan process to deal with questions relating to sexual harassment.

**Sexual Harassment Definition** - The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) defines sexual harassment as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature to an individual of the same or opposite gender when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; or
- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions (e.g., promotion, termination, pay increase) affecting that individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

**Prohibited Behavior** - Unprofessional, inappropriate, or offensive conduct committed by a supervisor, coworker, vendor, supplier, visitor, parishioner, or any other non-staff member is prohibited, even if the conduct is welcome by the recipient(s). Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Insulting, lewd, or sexually oriented comments, jokes, slurs, innuendoes, or stories. This includes verbal harassment as well as written, recorded, and electronically transmitted material;
- Demeaning, insulting, or sexually suggestive comments used to describe an individual or the individual's appearance or body;
- Leering, ogling, obscene gestures or sounds, or whistling;
- Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, propositions, or demands for sexual favors;
- Unwelcome physical contact, including touching, groping, grabbing, hugging, massaging, fondling, petting, pinching, or intentionally rubbing up against a person's body;
- Viewing, displaying, storing, or transmitting sexually oriented or pornographic materials; and
- A supervisor threatening or implying that a subordinate's acceptance or refusal of the supervisor's sexual advances will affect the subordinate's terms or conditions of employment (e.g., promotion, demotion, pay increase, termination).

**Supervisory Responsibility** - A supervisor is responsible for providing a work environment that is free from unsolicited, unwelcome, and intimidating behavior, including behavior of a sexual nature. A supervisor is required to take immediate and appropriate corrective action in the event the supervisor is a witness to, or becomes aware of, any violations of this policy. The supervisor is also responsible for immediately notifying the Executive of any policy violations.

**Complaint Procedure** – An employee or intern who believes that he or she is the victim of harassment is required to report this behavior to the diocesan designee immediately. Refer to the diocesan web site for information regarding how to file a complaint and the investigation procedures.

**Policy Violations** – An employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any vendor, supplier, visitor, parishioner, member of the clergy or other non-staff member who violates this policy will be subject to remedial action, as determined by the diocesan policy. There will be no retaliation of any employee or intern that reports or participates in an investigation of such violations.

### **503 Continuation of Insurance Benefits (COBRA)**

**Policy Statement** - The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, commonly referred to as COBRA, and New York State insurance regulation give employees and covered dependents the opportunity to continue their group health coverage at group rates after coverage would normally be lost due to any of the following qualifying events:

- Employee's separation from employment for reasons other than gross misconduct;
- Employee's reduction in work hours;
- Employee's legal separation or divorce;
- Employee's entitlement to Medicare;
- A dependent's loss of dependent child status under the plan; or
- Death of the employee.

**Eligibility** - An individual is considered a "qualified beneficiary" who is eligible for COBRA continuation coverage if the individual is covered under a group health plan on the day before a qualifying event as either a covered staff member, the spouse of a covered staff member, or a dependent child of a covered staff member. A child who is born to, or placed for adoption with, the covered staff member during a period of COBRA coverage is also a qualified beneficiary.

**Cost** - A qualified beneficiary who elects COBRA is responsible for the entire cost of the insurance premiums. The Church may also charge a 2% administrative fee.

**Marketplace Options** – Instead of enrolling in COBRA continuation coverage, other health coverage alternatives may be available to you through the Health Insurance Marketplace where you may be able to get coverage that costs less than COBRA continuation coverage. For more information about health insurance options available through a Health Insurance Marketplace, visit [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov) or call 1-800-318-2596.

**Maximum Continuation Period for Group Medical Insurance** - Each qualified beneficiary has the option of electing medical insurance continuation coverage for up to 36 months, regardless of the qualifying event.

**Maximum Continuation Period for Group Dental Insurance** - Each qualified beneficiary has the option of electing dental insurance continuation coverage for up to 18 or 36 months, depending on the specific qualifying event.

**Additional Information** - Qualified beneficiaries receive detailed information about their right to COBRA continuation coverage at the time they enroll in the group health plan and at the time of a qualifying event.

**Change in Status** - A covered staff member or qualified beneficiary must provide written notice/submit a completed *Notice of Qualifying Event Form* to the Plan Administrator when there is a legal separation, divorce, loss of dependent status, or social security disability determination. The Plan Administrator must also be notified if a second qualifying event



occurs which could extend the continuation coverage. Notification must generally be provided no later than 60 days from either the date of the qualifying event or the date the qualified beneficiary would lose coverage due to such event. The Church is not responsible for errors in coverage that result due to a staff member's failure to provide timely notification to the Church of such an event.

**Questions** - A staff member may obtain further information regarding COBRA in the plan's Summary Plan Description (SPD) or by contacting the Plan Administrator.

#### **504 *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)***

**Policy Statement** - The Church complies with all regulations pertaining to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), both in its role as an employer and as a plan sponsor. It is the policy of c/n to ensure, to the extent possible, that PHI is not intentionally or unintentionally used or disclosed in a manner that would violate the HIPAA Privacy Rule or any other federal or state regulation governing confidentiality and privacy of health information. All documents containing PHI will be stored appropriately to reduce the potential for incidental use or disclosure. Documents will not be accessible to any unauthorized staff. The Church provides benefits to eligible staff members through a fully-insured health insurance plan. The Church does not receive Protected Health Information (PHI) about participants in the plan.

**Plan Sponsor Responsibilities** - As a plan sponsor, the Church ensures that the insurance carriers and third party administrators it contracts with are in compliance with the HIPAA regulations.

**Medical Certificate** - A written certificate indicating prior health insurance coverage is provided to a participant in the Church's health insurance plan at the time health coverage is lost, when a COBRA notice is sent, and at any time a request is received within 24 months of losing coverage.

**Retaliation** - The Church will not retaliate against any staff member for exercising the staff member's rights under the HIPAA regulations.

**Confidential Communications** - A staff member may request that all medical-related communications with the Church be handled in a certain way or at a certain location by notifying the Office Manager. All reasonable requests will be accommodated.

#### **505 *Complaint Procedure and Investigations***

**Policy Statement** - The Church takes all complaints of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, unfair treatment, and retaliation seriously. A comprehensive complaint procedure has been developed to address any complaints received from staff members and non-staff members.

**Reporting Policy Violations** – An employee or intern who believes that the actions or words of a supervisor, coworker, vendor, supplier, visitor, parishioner, member of the clergy or any other non-staff member has violated the Church's Equal Employment Opportunity, Sexual Harassment, Americans with Disabilities Act, and/or Diversity and Fair Treatment policy is required to report the behavior to the Executive for referral to a case manager.

**Investigation of Complaint** - All complaints received are investigated promptly, thoroughly, and in as impartial a manner as possible. An investigation generally involves talking with the parties involved as well as any witnesses. All staff members are required to

cooperate in an investigation.

**Confidentiality** - A staff member's confidentiality will be protected to the greatest extent possible, consistent with conducting a full investigation. However, the Church cannot guarantee complete confidentiality.

**Retaliation by the Church** – The Church will not retaliate, intimidate, threaten, discriminate, or otherwise take any adverse employment action against an employee or intern who files a complaint, testifies, or assists in any complaint made under this policy or with a court or government agency. In addition, the Church will not retaliate against an employee or intern for opposing any practices that are prohibited under any federal or state employment regulation.

**Retaliation by Employees** - The Church prohibits an employee from intimidating, threatening, or retaliating against a coworker or non-employee for filing a complaint and/or participating in an investigation.

**Policy Violations** - Any staff member who violates the Church's Equal Employment Opportunity, Sexual Harassment, ADA, or Diversity and Fair Treatment policy or who retaliates against a coworker or non-staff member will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**Remedial Action** - Any vendor, supplier, visitor, parishioner, or other non-staff member who violates this policy will be subject to remedial action, as determined by the Executive.

## 600 OPERATIONAL POLICIES

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### 601 *Hours of Operation*

**Regular Hours** - Regular hours of operation for the Church office are Monday thru Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

**Department Hours** - The regular workdays and hours of each department may vary from the Church's normal business hours, depending upon the particular needs and requirements of that department.

**Summer Hours** - Summer hours are Monday thru Thursday 8:30am to 4:30pm and closed on Friday. Memorial Day thru Labor Day. Subject to change by Bishop.

### 602 *Meal Periods*

**Observance of Meal Periods** - In accordance with New York State regulations, a staff member who works more than six hours in a given day is required to take a thirty-minute meal period and two fifteen minute break periods. A staff member is not allowed to work through the meal period to make up lost work time or to leave work early. In addition, the meal period may not be taken at the end of a staff member's workday in order to leave work before the normal quitting time. Meal periods are not paid time.

**Lactation Breaks** - A nursing female staff member will be granted time off for lactation purposes during the workday for up to three years after the birth of a child. The Church will make a reasonable effort to provide the staff member with a private room or other location in close proximity to the work area. A staff member must use her authorized meal period, whenever possible. The Church will allow a staff member to extend her authorized meal period or will grant an additional break period, if needed to express milk. Any break period of less than 30 minutes will be paid.

**Extension of Meal Periods** - Staff members should be punctual in starting and ending all meal and break periods. A staff member may not extend a meal or break period beyond the time allowed unless prior approval is obtained from the staff member's supervisor.

**Changes in Meal Periods** - The Church reserves the right to change the length and time period of established meal due to operational needs.

## 603 *Emergency Closings*

**Policy Statement** - It is the policy of the Church to remain open during all normally scheduled work hours. However, there may be times when inclement weather, power failure, or another similar emergency requires the Church to open late, close early, or shut down for an entire workday.

**Notification** – The Church office follows the local school system’s closing for inclement weather: if the local schools are closed due to inclement weather, then the Church office will be closed for that day.

**Inclement Weather** - During periods of inclement weather, staff members should use their own discretion in determining if they can safely commute to work. When the Church has not officially shut down operations, a staff member who does not report to work or requests to arrive at work late or leave work early must obtain prior authorization from the staff member’s supervisor in accordance with the Church’s notification policy (See Section 700 Attendance). Credited, unused vacation or personal leave must be taken, if available. Otherwise, the time off is without pay for non-exempt staff members. If an exempt staff member has no paid leave benefits available, the staff member will only be docked if a full workday is taken.

**Compensation for Exempt Staff members** - Exempt staff members receive their regular salaries when the Church officially opens late, shuts down early, or closes for any partial workweeks due to an emergency closing. Exempt staff members are not paid if the Church is closed for an entire workweek or longer.

**Compensation for Non-Exempt Staff members** - When the Church officially opens late, closes early, or closes for an entire workday due to an emergency closing, non-exempt staff members are paid for the hours they would have normally worked on that workday.

**Compensation for Staff members On Scheduled Leave** - A staff member who is out of work on sick, vacation, or personal leave during an emergency closing will be charged such leave as scheduled.

## 604 *Time Records*

**Policy Statement** - Federal and state employment regulations require the Church to maintain accurate records of staff member work hours. Accurate time records allow the Church to calculate each staff member’s compensation for time worked and authorized paid leave taken in a given workweek. Time worked is all time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties.

## 605 **Business Expenses**

**Policy Statement** - The Church reimburses staff members for pre-authorized business expenses that are incurred in the performance of their jobs. These expenses include, but are not limited to, mileage, highway tolls, parking fees, airfare, meals, lodging, and training and membership fees. A staff member is expected to limit all business expenses to reasonable amounts.

**Seminars, Training, and Conferences** - A staff member may submit a written request to the Executive to attend a work-related seminar, training, or conference. In addition, mandatory seminars, training, and certification programs may be required on an individual or group basis to improve job performance or to prepare a staff member for increased responsibilities. All registration and course fees as well as business travel expenses are reimbursed for authorized attendance.

**Professional and Trade Association Membership** - The Church will consider paying for the cost of a staff member's membership in a professional or trade association that promotes the Church's goals and is directly related to the staff member's job.

**Procedures for Reimbursement** - A completed and signed *Expense Reimbursement Form* must be submitted to the Finance Department on a monthly basis for all business expenses incurred during the previous month. All required documentation and receipts must be submitted in order for the business expense to be processed.

**Falsification of Expenses** - Falsification of and/or any attempt to falsify business expenses may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## 700 ABSENCE FROM WORK POLICIES

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**Policy Statement** - In order to maintain a productive work environment, staff members are expected to work all scheduled work hours and to keep unscheduled absences to a minimum. Poor attendance, tardiness, and early departures place a burden on the Church, other staff members, parishioners and members of the clergy

### 701 *Tardiness*

**Notification of Tardiness** - A staff member is expected to be at their assigned work area ready to begin work at the time the staff member's workday begins. A staff member who is going to be late arriving at work must personally notify the office before the staff member's scheduled starting time. If no one answers the Church office telephone, then a message should be left in the general office mailbox. The reason for tardiness and the expected time of arrival must be indicated.

**Unexcused Tardiness** - Notification of tardiness to a staff member's supervisor does not automatically mean the time off is authorized. Any time off from work that is without supervisory approval is considered unexcused. A non-exempt staff member who arrives at work late or leaves work early is not paid for the time not worked.

**Policy Violations** - Unexcused tardiness and other violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. In addition, any staff member who has a record of tardiness or who develops a pattern of tardiness, even if excused, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### 702 *Attendance*

**Unscheduled Absences** - A staff member who is unable to report to work due to illness, a family emergency, or other unscheduled reason must personally contact the office before the staff member's scheduled starting time. If no one answers the office telephone, then a message should be left in the general mailbox indicating the reason for your absence. Asking a relative, friend, or another person to call in on the staff member's behalf is not permitted. Notification requirements may be waived in cases of emergency.

**Unexcused Absences** - Notification of an absence to a staff member's supervisor does not automatically mean the absence is authorized. Any time off from work that is without supervisory approval is considered an unexcused absence. An unexcused absence is without pay for non-exempt staff members.

**Daily Notification** - If a staff member is unable to report to work for more than one workday, the staff member must personally notify the staff member's supervisor each day of the absence, unless the absence was pre-authorized.

**Failure to Call in or Report to Work** - A staff member who does not report for work or notify the office of the staff member's absence for two consecutive workdays will be considered job abandonment.

**Documentation of Absences** - A staff member who has frequent absences may be required to provide documentation of the reason for any future absences.

**Time Off Without Pay** - A staff member must use all credited, unused vacation, and/or personal leave before requesting time off without pay. Sick leave must also be used for any time off due to illness of the staff member or a member of the staff member's immediate family. If an exempt staff member has no paid leave benefits available, the staff member's pay is docked only if a full workday is taken. Exempt staff members are generally not docked for partial day absences. At the Executive's discretion, requests for unpaid time off may be denied.

**Policy Violations** - Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. This includes falsification of the reason for absence, unexcused absence(s), a record of excessive absences or early departures, or a pattern of absenteeism, even if excused.

### **703 *Jury and Witness Duty***

**Policy Statement** - Staff members are encouraged to fulfill their civic responsibilities and are granted time off to serve on jury duty or to appear as a witness in a criminal proceeding in accordance with federal and state regulations.

**Notification Requirements** - When a staff member receives notice to report for jury duty or a subpoena to testify as a witness, a copy of the notice/subpoena should immediately be submitted to the staff member's supervisor.

**Compensation for Exempt Staff members** - An exempt staff member is paid the staff member's regular salary for the first ten (10) days of jury duty, provided the staff member is scheduled to work for the Church on those days. Thereafter, in accordance with federal regulations, an exempt staff member who serves as a juror or witness is paid the staff member's regular salary for working any partial workweeks but is not paid for any workweeks in which no work is performed for the Church.

**Compensation for Non-Exempt Staff members** - A non-exempt staff member who is required to report for jury duty on a regularly scheduled workday is paid for the staff member's normally scheduled work hours at the staff member's base rate of pay, up to a maximum of ten days. Thereafter, a non-exempt staff member is no longer paid by the Church but is entitled to any stipend paid by the court. Time off for witness duty is without pay.

**Verification of Service** - A staff member must provide written verification from the court noting the date(s) and time(s) served as a juror or witness in order to receive payment from the Church.

**Return to Work** - A staff member who is excused from court for the entire day must report to work for the staff member's scheduled work hours. If a staff member is released early from jury or witness duty on a given day, the staff member must report to work.

**Accrual of Benefits** - The Church will continue to provide health, dental, and life insurance benefits for an eligible staff member during time spent as a juror or witness. All staff member contributions, if any, must be paid on a timely basis in order to maintain the continuous coverage of benefits. Vacation, sick, and personal leave and holiday benefits also continue to accrue.

**Rescheduling of Jury Duty** - The Church reserves the right to request that a staff member seek to have the jury duty rescheduled.

## 704 **Military and Reserve Leaves**

**Policy Statement** - The Church recognizes the importance of military service and complies with all federal and state regulations relating to military leaves of absence, encampment, and temporary military duty. The Church shall grant a staff member time off for active duty in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, Public Health Service commissioned corps, the military reserves, Army National Guard, and Air National Guard.

In accordance with New York State regulation, a leave of absence will also be granted to a staff member whose spouse is on leave from the military under specified circumstances as described below.

**Notification** - A staff member is required to give advance notice to the staff member's supervisor of the dates of military service unless unable to do so because of military necessity or if it is otherwise impossible or unreasonable to do so. A staff member is asked to give as much notice as possible. A staff member requesting a leave of absence due to a spouse being on military leave should request leave in accordance with the Church's leave of absence policy (See Leaves of Absence Policy below).

**Benefits during Leave** - During a military leave, a staff member retains and accrues any Church-sponsored benefits that are tied to seniority. This means there is no break in service for pension purposes. The staff member is also allowed to participate in the health insurance plan and other Church-sponsored benefits that are not determined by seniority to the same extent as a staff member who is granted a FMLA or leave of absence (See Section 700 Family and Medical Leave Act and Leaves of Absence Policies), so long as the staff member meets the eligibility requirements of each benefit plan.

**Return from Leave** - If a staff member's cumulative military leave with the Church does not exceed five years, the staff member retains certain rights relating to reinstatement, seniority, status, length of service promotions, and compensation upon return from military duty, as long as the staff member is not separated with a dishonorable or bad conduct discharge. Certain types of uniformed service do not count against a staff member's five-year maximum, including service during war or call-ups during national emergencies, reserve drills, and annually scheduled active duty for training.

**Temporary Military Duty** - The Church will attempt to rearrange a staff member's work schedule, if possible, when the staff member needs to attend a weekend drill or encampment.

**Compensation for Exempt Staff members** - In accordance with federal regulations, an exempt staff member who is on military leave or reserve leave for any partial workweeks is paid the staff member's regular salary for those workweeks. Any military pay received is deducted from the staff member's salary. An exempt staff member is not paid for any workweeks in which no work is performed for the Church. A staff member may request to use credited, unused vacation or personal leave during the leave.

**Compensation for Non-Exempt Staff members** - Military leave and reserve leave is without pay for a non-exempt staff member. A staff member may request to use credited, unused vacation or personal leave during the leave.



**Leaves of Absence for Military Spouses** – If a staff member’s spouse is a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, National Guard, or reserves, The Church will comply with New York State regulation by granting the staff member an unpaid leave of absence of up to ten days if: 1) the spouse has been deployed during a period of military conflict to a combat theater or combat zone of operations; *and* 2) the spouse is on a leave from the military. To be eligible for such leave, a staff member must work an average of 20 hours or more per week. A staff member may use accumulated vacation or personal leave during the leave; otherwise, the leave is without pay.

**Family and Medical Leave** - A staff member may be eligible for time off in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) due to a covered family member’s active or impending military duty or if a covered family member suffers a serious injury or illness while on active duty (See Policy 706 Family and Medical Leave for additional information).

## **705 Military Spousal Leave**

**Policy Statement** - In accordance with New York State regulation, the Church will grant an unpaid leave of absence of up to ten days to an employee whose spouse is on leave from the military under specified circumstances as described below.

**Basic Leave Entitlements** - An eligible employee may take an unpaid military spouse leave if the following conditions are met:

- The employee’s spouse is a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, National Guard, or reserves;
- The spouse has been deployed during a period of military conflict to a combat theater or combat zone of operations; *and*
- The spouse is on a leave from the military.

**Eligibility** - An employee must work an average of 20 hours or more per week to be eligible for a military spousal leave. There is no minimum length of service requirement.

**Definition of Spouse** – For the purpose of this policy, a spouse includes a married spouse of the same or opposite sex.

**Notification Requirements** - If possible, an employee should give at least 30 calendar days notice to the staff members supervisor prior to the requested start date of the leave. When a leave is unforeseen, an employee must give notice as soon as the need for leave is known. A *Leave of Absence Request Form* must also be jointly completed by the Church and the employee. Permission or denial of the leave is normally communicated to the employee in writing within one week of the Church receiving the request.

**Benefits during Leave** - For the purpose of this policy, the following applies to the employee’s benefits during a spousal military leave:

- **Use of Paid Leave** - Credited, unused vacation leave may be used at the start of the leave. The use of paid leave benefits does not extend the leave of absence.
- **Insurance Benefits** - An employee’s insurance benefits will continue at the same level

during the leave of absence. The employee is responsible for his or her normal contributions toward insurance benefits.

## **706 Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

**Policy Statement** - The Church complies with the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). FMLA entitles an eligible staff member to a maximum of 12 workweeks (defined by the staff member's normal workweek) of job-protected, unpaid leave in any 12-month period for certain family and medical reasons. When the time off is to care for a covered family member's serious injury or illness suffered in the line of active military duty, a staff member is eligible for a maximum of 26 workweeks of FMLA in a single 12-month period.

**Eligibility** - To be eligible for an unpaid leave under the FMLA, a staff member must meet the following requirements:

- Completion of at least 12 months of service with the Church before the leave begins (these 12 months need not be worked consecutively);
- Worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12 months prior to the date the leave begins; and
- Work at, or report to, a work site which has 50 or more staff members or is within 75 miles of work sites that taken together have a total of 50 or more staff members.

Spouses who both work for the Church are allowed a combined maximum of 12 workweeks of FMLA leave during any 12-month period for the birth or care of a newborn child, adoption or foster care of a child and to care for such newly placed child, or the serious health condition of a parent. A combined total of 26 weeks of leave is available to care for a covered family member's serious injury or illness suffered in the line of active military duty.

**Basic FMLA Entitlements** - An eligible staff member shall receive an unpaid FMLA leave under the following circumstances:

- Inability of the staff member to perform one or more of the essential functions of the staff member's job due to the staff member's own serious health condition;
- The birth of the staff member's child and to care for the newborn child;
- The placement of a child with the staff member for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child; or
- To provide care for the employee's spouse (includes same-sex spouse), child (includes son or daughter of the same-sex spouse), or parent who has a serious health condition; or
- A qualifying exigency (as defined by the Secretary of Labor) arising out of the staff member's spouse, child, or parent's active military duty or impending call or order to active duty in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation; and
- A serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

**Serious Health Condition** - The FMLA defines a serious health condition as an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care in a medical

care facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Continuing treatment by a health care provider includes:

- A period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider;
- One visit to a health care provider and a regimen of continuing treatment;
- Incapacity due to pregnancy or prenatal care; or
- Incapacity due to a chronic health condition.

Other conditions may also meet the definition of continuing treatment.

**Amount of Leave Available** - An eligible employee will be granted up to a maximum of 12 workweeks of leave in any 12-month period for qualified family and medical reasons. A maximum of 26 workweeks of leave in any 12-month period is available to care for a covered family member's serious injury or illness suffered in the line of active military duty.

**Twelve-Month Period** - The 12-month period is a rolling period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave. Each time FMLA leave is taken, the Church will compute the amount of FMLA leave that has been used in the last 12 months and subtract it from the 12 (or 26) weeks of available leave. The balance remaining is the maximum amount of FMLA leave still available.

### **Military Family Leave**

**Qualifying Exigency Leave** - Eligible employees whose spouse (includes same-sex spouse), son, daughter or parent is on covered active duty or call to covered active duty status may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies are non-medical, non-routine activities. Examples of qualifying exigencies may include short-notice deployment (up to seven days), military events and related activities, childcare and school activities, financial and legal arrangements, non-medical counseling, rest and recuperation (up to fifteen days), and attending post-deployment activities (90-day period). c/n and the employee can agree to consider any other event that may arise out of active duty or a call to active duty status as a qualified exigency.

**Military Caregiver Leave** - Eligible employees may take up to 26 workweeks (eligible airline flight crew employees are entitled to 156 days) of FMLA leave in a "single 12-month period" to care for a "covered service member" with a "serious injury or illness" if the employee is the covered service member's spouse (includes same-sex spouse), parent, son, daughter, or next of kin.

A covered service member is:

- (1) a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness\*;or
- (2) a veteran who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered veteran, and who is undergoing medical treatment,

recuperation, or therapy for a serious injury or illness.\*

\* **Serious Injury or Illness for a Current Service member** - FMLA defines a serious injury or illness for a current service member as:

- (i) an injury or illness incurred by a covered service member in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces that may render the service member medically unfit to perform the duties of his or her office, grade, rank, or rating; or
- (ii) An injury or illness that existed before the beginning of the service member's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces.

**Serious Injury or Illness for a Covered Veteran** - A serious injury or illness for a covered veteran means an injury or illness incurred that was incurred or aggravated by the member in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces and manifested itself before or after the service member became a veteran, and is:

- (i) a continuation of a serious injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated when the covered veteran was a member of the Armed Forces and rendered the service member unable to perform the duties of the service member's office, grade, rank, or rating; or
- (ii) a physical or mental condition for which the covered veteran has received a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Service Related Disability Rating (VASRD) of 50 percent or greater, and such VASRD rating is based, in whole or in part, on the condition precipitating the need for military caregiver leave; or
- (iii) a physical or mental condition that substantially impairs the covered veteran's ability to secure or follow a substantially gainful occupation by reason of a disability or disabilities related to military service, or would do so absent treatment; or
- (iv) an injury, including a psychological injury, on the basis of which the covered veteran has been enrolled in the Department of Veterans' Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

**Notification Requirements** - If the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable, a staff member must give written notice to the Executive at least 30-calendar days prior to the requested start date of the leave. A *FMLA Request Form* must also be jointly completed by the Church and the staff member. Permission or denial of the FMLA leave is normally communicated to the staff member in writing within two business days of receipt of the leave request. Failure to give 30-days notice of a foreseeable leave with no reasonable excuse may result in the FMLA leave being delayed until 30 days from the date of notice. When the necessity for leave is foreseeable because the family member is either on active military duty, has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty, or has suffered a serious injury or illness in the line of military duty, the staff member must provide reasonable and practicable notice.

**Medical Certification** - A staff member must provide medical certification issued by a health care provider that supports the need for a leave under this policy. When required, the staff member must provide the certification before the FMLA leave begins, or if the FMLA leave was unforeseeable, 15-calendar days from the date the Church requests the certification. Failure to submit medical certification may jeopardize the staff member's eligibility for FMLA leave and/or the ability to return to work. The medical certification must include:

- The date the medical condition began;
- The probable duration of the medical condition;
- Pertinent medical facts; and
- An assertion that the staff member is unable to perform the staff member's essential job functions or that the staff member is needed to care for a family member for a specified period of time.

The Church reserves the right to request a second opinion by another health care provider at the Church's expense. In the event a conflict occurs between the first and second opinion, the Church may, again at its own expense, obtain a third opinion from a health care provider approved jointly by the Church and the staff member. This third opinion shall be final and binding.

**Certification for Adoption or Foster Care** - A staff member must produce proper certification from the appropriate agency for an unpaid FMLA leave due to the adoption or foster care of a child.

**Certification for Active or Impending Duty** - A staff member must provide documentation of a family member's active military service or impending call or order to active military duty when requesting FMLA leave due to a covered family member's military service. Documentation can include a copy of the military orders or other official military communication.

**Certification for a Service Member's Serious Injury or Illness** - A staff member must produce documentation (as may be prescribed by the Secretary of Labor) of a family member's injury, recovery, or need for care when FMLA leave is due to the family member's serious injury or illness suffered in the line of active military duty. Documentation can include, but is not limited to, a copy of the military medical information, orders for treatment, or other official military communication regarding the service member's injury or illness that renders him or her medically unfit to perform military duties.

**Twelve-Month Period** - The 12-month period is a rolling period measured backward from the date a staff member uses any FMLA leave. Each time FMLA leave is taken, The Church will compute the amount of FMLA leave the staff member has used in the last 12 months and subtract it from the 12 weeks of available leave (26 weeks for the care of an injured or ill service member). The balance remaining is the maximum amount of FMLA leave still available to the staff member.

**Intermittent and Reduced Leave Schedules** - A staff member may take all 12 weeks of FMLA leave consecutively. If the FMLA leave is related to the serious health condition of the staff member or the staff member's immediate family member, leave may be scheduled on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis when medically necessary.

**Status Reports** - If a staff member's request for leave does not indicate a specific return to work date or if a staff member requests a leave extension, the staff member must update the Executive or the Executive's designee as to the staff member's medical status and intent to return to work every two weeks.

**Benefits during a Leave of Absence** - For the purpose of this policy, the following applies to staff member benefits during a FMLA leave:

- **Use of Paid Leave** – Credited, unused vacation and

personal leave must be used at the start of a FMLA leave. For leaves taken due to the birth of a child (female staff members only), a staff member's own serious health condition, or to care for the staff member's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition, the staff member must also use any credited, unused sick leave. The use of paid leave benefits does not extend the 12-week period. The use of paid leave benefits does not apply to staff members who are on FMLA leave and workers' compensation/disability concurrently (see below).

- **Accrual of Paid Leave Benefits** - A staff member continues to accrue vacation, personal, and sick leave and receive holiday pay during any portion of a FMLA leave that is paid. For the purpose of this policy, paid leave is defined as leave during which the staff member is using credited, unused vacation, personal, and/or sick leave. After all such paid leave is exhausted, the remaining portion of the FMLA leave is unpaid. A staff member does not accrue vacation, personal, or sick leave or receive holiday pay during any portion of a FMLA leave that is unpaid.
- **Insurance Benefits** - A staff member's eligibility for health, dental, and life insurance benefits continues during a FMLA leave. Both the Church's and the staff member's contribution towards the premium payments remains the same throughout the leave. All staff member contributions, if any, must be paid on a timely basis in order to maintain the continuous coverage of benefits. Coverage shall cease for the duration of the leave if premium payments are not made within a 30-calendar day grace period of the due date. Premium payments and policy coverage are subject to change. If a staff member does not return to work after an authorized FMLA leave has expired, the Church may recover the insurance premiums it paid during such leave under certain circumstances.

**Workers' Compensation and Disability** - Leaves taken under workers' compensation and disability may invoke the FMLA if a staff member meets the eligibility criteria outlined above and the Church appropriately designates the leave as FMLA. In accordance with the FMLA regulations, a staff member who is on workers' compensation/disability and FMLA leave concurrently cannot use vacation, personal, or sick leave to supplement the staff member's workers' compensation/disability insurance benefits.

**Employment Restrictions during Leave of Absence** - While on FMLA leave, a staff member may not work for another employer during the same work hours that the staff member is normally scheduled to work for the Church.

**Early Return or Extension of Leave** - A staff member who intends to return to work earlier than anticipated must notify the Executive or a designee of the Executive at least two business days prior to the date the staff member is able to return. If a staff member needs to extend the FMLA leave beyond the time originally requested, the Executive or a designee of the Executive must be notified at least two business days from the date the change occurred which necessitates the extension.

**Return-to-Work** - At the conclusion of a FMLA leave, the following conditions apply:

- **Return Date** - If the leave request indicates a specific return-to-work date, the staff member should contact the staff member's supervisor at least ten days prior to this date. If the return-to-work date was not known at the time leave was granted, the staff member must immediately notify the Church when a return-to-work date has been

established. Failure to return to work when scheduled may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination due to misconduct;

- **Medical Statement** - If FMLA leave was taken due to a staff member's own serious health condition, a health care provider's statement releasing the staff member to return-to-work with or without work restrictions is required prior to returning to work. A staff member will not be allowed to work until such medical documentation is provided. In the event work restrictions are indicated, the Church reserves the right to evaluate if the restrictions can be reasonably accommodated (See Section 500 Equal Employment Opportunity/Americans with Disabilities Act); and
- **Job Restoration** - A staff member shall be restored to the position the staff member held when the leave began or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment, provided the staff member returns to work within the time period allowed under the FMLA regulations.

### **707 Sabbatical**

**Policy Statement** – Clergy may be eligible to take a sabbatical according to their letter of agreement. The letter of agreement will outline all relevant information pertaining to the sabbatical.

### **708 Time Off to Donate Blood**

**Policy Statement** - In accordance with New York State regulation, a staff member who works an average of 20 or more hours per week will be granted up to three hours off in any 12-month period to donate blood. The time off will be without pay unless the staff member uses accumulated vacation or personal leave.

**Time Off Requests** - A staff member must request time off to donate blood in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Church's attendance policy (See Policy 702 Attendance).

## 800 COMPENSATION

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### 801 *Payroll Period and Payday*

**Payroll Period** - The payroll period is semi-monthly

**Payday** - Staff members are paid on 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. *If a payday falls on a designated holiday, paychecks are normally distributed on the preceding workday.*

**Direct Deposit** - A staff member may elect to have all or part of the staff member's paycheck deposited directly into a checking and/or savings account at the staff member's designated financial institution each payday. A staff member must submit a signed, written authorization to the Church to initiate or change direct deposit.

**Authorized Check Release** - A staff member's supervisor shall not release a paycheck to anyone other than the staff member unless the staff member has provided a signed, written authorization to the Church.

### 802 *Payroll Deductions*

**Statutory and Voluntary Deductions** - In compliance with government regulations, the Church deducts the required portion of a staff member's wages for federal, state, and social security taxes. A staff member may voluntarily authorize payroll deductions for items such as insurance benefits and retirement by submitting a written authorization to the Church. All statutory and voluntary payroll deductions are indicated on each staff member's pay stub.

**Improper Payroll Deductions** - The Church prohibits any deductions from a staff member's paycheck that are in violation of federal or state regulations. A staff member who believes that an improper deduction has been made from the staff member's paycheck should contact the Comptroller. If it is determined that an improper deduction was made, the staff member will be reimbursed the applicable amount as soon as possible.

**Garnishments** - If the Church is required to deduct any garnishments from a staff member's wages, the staff member is notified as soon as possible.

**Questions** - Questions concerning paycheck deductions or how they were calculated should be directed to the Comptroller.



## 900 STAFF MEMBER BENEFITS

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### 901 *Staff Member Benefits Administration*

**Policy Statement** - The Church is pleased to offer staff members a comprehensive benefits package. Eligibility for benefits is dependent upon several factors, including employment classification and length of service.

**Plan Document** - Benefits are administered according to applicable government regulation, insurance carrier master policy, plan document, or Church policy. In the event of a discrepancy between the information presented in this staff member handbook and the applicable plan document, the plan document takes precedent. In addition, the Church has discretionary authority to determine eligibility for benefits and to interpret the terms of each benefit plan.

**Changes in Benefits** - The Church reserves the right to add, modify, or terminate benefits for all current, former, and retired staff members, to change carriers, and/or offer alternative insurance plans at any time. Further, all Church contributions are subject to change.

**Plan Administrator** - The Executive or a designee serves as the Plan Administrator of the Church's benefit plans. The Plan Administrator is responsible for all communications and disclosures concerning Church benefits and is available to answer questions concerning the benefit plans.

**Enrollment Information** - A staff member must complete the appropriate insurance forms and payroll deduction authorizations in order to receive insurance benefits.

**Waiver of Benefits** - A staff member who is eligible to participate in an insurance plan but who declines coverage must sign a waiver declining such coverage.

**Change in Status** - The Church insurance carriers require a staff member to notify the Plan Administrator immediately of any change in the staff member's insurance coverage, such as the addition of a spouse or a new dependent.

For COBRA purposes (See Section 500 Continuation of Benefits), a covered staff member must provide written notice to the Plan Administrator when there is a legal separation, divorce, loss of dependent status, or social security disability determination. The Plan Administrator must also be notified if a second qualifying event occurs which could extend the continuation coverage. Notification must generally be provided no later than 60 days from either the date of the qualifying event or the date the qualified beneficiary would lose coverage due to such event.

The Church is not responsible for errors in coverage that result due to a staff member's failure to provide timely notification to the Church of such an event.

*The following is a brief description of the benefits available to eligible staff members. This description is only an overview. The applicable plan document or government regulation provides a full description of the specific benefit.*

### 902 *Health and Dental Insurance*

**Policy Statement** - The Church offers eligible staff member's comprehensive group health and dental insurance coverage.

**Eligibility** - As determined by letter of agreement, staff members are eligible to participate in the health and dental insurance plans on the first day of the month following the completion of 30 days of continuous employment, provided all eligibility requirements of the plan are met. Eligible staff members may also enroll in the health and dental insurance plans during the annual open enrollment period or at the time of a qualified change in employment or family status, as defined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the insurance carrier. Per Diem staff members are not eligible for health or dental insurance coverage, but have the option of purchasing health insurance available through the Health Insurance Marketplace at their own expense. For more information about health insurance options available through a Health Insurance Marketplace, visit [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov).

**Premium Payment** - The Church pays such portion of the premium for individual and family health and dental insurance coverage, of the Church plan, for eligible staff members as has been determined in a letter of agreement or by the church's Governing Board.

**Pre-Tax Insurance Premiums** - A staff member may elect to pay the staff member's contribution towards the health and dental insurance premiums with pre-tax dollars, which means deductions are taken from the staff member's paycheck before federal, state, and social security taxes are calculated. This reduces the staff member's taxable income and increases net wages.

**Continuation of Coverage** - In the event a covered staff member, spouse, and/or dependents lose their health insurance coverage, they may be eligible to continue such coverage at their own expense under certain qualifying conditions (See Section 500 Continuation of Benefits).

### **903**    *Life Insurance*

**Eligibility** - The Church offers group term life insurance coverage by letter of agreement, to staff members, following the completion of 30 days of continuous employment provided all eligibility requirements of the insurance plan are met. Per Diem staff members are not eligible to participate in the life insurance plan.

**Coverage** – Staff members will be notified of the amount of the life insurance coverage in their letter of agreement.

**Premium Payment** - The Church pays such portion of the premium for eligible staff members as has been determined in a letter of agreement or by the church's Governing Board.

**904    *The Episcopal Church Pension Plan/Tax Sheltered Annuity***

**Policy Statement** – Staff members are eligible to participate in retirement plans, as determined by letter of agreement. Clergy and lay staff members are eligible to participate in the Episcopal Church Pension Plan. Lay staff members are also eligible to participate in a tax-sheltered annuity, at their own expense.

**Eligibility for Episcopal Church Pension Plan** - By letter of agreement, lay staff members who are twenty-one years of age or older and who work at least 1000 hours per year are eligible to participate in the plan upon completion of one year of service. Members of the clergy are required to participate and are eligible to participate upon hire. Per Diem staff members are not eligible to participate in the plan.

**Eligibility for Tax Sheltered Annuity** – Full-time and part-time lay staff members are eligible to participate in the tax sheltered annuity upon completion of one year of continuous service. Staff members pay for 100% of this contribution.

**Contributions** – A staff member may elect to contribute a percentage or specified dollar amount of the staff member's eligible compensation, above the Church contribution. A staff member's contributions are made on a pre-tax basis.

Additional information is available through the church pension fund.

**905    *Vacation Leave***

Vacation leave is not required under state and federal regulations.

**Eligibility** - Full-time and part-time staff members are eligible for paid vacation leave for a period of rest and relaxation in recognition for services performed throughout the year. Per Diem staff members are not eligible for paid vacation leave but are allowed unpaid time off with prior supervisory approval.

**Allowance** - Eligible staff members receive paid vacation leave in accord with their letter of agreement or the policy of the Governing Board.

<b>CONTINUED, CONTINUOUS LENGTH OF SERVICE AS OF ANNIVERSARY DATE</b>	<b>VACATION LEAVE CREDITED AS OF ANNIVERSARY DATE</b>
1 year	2 weeks
3 years	3 weeks
5 years	4 weeks
Over 5 years	TBD per contract

**Vacation Leave Pay** - A non-exempt staff member is compensated at the staff member's current base rate of pay for each day of vacation leave taken. An exempt staff member receives the staff member's regular salary for the vacation period.

**Scheduling** - Vacation requests must be submitted in writing to the Executive. Every effort is made to authorize vacations in accordance with staff member requests. Due to Church

needs, the Church may authorize only one member of a department to take vacation leave at any given time.

**Use of Vacation Leave** - Vacation leave may be used in increments of one day.

**Accumulation** - Any unused vacation days may be carried over into the next benefit year. Staff members must use any of the carried over vacation leave within 90 days. If any carried over days remain after the 90 days, they will be forfeited unless approval has been obtained.

**Holiday During Scheduled Vacation** - If a Church-observed holiday falls on a staff member's normal workday and the staff member is on paid vacation, the day is counted as a paid holiday and not a vacation day. No allowance is made for sickness or other paid absence occurring during a scheduled vacation.

**Leave of Absence** - Vacation leave accrues while a staff member is on a paid leave of absence (including paid FMLA leave) but does not accrue while a staff member is on an unpaid leave of absence. For the purpose of this policy, paid leave is defined as leave during which a staff member is using credited vacation, personal, and/or sick leave. A staff member who has taken an unpaid leave of absence during the preceding benefit year is credited with prorated vacation leave on the staff member's anniversary date based on the time worked during the preceding year.

**Separation from Employment** - A staff member is **not** eligible to receive compensation for credited, unused vacation leave upon separation from the Church unless approval is obtained.

## **906 New York Paid Sick Leave**

**Eligibility** - Full-time and part-time staff members are eligible for paid sick leave for personal illness or injury and for doctor and dentist appointments. Sick leave may also be used to provide direct care to a member of the staff's household. Per Diem staff members are not eligible for paid sick leave but are allowed unpaid time off with prior supervisory approval.

**New York Paid Sick Leave Law** – In accordance with NYS paid sick leave regulations, employees are entitled to up to 40 hours of paid sick leave each calendar year. Because our sick leave policy meets or exceeds this requirement, including terms of accrual, carryover, and usage, employees will not be provided with additional sick leave.

This sick leave policy is inclusive of the New York paid sick leave law, which allows employees to use their credited sick leave for the reasons allowed under that law, as described below:

- the need for diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness or preventative care of the employee or the employee's family member; and
- certain needs related to the employee or the employee's family member being the victim of domestic violence, sexual offenses, stalking, or human trafficking, including obtaining services from a domestic violence shelter, rape crisis center, or other services program; participating in safety planning; temporarily or permanently relocating; meeting with an attorney or participating in legal proceedings; enrolling children in a new school; or taking other actions to increase the safety of the employee or employee's family members.

**Definition of Family Member** - For purposes of this leave, a “family member” includes an employee’s child (including foster child, legal ward, or equivalent legal relationship), spouse, domestic partner, parent (including a step- or foster parent, legal guardian, or equivalent legal relationship), sibling, grandchild, grandparent, and the child or parent of an employee’s spouse or domestic partner.

**Allowance** - Staff members are credited with 6 days of sick leave on a staff member’s anniversary date for the previous year of service. Sick leave is not credited before a staff member’s anniversary date and may be taken only after it is credited.

Sick leave is credited based on the number of hours a staff member is normally scheduled to work, up to a maximum of eight hours per day and 40 hours per workweek for a full-time staff member.

**New Staff members** - Newly hired staff members are credited with 6 days sick leave as of their date of hire.

**Benefit Year** - The benefit year is the period commencing and ending on a staff member’s annual anniversary date.

**Sick Leave Pay** - A non-exempt staff member is compensated at the staff member’s current base rate of pay for each day of sick leave taken. An exempt staff member receives the staff member’s regular salary for the period of sick leave taken.

**Notification Procedures** - A staff member who is unable to work due to illness or injury must notify the staff member’s supervisor in accordance with the Church attendance policy (See Section 700 Attendance).

**Accumulation** - Sick leave is not cumulative and cannot be carried over into the next benefit year. Any credited, unused sick leave is forfeited on the last day of the benefit year. A staff member is not paid for any credited, unused sick leave remaining at the end of the benefit year.

**Use of Sick Leave** - Sick leave is a benefit to be used for illness only and is not intended to be an extension of vacation leave. Sick leave may be used in one-day increments.

**Medical Certification for Extended Paid Sick Leave** - An employee who is absent from work for more than three consecutive workdays due to illness or injury may be required to provide documentation from the employee’s health care provider verifying that the employee is unable to work. Medical documentation may also be required for certain shorter absences as permitted by government regulation, if it is suspected that the employee has developed a pattern of sick leave use or an excessive amount of sick leave has been used. If an employee is on an authorized leave of absence in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Policy or the Leaves of Absence Policy, the medical certification provisions of the applicable policy apply. Failure to produce the medical certification may result in an employee receiving the time off without pay and/or jeopardize continued employment with the Diocese.

Upon return to work, the employee may also be required to provide a medical statement from the employee’s health care provider indicating that the employee is able to return-to-work and any work restrictions. In the event work restrictions are indicated, the Diocese reserves the right to evaluate if the restrictions can be reasonably accommodated. An

employee is not allowed to return to work until a medical statement is provided to the Diocese.

**Leave of Absence** - Sick leave accrues while a staff member is on a paid leave of absence (including paid FMLA leave) but does not accrue while a staff member is on an unpaid leave of absence. For the purpose of this policy, paid leave is defined as leave during which a staff member is using credited, unused vacation, personal, and/or sick leave. Any staff member who has taken an unpaid leave of absence during the preceding benefit year is credited with prorated sick leave on the staff member's anniversary date based on the time worked during the preceding year.

**Separation from Employment** - A staff member is **not** eligible to receive compensation for credited, unused sick leave upon separation from employment with the Church.

## **907 Personal Leave**

Personal leave is not required under state and federal regulations.

**Eligibility** - Full-time and part-time staff members are eligible for paid personal leave to attend a funeral, to conduct personal business that cannot be scheduled outside of normal working hours, for medical and dental appointments, religious observances, personal emergencies, and other similar reasons. Per Diem staff members are not eligible for paid personal leave but may be allowed unpaid time off with prior supervisory approval.

**Allowance** - Staff members are credited with 6 days of personal leave on a staff member's anniversary date for the previous year of service. Personal leave is credited only for months during which a staff member works at least sixteen days during the month.

Personal leave is not credited until a staff member's anniversary date and may be taken only after it is credited.

Personal leave is credited based on the number of hours a staff member is normally scheduled to work, up to a maximum of eight hours per day and 40 hours per workweek for a full-time staff member.

**Benefit Year** - The benefit year is the period commencing and ending on a staff member's annual anniversary date.

**Personal Leave Pay** - A non-exempt staff member is compensated at the staff member's current base rate of pay for each day of personal leave taken. An exempt staff member receives the staff member's regular salary for the period.

**Scheduling** - A staff member must obtain supervisory approval to use personal leave in accordance with the Church's attendance policy (See Section 700 Attendance).

**Use of Personal Leave** - Personal leave must be taken in half-day increments.

**Accumulation** - Personal leave is not cumulative and cannot be carried over into the next benefit year. Any credited, unused personal leave is forfeited on the last day of the benefit year. A staff member is not paid for any credited, unused personal leave remaining at the end of the benefit year.

**Leave of Absence** - Personal leave accrues while a staff member is on a paid leave of absence (including paid FMLA leave) but does not accrue while a staff member is on an unpaid leave of absence. For the purpose of this policy, paid leave is defined as leave during which the staff member is using credited, unused vacation, personal, and/or sick leave. Any staff member who has taken an unpaid leave of absence during the preceding benefit year is credited with prorated personal leave on the staff member's anniversary date based on the time worked during the preceding year.

**Separation from Employment** - A staff member is **not** eligible to receive compensation for credited, unused personal leave upon separation from employment with the Church.

**908 Holidays**

**Observed Holidays** – Unless the Governing Board has set a different schedule, the Church is closed for business to observe the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Independence Day
Presidents Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King Day	Columbus Day
Good Friday	Veterans Day
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving & Day after Thanksgiving
Diocesan offices are closed from Christmas Eve thru New Year's Day	

**Eligibility** - Full-time and part-time staff members are eligible for paid holidays upon hire. Per Diem staff members are not eligible to receive compensation for Church-observed holidays.

**Holiday Pay** - A non-exempt staff member is eligible for holiday pay at the staff member's current base rate of pay. An exempt staff member receives the staff member's regular salary for each holiday.

**Leave of Absence** - A staff member who is on a paid leave of absence (including paid FMLA leave) is eligible to receive compensation for any Church-observed holidays that occur during the leave. For the purpose of this policy, paid leave is defined as leave during which the staff member is using credited, unused vacation, personal, and/or sick leave. A staff member who is on an unpaid leave of absence is not eligible for any paid holidays that occur during the leave.

**Holiday Occurs During Vacation** - If a Church-observed holiday falls on a staff member's normal workday and the staff member is on paid vacation, the day is counted as a paid holiday and not a vacation day.

**Holiday Observance** – Holidays are observed on the day designated by the federal government.

**Holidays Not Designated by the Church** - A staff member may request time off for a religious holiday, observance, or practice that is not included in the above list of Church-observed holidays. Requests should be submitted in accordance with the Church attendance policy (See Section 700 Attendance). A staff member will not be denied time off solely because it has been requested for religious reasons. Time off is generally granted so long as it does not create an undue hardship on the Church. A non-exempt

staff member may be allowed to make up the lost work time during the current workweek with prior supervisory approval, if work is available and if the staff member and the supervisor can agree to a mutually convenient time. A staff member also has the option of using credited, unused vacation or personal leave or taking the time off without pay (exempt staff members are only docked for full day absences).

## **909 Disability Coverage**

### **New York State Disability**

**Policy Statement** - New York State Disability benefits are available as a temporary benefit to eligible staff members who are unable to work for a period in excess of seven days due to a non-work related injury or illness.

**Eligibility** - A staff member who has worked for the Church for at least four consecutive weeks or has recently worked for a “covered” employer is generally covered by the Church’s disability plan. Minors who are currently attending elementary or high school are generally not covered.

**Coverage** - Eligibility for benefits is determined by the Church disability insurance carrier. An eligible staff member is covered for the period of disability specified by the staff member’s health care provider and approved by the insurance carrier, starting with the eighth day of the disability and continuing up to a maximum of 26 weeks. A staff member generally receives 50% of the staff member’s average weekly wages based on the previous eight weeks of employment, up to a maximum of \$170 per week. There is no coverage for medical care.

**Premium Payment** - The Church pays 100% of the cost of this benefit.

### **Long-Term Disability**

**Eligibility** - Full-time staff members are eligible to participate in a Church-sponsored long-term disability plan that provides income at the time of a qualifying injury or illness. Part-time and per diem staff members are not eligible for this benefit.

**Coverage** - Eligibility for long-term disability benefits is determined by the insurance carrier. An eligible staff member generally receives a percentage of the staff member’s average weekly wages. Specific information is available in the summary plan description.

**Premium Payment** - The cost of long-term disability insurance is paid entirely by the participant unless the letter of agreement provides otherwise.

**Leave of Absence** - The FMLA policy (Section 700) generally applies to a staff member who is receiving New York State Disability benefits. Please refer to this policy for information regarding leave requests, benefit continuation, job restoration, etc.

## **910 Workers' Compensation**

**Policy Statement** - Workers' Compensation benefits are provided to eligible lay staff members who suffer a job-related injury or illness.



**Eligibility** - Staff members are covered by the Church's workers' compensation plan upon hire.

**Coverage** - The Workers' Compensation Board is responsible for determining a staff member's eligibility for benefits. If deemed eligible, a staff member is covered for the period of disability specified by the staff member's health care provider and the Workers' Compensation Board. A staff member must generally serve a seven-day waiting period before cash benefits begin. If the staff member is unable to work for more than 14 days, cash benefits for the first week are generally paid retroactively. Coverage is provided for all medical care received that is related to the job-related injury or occupational disease.

**Voluntary, Off-Duty Conduct** - Neither the Church or its insurance carrier is liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that occur during a staff member's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity sponsored by the Church.

**Leave of Absence** - The FMLA policy (Section 700) generally applies to a staff member who is receiving Workers' Compensation benefits. Please refer to this policy for information regarding leave requests, benefit continuation, job restoration, etc.

**Premium Payment** - The cost of workers' compensation insurance is paid entirely by the Church.

### **911 Unemployment Insurance**

**Policy Statement** - Unemployment insurance benefits provide short-term financial assistance to lay individuals who have lost their jobs due to no fault of their own and are ready, willing, and able to work.

**Eligibility** - Eligibility for unemployment insurance is determined by the appropriate State Department of Labor.

**Cost** - The cost of unemployment insurance coverage is paid entirely by the Church.

### **912 Social Security**

**Policy Statement** - Social security benefits are available for retirement, survivor's benefits, and medical costs under qualifying conditions as determined by the Federal Social Security Administration Office.

**Cost** - The Church matches lay staff member contributions to social security (FICA).

### **913 Educational Assistance**

**Policy Statement** - The Church's budget may provide funds to help staff members maintain and improve job-related skills and increase their career potential with the Church. Courses must be job-related.

**Clergy** – Clergy are eligible of 2 weeks and \$500 of continuing education per year. This may accumulate for a maximum of 7 years.

## **1000 PERSONAL CONDUCT**

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### **1001 Personal Appearance**

**Policy Statement** - The Church has developed dress and appearance standards for staff members to promote a professional and positive work environment. Each staff member is expected to dress appropriately according to the work situation and to follow good grooming and hygiene practices.

**Grooming Standards** - A staff member's hair, sideburns, mustache, and/or beard should be clean, combed, and well-groomed. Staff members who have regular contact with the public are not allowed to have visible tattoos and/or body piercing (other than earlobes). At the discretion of management, a staff member may be required to fully cover a large tattoo.

**American Flag** – In accordance with New York State labor regulation, the Church will allow a staff member to display an American flag on the staff member's person as long as it does not substantially or materially interfere with the staff member's job duties.

**Policy Violations** - A staff member may be sent home to change if the staff member reports to work inappropriately dressed or groomed. A non-exempt staff member is not compensated for any time lost from work to comply with this policy.

### **1002 Misrepresentation**

**Policy Statement** – An employee is prohibited from intentionally misrepresenting him/herself or the Church, to churches, parishioners, vendors, government agencies, or anyone else the staff member comes in contact with as a part of the staff member’s job. Examples of prohibited conduct include, but are not limited to, falsifying or intentionally omitting information on the Church *Application for Employment Form* or any report, invoice, or work-related document or record; falsifying the reason for absence from work, job-related injury, or claim for Church benefits; intentionally giving false information to anyone concerning the Church’s and unauthorized or personal use of Church letterhead or church forms.

**Reporting Policy Violations** – An employee is required to report any conduct that he or she reasonably believes violates this policy by notifying their supervisor immediately.

### **1003 Confidentiality**

**Policy Statement** - All Church, staff member, clergy and parishioner information is to be treated with discretion and confidentiality. A staff member should not discuss, photocopy, duplicate, or reveal Church, staff member, clergy or parishioner information that is not generally known to the public in any form to anyone. This means that a staff member should not discuss other clergy, parishioners, coworkers, or Church business in front of anyone, including friends or family.

Information obtained as a result of employment with the Church and from contact with clergy or parishioners is considered proprietary and can only be used in the course of employment with the Church. This obligation remains in effect after a staff member separates from employment. Confidential information should only be shared with other staff members within the Church who have a business need to receive such information.

**Confidential Church Information** - All records and files maintained by the Church are confidential. This includes, but is not limited to: personnel records and confidential information relating to staff members, parishioners and clergy.

**Personal Information** - A staff member should never provide a caller or visitor with confidential information regarding staff members, including home addresses and personal telephone numbers. Take the person’s name and telephone number and inform the caller/visitor that a message will be forwarded to the staff member.

**Security and Removal of Confidential Information** - A staff member is responsible for properly securing and maintaining confidential and proprietary material in the staff member’s possession. Unauthorized removal of confidential or proprietary information from Church premises prohibited.

**Confidentiality/Non-Disclosure Agreement** - As a condition of employment, a staff member is required to sign a confidentiality/non-disclosure agreement at the time of hire.

## 1004 **Substance Free Workplace**

**Substance Free Workplace** - It is the Church's goal to provide a healthy and safe workplace free of illegal substances. Staff members are required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform their jobs in a satisfactory manner. There may be occasions when alcohol is served at Church related functions.

**Prohibited Behavior** - A staff member is prohibited from possessing, using, selling, purchasing, storing, distributing, manufacturing, or having alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or narcotics present in the staff member's system when reporting to work, during working hours, or at any time while conducting business-related activities. Drug paraphernalia, such as pipes and needles, are prohibited on Church premises, at work sites, and in vehicles being used for Church business.

The Church prohibits off-premises abuse of alcohol and controlled substances, as well as the possession, use, or sale of illegal drugs, when these activities adversely affect job performance, job safety, and/or the Church's reputation in the community.

**Use of Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs** - Prescription drugs must be in the possession of the individual to whom the prescription was written, taken in the dosage prescribed, and maintained in their original containers. A staff member is not allowed to use prescription drugs that have not been legally obtained or in a manner or for a purpose other than as prescribed.

**Reporting of Problems** - Any observation or knowledge of a staff member who is in a condition that impairs the staff member's ability to perform job duties, presents a hazard to the safety and welfare of others, or appears to otherwise be in violation of the Church substance free workplace policy should be reported to the Executive immediately.

**Screening for Drug or Alcohol Use** – Any staff member may be tested for alcohol or illegal drugs where a reasonable suspicions that abuse, impairment, or violation of this policy exists. Testing will be conducted in accordance with applicable state or municipal regulation and will generally follow DOT regulations. A staff member that agrees to take the test must sign a consent form authorizing such test and the Church's use of the test results for purposes of administering its discipline policy. It is a violation of this policy to refuse to consent to the test or to test positive for alcohol or illegal drugs. Policy violations will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Tests are paid for by the Church, and are the property of the Church.

A staff member who tests positive in a confirmed test for alcohol or controlled substances is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. In the event a staff member is not immediately discharged for testing positive or for some other violation of this policy, the Church, in its sole discretion, may allow the staff member to return to work pursuant to the staff member executing a written agreement acknowledging that:

- 1) The staff member tested positive or otherwise violated this policy; and
- 2) In exchange for the Church not discharging the staff member for this instance of testing positive or otherwise violating this policy, the staff member agrees to:
  - a) Undergo rehabilitation, counseling or other activities prescribed by a licensed medical professional;
  - b) Undergo periodic, unannounced drug and/or alcohol testing for a set period: and

- c) Be subject to discharge for any future violation of this policy.

A staff member's participation in a treatment program does not prevent the Church from disciplining the staff member for violations of this or other Church policies.

A staff member who tests positive, admits to illegal drug or alcohol use or related misconduct, or voluntarily seeks assistance, and is not discharged, will not be allowed to return to work or continue working until the staff member has been evaluated by a health care professional of the Church's choice to determine if the staff member can safely return to work.

**Policy Violations** - Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The possession, use, sale, purchase, storing, distribution, or manufacture of illegal drugs shall also be brought to the attention of the appropriate law enforcement agency.

### **1005 Outside Employment**

**Policy Statement** - The Church generally permits a staff member to hold a second job as long as it does not interfere with the staff member's job performance, pose an actual or potential conflict of interest, or compromise the interests of the Church. Outside employment that does or may constitute a conflict of interest is prohibited.

**Performance and Work Schedule Requirements** - All staff members are judged by the same performance standards, regardless of any existing outside work requirements. A staff member must meet all scheduling requirements of the Church, including business travel and overtime hours, and shall not receive authorization to report to work late or to leave work early in order to accommodate a second job.

**Use of Paid Leave Benefits** - A staff member is not allowed to use paid leave or to take time off without pay to work at another employer.

**Notification of Outside Employment** - A staff member who is interested in obtaining outside employment must discuss the matter with the Executive prior to accepting the job to ensure that the above guidelines are maintained. Newly hired staff members who are employed by another employer, own their own business, or partake in other work activities must disclose this information on their *Application for Employment Form*.

### **1006 Driving on Church Business**

**Policy Statement** - Staff members in certain positions may be required to drive personal vehicles to conduct business on behalf of the Church. Staff members who drive on Church business must operate vehicles in a safe and responsible manner, and in compliance with all applicable motor vehicle and traffic regulations.

**Driver's License** - A staff member who is required to drive on Church business must possess a valid driver's license free from major infractions at the time of hire and throughout employment.

The driving records of applicants and staff members who apply for positions that involve driving as a part of job duties are checked following a conditional offer of employment.

Thereafter, the Church may conduct motor vehicle record checks in accordance with the requirements of the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA).

**Change in Status or Loss of Driver's License** - A staff member who drives on Church business must immediately notify the Executive of any moving violations or license suspension or revocation. The loss or suspension of a driver's license may affect a staff member's employment with the Church.

**Suspension of Driving Privileges** - A staff member's Church driving privileges may be suspended for receiving an excessive number of traffic citations, regardless of whether the citations were received while driving on Church business. If a staff member's Church driving privilege is suspended and the staff member's position requires regular use of a vehicle, the staff member may be reassigned to another comparable position, if available, or terminated for inability to perform the duties of the job.

**Use of Personal Vehicle for Church Business** - A staff member who drives a personal vehicle to conduct Church business must have auto liability insurance (for both bodily injury and property damage) and proof of a minimum policy for liability coverage of \$100,000 per person/\$300,000 per accident. Proof of such insurance is required upon hire and on an annual basis thereafter. If a staff member's liability insurance lapses, the Executive must be notified immediately.

**Traffic Violation** - A staff member is responsible for paying the cost of any traffic or parking tickets, moving violations, or fines that result from driving on Church business.

**Cell Phones** - In accordance with New York State regulation, a staff member is not allowed to make or receive calls on a cell phone while operating a vehicle on Church business unless a headset or hands-free device is used.

**Accident** - A staff member must notify the Executive immediately in the event of an accident, theft, or damage involving a personal vehicle being used for Church business, regardless of the extent of the damage or lack of injuries. A law enforcement officer should be summoned to the scene of any accident involving a Church staff member or vehicle being used for Church business. The staff member should cooperate with any law enforcement officer who is investigating the accident but should not make any statements or provide information to anyone else. An Accident Report should be obtained from the police for submittal to the Executive.

## **1007 Personal Conduct**

**Policy Statement** - For the benefit and safety of staff members, clergy, parishioners, and the Church, a staff member must comply with the Church standards of behavior and performance. Conduct that interferes with business operations, discredits the Church, or is offensive to coworkers, clergy, parishioners, or the public is not tolerated.

**Staff member Responsibilities** - Staff members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and to treat coworkers, clergy, parishioners, vendors, and visitors with courtesy and respect. Appropriate staff member conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Performing all assigned job duties efficiently, to the best of the staff member's abilities, and in accordance with established performance standards;
- Being fair, considerate, and honest with supervisors, coworkers, clergy, parishioners, vendors, and members of the public;

- Reporting any suspicious, unethical, potentially violent, or illegal conduct by coworkers or any other persons with whom the staff member conducts business on behalf of the Church; and
- Cooperating with any the Church investigation.

**Prohibited Conduct** - A staff member may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for a violation of a policy, procedure, or rule outlined in this staff member handbook or otherwise established by the staff member's supervisor. In addition, a staff member may be subject to disciplinary action for engaging in any of the following:

- Offensive or unprofessional conduct that is contrary to the Church's best interests;
- Improper performance of job duties or repeated failure to perform assigned duties and responsibilities;
- Unauthorized expenditure of Church funds;
- Insubordination or refusal to obey a supervisor's instructions;
- The use of foul or abusive language, including racial slurs and epithets;
- Sabotaging the work of a coworker;
- Illegal gambling while on duty; and
- Any other act or conduct that is deemed unacceptable by the Church.
- Refusing to sign a corrective discipline notice or any other requested acknowledgement form

The above list is illustrative only and is not intended to limit the Church's right to impose discipline in other appropriate situations.

### **1008 Corrective Discipline**

**Policy Statement** - The Church must have certain policies, procedures, and rules to ensure smooth and efficient operations. When a violation occurs, the Church strives to impose corrective discipline fairly, consistently, and in relation to the seriousness of the offense. The disciplinary procedure is intended to promote staff member understanding of acceptable conduct and performance and to encourage corrective action to meet those standards.

**Communication of Violations** - Normally, if a staff member is not meeting the Church's standards of behavior or performance, the staff member's supervisor will meet with the staff member to address the situation. If a policy or procedure was violated, the supervisor may also meet with any witnesses, review any physical documents, and/or conduct an investigation, as appropriate. The staff member's supervisor will then meet with the staff member to inform him or her of the outcome and any disciplinary action to be taken, if applicable.

**Forms of Discipline** - Disciplinary action may include verbal warnings, written warnings, suspension with or without pay, termination of employment, or other disciplinary measures, depending on the circumstances. The Church does not guarantee that one type of discipline shall precede another. Further, the Church reserves the right to suspend a staff member with or without pay while an investigation is conducted.

An exempt staff member may be suspended without pay in partial or full day increments for safety rule infractions of major significance or in one or more full day increments for violations of workplace conduct rules (e.g., violations of the Church's policies relating to sexual harassment, discrimination, violence, and substance testing). Unpaid suspensions of exempt staff members for any other reason are in full week increments only. Paid suspensions for exempt and non-exempt staff members may be in partial day or partial week increments.

**Corrective Discipline Notice** - A staff member who receives a written warning is given the opportunity to agree or disagree with the warning and is able to write a brief statement on the *Corrective Discipline Notice*, if desired. As a condition of employment, the staff member is required to sign the *Corrective Discipline Notice* to indicate that a discussion of the issue has taken place. Refusal to sign the form may result in further disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**Location of Corrective Discipline Notices** - A staff member receives a copy of any *Corrective Discipline Notice* issued by the Church. The original *Corrective Discipline Notice* and other pertinent documentation are maintained in the staff member's personnel file.

## 1009 Ethics

**Policy Statement** - The Church expects all staff members to maintain the highest standards of professionalism and integrity in the performance of their job duties and while representing the Church. All work must be performed in an ethical manner and in accordance with government regulations and Church policy. A staff member should never use the staff member's position with the Church or relationship with a member of the clergy or parishioners for private gain.

**Prohibited Conduct** - A staff member is expected to refrain from any illegal and/or dishonest business activity. In addition, a staff member is prohibited from engaging in any activity that could have the potential to conflict with the interests of the Church, coworkers, clergy or parishioners or that could be viewed unfavorably by anyone. Examples of prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Directly or indirectly soliciting a bribe, kickback, loan, gift, service, or entertainment from a current or prospective vendor, supplier, clergy, parishioner, or competitor for the staff member's personal gain in return for being influenced in connection with Church business;
- Directly or indirectly giving a bribe, kickback, loan, gift, service, or entertainment to a current or prospective vendor, supplier, clergy, parishioner, or competitor in return for influencing that individual or organization in connection with Church business;
- Having a direct or indirect financial interest or a personal business relationship with any business or person that does business with the Church without disclosure to and approval of Church Council; and



- Investing in the stocks, bonds, or securities of a vendor or supplier if such transactions are based on any "inside information."

**Staff member Guidance** - Because the Church is unable to list every example of conduct that may violate this policy, a staff member should use good judgment and seek guidance and assistance from the staff member's supervisor, if needed.

**Gifts** - A staff member is allowed to accept a nominal gift, money, service, travel, entertainment, or other consideration of up to \$100 in value from a current or prospective vendor, supplier, clergy or parishioner. Any gift falling into this category must be reported to the Executive.

## **1010 Conviction Notification**

**Policy Statement** - A staff member must, as a condition of employment, inform the Church of all criminal convictions.

**Notification Prior to Employment** - An applicant must indicate any convictions on the Church *Application for Employment Form* and/or indicate such convictions, if asked, during any employment interviews.

**Notification during Employment** - A staff member is responsible for notifying the Executive within three days of receiving a misdemeanor or felony conviction.

**Employment Decisions Based on Conviction** - A criminal conviction does not necessarily disqualify an applicant from employment consideration or termination of a current staff member. Employment decisions based on such information take into consideration the extent to which the offense relates to the functions of the particular job, the seriousness of the offense, rehabilitation, and length of time since the conviction.

## 1100 CHURCH PREMISES AND WORK AREAS

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### 1101 *Church Property*

**Staff Member Responsibility** - A staff member is responsible for any items issued by the Church that are in the staff member's possession and/or control. All equipment must be used appropriately, handled carefully, and maintained in good condition. In addition, all operating and maintenance instructions must be followed. Supplies should be used efficiently and not wasted in order to save money and resources.

**Prohibited Uses of Church Property** - A staff member should not deliberately destroy, deface, or misuse Church property. The theft, unauthorized removal, or unauthorized possession of Church property is prohibited. No Church property should leave the premises without the approval of the Office Manager.

**Personal Use of Church Property** - A staff member may not use or borrow any Church property for personal use without the prior approval of the Office Manager. If authorization is granted, a staff member may use such property for the staff member's own benefit only and not for furtherance of any personal business or monetary gain. Proper use and care must be taken when using Church property to ensure it is returned in good working order.

**Personal Use of Church Facilities** - Staff members and private individuals are prohibited from conducting any type of personal business, entertainment or non-business related activity on Church premises unless prior written approval is obtained from the Executive.

### 1102 *Personal Belongings*

**Policy Statement** - The Church discourages a staff member from bringing valuable, unnecessary, or inappropriate personal property to work. Personal property that is brought onto Church premises should not disrupt work or pose a safety risk to other staff members or visitors.

**Personal Liability** - The Church is not responsible for the personal belongings of staff members. The Church will not repair, replace, or reimburse a staff member for any damage to, or loss of, a staff member's personal property. This includes personal items in personal vehicles.

### **1103 Maintenance of Work Area**

**Policy Statement** - The Church is dedicated to providing a safe, clean, and pleasant work environment for staff members and visitors.

**Work Areas** - Work areas are to be maintained in a clean and orderly fashion. Coats, boots, and other personal items should be stored in designated locations.

**American Flag** – In accordance with New York State labor regulation, the Church allows a staff member to display an American flag in the staff member's work area as long as it does not substantially or materially interfere with the staff member's job duties

**Housekeeping** - It is the responsibility of all staff members to keep the kitchen, conference rooms, restrooms and the entire premises clean at all times. Please put items in their proper location after each use, dispose of garbage in the appropriate receptacles, and wash and put away dishes. Office paper, cardboard, newspapers, and other items that can be recycled should be placed in the designated containers.

### **1104 Parking**

**Designated Parking** - Staff member parking is available in the back parking lot.

**Damage to Vehicles** - The Church is not responsible for the security of, or damage to, staff members' vehicles or their contents while parked on the premises or while on Church business.

### **1105 Smoking**

**Policy Statement** - The Church is dedicated to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all staff members and visitors.

**Smoking Restrictions** - In compliance with New York State regulation, the Church maintains a smoke-free work environment. The smoking or chewing of tobacco products is prohibited throughout the entire workplace.

**Smoking Locations** - Smoking is allowed outside the building.

**Maintenance of Smoking Locations** - Smokers have an obligation to keep smoking areas litter-free and to properly discard trash in appropriate receptacles. Cigarettes and matches should be completely extinguished after use.

## 1106 *Security Inspections*

**Policy Statement** - To maintain security and protect against theft, the Church reserves the right to inspect all Church and/or personal property brought onto Church premises or work sites at any time with or without notice, if there is suspicion by management of theft, illegal activity, or similar behavior that may violate Church policy or government regulation. This includes, but is not limited to vehicles, packages, briefcases, purses, desks, and file cabinets, even if locked. The inspection may be made in the presence of the staff member.

**Removal of Property** - The Church reserves the right to remove a staff member's personal belongings from the premises if they are in violation of Church policy.

**Policy Violations** - Any staff member who refuses to allow management to inspect the staff member's Church or personal property may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. In addition, a staff member who steals from the Church will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, as well as prosecution to the fullest extent of the law.

## 1200 SECURITY

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### 1201 *Building Security*

**Safety Precautions** - In order to ensure staff member safety, prevent theft, and reduce accidents, a staff member who enters or remains in the office before or after normal business hours must exercise reasonable care.

**Securing the Premises** - The last person to leave the office at the end of the workday is responsible for locking all exterior doors and windows, turning off all equipment and turning on the security system.

### 1202 *Violence in the Workplace*

**Policy Statement** - The Church considers the safety of its staff members, vendors, suppliers, clergy, parishioners, visitors, and the general public to be of paramount importance. The Church has zero tolerance for any staff member or individual on Church property who threatens, intimidates, or infers violence against any person or property associated with the Church. The Church considers any threat of violence or potential violence as legitimate, and takes immediate appropriate action, including the involvement of law enforcement.

**Notification of Threatening Behavior** - A staff member who witnesses or becomes aware of any threats or acts of violence should inform the Executive and the Office Manager immediately. Likewise, any suspicious individuals or activity must be reported immediately.

**Prohibited Conduct** - Provoking a fight, fighting, and horseplay are prohibited at all times while on Church property or at any location while representing the Church.

**Firearms and Weapons** - Staff members are prohibited from possessing firearms or weapons of any kind while on Church premises; in vehicles while conducting business for

the Church; or any other location during working hours or while representing the Church, regardless of whether the person is licensed to carry the weapon. The only exceptions are law enforcement personnel and security guards.

**Policy Violations** - Violations of this policy will result in immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination and/or legal action.

## **1300 COMMUNICATION POLICIES**

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### **1301 Staff Member Questions and Concerns**

**Policy Statement** - The Church believes that open communication between staff members and the Office Manager is essential to a productive and successful work environment. A staff member is encouraged to bring any questions or concerns to the attention of the Office Manager as most problems can be, and are, resolved as a matter of day-to-day supervision. The Office Manager will review the staff member's concerns and, as appropriate, may meet with any other individuals involved to obtain further information, review any physical documents, and/or conduct an investigation. The Office Manager will then provide a verbal or written response to the staff member in a fair and prompt manner. If the staff member's question or concern involves the Office Manager or the supervisor, the staff member may submit the complaint directly to the Executive.

**Complaint Procedure for Compliance Policies** - If the complaint involves any of the Church compliance policies, such as sexual harassment, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or Equal Employment Opportunity, the complaint procedure outlined in Policy 505 Complaint Procedure and Investigations should be followed.

**Retaliation** - A staff member who brings any work-related questions, concerns, or complaints to management's attention will not be subject to retaliation or any adverse employment action that could affect the staff member's job security or potential advancement.

### **1302 Staff Member Communications**

**Policy Statement** - Staff members are notified of new policies, announcements, meetings, and other important Church information via a variety of communication channels, including memos, e-mail, voice mail, payroll attachments, staff meetings, and bulletin board postings.

**Bulletin Board** - A bulletin board is located kitchen for the posting of Church announcements and information of general interest. A staff member should review the bulletin board on a regular basis.

### **1303 Use of Communications Systems**

**Policy Statement** - The Church communication systems and equipment are an integral part of the Church's business, and are provided to staff members to aid them in the performance of their job duties and to promote efficient operations.

**Definition of Communications Systems and Equipment** - For the purpose of this staff member handbook, the Church communications systems and equipment include, but are not limited to, telephones, voice mail system, cellular telephones, palm pilot, fax machines, incoming/outgoing mail, e-mail, and computer systems (e.g., hardware, software, Internet, and computer files).

**Church Property** - All Church communications systems and equipment are the sole property of the Church. This includes the messages created, transmitted, and stored on such systems and equipment.

**Computer Systems** - All computer hardware and software is to be provided by the Church and must be licensed and registered to the Church. No unauthorized or unlicensed hardware or software may be used or installed on any Church-owned computer.

All computer disks and file attachments received from coworkers and from outside the Church must be scanned by anti-virus software prior to being used. A staff member should turn off the computer and notify the Communications Officer immediately if it is suspected that the staff member's computer is infected with a virus.

**Prohibited Uses** - In addition to the guidelines set forth above, the following uses of the Church communications systems and equipment are prohibited. This list is meant to be illustrative, and not exhaustive.

- Any illegal activity or violation of copyright regulations, including the copying or distribution of copyrighted materials without the permission of the author;
- Transmitting e-mail containing confidential or proprietary information or trade secrets;
- Any form of slander or defamation;
- Verbal or written obscenities, vulgarities, threats, or harassment;
- Verbal or written remarks that are discriminatory, offensive, demeaning, intimidating, or insulting;
- Distributing chain letters;
- Writing, transferring, or storing obscene or sexually suggestive messages or graphic images;
- Accessing, or attempting to access, the computer files, e-mail, or voicemail messages of a coworker without appropriate authorization from the intended recipient;
- Using or aiding in the unauthorized use of another person's password;
- Harming or destroying software, data, files, or messages (other than editing or deleting information in the normal course of one's job duties);
- Installation or use of any Church-owned hardware or software for any use that is not Church-related business, including unauthorized commercial activity;
- Reproducing any software for use on more than one of the Church computers unless authorized by the software developer;

- Reproducing, transferring, downloading, modifying, deleting, or sharing licensed or non-licensed software with any business, clergy, parishioner, or for the staff member's personal use; and
- Installation or downloading of any files, disks, software, or e-mail attachments that a staff member is aware, or has reason to believe, contains a computer virus.

**Church's Right to Monitor Communications Systems and Equipment** - There is no guarantee of privacy when using Church-owned communications systems and equipment. Management reserves the right to enter, search, and monitor staff member communications equipment and files, with or without advance notice, in the normal course of business.

### **1304 Social Media**

**Social Media** – For the purpose of this employee handbook, the term “social media” refers to any Internet-based media that facilitate activities such as professional or social networking, posting comments or opinions, and sharing photos, audio, video, or other content. Examples include, but are not limited to: Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, MySpace, Twitter, personal websites, blogs, podcasts, chat rooms, RSS feeds, and Wikis.

#### **Guidelines**

- All church policies, including its discrimination, sexual/anti-harassment, equal employment opportunity (EEO), anti-bullying, ethics, and confidentiality policies, apply to the use of social media.
- Post only appropriate and respectful content.
- An employee is prohibited from disclosing any trade secrets, products, processes, proprietary information, strategic business plans, or any other private or confidential information about the church or customers via social media. Respect copyright, trademark, fair use and financial disclosure laws.
- Do not post any information or engage in any online activity that violates applicable local, state or federal laws, or professional rules of conduct.
- If an employee indicates on any social media that he or she is a church employee, he or she must clearly state that the views expressed are solely the personal views of the employee and that they do not represent those of the Church, fellow coworkers, members, customers, suppliers or people working on behalf of the church. This applies to posts, blogs, and videos occurring on any computer during both working and non-working time.
- Do not use church email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use. In addition, the church's logo and trademark should not be added to an employee's personal blog or profile.

**Using Social Media At Work** - An employee must receive prior authorization to develop, post to, or maintain a corporate blog or use social networking sites to conduct

church business. An employee who has received such authorization may post or blog during working hours for business purposes only. Engaging in social networking at work for personal use is strictly prohibited.

**Using Social Media During Non-Working Hours** – The church respects an employee’s right to self-expression, especially when using social media during non-working time. However, because customers, coworkers, and the public may have access to employees’ posts and videos, employees are expected to use good judgment and to use social media in a responsible manner that does not violate the church’s policies. An employee should not make false statements about the church, coworkers, customers, vendors, or competitors.

**Retaliation** - The church will not retaliate against any employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee who retaliates against another employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**Policy Violations** - Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated. Employees are solely responsible for what they post online. Keep in mind that any conduct that adversely affects job performance, the performance of coworkers or otherwise adversely affects members, customers, suppliers, people who work on behalf of the church or the legitimate business interests of the church may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **1305 *Adverse Situations and Correspondence***

**Written Communication** - Any written communication of a negative nature relating to the Church should immediately be forwarded to the Office Manager for resolution. This includes, but is not limited to, letters, e-mails, and summons.

**Verbal Communication** - A staff member should treat all complaints from clergy, parishioners, vendors, suppliers, or members of the public seriously and professionally. Take the time to listen carefully and resolve the person’s concerns, if possible. In the event the complaint cannot be resolved to the person’s satisfaction or if the person becomes unreasonable or harassing, the staff member should immediately notify the Office Manager.

### **1306 *Media Relations***

**Parishioner Relations** - Because the Church is a service-oriented, the public should be assisted promptly and treated courteously and professionally at all times. Positive service can greatly enhance goodwill, while a negative experience can easily destroy a valuable relationship.

**Media Relations** - All requests for information from the media (e.g., television, radio, and newspaper) regarding any aspect of the Church must be referred to the Communications Officer. The Communications Officer must approve all press releases, publications, articles, and any other documents for release to the media in advance.



## STAFF MEMBER HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Church's staff member handbook, which includes an overview of the policies, procedures, rules, and benefits of the Church. I further acknowledge that I have read or will read the contents of the staff member handbook and I agree to abide by the policies contained therein. I am aware that if I have any questions regarding the contents of the staff member handbook I should contact the Executive.

I understand that the policies in this staff member handbook may supersede, modify, or eliminate benefits, policies, procedures, rules and regulations previously issued by the Church.

I understand that the Church reserves the right to interpret, add, modify, or revoke any provision in the staff member handbook with or without cause or notice. I also understand that the staff member benefits, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations in this staff member handbook will remain in effect until notified of changes by the Church. I agree to retain the staff member handbook for future reference and to update it with any policy additions or revisions that the Church issues.

I am aware that my copy of the staff member handbook and any the Church property in my possession must be returned to the Church upon my separation from employment or when requested by the Church.

I understand that I may be subject to reasonable suspicion substance testing as outlined in the Substance-Free Workplace Policy (Section 1000 Personal Conduct). I am aware that my refusal to consent to such a test or to test positive for alcohol or illegal drugs is a policy violation which will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employment at the Church is employment-at-will. Accordingly, this staff member handbook is not intended to be a contract of employment, a warranty of benefits, or a limitation on the Church's ability to terminate staff members.

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STAFF MEMBER NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

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STAFF MEMBER SIGNATURE

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DATE OF SIGNATURE

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SIGNATURE OF EXECUTIVE

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DATE OF SIGNATURE