

**PERSONNEL
PRACTICES
HANDBOOK**

Southern California Nevada Conference
of the
United Church of Christ

Southern California Nevada Conference
of the United Church of Christ
Personnel Practices Handbook
Adopted 9/25/93

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | <u>Page #</u> |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Introduction | 1 |
| 2. Personnel Practices Administration | 1 |
| 2.1 Definitions | 1 |
| 2.2 Classifications | 2 |
| 3. Employment | 2 |
| 3.1 Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action | 2 |
| 3.2 Harassment | 3 |
| 3.3 Health and Safety | 3 |
| 3.4 Hiring | 3 |
| 3.5 Conflict of Interest | 4 |
| 3.6 Honoraria | 4 |
| 3.7 Confidentiality of Conference Information | 4 |
| 4. Compensation | 4 |
| 4.1 Salary Administration | 4 |
| 4.2 Salary Review | 4 |
| 4.3 Salary Adjustments | 4 |
| 4.4 Basic Work Week and Hours | 5 |
| 4.5 Attendance and Punctuality | 5 |
| 4.6 Overtime | 5 |

| | | |
|------|--------------------------------------|----|
| 4.7 | Compensatory Time | 6 |
| 4.8 | Flexible Time | 6 |
| 4.9 | Time Records | 6 |
| 5. | Benefits | 6 |
| 5.1 | Eligibility | 6 |
| 5.2 | Vacations | 6 |
| 5.3 | Holidays | 7 |
| 5.4 | Sick Leave | 7 |
| 5.5 | Emergency Leave and Leave of Absence | 8 |
| 5.6 | Jury Duty/Military Duty | 8 |
| 5.7 | Bereavement | 8 |
| 5.8 | Sabbatical | 8 |
| 5.9 | Annuity and Retirement Fund | 9 |
| 5.10 | Social Security | 9 |
| 5.11 | Housing Allowance | 9 |
| 5.12 | Group Insurance | 9 |
| 5.13 | Maternity/Paternity Leave | 10 |
| 5.14 | Automobile and Travel Expense | 10 |
| 5.15 | Loans to Clergy Staff | 10 |
| 6. | Employee Development | 10 |
| 6.1 | Continuing Education | 10 |
| 6.2 | Performance Review Process | 11 |
| 6.3 | Annual Interview | 11 |

| | | |
|-----|------------------------|----|
| 6.4 | Grievance Procedures | 12 |
| 7. | Separation | 12 |
| 7.1 | Bylaw Provisions | 12 |
| 7.2 | Separation Categories | 13 |
| 7.3 | Severance Arrangements | 14 |
| 7.4 | Exit Interview | 14 |
| 7.5 | Continued Coverage | 14 |

Section 1 Introduction

As the Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ, we believe that the wise and effective discharge of the management and business affairs of the office must reflect the Christian principles that affirm the innate worth of each individual. We seek to cultivate a climate of worth of each individual. We seek to cultivate a climate of sensitivity and concern for persons in staff relationships and in the resolution of personnel problems which may arise from time to time.

This handbook is a guide to the practices and procedures that we are seeking to live by. It does not constitute a contract, but presents our guidelines for compassionate and judicious administration of our important resource: the members of our staff.

Although the Conference hopes for a long and mutually beneficial working relationship with each of its employees, we recognize that all employees serve at the pleasure of the Conference. The employee has the right to terminate his/her employment relationship at will for any reason, or no reason, at any time, with or without notice, and the Conference reserves the same right.

This handbook sets forth the ways we hope we can order our life together so that the many different needs of Conference, supervisors, employees, Personnel Committee and Board of Directors may all be balanced and our best energies devoted to fulfilling and enhancing the mission of the United Church of Christ in Southern California and Nevada.

Section 2 Personnel Practices Administration

2.1 Definitions

The Southern California Nevada Conference acting in its capacity as employer and hereafter referred to as "Conference" is governed by delegates of its member churches who convene in an Annual Meeting (or specially called meetings) to govern a Board of Directors elected by those delegates to govern between meetings.

Annually the Board of Directors appoints a Personnel Committee to develop policies and practices related to personnel administration of the Conference. The names and addresses of members of both Board and Personnel Committee may be found in the current Conference Directory. The Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Directors is the Chairperson of the Personnel Committee.

The Conference Ministers are "the chief executives of the Conference, administering all the work of the Conference in accordance with the policies established by the Conference or Board of Directors." (Bylaws Article XI,A.)

More details about the roles of the Personnel Committee, the Board and the Conference Ministers may be found throughout this handbook.

2.2 Classifications

The Southern California Nevada Conference, for payroll and benefit purposes, recognizes these major classifications of employees:

Full-time regular, exempt, ordained clergy and professional staff (administrators): salaried with minimum thirty-five (35) hour work week; not subject to overtime regulations.

Full-time regular, non-exempt, non-ordained lay employees: salaried with minimum thirty-five (35) hour work week; subject to overtime regulations.

Part-time regular clergy and lay employees: salaried or hourly; work fewer than 35 hours per week but at least 17.5 hours per week and employed on a regular basis. Entitled to appropriate employee benefits on a pro-rata basis.

Temporary part-time or full-time: An employee with an established or understood termination date, or who works “on call”. The employee is paid at an hourly rate.

Temporary employees or those regular employees working less than 17.5 hours per week are not entitled to employment benefits but are covered by the provisions of this document.

Section 3 Employment

3.1 Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action

The Bylaws of the Conference contain this affirmation: “The Conference shall afford all individuals an equal opportunity for employment and voluntary service. To assure equal opportunity, there shall be no discrimination concerning any individual or group because of race, color, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin or medical condition.”

In implementing this Bylaw, the Board of Directors has adopted an Affirmative Action Plan and Program which provides for an Affirmative Action Officer and an Affirmation Action Task Force. Their work is reviewed and their mandate updated from time to time by the Board. Any experience which does not uphold the Conference’s commitment to equal opportunity and affirmative action should be reported to the Affirmative Action Officer.

3.2 Harassment

The Conference has a fundamental commitment to treat each individual with dignity and respect. Our support of equal opportunity employment includes the commitment that harassment of employees because of sex, race, color, age, national origin, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or any other reason will not be tolerated. All of our staff have the right to be free from negative slurs, sexual innuendo, or any other verbal and/or physical harassment that could reasonably be interpreted as harassment. Any conduct which is offensive, intimidating or abusive in nature whether by supervising personnel, staff or other individual cannot be permitted. Staff and volunteers involved in Conference programs have the explicit responsibility immediately to report any harassment of staff, volunteers or program participants. Anyone involved in the Conference who believes that he/she is being subjected to harassment is to report this to the Conference Ministers or Affirmative Action Officer. Where investigation substantiates the allegation of harassment, appropriate corrective action (up to and including severance of employment) will be taken.

3.3 Health and Safety

The Conference encourages safe working conditions, and has an injury prevention program, a copy of which is provided to the employee at the time of employment. If an employee sees an unsafe condition, it must be reported immediately to a Supervisor.

Smoking is not allowed in the Conference offices or common areas.

3.4 Hiring

All program exempt staff are called by the Board of Directors upon nomination of the Conference Ministers after consultation with the Personnel Committee as to search procedures and terms of employment.

All administrative exempt and non-exempt Staff are hired by the Conference Ministers using established procedures. All exempt and non-exempt staff are employed under an initial six months probationary period.

3.5 Conflict of Interest

Should an employee take a supplementary job, a conflict of interest in respect to employment at the Conference may occur. At the Conference's discretion, the Conference may find it necessary to end the employment relationship of any employee where the Conference finds a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest exists.

3.6 Honoraria

Full-time exempt staff may not accept honoraria for their work on behalf of the Conference. If the donor insists, any such honoraria will be considered as contributions to the Conference to offset travel cost.

3.7 Confidentiality of Conference Information

Proprietary and confidential information is that which, if disclosed without authorization, would be detrimental to the operation and reputation of the Conference, or its agents, or infringe on anyone's right to privacy. Information entrusted to staff members should never be discussed beyond business requirements. Violations will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Section 4 Compensation

4.1 Salary Administration

The Conference Ministers, the Business Manager, and the Personnel Committee are responsible for the administration of salaries, subject to the adoption of the annual budget by the Board of Directors.

4.2 Salary Review

A salary review for all employees shall be conducted by the Conference Ministers and the Personnel Committee as part of the Conference budget preparation.

4.3 Salary Adjustments

Adjustments in salary shall be based on factors such as individual performance, the rate of inflation and budget constraints.

4.4 Basic Work Week and Hours

The work week is defined as the period from Saturday through Friday.

Full time non-exempt employees are hired on a salary basis, with the understanding that the salary is based on all hours worked up to 40 hours a week. On occasion, a workday may be adjusted to accommodate special circumstances, normal office hours, however, are Monday through Friday, from 9:00 to 5:00 for 7 hours of work, with an hour allowed for lunch, and 15 minute breaks morning and afternoon. From August 1 to Labor Day weekend the office normally closes at 4:00pm. No salary reductions will be made when less than 40 hours of work is done as long as normal hours are worked.

Any work by non-exempt employees during a week between 35-40 hours is to be dealt with by compensatory time within the work week. If hours are worked beyond 8 in a day or 40 in a week, the overtime rate is determined by dividing a full-year salary by 2080 (52 weeks @ 40 hours) and pay is computed at 1.5 times this rate.

All employees are allowed flexibility in scheduling their lunch hour as long as consideration is given to work needs.

Salaried non-exempt employees may schedule personal appointments and take emergency time off. Any employee who has excessive absences of this nature may be subject to disciplinary action following counsel by Supervisor.

4.5 Attendance and Punctuality

Non-exempt staff: employees are expected to be in attendance and to be on time for work.

4.6 Overtime

Employees classified as “exempt” are not covered by Federal and State laws requiring compensation for overtime. All other employees, not falling into this category, are entitled to receive monetary compensation or compensatory time for hours worked in excess of eight (8) in any one work day or forty (40) in any one work week, overtime work by non-exempt employees is to be performed only on the authorization of the Supervisor, in consultation with the Conference Ministers.

4.7 Compensatory Time

From time to time non-exempt employees are asked to work evenings and weekends. In such a case, compensatory time is to be granted during the same work week so that the total hours for the week do not exceed forty. This time is scheduled when mutually agreeable to the employee and the Supervisor.

4.8 Flexible Time

Building security measures and the need for adequate coverage throughout normal office hours, or set schedules, make it difficult to allow non-exempt employees to change their working hours on a regular basis. Any adjustment in regular work schedule must be arranged individually with one’s Supervisor and the Conference Ministers. Office hours of exempt employees shall be flexible according to the demands upon their time.

4.9 Time Records

All non-exempt employees are required to keep accurate records of hours worked, each employee shall submit weekly time reports signed by the employee and the Supervisor, These reports shall show daily starting and ending time and also the time the employee leaves for and returns from lunch. Times should be reported to the nearest quarter hour.

Section 5 Benefits

5.1 Eligibility

All fulltime employees are eligible for benefits. Halftime employees are eligible for benefits on a prorated basis. Temporary employees and those working less than halftime are not eligible for benefits.

5.2 Vacations

Normally vacation time is not cumulative. Holidays falling within a vacation period will extend the vacation by the number of holidays involved.

Vacation schedules should be planned in advance and requests made in writing to one's Supervisor at least thirty (30) days in advance so that both the employee and other staff persons may be accommodated.

5.2a Administrative exempt and non-exempt staff are eligible for one week vacation after six months employment, and a second week at the end of the first year, with two weeks at the end of each ensuing year.

5.2b Exempt program staff members are eligible for two weeks of vacation after six months of employment, and a second two weeks at the end of the first year, with one month at the end of each ensuing year.

After five years of uninterrupted service, administrative exempt and non-exempt employees shall be granted three weeks of vacation time each year and after ten years or uninterrupted service, the employee shall be granted four weeks of vacation time each year.

Vacation time for clergy staff may be accumulated only with approval of the Conference ministers and the Board of Directors.

5.3 Holidays

The Conference recognizes the following holidays, and grants them with pay to employees scheduled to work on that day:

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday
President's Day
Good Friday after 12 noon
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day and day following
Christmas Eve Day after 12 noon
Christmas Day

When a holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday will be recognized as the paid holiday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday will be recognized as the paid holiday.

5.4 Sick Leave

The Conference will allow sick leave with compensation to all eligible employees whose absence from work is required by personal illness or injury.

An employee will be eligible to receive regular compensation up to twelve (12) days of sick leave per year. At the discretion of the Conference Ministers, additional sick leave maybe granted for an additional thirty (30) days. Any sick leave beyond this must be approved by the Board of Directors in executive session.

Sick leave is non-cumulative. Holidays occurring during a required absence for illness or injury will be honored.

5.5 Emergency Leave and Leave of Absence

At the discretion of the Conference ministers, a staff member may be granted emergency leave, with compensation, without charge to annual sick leave, for no more than five (5) working days annually.

Any extended leave of absence must be approved by the Board of Directors and may or may not be with compensation, according to the recommendation of the Conference Ministers.

5.6 Jury Duty/Military Duty

Approved absence, with full pay remuneration for ten days, is granted any employee serving on jury duty or as a witness in a court of law. Any compensation received for jury duty may be retained by the employee.

Leave of absence without pay is granted for temporary military duty. The employee may elect to use accrued vacation leave for this purpose. Upon return from duty, the

employee shall be restored to his/her former position or to a comparable position. Any special circumstances should be directed first to the Conference Ministers, then Board of Directors for approval.

5.7 Bereavement

Upon the death of a member of the employee's immediate family (spouse, employee's or spouse's grandparents, parents, siblings, child or child's spouse) the eligible employee may be granted up to three (3) days absence with pay. With the approval of the Conference Ministers, additional time may be taken as absence without pay.

5.8 Sabbatical

All eligible clergy staff, after a five year period of service in the employment of the Conference, shall be eligible for up to three (3) months of Sabbatical Leave with full pay. Regular vacation may be added to the sabbatical period. Sabbatical leave is not cumulative. After each sabbatical leave, the staff member must wait four (4) calendar years before being eligible for another. A written plan indicating how the sabbatical will improve job performance shall be submitted to the Conference Ministers, the Personnel Committee and the Board of Directors for approval. A report of the sabbatical experience will be submitted afterwards to the Conference Ministers and the Board of Directors.

Except in an abnormal situation, it is expected that a person will continue in the service of the Conference for a period of at least one (1) year following the completion of a sabbatical leave. The following formula is suggested: for three years service, one (1) month leave; for four (4) years of service, two (2) months leave.

5.9 Annuity and Retirement Fund

Upon the completion of three months of employment, for the employees working twenty (20) or more hours per week the Southern California Nevada Conference provides participation in the Annuity Fund of the United Church of Christ Pension Boards and in the Retirement Fund for Lay Workers administrated by the same agency at no cost to the employee. After ninety (90) days, participation is retroactive at the rate of 14% to both funds.

5.10 Social Security

Non-clergy employees are covered by the Social Security Act and are subject to the legally required withholding tax, which is matched by the Conference.

5.11 Housing Allowance

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service Code 107 allows ordained clergy to designate a portion of their annual salary as housing allowance, and the amount actually expended for housing related costs in any tax year may be excluded from taxable income. Each clergy staff person will report to the Conference Ministers in writing by October 15 the amount of their salary for the ensuing year which they want designated as housing allowance. The Board of Directors will vote such designation by official action at its next meeting or prior to December 31.

5.12 Group Insurance

The Conference provides for health and dental insurance coverage through the United Church of Christ plan for all eligible full time employees who need the coverage (either individual or family). Employees are covered within three months of their employment, and details are covered in booklets provided by the UCC plan given to employees at the time of employment.

The Conference recognizes the need for each eligible full time employee to have long term disability and life insurance. Each employee who is enrolled in the Annuity Fund or the Retirement Fund for lay Workers is, after one (1) month of service, at the employee's option eligible for insurance under the family Protection Plan, for which the Conference will pay the premium. Details are provided to the employee at the time of employment.

5.13 Maternity/Paternity Leave

Maternity/Paternity Leave is provided with pay for a period up to four weeks and, if needed, a leave of absence without pay of up to an additional three (3) months may be approved by the Conference Ministers.

5.14 Automobile and Travel Expense

The Conference purchases automobiles for each fulltime clergy staff member. Each such staff member is responsible for the maintenance of the vehicle and the reporting of occurrences affecting its value or functioning to the Business Manager of the Conference. Mileage records will be maintained as required by the Internal Revenue Service. At the end of each calendar year, the staff person must report to the Business Manager, on a form supplied by the Conference, the number of personal use miles and those miles will be attributed as income reported to the IRS.

This benefit is completely dependent on the financial ability of the Conference from year to year and does not constitute a contract.

5.15 Loans to Clergy Staff

The Conference may provide loans for assistance with housing acquisition. Details will be negotiated by the employee, the Conference Ministers, and the Treasure of the Conference with approval of the board of Directors required. The loan will be due and payable in its entirety within ninety (90) days after the person leaves the employ of the Conference, unless provided for otherwise in contractual agreement predating the adoption of this manual. In unusual circumstances, the Board of Directors may vote to extend the time period for additional ninety (90) day segments.

Section 6 Continuing Education

In order to encourage and assist with the development and implementation of programs to promote the growth and continuing education of eligible fulltime employees, the Conference may provide educational benefits with the approval of the Conference Ministers and Supervisor.

All continuing educational benefits must be used to promote job skills that are related to the job requirements of the employee's current duties or to those which he/she may reasonably be expected to perform in the normal course of work. Related expenses shall be reimbursed with the approval of the Conference Ministers and receipt of adequate documentation.

Clergy Staff elected following the approval of this manual are eligible for two weeks of study leave per year. Request for particular weeks must be submitted in writing to the Conference Ministers ahead of time and will be scheduled with appropriate concern for the effectiveness of the work of the Conference and the other staff as well as the need of the employee.

6.2 Performance Review Process

Performance appraisal is a means by which we grow. The Board of Directors has approved a performance review process which engages all staff at all levels in looking at their job descriptions, setting goals for the year ahead, and then at the end of the year, evaluating their effectiveness in meeting those goals. The process is reviewed periodically by the Board. Every staff person shall be given a copy of the current review process at the time of employment.

Performance appraisal is also an ongoing process, not simply once a year. During the time between formal reviews, when a supervisor finds it advisable to give feedback to a staff member about his or her effectiveness, a memo recounting the feedback may be filed in the staff member's personnel file. An entry of this nature will be presented to the staff person, who will be asked to sign it, not as a sign of agreement but in acknowledgement of having been appraised of its contents.

The Conference Minister(s) job performance shall be reviewed annually by the Personnel Committee of the Board of Directors. The Conference Minister(s) shall meet with the Personnel Committee shortly following the Conference Annual Gathering (meeting) to submit a list of the prior year's accomplishments and goals for the coming year. The job description for the Conference Minister(s) will also be reviewed at this time.

In addition, a more through Conference wide evaluation of the Conference Minister(s) will be conducted by the Personnel Committee every three years.

6.3 Annual Interview

All Conference staff may be invited annually, or at their own request, to an interview with the Personnel Committee to discuss their job and their expectations for the position. The Personnel Committee may make recommendations to the employee, the Board of Directors, or the Conference Ministers as a result of the interview.

6.4 Grievance Procedures

It is our objective to encourage the prompt resolution of employee grievances. All parties to a grievance are expected to treat the issues and information as confidential. Following are the steps to be observed.

- a. The employee should discuss the grievance issue privately with his or her immediate supervisor and every effort should be made to resolve the matter at this level.
- b. All efforts made for resolution at each stage shall be documented.
- c. If this discussion fails to resolve the grievance, the employee shall put the issue in writing and submit it to the Conference Ministers.
- d. The Conference Ministers will document efforts made thus far to resolve the issue and meet with the supervisor and with the employee for discussion and resolution.
- e. The preceding steps will take place within a prompt and reasonable time. Timeliness may be affected by the availability of any of the parties.
- f. If the grievance remains unresolved, the employee shall submit the issue in writing to the Chairperson of the Personnel Committee.
- g. The Chairperson shall appoint a three member Grievance Review Committee, which may include a member of the Board of Directors, for a hearing/review to evaluate the facts. The employee and any others involved may be called upon at this stage to give oral testimony.

- h. Such a hearing shall take place within thirty (30) days.
- i. The supervisor and/or the Conference Ministers shall submit documentation of prior attempts at resolution.
- j. The appointed Grievance Review Committee shall issue a written decision within five (5) days of the hearing and said decision shall be final.

Section 7 Separation

7.1 The bylaws of the Conference provide:

“The Staff shall be employed or dismissed as follows: 1. All professional Staff members shall be employed and dismissed by the Board of Directors in consultation with the Conference Ministers. 2, All other Staff members shall be employed and dismissed by the Conference Ministers.

7.2 Separation Categories;

The end of an employment relationship with the Southern California Nevada Conference should fall into one of the following categories:

- a. Resignation – A voluntary termination freely made by an employee for any reason.
Two months written notice will be provided by exempt clergy and program staff persons and a minimum of two weeks written notice by other exempt and non-exempt staff persons. When an employee resigns, the only compensation beyond salary for the time worked will be that of unused vacation. Sick days, study leave, sabbatical and other benefits are not included.
- b. Retirement and Medicare Eligibility – when an employee becomes eligible for Medicare benefits, the Conference requests he/she notify the Conference Ministers. This will help the Conference to be sure the employee understands benefit and insurance options. Notification should be given to the Conference Ministers at least two months prior to the effective date of retirement. Retirement benefits are subject to the rules, policies and provisions of the Pension Boards of the United Church of Christ, and the Laws pertaining to Social Security , as may be appropriate.
- c. Unsatisfactory Performance – The Southern California Nevada Conference will make every attempt to identify areas of performance requiring improvement, so that careers may continue in a positive manner. If, however, performance or attendance is unsatisfactory, the

Conference may allow, in its sole discretion, a period during which the employee may correct the problem. Failure to correct the situation will result in termination of employment. Two months written notice of termination will be provided to an exempt staff person except in unusual circumstances, and two weeks written notice to a non-exempt staff person except in unusual circumstances.

Serious misconduct such as theft, violence or other disturbance may result in immediate dismissal.

- d. Reduction of the Work Staff – Reorganization or financial considerations, as determined by the Board of Directors, may result in the elimination of positions. Employees thus affected will be given a reasonable amount of released time during the notice period for interviews.
- e. Death of employee – In the event of the death of an employee, the estate shall receive any salary due on the day of death, plus accrued vacation time.

7.3 Severance Arrangements

Full-time non-exempt employees, with less than five (5) years of service who leave due to reduction in work force will normally be given one (1) months notice, plus accrued vacation pay.

Full-time non-exempt employees with more than five (5) years of service who leave due to reduction in work force normally will be given two (2) months notice and accrued vacation pay.

Full-time exempt employees, who leave due to reduction in work force normally will be given two (2) months notice, plus accrued vacation pay.

7.4 Exit Interview

It is the practice of the Conference to conduct exit interviews with each departing employee by the Personnel Committee and the Conference Ministers. These occasions provide an opportunity for the Conference to strengthen its relationship with the remaining employees by learning from the experiences of the one who is leaving. It can also be helpful to the departing employee to give voice to concerns and insights that he or she never felt free to share while employment was continuing.

During a separate exit interview, the Conference Ministers will also discuss matters such as final pay, future recommendations, and provisions for insurance benefit transfers or continuation.

7.5 Continued Coverage

At termination, it is important that employees, especially ordained ministers, contact the Pension board concerning continuing coverage.

At termination, the employee may be allowed to continue participation in his/her group health insurance plan at his/her own expense. The employee will be advised of his/her eligibility at termination or shortly thereafter.