

Personnel Policy
First Unitarian Church
Approved June 12, 2019

PURPOSE: To insure that the church treats employees fairly in accordance with employment laws while requiring employees to perform their work in a manner that advances and protects the interests of the church.

I: APPLICABILITY: These policies apply to all employees of the church, with the exception of the Minister.

II: RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADMINISTRATION: The Minister is responsible for administration of this policy for all staff. In this document, the Minister is defined as the person serving as the principal Minister of the church.

III: STAFF RECRUITMENT AND HIRING:

- a. *Authority to Hire:* The Board of Trustees must approve a written job description and the salary before recruitment starts for any position. Funding for the position at the approved salary must be included in the annual budget.
- b. *Recruitment:* Each position must be widely marketed to insure that the church practices open, non-discriminatory hiring practices. The marketing method will vary by position and should be approved by the Board of Trustees.
- c. *Application Procedures:* All employees must submit the attached application form and shall provide the church with at least three references.
- d. *Employee Interviewing and Selection:* The selection committee for all positions shall consist of the Minister and Board representatives. The Board can ask members of related committees to be a part of the selection committee. The selection committee should review the applications, interview the selected candidates and select the candidate to be hired.
- e. *Employee Screening:* Once a tentative employee selection is decided upon, the Minister shall be responsible for checking references given for at least the past five years of history using, the attached employment application. Employment references provided by the applicant should also be checked. A record of the reference check shall be maintained in the employee's personnel file. In addition to the reference check, each future employee must undergo a criminal records check and go through the E-Verify process to verify immigration status. Any questionable material found in the reference or other checks must be reviewed by the Selection Committee.
- f. *Offer Letter:* After the above requirements have been satisfied, the Minister shall be responsible for preparation of an offer letter, which states the terms of employment, the classification of the employee as exempt or nonexempt and the starting date. The job description will be attached to the offer letter. A copy of these Personnel Policies shall be given to the employee. The employee shall sign the offer letter and an acknowledgement that they have received the Personnel

Policies and this job description. This receipt shall be retained in the employee's file. One copy of the offer letter is given to the employee and one signed copy is retained in the personnel file.

- g. *Exempt versus Nonexempt*: All employees shall be classified as exempt or nonexempt based on federal labor standards. This classification shall be noted on the initial hiring letter.

IV: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS:

- a. *Vacation*: Full time employees are eligible for two weeks of paid vacation per year. After five years, full time employees are eligible for three weeks of vacation time. Part time employees earn vacation time proportionate to the number of hours worked as stated in their job description. For example a half time employee is entitled to two weeks of vacation for the number of hours they usually work at half time pay. Vacation time is accrued on a monthly basis and can be used as it is earned. No more than five days of vacation can be carried over to the next year. Unused vacation earned in the final year will be paid at employee separation. Accrued vacation time may be used for an approved leave of absence.
- b. *Holidays*: There are seven paid holidays each year: 1) New Year's Day, 2) Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday, 3) Memorial Day, 4) Independence Day, 5) Labor Day, 6) Thanksgiving, and 7) Christmas. If a holiday falls on a weekend, the following Monday will be a paid holiday.
- c. *Illness, Medical, Dental, and/or Family Leave*: After three months of employment, a full-time employee earns four hours of paid leave each month for personal illness and/or the illness or bereavement of a family member and/or medical/dental visit. There is no accrual limitation for this leave, but the unused accrued time will not be paid to the employee upon termination of employment.

V. ONGOING EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES:

- a. *Time Worked*: All employees shall keep records of time that they work. Bi-weekly time sheets shall be submitted to the Minister and then retained in the church files. The Minister is responsible for approving time sheets. If discrepancies are noted between the time written on the time sheet and the time worked, the Minister is responsible for bringing this to the employee's attention and asking them to revise the time sheet.
- b. *Overtime*: Nonexempt employees cannot work more than 40 hours a week without the express written approval of the Minister. Any employee that works more than 40 hours a week must be paid one and one half times their usual hourly rate for the overtime hours.
- c. Nonexempt employees must be paid for any time worked that is substantially more than their customary hours at their regular hourly rate. If employees habitually work substantially more than the number of hours in their job description, the Minister should discuss this with the employee and look for ways

to help the employee work more efficiently and set priorities for the work. If an employee continues to work substantially more hours than specified in the job description, the Minister should bring this situation to the Board of Trustees for discussion and resolution.

- d. *Three Month Review:* After an employee has been employed for three months, the Minister shall conduct a review of the employee's performance and suitability for the position. The results of this evaluation shall be in writing, shall be discussed with the employee, and be placed in the employee's personnel file.
- e. *Ongoing Review of Work:* The Minister is responsible for reviewing the work of employees on an ongoing basis. The Minister shall do an annual review of the work of each employee and the written review shall be shared with the Board President. If the employee is not doing the work in the job description, this should be handled as described in the Disciplinary Procedures Policy in Section VI below.
- f. *Confidentiality:* All information obtained during employment with the church is to be treated in strictest confidence. Any breach of this requirement is considered a severe infraction of church policies.
- g. *Conflict of Interest:* Any family member within one generation, committed partner or spouse of an employee (full or part time) may not serve on the Board of Trustees. If an employee has work outside the church that may pose a conflict of interest with their work at the church, the outside relationship should be disclosed to the Minister and to the President of the Board of Trustees at the start of employment or before entering into the outside relationship. If the Minister or the Board President decides that the conflict of interest interferes with the employee's work in a substantial way, the employee will be notified in writing. At that point, the employee can decide whether to work for the church or for the outside interest. The employee can appeal this determination as described under the Grievance Policy in Section VII below.

VI. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES:

- a. *Procedures:* If an employee fits any of the conditions below, the Minister shall issue a written warning. Situations justifying written warning notices may include but need not be limited to:
 - i. Overall work which is considered unsatisfactory or marginal.
 - ii. Unauthorized or unexcused absenteeism.
 - iii. Repeated tardiness.
 - iv. Violation of work or safety rules.
 - v. Sexual harassment. (See the attached policy).
 - vi. Creating a hostile work environment that makes it difficult for other employees to do their work.
 - vii. Insubordination.
 - viii. Any other serious issue which interferes with the work of the employee or other employees or the work of the church.

- b. *Documenting a Performance Deficiency:* When a situation justifies a written warning, the action must be documented. The written warning should set forth in detail the reason for the warning, together with the corrective action the employee must take. A time limit of one to three months (or a reasonable time period to enable the employee to correct the deficiency or improve performance) for corrective action must be noted on the evaluation form. The written warning must be reviewed with the employee, and the employee should sign it, or a notation should be made by the supervisor that the warning was read to the employee who refused to sign it.

The Minister may prepare a Personnel Improvement Plan (PIP) detailing steps the employee can take to improve their performance. The preparation of a PIP is at the discretion of the Minister.

- c. *Administering a Warning:* Any warning should always be done in private. A copy of a written warning must be given to the offending employee; the Minister retains a copy and a copy is placed in the employee's personnel file.
- d. *Termination:*
- i. Employees that are not doing adequate work should be terminated as described below. Except for violations listed in VI. E (below) or reduction in workforce, employees with three or more months of employment may not be terminated unless:
 - At least one written notice has been given on the appropriate form for a similar or different offense in the preceding 12-month period that would be cause for termination of employment.
 - The employee has been given a reasonable time period to correct the deficiency.
 - The Board President or their designee has approved the termination on the performance evaluation form prepared by the Minister.
- e. *Suspension for Fact Finding:* Normally, employees who commit or who are suspected of committing any of the violations listed in VI.F. below should be suspended for a period not to exceed three days whenever possible, during which time a full investigation of the circumstances is to be made. The employee must be advised at the time of suspension that the investigation will be conducted and that she or he will be advised within three days of the decision reached. All facts must be obtained and reviewed with the Minister and Board President or their designee for approval prior to making the final decision. When a decision has been reached, the employee must be advised of the decision in person.
- f. *Suspension for Discipline:* Suspension of an employee from work is a serious penalty and should be imposed only in extreme situations. Gross insubordination or an instance in which an employee commits or is

suspected of committing a serious violation of church policy are examples of instances that may justify suspension of one to three days maximum, until a decision is reached concerning termination. See Section VI.E. below for additional reasons warranting suspension for disciplinary action.

- g. *Approval of Discharge:* Because of the unsettling impact that a discharge without notice has on an employee and the job security of all personnel in general, it is vitally important that such discharges be administered with fairness and tact. A discharge without notice should take place only after careful review of all the facts and only after approval of the Minister and the Board President.
- h. *Less than Three Months Employment:* All employees are considered to be in a “provisional” status during the first three months of employment. During this time, performance and suitability for a position are to be carefully evaluated. At any time during the first three months of employment, an employee may be terminated at the sole discretion of the Minister without notice if the facts support the action. The Minister must receive approval of a termination from the Board President during the three months of employment via a completed Personnel Action Notice. Employees terminated during the first three months of employment will not receive severance pay or any other benefit accrual payout.
- i. *Reasons for Termination without Notice:* Violations that may result in termination without warning or advance notice will include but not be limited to the following:
 - i. Willful damage or gross negligence to church property.
 - ii. Possession of a weapon on church premises.
 - iii. Drinking, intoxication, or possession of alcoholic beverages on the job.
 - iv. Being under the influence of narcotics or other illegal substances, use of narcotics or other illegal substances, or possession or solicitation of narcotics or other illegal substances for use while at work, other than prescription drugs as prescribed by a physician.
 - v. Gambling on church premises.
 - vi. Absence without authorization for three or more work days (consecutive or otherwise) during any 12 consecutive months.
 - vii. Disclosure of confidential or sensitive church information.
 - viii. Assaulting or fighting with another employee or member on church property, on or off duty.
 - ix. Conviction of a felony or serious misdemeanor while in the church's employ.
 - x. Willful falsification of church records, such as an employment application, payroll information, or financial or insurance records.
 - xi. Theft of church property.
 - xii. Willful violation of church policy.
 - xiii. Extensive use of the church computer for outside work or activities.

VII. Grievance Policy:

If any employee feels that he or she has not been treated fairly in terms of employment, pay or working conditions the employee should first attempt to resolve the concern or problem with the Minister before contacting the Board President. If the employee is unable to resolve the concern with the Minister, the employee should speak with the President of the Board of Trustees about their concerns. This policy applies to all equal opportunity and “whistle blowing” complaints.

Employees have the assurance of the church that all employee concerns will be resolved in the best interest of the employee and the church and that no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee for voicing her/his concerns. Every effort will be made to treat employee complaints in confidence.

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