

THE CALIFORNIA-NEVADA ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**  
POLICIES AND BENEFITS

January 23, 2013

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# WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

These are the basic personnel policies of the California-Nevada Annual Conference (hereafter referred to as the Conference) of the United Methodist Church. These policies apply to lay employees and any clergy employees employed by these agencies but not under episcopal appointment as conference staff. These policies are the entire agreement between the employee and the employing agencies and cannot be changed by any oral or written statements that contradict or are in conflict with the policies set forth herein. Within the authority granted by the United Methodist Book of Discipline and the standing rules of the California-Nevada Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, these policies supersede all previous handbooks, personnel manuals, policies, or guidelines which are in conflict with this document. Although more specific policies, procedures, training programs or instruction, either verbal or written, may also apply depending upon the employee's job, no such policy or procedure may be in conflict with those contained in this document. In addition, no employing agency representative is authorized to modify these policies for any employee or to enter into any agreement contrary to what is stated herein. Each employee will be provided with a copy of the personnel policies and are required to read, become familiar with, and agree to abide by these policies during their employment.

The Conference Human Resources Team will review and recommend policy changes to CFA for adoption as they deem necessary. Any changes to these policies will be provided to employees, in writing, at the time changes are made. The employing agencies are charged with oversight of the implementation of these policies.

Employment with the Annual Conference is strictly "at-will" and may be terminated at any time by either the employee or by the supervisor/supervising agency without cause or reason. Nothing contained in this manual, nor in any representation by any supervisor or representative of the agency may contradict or contravene this policy of at-will employment.

The conference treasurer's office may provide ancillary payroll and/or bookkeeping services to other conference-related agencies or committees other than the employing agencies listed above. Such services do not imply an employer/employee relationship with the Annual Conference.

## **ABOUT THIS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

This handbook sets forth policies and benefits for the following:

- All lay employees of the Annual Conference, including clergy employed by the Annual Conference but not under appointment.

The statements contained in this Employee Handbook are intended to serve as general information concerning the employees of the Conference. You should familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook for it will answer many common questions concerning employment with the Conference. But, this handbook should not be considered your only source of information.

This Employee Handbook is meant as a supplement to the provisions of the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church (“Book of Discipline”) and the Journal of the California Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

## **HANDBOOK UPDATES**

The Human Resources Team is responsible for periodic review of all benefits and employment policies and will update this handbook accordingly. The information contained in this handbook may change from time to time. You will receive updated information as changes occur. None of the information in this handbook is a guarantee that conditions of employment may not change (See, for example, —Employment at Will later in this handbook). Questions should be referred to the Human Resources Team.

## **WHO WE ARE**

The United Methodist Church, which began as a movement and a loose network of local societies with a mission, has grown into one of the most carefully organized and largest denominations in the world. The United Methodist structure and organization began as a means of accomplishing the mission of spreading Scriptural Holiness over the land. John Wesley recognized the need for an organized system of communication and accountability and developed what he called the “connexion,” which was an interlocking system of classes, societies, and annual conferences.

No local church is the total body of Christ. Therefore, local United Methodist churches are bound together by a common mission and common governance that accomplish reaching out into the world. United Methodist churches and organizations join in mission with each other and with other denominations.

The annual conferences typically have a central office and professional staff that coordinate and conduct ministry and the business of the conference. It likely has a director of connectional ministries, treasurer, directors of program areas (such as camping), communications director, and other staff as deemed appropriate for the annual conference and as required by the Book of Discipline. Clergy and laypersons may also serve on conference boards, commissions and committees.

As an employee of the California-Nevada Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, you are part of an organization founded in 1848, the first Protestant organization in California. Today, the California-Nevada Annual Conference includes 350 churches spanning the area from Bakersfield to the Oregon border, from the Pacific Coast to Eastern Nevada.

The annual conference is the basic governing body within the United Methodist denomination. The term “annual conference” refers to both an entity and an event. The event called “annual conference” occurs every June. Clergy and lay members from our churches meet to worship, to elect delegates and committee members and to create policies. The policies of the annual conference are implemented throughout the year via various boards and agencies.

Our ordained clergy are members of the annual conference, not members of individual churches. They are appointed to a church by the resident bishop. Most will serve numerous churches in the course of their careers.

The United Methodist denomination is a global church with conferences and churches throughout the world. It includes 62 annual conferences in the United States, 12 central conferences in Africa, 4 central conferences in Europe and 1 central conference in the Philippines. Over 800 United Methodist missionaries serve mission projects in 65 countries.

Most employees of the California-Nevada Annual Conference are based in our United Methodist Center in West Sacramento, California while others are located at our Board of Pensions office in Oakland, California. Our employees work as a team to resource the people of the Annual Conference and to help serve as the connection between the “people in the pews” and the global church. Our success depends on our ability to coordinate and communicate our efforts within the decentralized organizational structure of the Annual Conference.

Supervisors play a key role in helping you and the organization achieve this success. Supervisors work together to help create a positive working environment for all employees in West Sacramento and Oakland. Your supervisor is your primary link to the organizational structure. You are encouraged to talk to your supervisor about any employment question or concern. If you are not satisfied with their response, you can contact the personnel committee directly.

We place a high value on professionalism and customer service. We hope you will take the initiative to build relationships with your co-workers in order to foster the coordination of effort necessary for success. We also encourage you to build professional working relationships with the clergy and lay people of our local churches.

The California-Nevada Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church has made a difference in the lives of thousands of people over many generations. We welcome you to our team and wish you great success!

## **Our Vision Statement**

### **Passion in Jesus Christ – Compassion for All**

*The Vision of the California-Nevada Conference is extending Christ's Invitation to a joyous life. Our vision challenges us to live as visible and contagious examples in our communities. We celebrate our diversity and unity in Christ by welcoming a future where every congregation names and embraces our identity, bearing fruits of respect, love, and mutual ministry. We hold up compassion with the Heart of Christ which calls us to service through outreach ministries – face to face, hand to hand, with the poor, the least, the outcast and the hungry. Out of passion for the Mind of Christ our movement is towards a future where every Faith Community is in fact a Spiritual Transformation Center.*

## **Our Mission Statement**

The mission of the United Methodist Church is:

To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **BEFORE YOU ARE HIRED**

### **HIRING PRACTICES**

#### **Staff Requirements**

All staff members must be supportive of the principles and values of the Christian faith and the purposes of the United Methodist denomination, and:

- Possess the special aptitudes, skills, and capacities that are required in their respective field of work;
- Win and hold the cooperation and good will of the people they serve, as well as their associates;
- Maintain and keep confidences at all times;
- Demonstrate the capacity to learn and to improve their work skills and abilities through continuing education.

#### **Conference Hiring Policies**

The Conference will consider for employment all candidates who meet our staff requirements and the job qualifications of the open position. When an opening occurs, the most skilled and talented individual(s) will be sought to fill the job.

Current staff members will be made aware of the job, its goals and objectives, and the minimum qualifications needed to be considered for the position prior to its being advertised to the general public. After a designated amount of time, the Conference may conduct a search externally for additional candidates.

If a current employee meets the minimum qualifications for the open position and is interested in applying, the employee should discuss the opportunity with their supervisor. If the employee is qualified for the position, the job presents an opportunity for the employee, and the employee has fulfilled their obligation to the Conference in their present position, their supervisor will discuss their application with the hiring supervisor and/or the HR Team. Following the appropriate review, the employee may be invited to interview for the position.

All candidate resumes will first be reviewed by the hiring supervisor(s). Personal interviews for qualified candidates for Conference positions will be conducted by an interview team consisting of the hiring supervisor and/or members of the HR Team.. Upon completion of the interview process, an offer may be offered. If none of the candidates is determined to be a good match for the position – or the offer is rejected – the recruiting and interview process will continue as described above.

#### **Application for Employment**

All candidates for employment must complete, date, and sign the standard Conference Employment Application form. A resume may accompany the employment application. The completed application will be made part of the personnel file of those applicants selected for employment.

## **Confirmation of Previous Employment**

The Human Resources Team will verify the accuracy and completeness of previous employment and personal information contained in the application. The Conference may refuse, in its sole discretion, to hire and may terminate the employment of anyone giving false or incomplete information.

## **Reference Checks**

The Conference desires to provide a work environment that is safe and secure. Therefore, the Conference will conduct a reference check to determine or verify background information. This is to ensure that individuals who join the Conference are well qualified, have a strong potential to be productive and successful, and have honestly presented their background and qualifications.

## **Background Checks/Drug Screening**

All new Conference employees will undergo a criminal background check and drug screening.

## **Employment of Relatives**

Spouses or other relatives may work for the Conference. However, close relatives should not supervise one another nor report to the same supervisor. Close relatives are defined as spouses, domestic partners, children, brothers/sisters, parents, grandparents, aunts/uncles, in-laws, and first cousins.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity**

The Conference is committed to a policy of equal treatment for everyone. Such treatment will be given regardless of age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, disability, medical condition, or marital status.

The Conference will make every effort to ensure that actions affecting your employment are administered fairly and in the spirit of equal opportunity employment. These actions include but are not limited to hiring, placement, training, promotion, performance evaluation, compensation, fringe benefits, working conditions, special programs, transfers, leaves of absence, termination, social or recreational programs, educational reimbursement, and separations.

You and your coworkers hold the keys to our success. The Conference recognizes this and accordingly believes that direct, open communication among employees, consistent and fair personnel policies, and a creative, healthy and rewarding work environment are essential.

## **Americans with Disabilities Act**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Conference endeavors to provide a workplace free from discrimination against persons with disabilities. The ADA expressly prohibits discrimination with regard to job application procedures, hiring, discharges, compensation, advancement, job training, and other terms and conditions and privileges of employment. The Conference will make every effort to accommodate employees with disabilities.

## **ONCE YOU ARE HIRED**

### **Employment at Will**

We want you to enjoy working here, and we hope you will stay with us for many years of productive service. However, employment with the Conference is not offered, contracted, or

promised for any specific length of time. You have the right to leave your employment with us at any time, and we have the right to terminate your employment at any time. The right of the employee or the Conference to terminate the employment relationship —at will is recognized and affirmed as a condition of employment.

## **Introductory Period for Training and Evaluation**

All new employees, including transfers and individuals who have been promoted from non-exempt to exempt status, will attend an Orientation Meeting with their immediate supervisor or the Human Resources Team during the first few weeks of their employment or promotion.

In addition to providing general information about the employer, the immediate supervisor or Human Resources Team will discuss job expectations (and Job Description), and explain personnel policies, procedures, and benefit programs.

Each employee will be provided with a copy of this Employee Handbook. The employee is responsible for reading its contents, and is expected to use it as a guide during the term of employment. Questions concerning the Employee Handbook may be directed to the employee's immediate supervisor or the Human Resources Team.

Each employee will complete and sign the Acknowledgment of Receipt page and return it to his/her immediate supervisor. The first 90 days of continuous employment at the Conference are considered an introductory period. It is during this time that your supervisor initially evaluates your ability to perform work assigned and for you to adjust to new working conditions. Your supervisor will provide you with specific requirements and expectations for the position and will guide and counsel you regarding any concerns that emerge during training. The Introductory period may be extended for any employee in order to complete the initial evaluation. Extension of the introductory period will be made in writing to the Human Resources Team. Such extensions alter and extend the evaluation cycle described above. Completion of the introductory period does not entitle the employee to remain employed by the Conference for any definite period of time. Both the employee and the Church are free, at any time – with or without notice and with or without cause – to end the employment relationship.

## **EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES**

### **Employment Status**

All positions are classified as either exempt or non-exempt. Position duties must meet relevant state and federal laws to be classified as exempt. Classifications will be stated in the job description.

### **Nonexempt**

Non-exempt employees will be paid overtime for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek or 8 hours in a work day and must maintain a true and accurate record of hours worked. For further details, refer to the —Overtime Policy section later in this handbook.

### **Exempt**

Exempt employees do not receive overtime pay.

# **WORK SCHEDULES**

## **Regular Workday**

Conference Center regular office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day, Monday through Friday. Each department may establish its own flexible work schedule provided that good customer service is made available and to every degree possible employee work schedules provide coverage during the same business hours as those established for the Conference Center.

## **Breaks and Lunch Periods**

State law requires that employees are provided with a paid 10 minute break for each four (4) hours of work. Breaks are informal and may be taken at the employee's convenience.

In accordance with state law, employees are also required to take a meal period each day which should be no less than thirty (30) minutes for each six (6) or more hours of work. Meal periods are not considered working time and therefore are not paid.

## **Determination for Hours Worked**

Hours worked, in general, means the period between the times an employee begins and ends his/her principal activity(s). It includes all the time during which the employee is necessarily required to be on the employer's premises or at a prescribed place of work. Bona fide meal periods are not work time. Attendance at lectures or training required by the employer or given by the employer is hours worked.

Whether or not time spent in travel is working time depends upon the kind of travel involved. Normal travel from home to work is not work time. Travel to another city or work site is not considered ordinary home-to-work travel. It would qualify as an integral part of the employee's principal activity(s), and thus be work time. The time counted would be travel and work that occurs during normal working hours. The time traveling to and from the airport, for example, is not counted as work time.

## **Overtime**

Overtime is sometimes necessary and is determined by the supervisor.

### **At Employee's Request**

While the Conference appreciates the efforts of employees who work beyond their normal schedules, all employees are expected to accomplish their work during normal Conference hours. We recognize, however, that circumstances do occur from time to time making it necessary for employees to work after hours or on weekends or holidays. Therefore, the Conference may authorize overtime work beyond an employee's normal workweek. All nonexempt employees must obtain approval from the appropriate supervisor(s) before overtime work is undertaken.

Nonexempt employees may be required to work overtime. If overtime is required, the supervisor will make every effort to notify the employee of the requirement as soon as possible. Employees may be scheduled to work weekends and holidays.

*Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime pay.*

*Nonexempt employees* who work more than eight hours in a day or more than 40 hours during the week will be paid overtime.

### **Computing Overtime**

- All overtime is to be reported on your time card, time sheet or into the electronic timekeeping system.
- Pay for the first eight hours in a day or the first 40 hours of work in any one workweek will be computed at the regular pay scale.
- The hours worked over 8 hours in a day, over forty hours in a week, and any hours worked on the seventh consecutive day will be compensated in accordance with state and federal law.
- Hours not worked—paid time off, personal time off, holidays, sick days, jury duty, and bereavement leave—are not included in overtime computation. *For example*, if you work 32 hours and take nine hours of vacation in one week, you will not receive overtime pay for that week.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

Our commitment to quality customer service and our ability to operate efficiently depends on having adequate staff available during normal work hours. You are expected to be at work as scheduled and be ready to begin work promptly at the established time. Any variance in your work schedule must be reported to the accounting department by your supervisor in writing.

You are expected to notify your supervisor in advance if:

- You are unable to report to work due to illness, injury, or any other reason;
- You expect to arrive late to work; and
- You need to leave during the workday.

## **COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

### **Time and Attendance Reporting**

#### **Time Reporting**

Non-exempt employees must record their time accurately each workday using an electronic system. Record your starting time, ending time, and lunch times in and out. The time and attendance system allows a 10 minute window around your scheduled starting time. Please notify your supervisor if you cannot start or end your work day in this 10 minutes window for any particular day. In general and as noted above, you are expected to be at work as scheduled and be ready to begin work promptly at the established time.

Recorded time must reflect the actual time worked. Falsification of your time record is a basis for immediate dismissal.

#### **Pay Period and Payment**

You will be paid semi-monthly with pay dates on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the last day of the month, assuming those days are weekdays. When those days are not weekdays, the pay date will be the preceding weekday. Pay periods run from 3 weekdays prior to the last pay date through the fourth weekday prior to the next pay date. A schedule of pay dates and pay periods will be distributed to each employee at the beginning of each calendar year.

Employees may have pay directly deposited into their bank accounts if they provide

advance written authorization to the accounting department. Employees will receive an itemized statement of wages when direct deposits are made.

### **Pay for Partial Pay Period**

If you are employed for less than a full pay period (i.e., you take leave without pay or resign at a date other than the beginning or the end of the pay period), your pay is computed on the basis of time worked.

### **Garnishment Policy**

Garnishments and wage assignments are legal liens against an employee's earning required to satisfy unpaid debts or judgments ordered by a court. An employer has no option but to follow the precise requirements outlined in any garnishment and employees will be notified when such a garnishment is to be applied.

### **Payroll Deductions**

As required by law, the Conference will make the following deductions (if applicable) from an employee's gross pay: federal and state income taxes, Social Security and Medicare taxes, and garnishments. There is not a payroll deduction for state unemployment or disability as the conference (as a church) does not participate in these plans. Employees must authorize any other deductions made to their pay.. Questions regarding payroll deductions should be directed to Accounting Manager.

### **Whom to Contact if There Is an Error in Pay**

Errors in pay may occur. We encourage you to regularly review your pay vouchers. If you believe there is an error in your pay, you should notify the Accounting Office within five business days. The Accounting Manager will make every attempt to adjust the error immediately, or no later than your next pay period.

### **Pension Contributions**

The Annual Conference offers pension contributions to all fulltime employees at 12% of their compensation level. Plan benefits are described in the plan document. A summary of the plan documents is available from the Executive Secretary of the Conference Board of Pensions.

### **Health Benefits**

The Annual Conference offers a health plan to all employees working 30 hours or more per week, including spouses/domestic partners and dependent children for which premiums are paid. Plan benefits are described in the evidence of coverage booklet available from the Executive Secretary of the Conference Board of Pensions.

### **Job Postings**

The Conference will notify employees of internal employment opportunities via postings on Conference bulletin boards, electronic mail, or other means. Contact the Human Resources Team if you are interested in applying for a posted position.

### **Transfer of Positions or Duties**

To meet Conference requirements, you may be required to temporarily perform duties not specifically included in your job description or you may be asked to transfer to another department. Your supervisor will notify you if you must take on extra duties or be transferred. If you decline to take on the requested extra duties or transfer, your employment may be terminated.

If an employee should wish to take on extra duties or transfer to another work location he or she should submit a request to their supervisor.

### **Educational Assistance Program**

Financial assistance may be available to eligible full-time employees to further their education. Eligibility is based upon an employee's job description and length of service, and availability of funding within the Conference budget. You may obtain information regarding the application process from the Human Resources Team.

### **Employee Performance Reviews**

To assist you in performing your work to the best of your abilities, it is important that you be recognized for your performance and that you receive appropriate suggestions for improvements. Consistent with this goal, your supervisor will conduct periodic written evaluations of your job performance. Written performance evaluations will be based on your overall performance in relation to your job responsibilities as defined in your job description. Evaluations will also take into account your conduct, demeanor, and your contribution to the Conference Mission and Vision.

If you are a nonexempt employee, performance evaluations will occur after you have been employed from three to six months, again on your first anniversary date, and at a minimum, annually thereafter. If you are promoted or transferred to a new position, your performance will be evaluated after you have been in your new position for at least three months.

The Conference conducts annual written performance reviews of each employee. Your supervisor will prepare and sign the performance evaluation, which will then be reviewed by the next level of management and the Human Resources Team. You should examine the evaluation, make comments, if you wish, and sign it. The original will be placed in your personnel file. A copy will be provided to you. In addition to the regular performance evaluations described above, the Conference may conduct interim written performance evaluations at any time to inform an employee of performance or disciplinary problems.

### **Progressive Disciplinary Action**

Violation of Conference policies and rules may warrant disciplinary action. A system of progressive discipline has been established that includes verbal warnings, written warnings, and suspension. The system is not formal, and the Conference may utilize whatever form of discipline is deemed appropriate under the circumstances -- up to and including termination of employment. The Conference's policy of progressive discipline in no way limits or alters the at-will employment relationship. Serious violations or unacceptable behavior as defined in the section titled "Gross Misconduct" may result in immediate termination with no prior written warnings.

### **Personnel Files**

The Conference maintains a confidential personnel file for each employee at the Conference Center. These files, maintained by the Human Resources Team, contain documentation regarding all aspects of the employee's employment with the Conference such as performance reviews, beneficiary designation forms, etc. Personnel files are the property of the Conference.

## **Requests to Review**

Due to the confidential nature of the information in personnel files, access to them is regulated. They will be made available to employees for inspection with their supervisor upon reasonable request and scheduling. You may take notes, but you cannot remove, make copies, or make notations on the documents in your personnel file. You have the right to request in writing that a correction be made or that certain portions of your file be deleted; or, you may write a statement of disagreement with any item (open to inspection) contained in your file.

## **Keep Us Informed About You**

When hired, you completed various forms that contained important information. Keeping this information correct and up-to-date is your responsibility. Accurate data enables us to reach you in an emergency, forward your mail and W-4 forms, compute your payroll deductions, etc. Notify the Human Resources Team promptly of any changes in the following:

- Name
- Address or telephone number (notify supervisor or manager as well)
- Marital status
- Number of dependents
- Formal education or courses completed
- Beneficiary or dependent designated on insurance as applicable

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

The Conference is committed to sustaining a positive work environment in which employees work constructively together and communicate openly. Employee programs, wages, and working relationships are intended to help you achieve genuine personal satisfaction and growth. However, as with any group working together, honest differences of opinion will arise from time-to-time. The problem resolution policy and process has been established as a foundation for ensuring that the work environment remains positive and that together we can find ways to improve the way we serve others.

### **The conflict resolution policy is intended to:**

- Provide the opportunity to resolve a conflict or complaint quickly, fairly and without reprisal.
- Improve communication and understanding between employees; and between employees and their supervisor.
- Ensure confidence in management that employee concerns will be addressed.
- Support a positive work environment by allocating supervisors responsibility for preventing and resolving conflicts and complaints.
- Identify organization policies and procedures which need to be clarified or modified.
- Ensure that employees who are experiencing a work related conflict or have a concern or complaint are encouraged to resolve it through discussions with their co-workers or their supervisor whenever possible.

- Provide that all requests for conflict resolution, complaints and appeals shall be fully investigated and a reply will be given as quickly as possible.
- Protect employees who initiate conflict resolution or make a complaint, or participate in a conflict resolution investigation from retaliation.

## **Procedures**

**Conflict resolution and complaint process:** The conflict resolution process is available to help you resolve work-related problems.

1. Employees who experience a work related conflict or who have a complaint should first attempt to discuss the matter with the individual with whom they have the conflict. In some situations this may be difficult or inappropriate. In these cases, the employee may request a meeting with their supervisor to discuss the problem.
2. The supervisor will analyze the merits of the conflict resolution request or complaint, and within two (2) working days will meet with the employee to inform the employee of the proposed plan of action.
3. If the supervisor's response does not achieve the desired results, the matter may be referred to the next level of management for a final decision.
4. The Conference reserves the right to change, alter, or eliminate the conflict resolution and complaint process in any specific instance in its sole and absolute discretion.

## **Harassment**

### **Definition**

The Fair Employment and Housing act in California prohibits discrimination on the basis of protected categories, race, color, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sex, sexual orientation, religion, or national origin.

The Conference is committed to promoting and preserving an environment of open communication, supporting the development of one's faith, and encouraging productivity. This can only be accomplished in a work environment that is free of harassment, intimidation, or coercion. Harassing behavior is inconsistent with the Conference's philosophy of mutual dignity and respect for all employees, and will not be tolerated.

This policy applies equally to all employees, supervisors, ordained clergy, volunteers, and non-employees admitted to Conference premises or in contact with Conference personnel in the normal course of their duties with the Conference. Any Conference employee who engages in harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include termination of employment or legal action.

### **Harassment Complaint Procedures**

If you believe you are being harassed or discriminated against, or you witness or become aware of conduct that you believe to be harassment or discrimination, you should:

- Consider speaking to the offending person about his or her offensive conduct and explain that you do not like the behavior. You are under no obligation to speak to the offending person.
- If you have spoken with the offender and had no success resolving the situation (or it would be inappropriate to do so), report such facts immediately to your supervisor so

that appropriate action can be taken. If you are uncomfortable approaching your supervisor or if you still feel that the matter has not been adequately addressed, bring it to the attention of the Human Resources Team.

## **Firearms, Weapons, and Threats of Violence**

The Conference prohibits the possession, carrying, and/or use of any type of firearms or weapons on its property. For purposes of this policy, Conference property is defined as:

- All land/grounds and facilities of the Conference
- Conference vehicles, including personal vehicles being used for Conference business; and
- All other locations where employees of Conference are conducting business within the scope of their employment.

To ensure the well-being of all employees, visitors, vendors, and customers, the Conference will not tolerate any form of violence or threat of violence. Any employee engaging in a violent act or threatening such an act will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees who have threats made against them or who are aware of threats to others should report this information to their supervisor and/or the Director of Human Resources.

An employee who violates the Conference's policy against firearms, weapons, and threats of violence will be subject to immediate termination. Furthermore, carrying a weapon onto Conference property will be considered an act of criminal trespass and will be grounds for immediate removal from Conference property and termination of employment.

## **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

### **Gross Misconduct**

Egregious behavior including but not limited to the following examples—may result in suspension or termination without warning or notice:

- Falsification of information on employment applications
- Falsification of timekeeping records, medical, or insurance reports and records
- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property of the Conference, customers, or employees
- Dishonesty, or failure to disclose the known dishonesty of others including failure to cooperate in internal investigations of dishonesty, safety violations, and drug- and alcohol-free workplace regulations
- Substance abuse or harassment
- Possession of weapons or firearm violations
- Possession, distribution, sale, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace or being under the influence
- Fighting, threatening, or provoking violence in the workplace
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to the damage of Conference or customer-owned property, data, machinery, equipment, and/or information
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential material
- Gambling on Conference premises
- Unauthorized use of Conference property, data, equipment, machinery, or information
- Use of computers for the purpose of accessing pornography, sexually explicit or

sexually erotic material or any internet site considered to be immoral, inappropriate or against the law.

- Altering an invoice, check, voucher, document, record, or statement
- Making unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical expressions of a sexual nature to employees or customers of the Conference
- Insubordination or disrespectful conduct toward coworkers or customers, including leaving a work assignment without proper relief or walking off the job
- Conducting unauthorized commercial activities that are not related to Conference business on Conference premises

## **SPECIAL WORK ISSUES**

### **Confidentiality**

Your knowledge of confidential information about people in the Conference and those with whom we do business places you in a special position of trust and confidence.

Safeguarding this information is critical. Any employee who compromises confidential information may be subject to disciplinary action, termination of employment or legal action, if laws have been violated.

**Actions to avoid** include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Improperly storing information outside of Conference property in any form
- Improperly disseminating confidential information outside the Conference
- Improperly disseminating confidential information within the Conference
- Improperly disseminating contact information without proper authorization
- Idle gossip

### **Outside Employment**

Employees of the Conference are expected to uphold and reflect the values, vision, and mission of the Conference at all time. The Conference has no objection to employees holding other jobs as long as they can effectively meet the performance standards for their positions with the Conference and such outside employment is consistent with the values, vision, and mission of the Conference. Outside employment will present a conflict of interest if it has an actual or potential for adverse impact on the Conference. We ask you to consider the effects such extra work may have—such as whether it may limit your effectiveness on your job with the Conference. The Conference will hold all employees to the same standards of performance and cannot make exceptions for those who also hold outside jobs. For those who do have outside employment that does not conflict with the values, vision, and mission of the Conference, such persons shall not use any asset of the Conference and/or their on duty time at the Conference to advance the interests of their outside employment.

### **Off-site Employees/Telecommuting**

Telecommuting may be approved by a supervisor in consultation with the HR Team. However, please note that not all positions are suitable for telecommuting.

### **Telecommuting Guidelines**

The following guidelines apply to telecommuting arrangements:

- A specific work schedule, including workdays and hours, must be agreed upon in advance.

- Employees must be on site as necessary to attend meetings, training sessions, or similar events or occurrences.
- Employees who are unable to work due to illness must use sick leave and must report their absence to their supervisor.
- Employees who wish to be relieved of telecommuting responsibility for work on a particular day or days must either come to the office or use vacation or a personal day.
- Employees are responsible for the safety and security of all Conference property and proprietary information.
- Conference property such as computers, printers, fax machines, and other equipment loaned to an employee is the employee's responsibility while it is not on Conference premises.
- Equipment and services may be provided by and paid for by the employee's department at the department's sole discretion. In many cases, employees will be expected to provide their own equipment, such as computers and telephone lines, if they wish to telecommute.
- Equipment such as computers, printers, software, and services such as fax lines provided on loan by the Conference remain the property of the Conference while on loan, and must be returned upon termination of the telecommuting arrangement.
- If Conference equipment is provided, each piece of equipment must be listed with its serial number when the employee takes possession.
- Employees must return the equipment in the same condition in which it was originally received, minus normal wear and tear. Employees are personally liable for missing or damaged equipment.
- The Conference assumes no liability for injuries occurring in the employee's home workspace outside of work hours.
- Employees should note that some homeowner policies do not automatically cover injuries arising out of, or relating to, the business use of the home. For employees' protection, employees should have their homeowners/tenants liability policy endorsed to cover bodily injury and property damage to all third parties arising out of or relating to the business use of their home. Employees who live in rented property should be aware that their lease might not permit business use of the premises.

## **HONORARIA/FEES TO CONFERENCE EMPLOYEES**

Services to a local church or agency of the Conference which are within an employee's job responsibilities should not be compensated to the employee separately by the local church or agency. Any honorarium or fees received shall be remitted by the employee to the Conference.

## **DAY-TO-DAY WORK PRACTICES**

We must make sure that we project an image that lives up to our constituent's expectations and to our own quality standards. This includes the cleanliness and appearance of the facilities, the friendly helpful service we provide, and upholding Christian values.

An adequate parking area is provided for employees. Employees are asked to park in the back area of the parking lot and to leave the parking spaces at the entrance open for visitors. Please cooperate by not blocking driveways. The Conference assumes no responsibility for employees' vehicles or their content while on Conference property.

The Conference recognizes an employee's desire to display family mementos or other personal items. While the Conference can take no responsibility for their safekeeping, we

welcome you to personalize your work area for added comfort. However, several guidelines must be observed:

- Nothing can be displayed that is derogatory to any person or system of beliefs.
- Objects that are inappropriate or hinder work efforts will not be allowed.
- Safety comes first. No object can interfere with job safety.
- Any personalization of your workspace must be consistent with the Vision, values, and mission of the Conference.

## **Internet/intranet and E-mail Policies**

The Conference owns all software, computers, voice mail, data and equipment provided to employees, and will provide employees with access to e-mail and the Internet/intranet at its own discretion. The Conference reserves the right to access all information stored on computers, in filing cabinets, smart phones and cell phones, and voice mail. Any violations of the following rules may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **E-mail**

The following use of e-mail is prohibited:

- disseminating confidential information to unauthorized sources—this includes the transmission of documents containing financial information or Social Security numbers
- sending or forwarding harassing, abusive, intimidating, discriminatory, or other offensive e-mails
- unauthorized or inappropriate solicitation for any purpose
- forwarding messages containing defamatory, obscene, offensive, or harassing information, or forwarding chain-type messages and executable graphics files which can cause an overload on our computer system
- Conducting outside employment

### **Internet/Intranet**

Internet access is provided to employees for business purposes. Responsible use of internet access should be observed by all employees.

## **Telephone Use/Cell Phones/Voice Mail**

### **Phones**

Conference telephones are primarily for business use. Personal use should be limited. If you bring a personal cellular phone with you to work, use it in a manner that will not disturb others.

### **Voice Mail**

The Conference may provide you with a voice mailbox that allows you to receive incoming call information when you are away from your office or on the phone frequently.

Please follow these guidelines:

- Personalize your voice mailbox greetings. Greetings should be polite, business-like, short, and informational. They should include, at a minimum, your name, office, date of the update, and availability. As a part of your greeting, give the name and extension of someone else in the office that can help the caller.

- Check for voice mail messages on a regular basis and reply promptly.
- Consider business and security issues when determining how long messages should be retained on the system before erasing them.
- Do not rely on voice mail as a standard operating procedure. Answer the phone while at your workstation.

## **Equipment and Facilities**

### **Energy Preservation and Waste Prevention**

Waste of energy and materials is costly to the Conference and ultimately results in expenses that must be paid through other cost reduction actions. Please conserve energy at every opportunity by keeping thermostats in moderate temperature ranges. Space heaters must be approved by the Facilities Manager.

### **Materials, Furnishings, and Equipment**

All materials, furnishings, and equipment remain Conference property. An employee should ask permission from his or her supervisor if he/she wishes to use any of the above for personal use.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL**

### **Using Personal Vehicles**

Employees may use their personal vehicles on official Conference business. A mileage rate, set by the Conference Treasurer, based on acceptable and current IRS regulations will be paid to employees who use their personal vehicles on official Conference business. The employee's automobile insurance is *primary* when using personal vehicles for official Conference business.

### **Travel Expense Reimbursement**

The Conference will reimburse employees for reasonable and documented expenses incurred when they are traveling on Conference business, including meals and lodging. In keeping with the spirit of good stewardship, expenses are to be kept to a minimum.

### **Documenting Your Expenses**

A clear, honest, well documented, and organized expense report is expected. Any questions may be directed to the Accounting Department. Violations or any form of abuse in relation to these policies and standards can result in denial of reimbursement requests and can ultimately lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### **Guidelines**

The following guidelines must be observed:

- All expense records must be turned in to the Accounting Department. Attach the receipts to the expense report.
- Any travel and/or business expenses must be submitted for reimbursement by providing receipts showing name(s), date(s), business discussed, amount(s), and the account to be charged. A Travel Expense Reimbursement form is available in the Accounting Department.
- The Conference will not provide reimbursements if covered by another party. If the employee has already received reimbursement from the Conference and then receives reimbursement from a third party, the employee must return the money reimbursed by the Conference.

## TIME OFF FROM WORK

Conference policies regarding time off from work are explained in the following paragraphs. When arranging to take vacation, personal, extended sick leave, or any other types of leave, you must make a request to your supervisor and obtain his/her approval. Your supervisor must then submit in writing your approved time off and submit it to the accounting department.

### Vacation

Exempt lay employees earn the same amount of vacation time as the clergy of this Conference, accruing at a rate of .84 days per pay period – 4 weeks per year.

Non-exempt employees accrue vacation according to the following schedule:

<u>Length of service</u>	<u>Weeks of vacation</u>	<u>Accrual rate per hour</u>
0-5 years	2	0.038461
6-10 years	3	0.057692
over 10 years	4	0.076923

The maximum amount of vacation that can be accrued and not taken is 150% of one year's accrual amount. After 150% of a year's vacation is built up, no more vacation time will be accrued until some is taken. No employee may "cash out" vacation until termination at which time all earned but unused vacation time will be paid in accordance with state law.

### Sick Leave

Employees earn 12 sick days per year worked. Exempt employees earn .5 sick days per pay period. Non-exempt employees earn sick time at a rate of .046154 hours per hour worked. There is no maximum accrual for sick time. Sick leave is to be used only in cases of illness, injury or medical appointment of the employee or an immediate family member (parent, child or spouse/domestic partner) where the employee must be absent to attend to the family member's needs. Additional sick time may be granted by the immediate supervisor and the HR Team in the event of a catastrophic illness.

Employees who are going to be absent should notify their supervisor according to the policies contained herein. Any employee who is absent for more than five consecutive days may be required to provide a physician's documentation justifying stating the need for sick leave. Accrued sick leave shall not be paid out upon separation of employment.

If you contract a disease that limits your ability to successfully perform your job duties or threatens the health or safety of others at work, you may be placed on sick leave. A doctor's statement is required before you may return to work. The doctor's statement must indicate that you are able to return to your job duties satisfactorily and does not pose a threat to the health and safety of others.

### Holidays

Full-time and part-time employees of the Conference receive paid holidays pursuant to the following schedule:

1) New Years Day, 2) Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, 3) Presidents Day,

4) Good Friday, 5) Memorial Day, 6) Independence Day, 7) Labor Day, 8) Veteran's Day, 9) Thanksgiving Day, 10) Day following Thanksgiving, 11) Christmas Eve Day, 12) Christmas and 13) New Year's Eve.

Full-time non-exempt employees shall receive seven (7) hours pay for each of the holidays specified, and part-time employees shall receive pro-rated pay based upon their schedule. In the event a holiday falls on Saturday, the preceding Friday will be observed. Should the holiday fall on Sunday, the following Monday shall be considered the holiday. If an employee is required to work on a holiday then the employee shall be granted another mutually agreeable day off with pay. Holidays will not be considered as time worked for purposes of calculating or computing overtime, and if a holiday falls during an employee's vacation, the employee will not be charged that day as vacation time, but instead will receive it as holiday pay if they otherwise qualify.

## **Leaves of Absence**

The following leave and salary continuation rights shall run concurrently with and shall be coordinated with any leave and salary continuation programs under state and federal law:

**Jury Duty:** Employees will be granted time off to serve on juries upon presentation of the Summons from the Jury Commissioner to their supervisor. The Conference will pay up to ten (10) working days each calendar year for employees to serve on jury duty if called. When first called for jury duty the employee should notify their supervisor who may ask the employee to seek a postponement based on work requirements, request "on call" status from the Jury Commissioner and be available by telephone from the workplace. In addition, any employee released from jury duty during a regularly scheduled workday shall return to work.

**Witness Duty:** Employees will be granted time off to act as a witness upon presentation of a copy of the subpoena to their supervisor. The Conference will pay up to two (2) working days each calendar year for employees to serve as a witness if called. In addition, any employee released from witness duty during a regularly scheduled workday shall return to work.

**Military Leave:** Military leaves of absence are provided to all employees in compliance with applicable state and federal laws. Any employee requesting military leave should submit such request promptly and accompany any such request with a copy of their orders indicating the beginning and ending dates of their active duty period. Military leave is unpaid.

**Maternity/Paternity Leave:** Employees are entitled to the same amount of maternity/paternity leave as clergy. Clergy maternity/paternity leave is described in the Book of Discipline. Employees are eligible for maternity/paternity leave of up to 3 months at the birth or arrival of a child into the home for purposes of adoption. Compensation will be maintained for no less than eight weeks of leave. Employees desiring this leave should notify their supervisor or supervising committee 90 days in advance, if possible. Maternity/paternity leave of up to three (3) months will be considered uninterrupted service for pension purpose. An employee's health benefits will remain unaffected by the leave.

**Disability Due to Medical Condition:** Employees disabled due to a medical condition may qualify for unpaid leave of absence for the duration of their disability, up to a maximum of four (4) months. Any employee who believes they may qualify for such disability leave must present their supervisor with a physician's statement of disability and must return to work upon release by their physician following the disability. Any disability leave lasting in excess

of four (4) months may be granted, but the employee will not be guaranteed a position upon return to work.

**Personal Leave Without Pay:** Employees may request up to thirty (30) day's leave without pay. Such requests should be made to the employee's supervisor or the supervising committee and may be granted or denied solely at the discretion of the Conference. During such personal leaves without pay, no vacation, sick leave, holiday or paid employee benefits will be earned or accrued.

**School Leave:** Employees may request up to forty (40) hours off per calendar year in order to attend and participate in the school of any dependent child. No more than eight (8) hours may be taken during any single month, and employees must receive permission in advance of taking the time off. Any time taken for this purpose is without pay.

**Alcohol/Drug Rehabilitation Leave:** The Conference wishes to assist employees who recognize that they have a problem with alcohol or other drugs that may interfere with their ability to perform their job in a satisfactory manner. Employees who have a problem with alcohol or drugs and who decide to enroll voluntarily in an alcohol/drug rehabilitation program will be given unpaid time off to participate in the program unless it would result in an undue hardship to the Conference to provide time off. If an employee requests time off to participate in such a program, the Conference will make a reasonable effort to maintain the confidentiality of the fact that the employee is enrolled in such a program.

**Bereavement Leave:** Bereavement leave maybe granted by the employee's supervisor. The Conference will pay up to five days per year for bereavement leave.

## **VOTING**

If an employee does not have sufficient time outside of working hours to vote at a statewide election, the employee may, take off enough working time which when added to the voting time available outside of working hours will enable the employee to vote. No more than two hours of the time taken off for voting shall be with pay.

If an employee has reason to believe that time off will be necessary to be able to vote on election day, the employee shall give their supervisor at least two working days' notice that time off for voting is desired, in accordance with provisions California Elections Code. (Section 14000)

## **IF YOU LEAVE THE CONFERENCE**

### **Separation of Employment**

Employees are separated from employment by voluntary resignation, termination, lack of work, or retirement.

If you decide to leave the Conference, you are expected to give at least two weeks written notice to your supervisor and the Human Resources Team. The notice should include the date of resignation.

### **Exit Interview**

You may be asked to take part in an "exit interview" with the Human Resources Team. This meeting will give you the opportunity to discuss any problem areas and make suggestions,

and to receive answers to your questions regarding continuation and conversion of specific benefit plans on an individual basis.

## **Pay and Benefits at Time of Separation**

*Property:* The employee's supervisor will determine whether the individual has in his or her possession any Conference property (i.e. credit cards, keys, digital property etc.) and collect these items from the employee prior to their last workday.

*Final Paycheck:* A final paycheck will be issued to the employee. The check will reflect only time actually worked, plus accrued vacation.

*Vacation Pay:* Unused vacation time will be included in the employee's final paycheck.

*Sick Pay:* Unused sick leave will not be included in the employee's final paycheck.

*Benefits:* Prior to resignation or termination of employment, an employee should consult the Human Resources Team regarding pension, health and other benefits.

## **Unemployment Insurance**

Employees of the Conference are not eligible for unemployment compensation because the conference does not participate in these plans.

# THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT & UNDERSTANDING

## Part 1 – Read Immediately. To be completed by the employee

- **General Information.** The statements contained in the Employee Handbook are intended to serve as general information concerning the Conference with respect to its existing policies, procedures, practices of employment and employee benefits.
- **No Contract Implied.** Nothing contained in the Employee Handbook is intended to create, nor shall be construed as creating, an expressed or implied contract or guarantee of employment for a definite or indefinite term. Nothing in this handbook alters the at-will nature of the employment relationship between the employee and the Conference.
- **Handbook Updates.** From time to time the Conference may need to clarify, change, delete, amend, and/or supplement the information contained in the Employee Handbook. This may occur without notice.
- **Acknowledgment.** I have received a copy of the Conference’s Employee Handbook, have read, and understand the information outlined in the handbook.
- **Personal Copy.** I understand I may retain this copy of the Handbook in my possession while I am employed by the Conference, or until requested to return it.

## Part 2 – Sign Immediately.

To be completed by the employee, who acknowledges understanding of statements in Part 1 above.

Employee’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Part 3 – Sign Immediately.

To be completed by the employee’s supervisor or Human Resources Team.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_