

Personnel Policies and Procedures

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THE PRESBYTERY OF
SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND

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Section One

Introduction and Theological Statement

Welcome to working with the Presbytery of Southern New England!

The Presbytery of Southern New England (PSNE) is a community of faith within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), called into being by Christ to joyfully participate in Christ's ongoing life and work. By the grace of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Presbytery is called to help congregations and leaders to participate in Christ's mission by:

- Proclaiming and hearing the Word of God
- Administering and receiving the sacraments
- Nurturing a covenant community of disciples of Christ.

To carry out this mission, the Presbytery may from time to time employ such staff as needed. This Employee Handbook has been developed to provide support and guidance to both the Presbytery as employer and its staff, both employees and consultants. It provides guidelines about benefits, pay, time off and other policies and procedures of our organization. It is also a helpful reference for understanding our standards and for developing and realizing one's potential as one of our valued employees. It is based on a commitment to recognize and affirm the full potential of each employee, and to develop, support and use the full range of human resource potential by securing and maintaining cooperation between employer and employee. The system reflects an open environment in which objectives are shared, and in which both employer and employee acknowledge their rights and responsibilities.

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good;
love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor.

--Romans 12:9-10

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

--Galatians 5:22-23

Statement on the Constitution of the PC(U.S.A.)

Certain elements of this manual apply only to employed individuals who are ordained as Teaching Elders in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and will be indicated as such in this manual. Employees who may be ordained in denominations other than the PC(U.S.A.) are subject to the forms of government and discipline applicable to that denomination, insofar as those forms of government and discipline do not encourage or allow behavior that is prohibited by this manual.

Section Two - Employment Basics

At-will Statement

The Presbytery is an at-will employer for all non-installed staff.

Job Descriptions

Every Presbytery role should include a job description, which includes at least three core components that describe the nature of the work— the essential functions, the core competencies, and the goals. The essential functions are the central tasks that must be completed by the employee in the execution of the job. They describe what the employee is expected to do. The core competencies are the character attributes and abilities of the person—the how of the job. The goals are areas that will be a specific focus for the coming year. These will usually relate to the accomplishment of the organization’s mission. Goals should be described in SMARTIE terms—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Specific, Inclusive, Equitable. Job descriptions should, as much as possible, offer clear guidance about priorities and roles, be free of biases and social and cultural limitations, and be as specific as possible, without micromanaging. Job descriptions should be reviewed annually, or at least every other year.

Review Process

Reviews will be conducted on an annual basis in a format determined by the Personnel Committee and communicated annually. Feedback is provided throughout the year.

Legal Verifications

All employees must comply with state and federal law by providing an Employment Eligibility Verification Form (Form I-9) and original forms of documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. This is accomplished via our payroll service.

Section Three - Workplace Policies

Policies of PSNE

All staff are expected to fully abide by the following policies. Refusal to do so will result in immediate dismissal and/or disciplinary actions through the PC(U.S.A.) Rules of Discipline. If staff feel that a policy is not being adhered to or have a question, they are to work with their supervisor.

- PSNE Child Protection Policy
- PSNE Sexual Misconduct Policy
- PC(U.S.A.) Standards of Ethical Conduct
- Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
- PSNE Harassment Policy
- PSNE Anti Racism Policy

Equal Opportunity/Non-Discrimination

All Members and Staff shall have working conditions that encourage productivity and promote their general welfare without regard to race, sex, creed, national origin, sexual orientation or gender identity, disability; and assure freedom from any form of sexual harassment or intimidation. Therefore, the Presbytery shall:

- Recruit, hire, and promote persons in all job classifications without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual preference, gender, creed, religious affiliation (except where religious affiliation is determined to be a bona fide occupational qualification), sexual orientation or gender identity, disability unrelated to the abilities involved in the job, or any other characteristic protected by state or federal law.
- Conduct periodic analysis of all personnel actions and develop plans to ensure that Equal Opportunity is supported through an Affirmative Action program. Affirmative Action is the execution of a set of specific and result-oriented procedures designed to eliminate discriminatory practices.
- Avoid employing or assigning persons in positions where they would be working, directly or indirectly, for a relative, or where a relative would participate in any performance evaluation or recommendations on salary or promotion.
- Provide equal opportunities for training during employment.
- Ensure that all personnel matters such as compensation, benefits, transfer, leaves of absence, lay-offs, return from lay-offs, education, tuition assistance, and all others will be administered on a non-discriminatory basis.

Safety and Security

Weapons

Regardless of the laws applicable within the boundaries of PSNE, while performing PSNE duties and when physically interacting with others within the Presbytery, staff are prohibited from carrying weapons of any type. If staff are concerned for their safety related to weapons of any type in the course of their employment, they are to report that immediately to their supervisor and/or the Personnel Committee for resolution.

Health

It is expected that all staff of the Presbytery will attend to their personal health and of those with whom they interact by being fully vaccinated for all available vaccines on a normal medical schedule. If staff have concerns about their health safety at any time in the course of their employment, they are to report that immediately to their supervisor and/or the Personnel Committee for resolution.

Intellectual Property

It is acknowledged that in their capacity as an employee of the Presbytery, the employee has in the past, at present, and in the future will create, author, make, and design copyrightable works, including new ideas or concepts, writings, musical or dramatic or literary materials, the content and visible elements of a web page, art work, graphics, and other creative works of every kind and nature, recorded on and in all audio and video recordings and other mediums and technologies now existing and yet undeveloped (collectively referred to as “creative works”). The Presbytery and employee acknowledge that the employee has and will make copyrightable works for the sole benefit and ownership of the Presbytery, which are made with the Presbytery resources, including compensation for the time expended. The employee shall be granted copyright ownership to all material, in form, content, and creative content, developed by the employee during their tenure at the Presbytery of Southern New England. The Presbytery shall have the right to use the employee’s image and materials in its ministries without payment of royalties during his tenure. Materials developed for use in the Presbytery may be produced and used without royalties even after the employee’s tenure ends.

Digital and Social Media

Presbytery employees are expected to utilize official Presbytery social and digital media for all Presbytery communications (email, social media, video and voice production,

web). Communication should be for the benefit of promotion of Presbytery and related ministries. All communications shall comport with the current communications plan of the Presbytery which is developed by the Communications Manager and approved by the Presbytery Roundtable. Employees' personal social media accounts do not speak for the Presbytery.

Information Technology (IT)

All PSNE staff are provided with a laptop and other applicable tech hardware at the time of the beginning of employment. If they need replacement, staff are to work with their supervisor. Staff may purchase these items at the end of employment for their depreciated value, if desired.

The Presbytery works with an outside IT consultant to protect both hardware and internal software used in the normal course of work from malicious attacks which are commonplace on the internet today and are an area of vulnerability for everyone. This includes software that employees will be directed to download. This is not work or personal monitoring software. If employees have any concerns about privacy or usage, they may speak with their supervisor, who may put them in touch with our outside IT consultant to address those concerns. All staff are required to participate in the use of this software as it is protective of the organization and the data we both use and store.

Concerns and Grievances, Non-Retaliation

If an employee has any concerns related to their work with staff, members, volunteers, or related persons to the Presbytery they are to address those concerns first to their supervisor. If their supervisor fails to take appropriate and documented action, they are to report these concerns to the Chair of the Personnel Committee.

Regardless of the concern raised, there is zero tolerance for any work-related retaliation. If the concern is related to the General Presbytery and/or Stated Clerk, those concerns are to be reported directly to the Chair of the Personnel Committee.

Use of Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA)

In accordance with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Book of Order in G-2.0504 and G-2.0901, we affirm that the use of Non-Disclosure Agreements related to employment are prohibited.

Background Checks

All staff must have a full criminal background check conducted by our insurance carrier provider prior to an offer of employment.

Section Four - Code of Conduct

Anti-Harassment

It is the policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and PSNE that all church members, church officers, non-member employees, and volunteers of congregations, governing bodies, and entities of the church (hereafter: “Members and Staff”) shall maintain the integrity of the ministerial, employment, and professional relationship.

Definitions:

Sexual Harassment/Misconduct

Members and Staff who engage in sexual misconduct are in violation of the principles set forth in scripture, and of the ministerial, pastoral, employment, and professional relationship. It is never permissible or acceptable for a church member, officer, employee, or volunteer to engage in sexual misconduct. For further detail, please consult the PSNE Sexual Misconduct policy and the Church Discipline section of the Book of Order/Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Verbal Harassment and Intimidation

Members and Staff will be honest and truthful in their relationships with others; refrain from gossip and abusive speech; show respect and provide encouragement for colleagues. Verbal harassment and/or intimidation of any kind will not be tolerated and is grounds for immediate dismissal.

Written Harassment and Intimidation

Members and staff will refrain from distributing written communication of all types (letters, emails, text messages, social media etc.) that represents or promotes gossip, defamation, knowingly wrong or malicious accusations, and/or other abusive language; Staff are expected to respect the privacy of individuals, and not divulge information obtained in confidence without express permission, unless an individual is a danger to self or others.

Reporting:

Members and staff who have a complaint about any matter related to employment with the Presbytery may personally take the complaint to the General Presbyter, or in the alternative, to the Personnel Committee, for discussion and resolution.

(a) Such action shall not result in reprisal, recrimination or discrimination of any sort, regardless of outcome; and

(b) The employee has the right to select an advocate to be with them. Any advocate shall serve without expense to the Presbytery, and has no authority to go beyond helping present the employee's complaint unless under the manner described in the Rules of Discipline of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Whistleblower

The "Whistleblower Policy" is intended to encourage Members and Staff to raise serious concerns internally so that PSNE can address and correct inappropriate conduct and actions. It is the responsibility of all Members and Staff to report concerns about violations of the PSNE's Standards of Ethical Conduct and/or violations of law or regulations that govern PSNE's operations.

Reporting Procedure

PSNE has an open door policy and suggests that Members and Staff share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with their supervisor, or the Personnel Committee. The General Presbyter and/or the Personnel Committee has the responsibility to investigate all reported complaints. Members or Staff with concerns or complaints may also submit their concerns in writing directly to the General Presbyter and/or the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee is responsible for ensuring that all complaints about unethical or illegal conduct are investigated and resolved.

Confidentiality

Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

Disciplinary Actions

For PC(U.S.A.) ordained staff (teaching and ruling elders), the Church Discipline section of Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA) takes precedence over any policies of the Presbytery when applicable. Ordained staff from other denominations will be referred to their denominational reporting process as appropriate.

A progressive disciplinary process is in place. Progressive discipline policy and procedures are designed to provide a structured corrective action process to improve and prevent a recurrence of undesirable employee behavior and performance issues. Outlined below are the steps of this process:

- 1.) Counseling and verbal warning: to bring attention to the existing performance or conduct issue.
- 2.) Written warning: which involves more formal documentation of the performance, conduct or attendance issues and consequences with a copy to the employee's personnel file. A formal performance improvement plan for the employee to follow for sustained corrective action could be provided.
- 3.) Suspension and final written warning: Some performance, conduct or safety incidents are so problematic and harmful that the most effective action may be the temporary removal of the employee from the workplace. When immediate action is necessary to ensure the safety of the employee or others, the employee may be suspended pending the results of an investigation with or without pay.
- 4.) Recommendation for termination of employment: The last and most serious step in the progressive discipline process is a recommendation to terminate employment.

Generally, PSNE will work to exercise the progressive nature of this policy by first providing warnings, issuing a final written warning or suspending the employee from the workplace before proceeding to a recommendation to terminate employment. However, we reserve the right to combine and skip steps depending on the circumstances of each situation and the nature of the offense. Furthermore, employees may be terminated without prior notice or disciplinary action.

Section Five - Compensation and Development

Compensation/Benefits/Pay Schedule

The Presbytery seeks to offer, within the limitations of its budget, individual salaries, bonuses, benefits, and fees that reflect a wide variety of considerations, including specifically:

- External equity, in general, with the patterns of compensation for positions of apparently similar duties and responsibilities in representative organizations, particularly non-profit organizations, in the labor market from which Presbytery employees are drawn;
- Internal similarity of salaries for positions of similar duties and responsibility within the Presbytery;
- Periodic review and, as warranted, adjustment of the salary and/or a bonus for a particular job as the duties and responsibilities of that job change; and
- Periodic review and, as warranted, adjustment of the individual employee's salary, to reflect and reward sustained growth and improvement of performance of the duties of the job.

The periodic compensation review process should be in accord with current policies established and observed by the Personnel Committee.

For ordained staff in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) benefits will be offered in accordance with the usual practices of the Commission on Ministry and the Board of Pensions. Board of Pensions benefits include medical, death and disability insurance, and pensions. PSNE staff may elect other benefits offered by the Board of Pensions during the annual enrollment period. The cost of those additional coverages will be paid via payroll deduction in equal quantities throughout all pay periods in the year in which they are in effect. The new menu plan from the Board of Pensions no longer offers the traditional one-month transitional medical coverage. This continues to be offered if needed by the Presbytery.

Because PSNE utilizes a virtual office, all staff are provided with a technology stipend which is provided quarterly through reimbursement and the presentation of relevant receipt(s). The amount of this stipend is reviewed annually as part of the budget process.

The pay schedule is established for each year by December 20th of the previous year and sent in writing to all staff. All staff are paid through direct deposit.

Professional Development

All staff have access to professional development time. For PC(U.S.A.) ordained staff this is the normal two weeks of continuing education offered annually with an individual reimbursable budget line. For other staff members, this includes time off for continuing education at the discretion of their direct supervisor and access to pooled funds for staff continuing education. All staff are required to clear continuing education plans with their supervisor and/or the Personnel Committee at least 2 months in advance.

Section Six - Benefits and Perks

Leaves of Absence

Parental

Members and Staff should inform the General Presbyter and/or the Personnel Committee (who will provide guidance as needed) of a need for parental leave, at least two months in advance of the projected leave.

The addition of a new child to a family brings risks of complications, unexpected needs, and other uncertainties. Thus, it is the duty of the Members and Staff and the Personnel Committee to deal with these issues in an open and caring relationship.

The General Presbyter and/or the Personnel Committee should make provisions for the continuation of pastoral/professional functions during the leave period.

For non-ordained staff, parental leave should be granted for a period of twelve weeks, with full salary provided the individual has been an employee for at least three months prior. Leave may start prior to the addition of the child. If utilizing the Paid Family Leave Act, which covers 70% of (effective) salary, the Presbytery should continue to pay the other 30% of (effective) salary. See https://ctpaidleave.org/s/?language=en_US for legal information from the State of Connecticut.

For ordained staff in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) the rules of G.2.0804 regarding family medical leave take precedence, which requires a minimum of 12 weeks of full pay and benefits for all categories of family leave. It is the policy of the Presbytery that as much as possible, family leave of any type for ordained staff members is planned at least two months in advance in consultation with the Personnel Committee.

Parental leave should be given in the case of a critical family situation related to the addition of a child (including, but not limited to the case of miscarriage, still birth, or infant death) up to the full twelve weeks, as needed.

The Presbytery permits new parents to bring a child to the workplace (in appropriate situations) for up to age six months, or when the baby begins to crawl.

Continuing education time and reimbursements along with travel reimbursements if applicable may not be used during parental leave.

Family/Emergency Leave

Paid family leave should be given in the case of a critical family situation up to the full twelve weeks. This leave should be requested in writing to the supervisor and/or Personnel Committee.

Installed clergy staff members are subject to the family leave provisions in the Book of Order section G-2.0804.

Continuing education time and reimbursements along with travel reimbursements if applicable may not be used during family/emergency leave.

Disability

Disability leave may be granted at the request of the employee in writing to the supervisor and/or Personnel Committee. For ordained PC(U.S.A.) staff members, the rules of short or long-term disability from the Board of Pensions will apply.

Continuing education time and reimbursements along with travel reimbursements if applicable may not be used during disability leave.

Sabbatical

Sabbatical Leave is granted for the General Presbyter and the Stated Clerk after six (6) continuous years of service in their present position. Sabbatical Leave is three (3) months. Accrued vacation time and study leave may be attached to the Sabbatical Leave.

Equipment

All staff will be provided with the equipment necessary to undertake regular job functions. If there are issues with equipment necessitating repair or replacement, staff are to consult with their supervisor.

Reimbursements and Home Office Set-up

All staff will receive a home office reimbursement to offset the costs of home internet/cell phone.

All other reimbursements for staff are at the approval of their supervisor and/or the chair of the Personnel Committee, and must be based on the approved annual budget of the Presbytery. Mileage reimbursement is calculated at the current IRS business rate.

Benefits

No benefits are available for hourly staff other than those already outlined in this manual.

Section Seven - Working Hours, PTO and Vacation

Working Hours

The Presbytery “office” is virtual and staff are generally available during normal working hours. Because many of our staff are part-time all staff will have their regular work hours posted and if hours shift during a week, they are to notify their supervisor and provide an update via the “responder” function for email.

Contractors who provide services to PSNE must provide the work for which they are contracted. Working hours, PTO, and Vacation should be provided to PSNE for communication, but are at the discretion of the contractor.

Paid Time Off (PTO)

All staff are granted up to 10 floating paid days off per year. These days must be approved ahead of time by the supervisor and/or Personnel Committee.

Holidays

The Presbytery offices are closed on all federal holidays. If a staff member is required to work on a holiday, or it falls on a Saturday or a Sunday, they may take equivalent time as a floating holiday or extra vacation day. The Presbytery office is closed the week between Christmas and New Years.

Vacation and Study Leave

Vacation time is negotiated with each staff member at the time of employment. For installed PC(U.S.A.) staff vacation is five weeks and study leave is two weeks. Ordained staff are eligible for a three month sabbatical every six years in accordance with the COM policy.

Section Eight - Employee Resignation and Termination

In/Voluntary Separation

Three months of notice will be given for involuntary separation related to financial necessity. One month of pay per year of work is provided as severance for involuntary separation. This is to include Board of Pensions payments if the staff member is ordained in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Accumulated/unused vacation and personal time may be paid out at time of voluntary separation or involuntary separation if above notices are adhered to.

Staff are to give a minimum 14-day notice for voluntary separation.

Unemployment Policy

Unemployment coverage is based on the location of the work being performed. In CT, the location of the corporation, there is a test in their handbook for employers to assist in determining if coverage is required. The general guidelines are as follows: if the staff person is a member of the clergy, they are considered “self-employed” by the IRS [even though they receive a W-2] so are not covered by unemployment. Regular, non-clergy employees, in most cases, will be covered by their state of residence unless they commute into CT for the majority of their time.

Signatures

I have received and reviewed the Personnel Manual.

Name of Employee:

Name of Supervisor:

Signature of Employee:

Signature of Supervisor:

Date: