

1 **THE PRESBYTERY OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE**
2 **PERSONNEL POLICIES.**

3
4 **PREFACE**

5
6 In accord with the Book of Order G-3.0110, the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee employs persons to
7 assist its Administrative Committee and other committees in carrying out the mission of the whole
8 church within its bounds. As Reformed Christians, we believe that God calls each one to service
9 through our vocations. We believe that each staff member is called by God to serve the Presbytery
10 and the Church through each person’s work.

11
12 **The purpose of this manual is to establish personnel policies for all persons employed by the**
13 **Presbytery of Middle Tennessee to serve in the various categories of employment.**

14
15 In accordance with the Book of Order G-3.0106, these policies and practices are subject to the
16 Mission and Operations Manual of the Presbytery. The Presbytery reserves the right to modify,
17 supplement, rescind, or revise any policy, procedure, standard, or benefit from time to time, without
18 notice, as it deems necessary or appropriate. These personnel policies do not represent a contract. All
19 employees, whether called, elected, or hourly, are employees at will as defined by the State of
20 Tennessee. The Presbytery does not enter into employment contracts. This manual, and the policies
21 within, supersede any previous personnel manual or policy.

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23
24 ***Our Mission Statement***

25 ***The Presbytery of Middle Tennessee is a community of disciples***
26 ***that engages in worshipful work in order to further the mission of God.***

27
28 ***Our Core Values***

29 ***Our identity as the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee is grounded in the Triune God:***
30 ***in Jesus Christ,***
31 ***who moves us from brokenness to shalom.***
32 ***in God the Creator, whom Jesus called Abba, Father,***
33 ***who moves us from fear to generosity.***
34 ***in the Holy Spirit,***
35 ***who moves us from isolation to relationship.***

36
37 ***Our Vision***

38 ***The Presbytery of Middle Tennessee is a community of churches and church leaders***
39 ***whose role is to guide and support the work of its constituents,***
40 ***striving to build up the body of Christ through connections of mutual support,***
41 ***creating a culture of leadership development, and church transformation.***

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1
2 **GENERAL EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

3 **EMPLOYMENT AT WILL**

4 Employment is with the mutual consent of the employee and the Presbytery. Consequently, both
5 employees and the Presbytery have the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with
6 or without cause or advance notice. These policies do not constitute or imply a contract.
7

8 **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

9 The Presbytery is committed to equal employment opportunities for all qualified persons, without
10 regard to race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, marital or familial status, physical handicap
11 disability, medical condition, age, or religious affiliation, except when religious affiliation is
12 determined to be a bona fide occupational qualification to the extent required by law. This applies to
13 all employment practices, including hiring, promotions, training, disciplinary action, pay, termination
14 and benefits.
15

16 **EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS**

17 The Presbytery has the following classes of employees including elected (G-3.0104), called, hourly,
18 interim, and temporary Employee Categories:

19 **EMPLOYEE BENEFIT GROUPS**

- 20 1) Employees working 20 or more hours per week (2)
21 a) Employees prior to January 1, 2019 receiving full benefits:
22 More than 20 but less than 31 hours per week:
23 *Stated Clerk
24 b) Employees after January 1, 2019 receiving no benefits:
25 More than 20 hours but less 31
26 None
27 c) Employees 32 to 35 hours per week receiving full benefits:
28 *Executive Presbyter(s)
29 2) Employees working less than 20 hours per week (1) – eligible for self-funded benefits:
30 *Administrative Assistant
31 3) Installed pastors (0)
32 None
33 4) Ministers of the Word and Sacrament working 20 or more hours per week (1)
34 a) 32 to 35 hours per week receiving full benefits:
35 *Executive Presbyter(s)
36 5) Minister of the Word and Sacrament working less than 20 hours per week (0)
37 none

38 **Elected and Called Staff Positions:**

39 **Stated Clerk:**

40
41 Per the Book of Order, the Presbytery elects a Stated Clerk. Benefits received are medical, death,
42 disability, and pension through the Board of Pensions, and reimbursement for some professional
43 expenses.
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45

1 Executive Presbyter(s):

2 The Presbytery also has Executive Presbyter(s), a called position. The terms of employment and
3 benefits of the Executive Presbyter(s) shall be defined in the call.

4 In the event of a vacancy, the Nominating Task Force will nominate a Search Team made up of seven
5 (7) individuals, ruling and teaching elders as nearly equal as possible and being as representative of the
6 Presbytery as possible, who are elected by the Presbytery. Position descriptions are recommended by
7 the Personnel Task Force to the Administrative Committee for authorization and require approval by the
8 Presbytery prior to starting a search.

9
10 The position opening will be posted throughout the denomination and the Presbytery. Every effort
11 will be made to ensure that persons who wish to recommend nominees for these positions have ample
12 opportunity to place names in nomination. The Search Team will review and verify the qualifications
13 of each candidate, conduct thorough reference and background checks, and conduct personal
14 interviews before placing a name in nomination. When nominees are teaching elders, the Presbytery's
15 process for examination and approval of terms of call are required.

16
17 Hourly Staff:

18 The Executive Presbyter(s) and a member of the Personnel Task Force will recruit, interview, and select
19 persons for hourly positions to be approved by the Personnel Task Force. Position descriptions will be
20 recommended by Personnel Task Force to the Administrative Committee for approval. All employees
21 are eligible for some Board of Pension benefits through self-funded participation. Benefits and terms of
22 employment will be defined in each position description. Any changes in the requirements and/or hourly
23 expectation could require change in benefits. The position opening will be posted including throughout
24 the Presbytery.

25
26 Interim Employees (Transitional called or elected employees):

27 To provide continuity of administrative and/or program services, the Administrative Committee may
28 authorize the Executive Presbyter(s) and/or the Personnel Task Force, or an appointed search team, to
29 select interim staff to fill vacant positions until the position is filled. Benefits and terms of employment
30 will be defined in each position description.

31
32 Temporary Employees (hourly):

33 As needs emerge for additional administrative and/or program services, temporary staff may be
34 appointed by the Executive Presbyter(s) and/or the Personnel Task Force for limited terms to supply
35 specific services provided funding is available and approved by the Administrative Committee.

36
37 **APPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT**

38 All applicants for employment are required to submit a written application and/or resume prior to the
39 first interview. Employees are selected on their merit, and full consideration is given to education,
40 skill, training, and experience. Prospective employees of Presbytery will be informed during the
41 evaluation, interviewing, and selection process that a background check will be conducted and asked
42 to sign a consent form and a release form, giving authorization for the background check.

43
44 **SUPERVISION**

45 The Executive Presbyter(s) are the head of staff and supervisor of all hourly employees. The
46 Executive Presbyter(s) has the responsibility for the oversight of office operations. The Personnel
47 Task Force of the Presbytery is responsible for personal matters as specified in the Presbytery's
48 Mission and Operations Manual and these policies. The Personnel Task Force assigns a liaison from
49 among its members to each employee who is the point of contact for their respective employee.

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PERSONNEL RECORDS

The Presbytery maintains permanent personnel files which contain pertinent records relating to employment. The personnel file includes, but is not limited to, the employee's job application, resume, and records of training, documentation of performance evaluations, and salary adjustments. It is important that the Presbytery always has current information about its employees. Staff members will inform the Presbytery immediately if there is a change of name, address, telephone number, marital status, etc.

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Personnel files are confidential and are the property of the Presbytery. Access to the files is restricted to the Executive Presbyter(s) and members of the Personnel Task Force who have legitimate reason to review the information in the file. Employees desiring to review their file should contact the Personnel Task Force Chair. With reasonable notice and sufficient rationale, employees may review personnel records deemed relevant to the request by, and in the presence of the Personnel Chair.

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TIME RECORDS

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All hourly employees are required to maintain a monthly record of hours worked, vacation days used, and absences. Records from the previous month will be submitted the first of each month to the Executive Presbyter(s).

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT

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The Presbytery is committed to providing a work environment which is free of sexual harassment. The Presbytery affirms and abides by the *General Assembly PC(USA) Sexual Misconduct Policy and Its Procedures* and adopts the definition of sexual harassment contained therein. For further information see <https://www.pcusa.org/resource/presbyterian-church-us-sexual-misconduct-policy-an/>

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The Presbytery also affirms and abides by the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee Sexual Misconduct Policy.

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ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

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The use, sale, transfer, possession, or being "under the influence" of alcohol, illegal drugs, or controlled substances when on duty is prohibited. Violation of this policy will result in termination.

34

SMOKING AND TOBACCO USE

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Tobacco use is not allowed-in the Presbytery office at any time. This policy is for the health and safety of all employees and visitors, as well as protection of the facilities.

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CONFIDENTIALITY

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All employees must execute and abide by confidentiality agreements and other specific procedures that the Presbytery has established to safeguard its confidential information. The Presbytery absolutely prohibits the disclosure of confidential information to anyone outside of Presbytery or anyone inside the Presbytery who does not have a need to know the information. The Presbytery absolutely prohibits the use of confidential information for any purpose other than in connection with Presbytery's business. This includes speaking, recording, writing, and all electronic forms of communication that contain confidential information.

1 **ELECTRONIC MAIL AND INTERNET USE**

2 The Presbytery reserves the right to monitor, access, review, copy, store, or delete any electronic
3 mail from its email system for any purpose and to disclose them to others, as it deems appropriate.
4 The Presbytery reserves the right to monitor an employee’s use of the Presbytery’s internet.

5
6 **OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT**

7 Disclosure of any outside employment will be made to the Executive Presbyter(s). All employees are
8 prohibited from engaging in outside employment, private business, or other activities, which might
9 have an adverse effect on or create a conflict of interest with the Presbytery.

10
11 **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

12 Job descriptions for all elected and called staff will be recommended by the Personnel Task Force to
13 the Administrative Committee for authorization and approved by the Presbytery. Other staff position
14 descriptions, and any changes to staff position descriptions, are recommended by the Executive
15 Presbyter(s) or the Personnel Task Force to the Administrative Committee for approval.

16
17 **COMPENSATION**

18 Compensation is established by the Personnel Task Force, in consultation with the Executive
19 Presbyter(s), and Administrative Committee, and approved by Presbytery as part of the annual budget
20 process. Payroll checks will be distributed to each employee on the 15th and the last day of each
21 month. These checks will show gross wages, deductions, and net pay. Any adjustments in
22 compensation required by absenteeism, etc., will be made in the following pay period. Overtime
23 work is not permitted unless specifically requested or authorized by the Executive Presbyter(s).

24
25 **GUIDELINES FOR REIMBURSEMENT**

26 Reimbursable professional expenses for employees include mileage allowance at the current IRS
27 Standard Mileage rate, parking fees, tolls, and meals incurred in the performance of duties.

28 Additional allowable professional expenses for employees include:

- 29 • Fees for local conferences and events, approved in advance by the Executive Presbyter(s) or
30 Personnel Task Force Chair.
- 31 • Dues to professional organizations approved in advance by the Executive Presbyter(s) or
32 Personnel Task Force Chair.
- 33 • Continuing education expenses (tuition, room, board, travel) approved in advance by the
34 Executive Presbyter(s) or Personnel Task Force Chair.
- 35 • Governing body events appropriate for the position, approved in advance by the Executive
36 Presbyter(s) or Personnel Task Force Chair.
- 37 • Meals for Presbytery leaders when Presbytery business is being discussed.
- 38 • Other expenses as approved by the Personnel Task Force.

39
40 Expenses for entertainment, alcohol, or tobacco products are not reimbursable. **Employees are**
41 **expected to monitor and respect the limits of annual professional expenses allocations as voted**
42 **on by the Presbytery in the annual budget.**

1 **BENEFITS AND SERVICES**

2
3 **MEDICAL AND PENSION PLAN**

4 Complete details of the medical and pension plan, and the services offered, can be obtained from the
5 Board of Pensions (<http://www.pensions.org/Pages/default.aspx>) or the Executive Presbyter(s).

6
7 **CONTINUING EDUCATION**

8 For elected and called staff, continuing education will be stated in the terms of call or the job description
9 voted on by the Presbytery. As hourly employees are encouraged to improve their skills, any
10 continuing education selected will be negotiated with the Executive Presbyter(s) with expenses paid
11 by the Presbytery as approved by Personnel Task Force.

12
13
14 **HOLIDAYS**

15 The following days are designated as holidays, and the Presbytery office will not be open:
16 New Year's Eve Day; New Year's Day; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; Good Friday; Memorial Day;
17 Independence Day; Labor Day; Thanksgiving Day; Friday following Thanksgiving; Christmas Eve
18 Day; Christmas Day. All full-time employees receive full pay for these holidays; part time staff members
19 receive holiday pay if said holiday falls on their scheduled work day.

20
21
22 **ANNUAL VACATION**

23 Vacation is granted to staff members to refresh themselves from the routine of daily work. Vacation
24 scheduling is subject to the approval of the Executive Presbyter(s). The Executive Presbyter(s) will schedule
25 vacations in such a manner that the operational efficiency of the Presbytery will not be impaired.
26 Vacation must be taken in the year it is earned and may not be carried over to the following year or accumulated.
27 Employees are required to record vacation days used on monthly time records. If an employee resigns
28 or is terminated, vacation pay will be pro-rated.

29
30 Elected and Called Staff: The length of vacation is determined by the job descriptions and/or the
31 terms of call in compliance with the policies of the Presbytery.

32
33 Hourly Staff: The length of vacation is determined by the length of service. In the first two years of
34 service, two weeks of equivalent pay are granted. After two years of service, three weeks of equivalent
35 pay are earned.

36
37 At the start of each year, the employee accrues vacation according to the schedule identified for each
38 position/category of position and may use any or all of the year's vacation at any time during the
39 year. However, during the first year of employment, should the employee use all of that year's
40 vacation and then leave the Presbytery's employment, the unearned vacation time must be repaid.

41
42 **SICK LEAVE**

43 Paid sick leave is granted to staff members to protect them from endangering their health and that of
44 their fellow workers. Paid sick leave may also be used for the care of an employee's immediate family
45 members. The employee must report the illness to the Executive Presbyter(s) as soon as possible and
46 thereafter report daily on his/her condition.

47
48 Sick leave is not a benefit to be used in place of personal leave or vacation. All doctors, dentist or
49 other appointments made outside an actual illness will be considered as personal time off. Employees

1 are required to record sick days used on monthly time records. Sick leave may be taken only to the
2 extent that it is earned in accordance with the provision of these rules and regulations. Sick leave will
3 be charged exactly as it is taken.

4
5 Paid sick leave for elected, called and full-time staff will accrue at the rate of one day per month of
6 service and will be credited to each to member's account as it is earned. After one full year of service,
7 sick leave for part-time staff will accrue at the rate of one day every two months. Unused sick leave
8 will be allowed to accumulate up to a maximum of ninety days. In the event of extended illness or
9 physical disability, a staff member will be required to exhaust all earned and credited sick leave and
10 annual vacation.

11
12 **No payment will be made for accrued sick leave of an employee upon termination of his/her**
13 **employment with the Presbytery.** If it is determined that the illness or disability for which sick
14 leave is taken by a staff member is unjustified, that staff member will be subject to remedial
15 action up to and including reimbursement of pay and termination of employment.

16 17 18 **FAMILY LEAVE**

19
20 All employees shall be covered by the Presbytery's Family Medical Leave Policy (approved May
21 2021).

22 23 **Eligibility**

24 Because of the unique situation that is a church family, illness, the addition of a child to a family, or
25 the illness of a pastor's loved one creates a unique burden on both a pastor and the pastor's
26 congregation. This policy is our attempt to build a shared understanding of faithfully safeguarding
27 both needed support of the pastor and their family, and the continued vitality of the congregation. As
28 a connectional church, with shared leadership between Teaching and Ruling Elders, we hope to foster
29 communication for mutual care.

30
31 This policy covers all Ministers of Word and Sacrament serving a PC(USA) entity including those
32 serving in temporary/transitional or part-time positions, as well as in installed positions. Churches are
33 encouraged to extend similar benefits to other employees, at the session's discretion.

34 35 **Parameters**

- 36 • Within any 12-month period, a maximum of 12 weeks (total, regardless of precipitating event or
37 circumstance) of Paid Leave may be agreed upon with as much advance notice as possible. For the
38 sake of the health of each congregation, consecutive use of Paid Leave, vacation and sabbatical is
39 discouraged. Specific circumstances which call for the family/medical leave will help guide the
40 agreement reached about the length of the time for the family/medical leave. Possible partial
41 performance of pastoral duties during the absence is negotiable between the pastor and session. If
42 desired, the Committee on Ministry can provide assistance and support for these conversations. If
43 there is disagreement about the necessity of leave when it is not clear through the guidelines of the
44 Board of Pensions, either the pastor or the session can call on COM for help negotiating the Paid
45 Leave.
- 46 • Paid Leave may be used consecutively or intermittently. Tracking use and substantiating
47 documentation of intermittent absences is the responsibility of each session and pastor.
- 48 • During Paid Leave, the pastor will continue to receive all benefits in their terms of call, including
49 dues paid to and benefits provided by the Board of Pensions.

1 • Paid Leave is not vacation or sabbatical, and Paid Leave Time will not reduce the vacation/study
2 leave/sabbatical time in the pastor’s/employee’s terms of call/contract. At the discretion of the pastor
3 and session, vacation time may be used to extend the Paid Leave outlined in this policy.

4 • Following the period of Paid Leave, the pastor shall be entitled to return to the same position with
5 the same title, terms of call, hours worked, and job description.

6 • We recommend that the pastor/full-time employee, COM representative(s), and session/board
7 representative(s) participate in a reentry/reevaluation conversation during the Paid Leave, before the
8 pastor/employee returns to work.

9 o Becoming a parent, healing from a personal loss, and caring for ill/disabled family members
10 are major life events that can be substantially impactful. Having a conversation about the changes in
11 perspective/priorities brought about during/from the Paid Leave can smooth the pastor/employee’s
12 reentry into the life of the church/entity.

13 • Churches and pastors/employees are encouraged to use the energy, intelligence, imagination, and
14 love promised in ordination vows to approach the structure of each leave situation.

15 o For example, an employee with a life-altering reason for Paid Leave may be helped with a
16 gradual return to their job duties, which would ultimately benefit both the life of the church and the
17 thriving of the pastor/employee.

18 If desired, COM will consult with churches on pulpit supply — supported either by an emergency
19 pastoral supply fund, or by suggesting preachers who have agreed to forgo an honorarium under such
20 circumstances.

21 22 **Types of Leave**

23 **Events and Circumstances impacting the pastor** — These situations affect a pastor’s personal
24 ability to perform their duties. The Board of Pensions’ policy covers 60% of the effective salary of
25 the pastor in these situations:

26 • **Medical Leave:** Temporary Disability is defined by the Board of Pensions as when an employee is
27 “unable to perform regular work duties because of sickness or injury. Temporary disability benefits
28 are generally available for up to 90 days from the date of the disability, after a 14-day waiting period.”
29 The Board of Pensions Temporary Disability benefit will cover 60% of the pastor/employee’s salary
30 during Medical Leave, thus reducing the financial burden on the church. It is up to the Session of each
31 congregation to determine if they are able/willing to pay the remaining 40% of the pastor/employee’s
32 salary during his or her leave.

33 • **Parental Leave:** Within one year of birth or adoption, a pastor/employee may take up to twelve
34 consecutive or intermittent weeks of time off for bonding and care for the new family member.

35 • **Childbirth:** The Board of Pensions Temporary Disability benefit will cover 60% of the
36 pastor/employee’s salary during Parental Leave with approval from a physician, thus reducing some
37 of the financial burden on the church. It is up to the Session of each congregation to determine if they
38 are able/willing to pay the remaining 40% of the pastor/employee’s salary during her leave.

39 • **Adoption:** In cases of adoption, the Temporary Disability Benefit will not apply. It is recommended
40 that churches pay either 60% of the employee’s salary, the full salary less the amount needed to pay
41 for pulpit supply, or some other amount negotiated by the session and pastor/employee. The Board of
42 Pensions does offer an adoption grant that the pastor/employee should be made aware of as they
43 navigate the costs of adoption.

44 45 **Events and Circumstances impacting the family of the pastor:**

46 • **Caregiver/Family Leave:** When a family member requires care due to an illness or disability, a
47 pastor/employee may take up to twelve weeks Paid Leave, either consecutively or intermittently,
48 depending on the nature of illness and need. It is appropriate for pastors and other covered employees
49 to clarify the necessity or relationship that requires caregiving. It is recommended that churches pay

1 either 60% of the employee’s salary, the full salary less the amount needed to pay for pulpit supply,
2 or some other amount negotiated by the session and pastor/employee.

3 • **Personal Loss Leave:** In the event of the death of a loved one or a tragic event, a pastor/employee
4 may take up to twelve weeks Paid Leave, either consecutively or intermittently, depending on the
5 nature of event and need. It is recommended that churches pay either 60% of the employee’s salary,
6 the full salary less the amount needed to pay for pulpit supply, or some other amount negotiated by
7 the session and pastor/employee.

8 **Church [and Other PC(USA) Entity] Support**

9 • Where possible, pastors/employees are encouraged to anticipate Paid Leave with as much advance
10 notice as possible, and with sensitivity around the needs of the church/entity/body such as temporary
11 replacement and fulfillment of duties. Again, the COM is available to help sessions arrange
12 appropriate pulpit supply and pastoral services.

13 • Paid Family Leave is not intended to be a burden but rather a source of joy and comfort as
14 churches/entities encourage pastors to take time for the good of their families. Churches with smaller
15 staffs are encouraged to consult with the presbytery about implementing this policy. • Pastors laboring
16 outside the parish setting are to be guided by their employers’ FMLA policies (e.g. hospital chaplains).
17 In the absence of an FMLA policy, this policy is recommended.

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19
20 **PERSONAL LEAVE**

21 There are some instances where an employee may need to miss work other than sickness to care for
22 personal matters. Paid personal leave days are available to full-time and elected staff members at a
23 rate of two (2) days per year (non-accumulative). Personal leave must be requested in advance and
24 approved by the Executive Presbyter(s).

25
26 Additional personal leave will be granted by the Executive Presbyter(s) to employees who are not
27 temporary for the following reasons:

- 28 • Death in the immediate family (wife, husband, child, brother, sister, parent, parent-in-law, or
29 relative in the same household). Five (5) consecutive days will be given with pay, in the event
30 of a death in the immediate family.
- 31 • The Presbytery will grant paid leave for employees to perform jury duty or serve as a witness
32 in a court case.

33
34 **SABBATICAL**

35 The Presbytery awards sabbatical leave as required by Presbytery’s policy and the terms of call.

36
37
38 **MILITARY LEAVE**

39 The Presbytery grants leaves of absences for individuals to perform duties in the “uniform services”
40 in accordance with applicable law. The Presbytery may provide up to two weeks of paid leave to
41 individuals to engage in active training or active duty as a member of the National Guard or organized
42 reserve of any branch of the United States Armed Forces.

43
44 **PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

45 All employees of the Presbytery will participate in a performance evaluation conducted by their
46 supervisor(s) and others.

- 47 • New employees will participate in an evaluation toward the end of 90 days.
- 48 • All employees will participate in an annual evaluation normally in the third quarter of the
49 calendar year.

1 The Executive Presbyter(s) are supervised by the Administrative Committee. The Stated Clerk is
2 supervised by the Presbytery on matters related to the Book of Order. All non-polity responsibilities
3 and administrative duties are under the supervision of the Executive Presbyter(s). All other
4 employees whether called, full time, or part time are supervised by the Executive Presbyter(s) as
5 Head of Staff. The primary consideration will be given to the evaluation by the supervisor. The
6 Personnel Task Force may solicit additional input from members of the Presbytery and its committee
7 members and may consider reports of concern or commendation in the evaluation process.

8
9 The performance evaluation will be documented in writing and presented to the employee at the time
10 of the performance evaluation interview between the employee, the Executive Presbyter(s) and a
11 member of the Personnel Task Force.

12
13 The employee will be requested to sign the performance evaluation form to attest to the fact they
14 have been advised regarding their level of performance. The employee's signature does not mean the
15 employee accepts or agrees with the content of the evaluation, but that he or she has seen the
16 evaluation and has discussed it with the Executive Presbyter(s) and a member of the Personnel Task
17 Force. A copy of the evaluations will be kept in the employee's personnel file for the entirety of
18 employment plus five years.

19 20 **FAIR TREATMENT POLICY**

21 In the event an employee has an employment issue,

22 **Step One:** The employee should report any issue as soon as possible. Most
23 issues may be resolved through a conversation with the Executive Presbyter(s). In the
24 event an employee has an issue with the Executive Presbyter(s), the issue should be
25 presented to the Personnel Task Force Liaison who will attempt a resolution as soon as
26 possible.

27 **Step Two:** In the event the issue is unresolved, the employee has seven (7) days
28 to place the issue in writing and submit it to the Personnel Task Force Liaison who will
29 have seven (7) working days to respond in writing.

30 **Step Three:** Should the response by the Executive Presbyter(s) and/or Personnel
31 Task Force Liaison be unsatisfactory the employee may request, in writing, that the full
32 Personnel Task Force hear the issue. In a timely manner, the Personnel Task Force will
33 meet to address the issue. The Personnel Task Force will deliberate and prepare a
34 written response. The written response will be shared with the employee within seven
35 (7) days of deliberation.

36 **Step Four:** Should the response by the Personnel Task Force be unsatisfactory,
37 the employee may request, in writing, a hearing before the Administrative Committee
38 on the issue. In a timely manner, the Administrative Committee will meet to address
39 the issue. The Administrative Committee will deliberate and prepare a written
40 response. The written response will be shared with the employee within seven (7) days
41 of deliberation

42
43 **Written Record:** A written record of all issues, meetings, findings, and decisions will be kept in the
44 personnel files including a signed verification by the complaining party to indicate his/her acceptance
45 or rejection of the decision and outcome.

46 47 **SEPARATION POLICY**

1 The term "separation" shall refer to any and all terminations of the relationship between a staff member,
2 exempt or non-exempt, and the Presbytery of Middle Tennessee.

3 A. Voluntary Resignation

4 A voluntary choice of separation freely made by the staff member may take place after one month's
5 written notice for Executive staff members, or two weeks written notice for support staff.

6 B. Involuntary Separation by the Presbytery

7 An employee's employment may be terminated by the Presbytery (through the Executive Presbyter or
8 the Administrative Committee) for any reason not contrary to law or the *Book of Order*. For example, a
9 change in circumstances may warrant a reduction in the number of persons employed by the Presbytery.
10 Examples of a change in circumstance include, but not limited to, a budget reduction and/or a shift in
11 program direction which require a change in staff structure, skills or organization. Examples of other
12 reasons for which Presbytery may terminate the employment relationship include, but are not limited to:

- 13 1. Insubordination in the line of assigned duties.
- 14 2. Unsatisfactory performance of duties
- 15 3. Neglect in the care and use of Presbytery property or funds.
- 16 4. Repeated unexcused absences and/or repeated tardiness.
- 17 5. Illegal, dishonest and/or unethical conduct.
- 18 6. Failure to observe the Personnel Policies.

19 Discharge of a staff member is always considered to be an action of last resort taken after remedial
20 measures have proven ineffective or when the staff member's conduct is such as to preclude further
21 employment.

22 Recommended Steps:

- 23 1. Verbal warning – A private meeting with the employee to explain the problem or violation,
24 stating the expectation(s) and giving a time frame for correcting the situation.
- 25 2. Informal meeting – If the expectation is not met, an informal meeting may be needed to reiterate
26 the problems and expectations and to discuss corrective actions. This meeting should be
27 documented with notes in the supervisor's working file.
- 28 3. Formal warning – If, after the above communications, the expectation has not been met, a formal
29 meeting should be held, identifying the seriousness of the need for corrective action, any
30 coaching or resource(s) that may be appropriate, the expectation(s) to be met, the time frame for
31 correcting the performance or behavior, and the consequences for failure to meet the
32 expectation(s). These elements are documented in a written letter of warning and given to the
33 employee with a copy in the official personnel file. This letter must be signed by the supervisor
34 and the employee (or, if the situation warrants, "refusal to sign" noted by the supervisor).
- 35 4. Implementation of consequences – If the expectations are not met by the designated time, the
36 designated consequences are written in a letter to the employee and implemented, such as:
 - 37 a. Suspension (administrative leave), with or without pay;
 - 38 b. Demotion; or
 - 39 c. Termination.

40 When consequences are less than termination, the employee is provided with a clearly written
41 description of the performance or behavior that is expected for their employment to continue.

1
2 The Administration Committee should be notified when a individual reaches Step 3 above or if they feel
3 an immediate termination is warranted.
4

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6 NOTE: When an employee is a member of the PC(USA), (e.g., a member of a PC(USA) congregation, a minister of Word and
7 Sacrament, or a commissioned ruling elder) and there is a possible offence against Scripture or the PC(USA) Constitution,
8 the *Book of Order* governs the process. The judicial process outlined in the Rules of Discipline addresses the relationship of
9 the individual and the PC(USA), but it does not necessarily impact the employment of the individual. Similarly, the
10 effectiveness of the employee and the status of their employment is not always relevant in a judicial process. It is possible
11 for an individual to be simultaneously engaged in a judicial process and in a progressive/corrective action process described
12 above.

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14
15 **GENERAL OFFICE PROCEDURES**
16

17 **TARDINESS**

18 It is the responsibility of each employee to be punctual. Repeated tardiness will be noted in the
19 employee's personnel record and will subject the employee to disciplinary action.
20

21 **UNSCHEDULED ABSENCES**

22 Employees who are unable to report for work because of emergency must let the Executive
23 Presbyter(s) know as soon as possible.
24

25 **VIOLATION OF FINANCIAL POLICIES**

26 It is the responsibility of each employee to follow the Presbytery's financial procedures for fiscal
27 responsibility of the Presbytery office. Failure to do so may lead to termination.
28

29 **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

30 It is the policy of the Presbytery to maintain high standards of integrity, honesty, impartiality, industry,
31 and conduct by employees. Avoidance of conflicts of interest, whether real or implied, by all staff is
32 indispensable to the maintenance of these standards.
33

34 No employee of the Presbytery will accept any gift, gratuity, grant, service or any special favor from
35 any person or persons, or businesses which provide or receive goods and services or which seek to
36 provide or receive goods and services to or from the Presbytery. However, minor courtesies such as
37 luncheons, dinners or church publications in connection with business discussions may be received.
38

39 In addition, if an employee is called upon to participate in a decision in which the interests of the
40 employer conflict with his or her personal interests, the employee must abstain from participating in
41 the decision.
42

43 All employees will avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest, special interest, or any other
44 inappropriate conduct. If an employee discovers that he/she may be in a position of conflict of interest,
45 he/she will immediately report this conflict to his/her supervisor.
46

1 Failure to disclose a conflict of interest may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

2

3

AMENDMENTS

4 These personnel policies may be amended by recommendations made by the Personnel Task Force,
5 approved by the Administrative Committee, and adopted by the Presbytery.

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