

# **Guidance for PC(USA) Mid Councils on Personnel Processes and Policies**

**Office of the General Assembly**

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## Introduction

Councils of the church exist to help congregations and the church as a whole to be more faithful participants in the mission of Christ. The particular responsibility of the councils of the church

### Use of abbreviations

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is designated as **PC(USA)** throughout this document.

When the **Book of Order** of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is cited, the part, chapter, and section(s) are shown, *e.g.*, F-1.01 or G-3.0101.

is to nurture, guide, and govern those who witness as part of the PC(USA), to the end that such witness strengthens the whole church and gives glory to God (G-3.0101).

This document is intended to assist presbyteries and synods of all types and sizes in establishing personnel policies and processes, for the

following two reasons:

- 1) Almost all mid councils (presbyteries and synods) have some type of **employment relationship** with someone.

Councils may employ such staff as is required by the mission of the body in accordance with the principles of unity in diversity (F-1.0403). Larger presbyteries may have multiple full- and part-time ordained and non-ordained staff, while smaller presbyteries and synods may only have a part-time paid stated clerk, but there are always aspects of employment that need to be managed in order to ensure that the mid council is in compliance with both PC(USA) polity and applicable law.

- 2) Councils of the church at each level are required to develop a **manual of administrative operations** (G-3.0106).

It is important that the mid council's manual of administrative operations includes a section on personnel processes and policies. This document provides guidance on writing the personnel section of the manual of administrative operations.

The guidance in this document seeks to comply with the *Book of Order* of the PC(USA), and serve as an additional resource to the *Book of Order*. As with all working documents of the church, if there is a conflict between *Book of Order* and other documents, the *Book of Order* prevails.

## Terminology

**Council** – The councils of the PC(USA) are the session, presbytery, synod, and General Assembly.

**Mid Council** – Presbyteries and synods are the intended audience for this document, which uses the terms interchangeably – “mid councils” or “presbyteries and synods.”

**Commission** – A commission is a group which has been empowered by a council to make decisions. A commission may be either administrative or judicial.

**Administrative Commission (AC)** – An AC is a body which has been designated to make decisions on behalf of a council. In various presbyteries and synods, this group may be referred to as a leadership commission, coordinating commission or cabinet, etc. Administrative commissions have been called “councils” in some presbyteries or synods, but that term may be confusing since the *Book of Order* now uses “council” to refer to the entire presbytery or synod. (Some mid councils may call their primary leadership group a “council” without granting it the powers of a commission to act on behalf of the mid council.)

**Committee** – A group created by a council to study and recommend actions to the council and to carry out work assigned by the council. A committee is not empowered to make decisions on behalf of a council.

# Principles Guiding Development of Personnel Processes and Policies

## Theological Statement

This document is intended for use in the church, not in a business, so it is important that it be grounded in the beliefs of the Christian community and the PC(USA). Our model in employment relationships and policies arises from Jesus's practices of inclusion, appreciation of every person's unique talents and varied gifts, and call to accountability before God and one another to God's mission of justice for the world.

The PC(USA) and its predecessor denominations in the last generation have at various times issued position statements on employer/employee relationships, with particular emphasis on the issues of diversity and cultural proficiency (see "Privilege, Power and Policy: The Church as Employer" from the 220th General Assembly (2012) [<https://www.pc-biz.org/#/search/3951>]) as well as "compensation" understood more broadly than simply "salary" (see for example, "Neither Poverty nor Riches: Compensation, Equity, and the Unity of the Church" from the 219th General Assembly (2010) [<https://www.pc-biz.org/#/search/3243>] and earlier statements referenced in it). These statements note that there is a wide range of opinions on these matters across the church but often return to this confessional statement as an agreed upon foundation:

It is agreed among us that the fundamental purpose of human life is "to glorify God and enjoy [God] forever." [see Westminster Shorter Catechism, 7.001] ... A theology of compensation [and, we might add, employer/employee relationships more generally] is necessarily rooted in this theological consensus. And no reflection in the Church's system of economics can be considered other than on this basis. ... [The church's employment practice] is rooted in our common call to glorify God, *i.e.*, to make God more visible and more central in the processes of human community. ("A Theology of Compensation – A Study Paper," 195th General Assembly (1983), ll. 89–90, 99–100, and 105–106)

Or, to phrase it differently, the way that the church relates to its employees is fundamentally a question of justice and a facet of the "great ends of the Church" through its "promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world" (F-1.0304).

As mid councils develop their compensation and personnel policies more generally, they should remind themselves that our theological commitments are primary even as they seek to comply with the requirements of civil law.

## Foundations for Healthy Employment Relationships

- 1) All organizations need **healthy, thriving staff** in order to be healthy and thriving themselves. And staff, in order to be healthy and thriving, need:
  - equitable and fair compensation and benefits;
  - clear and up-to-date descriptions of their work;
  - fair, regular, and consistent evaluation;
  - support for professional growth;
  - recognition of achievements; and
  - employment policies that define expectations and obligations.
- 2) Mid councils can make better decisions about budgets, staffing needs, and policies if they have a **mission statement**, vision, or set of goals describing a shared understanding of what God is calling the organization to do at this time and in this place. Ideally, it will be specific to the organization's gifts and skills and the way in which these currently intersect with the needs of the community. All individuals and groups involved in a mid council's personnel decisions are responsible to the mission.
- 3) All employees of the mid council need clear and specific **job descriptions** that help them understand how they are expected to spend their time and what they are expected to accomplish. It is not fair for someone to be given a poor performance evaluation if the mid council has not been clear about what is expected.

Job descriptions change over time. If, for example, a presbytery's emphasis on new church development increases, the staff member responsible for this expanding program should have an updated job description.

Job descriptions are critical for the hiring process, as well as during the full cycle of employment.

- 4) Annual **evaluations** are important for both the employee and those in positions of oversight. They provide the opportunity to affirm positive performance, correct problems, and recalibrate job expectations.
- 5) Any mid council that has employees should have an employee handbook or **policy manual**, which employees are expected to sign when they are hired and during the period of employment as the policies are revised. If there is a conflict between the mid council's personnel policy manual and the *Book of Order*, the *Book of Order* prevails. If there is a conflict between the personnel policy manual and the standing rules of the mid council, the standing rules prevail. If there is a conflict between the provisions of the

personnel policy manual and those set forth in the terms of an ordained staff member's call, the terms of call prevail.

## Roles in the Personnel Process

Every mid council has individuals and groups who participate in personnel decisions and who have the responsibility to make sure they are done well, *i.e.*, are aligned with PC(USA) polity, in compliance with applicable law, and able to be understood and respected by the constituents of the mid council. These individuals and groups may include:

- the council (presbytery or synod),
- a group (administrative commission) *with* delegated powers to make personnel decisions for the presbytery or synod,
- a group (such as a personnel or human resources committee) *without* delegated powers to make decisions for the presbytery or synod, and
- member(s) of the staff who function in supervisory role(s).

The challenge for any entity is that while overall responsibility for good outcomes is shared, each group or individual needs to play a separate and distinct role in order to avoid conflict and confusion. The responsibilities and authority of each role should be clearly defined. Further, everyone involved in the personnel process should work to speak with one voice about personnel processes and policies.

### Presbytery or Synod

The presbytery or synod itself has “responsibility for the leadership, guidance, and government” of that portion of the church under its jurisdiction (G-3.0102).

The *Book of Order* provides for mid councils to “employ such staff as is required by the mission of the body in accordance with the principles of unity in diversity.” It also provides that councils “shall make provision in its manual of administrative operations for the process of electing executive staff and the hiring of other staff, the description of the responsibilities of the positions, the method of performance review, and the manner of termination of employment” (G-3.0110).

In addition to the above-mentioned requirements, all mid councils should consider the following to be personnel-related responsibilities:

- ensuring that the mid council has a shared mission that can be used to determine staff needs and create job descriptions,

- adopting personnel policies that are aligned with PC(USA) polity and comply with applicable law,
- evaluating each staff member annually, and
- nurturing an environment in which the mid council and the staff work with each other in a fellowship of trust and love.

### **Administrative Commission with Powers to Make Decisions for the Presbytery or Synod**

The mid council may delegate to an administrative commission the power to hire, evaluate, supervise, or dissolve employment relationships. See Terminology box on page 3.

### **Personnel or Human Resources Committee**

Many presbyteries and some synods, especially larger mid councils, choose to delegate some or most of their personnel responsibilities to a personnel committee (G-3.0106 and G-3.0109). When this is done, the mid council should make clear in a committee job description which tasks it is delegating and the way in which the personnel committee will continue to be accountable to the mid council for its work. Functions of a personnel committee may include:

- researching and proposing personnel and compensation policy language to the council or administrative commission, which is then responsible for adopting the language;
- participating in the employee hiring and termination processes;
- overseeing the staff's compliance with policies and applicable employment and tax laws;
- participating in annual compensation and benefits review and making recommendations to the budget process;
- ensuring the accountability of the staff to the mid council's mission through the provision of performance management policies and processes;
- assisting the council, administrative commission, and/or supervisors in the annual evaluation of the staff;
- serving as a resource and/or witness during disciplinary employment conversations; and
- consulting with local attorneys and/or other experts to ensure that policies and actions comply with federal, state, and local law.

The mid council should determine the size of the personnel committee, length of terms, and how members of the personnel committee are selected. The size of the committee will vary and should be set at a number that helps to maintain confidentiality. The personnel committee should include, if possible, people with experience in human resources or employment law. Committee members should also be chosen for their ability to be neutral and objective. In terms of composition, this committee, like others in PC(USA) entities, should “give full expression to the rich diversity of the church’s membership” and “provide for full

participation and access to representation in decision-making” (G-3.0103). Typically, personnel committees have the same term limits as other committees of the mid council. Orientation for personnel committees is vital; they should have a comprehensive knowledge of the mid council’s mission and personnel policies and practices.

If an administrative commission uses a personnel committee, it is helpful for at least one member of the personnel committee to be from the administrative commission.

## **Supervisors**

The supervisory structure of a mid council is dependent on the number of employees and their functions, and the structure and the associated lines of accountability should be clearly defined in the council’s manual of operations. The staffing structure of the mid council will be based on the mission needs of the council.

A mid council might elect an executive employee who will function as the head of staff and be responsible for managing daily operations, as well as equipping, leading, developing, coordinating, supervising, and evaluating staff members. If the executive employee has such supervisory responsibilities, that person should work closely with any entity of the council that also has responsibility for oversight of employees, such as a leadership administrative commission and/or a personnel committee.

A mid council might not elect an executive employee, but might hire one or more employees who will function as supervisors of one or more other employees.

## **Personnel Processes and Policies**

### **Hiring Staff**

Each mid council is called by God to mission and ministry that is specific to the needs and context in which it is situated. The development of mission always comes before organizational structures, positions, and job descriptions so that these components are all developed to support the mission.

### **Recruitment**

Recruitment strategy is often thought to come after the development of the job description. However, to consider recruitment in advance gives the mid council the opportunity to:

- focus on the diversity of the community served and identify underrepresentation on the staff;

- think about the benefits of a staff more reflective of the community’s diversity;
- recognize the value of different perspectives and talents; and,
- identify ways for the job listing, publicity, and informal information about the job opening to reach a more diverse group of potential applicants, *e.g.*, expand networking venues, search out new avenues for advertising that reach communities underrepresented on the current staff, encourage candidate referrals from diverse staff members, rethink screening factors to ensure job-relatedness, etc.

By taking these steps, the mid council will practice the guidance set in the Theological Statement (page 4), to reflect Jesus’s practice of inclusion in hiring practices.

### Job Descriptions

Job descriptions define and give structure to the positions that the mid council believes will help it fulfill its call to God’s mission. In addition to helping the mid council achieve its mission, job descriptions also provide:

- a tool for recruiting and selecting the right person for the needs of the job;
- a basis for determining salary level;
- a basis for determining Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) classification, *i.e.*, exempt/salaried or non-exempt/hourly;
- a guide for the staff member’s job performance and the supervisor’s performance evaluation;
- definition of key relationships, authority, and accountability among positions; and
- a legal foundation for hiring and termination decisions.

All staff should have a job description.

Before a hiring process begins, the mid council should determine the work needed in the position to support the work of the organization and its mission, and the community it serves.

Job descriptions are typically created by the person(s) with the most knowledge of the work needed. Best practice is to identify job needs by looking more broadly than the incumbent’s responsibilities, talents, and skills, and inviting input from other constituents of the position. These steps promote an openness to the possibility that the new employee will add diversity to the staff and innovative ideas to carry out the mission of the organization. The mid council should clearly identify the process by which job descriptions are approved.

A job description includes several key components that describe the position and the nature of the work—the title and position descriptors, the essential functions, the core competencies and

qualifications. Guidance for developing these sections, along with a sample job description, appear in **Appendix A**.

Because God's call changes over time, all job descriptions should be reviewed annually or at least every other year. This review is typically conducted by the staff member and supervisor. Considerations include:

- whether the position and priorities still meet the missional needs of the organization,
- whether additional clarity and specificity are needed, and
- whether the position has the right number of hours assigned to it.

### **Stated Clerk Job Description**

Each council is required to elect a stated clerk as one of two officers of the council. (The moderator is the other officer of the council.) The stated clerk will record the decisions of the council, keep the records, rolls, and registers of the council, and receive allegations or filings within the judicial process. Each stated clerk has constitutional responsibilities outlined in the *Book of Order*, for which they/he/she is accountable directly to the electing council. In addition, many stated clerks are often assigned administrative responsibilities not specifically required by the *Book of Order*, such as performing administrative duties for specific committees or administrative commissions of the presbytery.

All responsibilities (constitutional and administrative) should be clearly delineated in the job description. The amount of time the council believes the stated clerk will need to devote to constitutional responsibilities should be clearly stated either in number of hours (per week or month) or percentage of total hours. Likewise, administrative tasks should be quantified in hours or percentage of time. The supervision of the stated clerk's administrative functions, as opposed to the ecclesiastical constitutional functions for which the stated clerk is accountable directly to the electing council, should be clearly stated prior to hiring.

### **Sharing Employees**

It is possible for more than one entity (congregation, presbytery, synod) to share staff. If this occurs, the expectations for each council should be clear, as set forth in a job description. The job description needs to include an estimate of how many hours per week (or month) the individual should spend on the work of each council. The councils should be clear about expectations, supervision, and accountability, and agree upon how to share the cost of salary and benefits and how to pay the employee.

## Independent Contractors

Some mid councils have used independent contracts to engage significant positions, such as presbytery executive or stated clerk. This practice is likely a violation of state and federal law. Such significant positions should be hired as full- or part-time employees. Independent contracts should be used only for work that is not essential to the daily operations of the council. Independent contractors work alone on specific projects, on their own schedule to meet a deadline, using their own tools and equipment, and without any supervision. For example, a council may hire an independent contractor to create a program to track donations or an app for donors to make gifts directly from their devices. But the person who serves the presbytery on a daily basis and uses the program or app to identify gifts, track them, and send thank-you notes, such as an executive presbyter or member of the office staff, should be hired as a regular employee, not as an independent contractor.

## Hiring Process

All participants in a hiring process should be knowledgeable about both secular law and PC(USA) polity. All processes must be faithful to the principles of Reformed theology and the values of the PC(USA). Considerations in the assessment and interview process include:

- **Inclusiveness.** The PC(USA) is committed to full participation and representation—in its membership, its worship, its decision-making, and its employment practices. All participants in the hiring process are required to give full expression to the rich diversity of the church’s membership and to provide for full participation and access to representation in decision-making and in employment practices (F-1.0403, G-3.0103). For this reason, mid councils are expected to develop policies and manage all aspects of employment, including recruitment, hiring, evaluation, and retention, in a way that expands the organization’s witness to the diversity of God’s creation.
- **Nondiscrimination.** All aspects of the hiring process (and all aspects of personnel processes) are guided by the PC(USA)’s commitment to inclusivity and equal opportunity as stated in the *Book of Order*. Federal and state legislation related to equal opportunity may apply, depending on numbers of employees. Participants in all personnel practices should be aware both of this legislation and of the PC(USA)’s First Amendment right to the free exercise of religion and to be free of governmental establishment of religion, especially when employing persons for ministry and mission. For employment purposes, this has been interpreted as the “ministerial exception” for employment of ministers for religious purposes.

- **Interview Questions.** Interviews that ask questions relevant to the job responsibilities and requirements for a job are a necessary part of the hiring process. Certain kinds of questions should *not* be asked, including questions about an applicant’s race, national origin, pregnancy or plans to become pregnant, disabilities, or age. The courts do typically allow churches to ask questions related to an applicant’s faith and to exclude persons from or prefer persons for employment on the basis of religion. Guidance on interview questions appears in **Appendix B**.

## Employment Process

Once the person to be hired has been selected, additional employment processes begin.

- **Background and reference checks.** An offer is pending until background and reference checks are satisfactorily completed. Mid councils should develop a policy that calls for conducting background and reference checks for all positions and designate who (which position) is responsible for completing them, ensuring that person is knowledgeable and/or trained in the process.

**Background checks.** Some church insurance carriers provide access to background check vendors that may provide a form on which the prospective employee will authorize the background check. If not, a sample form is provided in **Appendix C**. In all cases, background checks should comply with insurance carrier requirements and policies of the mid council and the PC(USA).

**Reference checks.** A reference check of an employer is usually limited to verification of employment and dates and rehire status. Reference checks of individuals/supervisors should be limited to job-relevant questions, similar to those asked in an interview of the candidate. Helpful guidance on reference checks appears in **Appendix D**.

- **Compensation.** When setting compensation (salary and benefits) for any new position, mid councils should consider establishing a general policy that ensures reasonable compensation for all staff, using data related to comparable positions. All organizations must continually balance employee satisfaction driven by salary and benefits with affordability and market comparisons. A personnel committee may be charged with compensation research. Compensation decisions must be in compliance with requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and how the requirements apply to exempt and nonexempt employees.
- **Benefits.** Mid councils should establish policies regarding benefits, examples of which are listed in **Appendix G**. Eligibility is based on employment categories, such as full-

time, part-time, temporary, independent contractor, and ordination status.

**Medical and retirement benefits** offered to employees will consider the mid council's budgetary situation and options available in the PC(USA) Board of Pensions annual plan.

Other topics listed in the appendix are specific to **federal or state laws**, *e.g.*, military leave and jury leave.

Paid and unpaid **personal leave** are among the policies subject to the mid council's discretion. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave is required by federal law for employers of 50 or more, and by some states for employers with fewer than 50 employees. Most councils are likely not required by law to offer FMLA leave. However, best practice for a mid council is to develop a policy in keeping with the intent and spirit of FMLA and support for an employee during critical medical events for her/him/themselves or the family, *e.g.*, chronic or long-term illness, childbirth, etc. In all categories of leave, it is essential to define, in advance, eligibility for each type of leave, under what circumstance the leave is paid or unpaid, and the duration of the specific type of leave.

- **Job offer.** Mid councils should document the process for extending a job offer, including who has the authority to extend an offer and the process involved. Typically, a verbal offer is extended first and is followed up in writing with details of the terms. The offer letter, signed to acknowledge agreement, becomes a part of the employee's personnel file. It is helpful for the mid council to develop a template for a job offer letter to ensure completeness and consistency. See sample in **Appendix E**.

When mid councils employ a minister of Word and Sacrament, the mid council should put into writing the terms of employment, which will be sent to the presbytery of membership for approval as a validated ministry.

- **Hiring documentation.** Mid councils should identify a person to be responsible for handling the documentation required for employment of staff members. The person is responsible for proper record retention of these documents and should keep all personnel records confidential and locked so that they are only accessible to leadership of the council who have a right and need to review those records. See Record Retention section on page 19. This documentation includes, but is not limited to:

**Form I-9 and Immigration Status.** All employers, including churches, are required by law to verify the identity of new hires and confirm that they are eligible to work

in the United States, within three days of the start date, through a Form I-9. (Form I-9s are not required for independent contractors.) The policy for Form I-9s should appear in the mid council's personnel policies manual. For information, forms, and instructions, go to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration website at <https://www.uscis.gov/i-9>.

**IRS compliance.** Ministers ordained in the PC(USA) are frequently employed in the positions of stated clerk, mid council executive, or other staff functions. The position in which each person serves may be called and installed, or temporary. Attention should be given to the provisions related to ministers in the *Book of Order*, policies of the Board of Pensions regarding benefits, and federal and state tax law. For example, in accordance with federal and state law, and PC(USA) policy, ordained clergy are considered "self-employed persons" for Social Security purposes. However, for income tax purposes, income is reported to the federal and state tax authorities.

- **New Employee Orientation.** Mid councils should develop a process for orienting new employees to the organization, ensuring each employee is introduced to its history and culture, the facility, other staff, operational procedures, personnel policies, and equipment/materials. It is helpful to establish who will handle each aspect of the orientation to ensure consistency of information and completion of the process. The use of a checklist is helpful, and a sample appears in **Appendix F**.

## Personnel Management

### Personnel Policies

Any mid council that has employees should have a personnel policy manual. Policies make organizational life less chaotic by providing a common reference point when employment-related questions arise. The personnel policy manual typically outlines such aspects of the employment relationship as acceptable and unacceptable employee behavior, compensation and benefits, and procedures for employee discipline or termination. Because applicable state and local laws vary, it is not possible to include a full list of employment policies in this document; however, topics typically addressed in a policy manual are listed in **Appendix G**.

As councils of the church, presbyteries and synods are *required* by the *Book of Order* to adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a child and youth protection policy.

#### **Sexual Misconduct Policy**

(Adopted by the 219th General Assembly [2010], updated October 2013) It is the policy of

the PC(USA) “that all church members, church officers, nonmember employees, and volunteers of congregations, governing bodies, and entities of the church are to maintain the integrity of the ministerial, employment, and professional relationship always. Persons who engage in sexual misconduct are in violation of the principles set forth in Scripture, and of the ministerial, pastoral, employment, and professional relationship. It is never permissible or acceptable for a church member, officer, employee, or volunteer to engage in sexual misconduct.”

[https://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/oga/publications/sexual\\_misconduct\\_policy\\_and\\_its\\_procedures\\_approved\\_by\\_coga\\_october\\_2013\\_after\\_nfog\\_changes\\_\(00020308\).pdf](https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/publications/sexual_misconduct_policy_and_its_procedures_approved_by_coga_october_2013_after_nfog_changes_(00020308).pdf)

### **Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Its Procedures**

(Approved by the 222nd General Assembly [2016], updated 2020) It is the policy of the General Assembly of the PC(USA) and all entities (and their activities) of the General Assembly “that all church members, church officers, nonmember employees and/or contractors, and volunteers of congregations, councils, and entities of the church are to maintain the strongest sense of integrity, safety, nurturing, and care involving all interactions with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.”

[https://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/child\\_protection\\_policy\\_final.pdf](https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/child_protection_policy_final.pdf)

Each mid council should also adopt policies governing standards of conduct and professional ethics that apply to all employees of the presbytery or synod. A “Standards of Ethical Conduct” policy has been approved by the General Assembly and is recommended for inclusion in manuals of operations of mid councils.

### **Standards of Ethical Conduct**

(Approved by the 210th General Assembly [1998]) The standards contain three sections, for members, for employees and volunteers, and for ordained officers in the PC(USA), and include a list of commitments that employees and volunteers are to make to support their ministry in the workplace and the ministry of the organization. These standards were recommended for study, approval, and inclusion in manuals of operations and for use by mid councils. <https://oga.pcusa.org/media/uploads/oga/pdf/ethical-conduct.pdf>

Two additional PC(USA) documents, “Standards of Behavior” and “Ethics Policy,” may be useful to the mid council as it develops its policies:

### **Standards of Behavior**

(Approved by the Presbyterian Center [2011]) These standards can serve as a resource or

model for how to enact the Standards of Conduct in a “culturally proficient” organization. <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/standards-behavior/>

### **Ethics Policy**

(Adopted by the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly [2006]) These 10 standards apply specifically to business ethics. However, they serve as a resource or model for some organizational policy manuals.

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/ethics-policy-pma-oga-employees.pdf>

Finally, there may be times when mid council staff need to be placed on leave. As part of the policy manual, mid councils should develop a policy addressing the following issues:

#### **Administrative Leave**

Allegations of certain behaviors, such as embezzlement of funds, abuse of power, sexual misconduct or abuse, etc., may prompt or require an employee to be placed on administrative leave while a disciplinary procedure is followed. The process for placing the employee on administrative leave should be spelled out in the policy manual.

#### **Family Leave and Medical Leave**

As noted in the “Hiring Process” section under “Benefits,” due to staff size and the nature of the organization, not all mid councils will be subject to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Therefore, while a policy on personal leave, both paid and unpaid, is subject to the mid council’s discretion, best practice is to develop a policy in keeping with the intent and spirit of FMLA’s support of employees during critical medical events for themselves or their families, *e.g.*, chronic or long-term illness, childbirth, etc. In all categories of leave, it is essential to define, in advance, eligibility for each type of leave, under what circumstance the leave is paid or unpaid, and the duration of the specific type of leave.

#### **Judicial Process**

If an employee who is a member of the PC(USA) engages in behavior that is an offense against Scripture or the Constitution of the PC(USA), then a description of the behavior may be written by the supervisor and given to either the stated clerk or the clerk of session of the council of membership. The council of membership will appoint an investigating committee to examine whether there is probable cause that the individual committed the offense and whether it can be proven to a session or permanent judicial commission beyond a reasonable doubt. This judicial process applies to the relationship

of the individual and the PC(USA) and not the particular employment of the individual. A judicial process decision of guilt and a censure from the church may or may not affect the employment status. Similarly, the effectiveness of the employee and status of an employee's employment with the council are not contingent upon the status of a judicial decision. It is possible for an individual to be simultaneously engaged in a judicial process and an administrative process described above.

In addition to reviewing the suggested outline in **Appendix G**, it may be helpful to review policies of other mid councils when developing or revising a policy manual. These documents are available on various synod and presbytery websites. Some are also collected on the [equip.pcusa.org](http://equip.pcusa.org) site, "Welcome to Mid Council Ministry," accessible to stated clerks and executive presbyters; see the Resource Archives section. The *Employee Handbook of the PC(USA)*, A Corporation (the corporation of the General Assembly), is available for review from the Human Resources Department. For specific questions, consult the PC(USA)'s Legal Services office or a local employment attorney.

Once policies have been adopted by the mid council, they should be followed consistently for all staff so that there is no risk of discrimination. Ensuring compliance is often the responsibility of the executive employee, but the mid council is ultimately responsible. Ensuring adherence to personnel policies should be included in the executive employee's job description. The administrative commission, personnel committee, executive employee, and other supervisors should review the personnel policies annually, both to ensure that the policies follow PC(USA) polity and applicable law and to ensure that they themselves understand the policies.

Employees should acknowledge receipt of, understanding of, and intention to abide by the policies when the employee is hired, and periodically during their employment, especially when policies are changed.

### Confidentiality

Maintaining confidentiality is essential in managing employment relationships. All those involved in hiring, managing, and dismissing employees must keep personnel information confidential.

Councils, supervisors, personnel committees, and administrative commissions sometimes find themselves in the position of knowing things that are confidential. A confidentiality policy should define the proper handling of sensitive information so that all those—but only those—with a need to have access to the information, for the execution of their responsibilities, have access. Members of these bodies should have a reputation for integrity and should work hard to create an environment of trust and transparency. Once this environment exists, the minister members and others in the presbytery or synod will be

better prepared to have confidence that the council, supervisor, personnel committee, or administrative commission are acting in the best interests of the mid council and its employees when problems arise.

**Exception to Confidentiality.** A confidentiality policy should also define the exceptions to maintaining confidentiality. These exceptions occur when the person receiving information is unable to maintain confidence. Both state mandatory reporting laws and G-4.0302 dictate exceptions to maintaining confidentiality. The obligation to report applies in the following circumstances:

- the information received is about child abuse (mandatory state reporting laws), or
- the information is related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when there is a reasonable belief that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse (G-4.0302).

In these mandatory circumstances, the person receiving the information should make clear to the person providing the information that the receiver has a duty to report the information to the stated clerk of the mid council and civil legal authorities.

In addition, a person receiving confidential information may judge it necessary to report when:

- there is reasonable belief in risk of imminent bodily harm to any person, or
- the person providing the information gives permission to share it.

## Record Retention

Many kinds of personnel records are required by federal law to be kept for a period of years. Recommendations regarding retention of all kinds of records are available on the Presbyterian Historical Society (PHS) website at <https://www.history.pcusa.org/services/records-management/records-mid-councils>. The website provides good information about setting up an employee file and segregating certain records into separate files, *e.g.*, keeping the Form I-9 and medical records in separate files from the personnel file. Because record retention laws vary by state, mid councils are encouraged to use the retention schedule on the PHS website but also to research laws in their specific state and comply with local retention time frames. No matter what a mid council uses, consistency and documentation of retention schedules and policies are vital.

In addition to these organizational files, the supervisor maintains records for each employee. The supervisor records are primarily notes about employee performance, *e.g.*, working documents of supervisor/employee conversations, notes about the supervisor's observations, input from others.

## Performance Evaluation

All mid councils should have a clearly described and fair and balanced process for providing job performance feedback to an employee. The goals of a performance evaluation process are to maximize the employee's opportunity for job success in meeting the organization's needs and to advance the mission and goals of the mid council.

Policies for effective performance evaluation systems should include a statement of purpose, a general description of the process, roles and responsibilities of participants, and how the results are to be used (*e.g.*, for an official record, as basis for compensation decisions, and/or other personnel actions, etc.).

Components of an effective performance evaluation process typically include:

- documentation and communication about the organization's mission and goals, information on the performance evaluation policy and process, the employee's job description, and the performance expectations;
- ongoing communication and periodic check-ins with the employee about job performance;
- an annual performance evaluation meeting:
  - discussion of employee accomplishments, progress on goals, areas of excellence, strengths of the employee in performing job duties, areas where improvement is needed;
  - an opportunity for an employee's self-assessment of his/her/their performance, assessment of progress on goals, and suggested future goals;
  - establishing priorities and goals for the upcoming evaluation period; and
  - communication of next steps, including target dates for completion of goals and milestones for demonstrating improvement in identified areas.
- summary documentation of the annual performance, which should include signatures and space for employee comments. Copies of the annual performance document should be provided to the employee and supervisor and permanently retained in the employee's official personnel file. (Sample in **Appendix H.**)

## Termination

Situations may arise which require the termination of an employee. As with all aspects of the employment relationship, the termination process must be faithful to the principles of Christian theology and the values of the PC(USA). Mid councils will benefit from having a clear termination policy in place to guide practice in these situations.

A termination policy typically includes:

- types of issues that can warrant termination, such as unsatisfactory performance, violation of policies (including Standards of Conduct and Professional Ethics and Sexual Misconduct and Abuse), and reduction in force;
- reference to a corrective/progressive action process to use when normal performance improvement steps do not achieve specified results (see example in **Appendix I**);
- reference that the corrective/progressive action process is separate from the judicial process described in the *Book of Order* Rules of Discipline (see note in **Appendix I**);
- clarification of who has authority for termination and who needs to be consulted; and
- procedures for termination, including oral and written communication, information on the separation process, and statement of any benefits that the employee forfeits or retains.

Typically, termination is a situation in which advice is sought from a human resources professional and/or an employment attorney. Advice from these professionals may help the process proceed more smoothly and mitigate potential legal issues.

When the employment relationship between the council and a minister of Word and Sacrament is dissolved or terminated, the presbytery of membership of the former employee should be notified of the dissolution.

## Appendix A: Guidance on Developing a Job Description

For a new or vacant position, development of the job description should always be approached with a focus on the mission of the organization, the value of innovation, and the importance of diversity. For an existing position with an incumbent, the job description should be reviewed at least annually, to consider factors that have changed the needs of the job.

A job description includes several key components that describe the position and the nature of the work—the title and position descriptors, the essential functions, and the core competencies.

### Title and descriptors

- Type of position: full-time, part-time (part-time with benefits, part-time with limited benefits), whether ongoing or temporary, including number of weekly/monthly hours for the position
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) classification: exempt or nonexempt
- Supervision: who supervises the position
- Date the job description was written or revised

**Essential functions** are the central tasks that must be completed by the employee in the execution of the job. They describe *what* the employee is expected to do. Examples include “plan and organize all education programs for the organization,” “schedule all uses of the facility,” “manage the staff.”

**Core competencies** are the character attributes and abilities of the person relevant to the successful work of the job—the *how* of the job. Examples of core competencies might include attention to detail, initiative, integrity, compassion, creativity, mission ownership, team orientation, or maturity. An employee can be excellent at an essential function, such as data entry, but if one of the position’s core competencies is the ability to work with others and the employee cannot get along with other staff or congregation members, then the employee is not doing the whole job and needs to improve. By including in the job description core competencies in addition to essential functions, employees have clarity for job expectations and behavior and supervisors have a way to evaluate more than just accomplishment of tasks.

**Additional information** can be added when using the job description as a job advertisement, including:

- qualifications, *e.g.*, credentials or minimum previous experience, and
- physical requirements.

## Sample Job Description

**Employee Name:**

**Position Title:**

**FLSA classification:** Exempt or Nonexempt

**Accountable to:** Title of supervisor's position and/or name of group

**Accountable for:** Titles of employees supervised

**Date written/revised:**

### Essential Functions and Responsibilities

- A. Lead the presbytery, including [specific responsibilities]
- B. Work with the churches, synod, Office of the General Assembly, including [specific responsibilities]
- C. Lead and manage the staff, including [specific responsibilities]
- D. Participate in the wider community, including [specific responsibilities]

### Core Competencies

- A. Models strong faith in Jesus Christ
- B. Integrity and confidentiality
- C. Effective management skills
- D. Effective interpersonal communication
- E. Team and bridge building skills

### Qualifications

**Required:**

Master of Divinity Degree

Minimum of five years' experience in a pastor role

**Preferred:**

Some grant writing or fundraising experience

## Appendix B: Guidance on Interview Questions

### What You Can Ask/What You Cannot Ask

Issue	Do NOT Ask	You May Ask
Age	Applicant's age, date of birth, date of high school or college graduation. Federal and state laws prohibit discrimination based upon age, 40 and over.	Whether the applicant is over the minimum age and under the maximum age, if age is a bona fide occupational qualification.
Alcohol or Drug Use	Any questions at all. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act alcoholism is a covered disability, but current illegal drug use <b>is not</b> protected.	Nothing.
Arrest Record	Any questions at all. The EEOC discourages employers from relying on arrests to make hiring decisions; studies show that racial ethnic citizens are arrested at higher rates than white citizens.	Nothing.  After job offer and before start of employment, conduct background checks to address any relevant issues in this area.
Citizenship/ National Origin	Where the applicant or parents were born, customs, accent, attire, date they/he/she became a citizen. Federal and state laws prohibit discrimination based upon citizenship and national origin.	What languages the candidate speaks or reads/writes, only if being multilingual is relevant to the job duties of the position.
Credit History	Any questions at all. Credit history and credit ratings are considered discriminatory toward minority candidates.	Nothing.  Credit will be included in background check if relevant to the position (after job offer and before start of employment).
Criminal Record	Any questions at all.	Nothing.  Run criminal background checks to address any relevant issues in this area (after job offer and before start of employment).
Disabilities	Any questions about obvious or perceived disabilities, past injuries, physical limitations, worker's compensation claims, lawsuits over injuries, medications, or any question that would lead to answers about disabilities. Under the Americans	You may show the applicant the job description and ask if the applicant can perform the essential functions of the job. (1) If the answer is yes, ask nothing else; however, if necessary, you can ask the applicant to show how they would perform one of the

	with Disabilities Act, pre-offer inquiries about disabilities are prohibited, except in very limited circumstances.	essential functions, then stop asking questions in that area. (2) If the answer is yes and the candidate can perform the essential functions <i>with accommodation</i> , discuss the accommodation and seek legal advice. (3) If the answer is no, the candidate cannot perform all the essential functions of the job, document the answer and ask which functions the applicant cannot perform. If the applicant self-identifies as disabled, document it.
Gender Identity or Expression	Any questions at all about gender identity or expression.	Nothing.
Genetic Information	About genetic tests of applicant or family members or family health history. Under the federal Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, it is illegal to discriminate in employment based upon genetic information.	Nothing.
Licenses and Certifications		If they are relevant to the position.
Marital or family status	About marital, family status, pregnancy, number of children, or childcare issues. Federal and state law prohibit discrimination based upon gender and pregnancy.	If the applicant can perform the essential functions of the job, including work schedule, but the question must be asked of ALL candidates, not just female candidates.
Membership	Any questions about clubs and organizations to which the applicant belongs, unless they are expressly relevant to the position.	Organizations to which applicant belongs and positions held, if the information is not used to discriminate based upon a protected category (e.g., age, gender, race). And the organizations should be relevant to the position (e.g., if you are interviewing a lawyer, bar association membership is relevant).
Military Service	Any questions about military service, unless they are expressly relevant to the position. Federal law prohibits discrimination based upon military service.	Rank attained, experience, and education in the military as it relates to the position.
Race/Color	Any questions at all about race or color. State and federal law prohibit discrimination based upon race/color.	Nothing.

Religion/Creed	Questions about religious beliefs, to what religious community the applicant belongs, religious holidays the applicant observes, religious customs, unless religion is a bona fide occupational qualification for the position.	If the applicant can perform the essential functions of the job, including work schedule.
Sex	Questions about the gender of an applicant. State and federal law prohibit discrimination based upon a candidate's gender.	Nothing.
Sexual Orientation	Anything at all about a candidate's sexual orientation.	Nothing.
Smoking	If the applicant smokes. It is a violation of laws of some states to discriminate against smokers.	Nothing.

## Appendix C: Sample Form for Background Check Release

The [name of mid council] will conduct the following investigative activities as part of the background review of [name of employee]. Your signature on this Release Form indicates you understand these activities and you authorize them to be performed with the conditions specified below.

Persons convicted of specific crimes may not hold certain positions at [name of mid council]. If you are applying for such a position and have been convicted of a felony, please note this below. If more space is needed, please provide the additional information on a separate sheet of paper. In addition, you authorize the [name of mid council] to undertake a criminal record check with state police officials.

You authorize the [name of mid council] to obtain a Motor Vehicle Record report. Our insurance company may also obtain a report through its sources. If the position for which you are applying involves driving a motor vehicle, you must have a good driving record.

I have read and understand the above. I consent to the background check as described herein.

---

Signature

Date

## Appendix D: Guidance for Candidate Reference Checks

Helpful guidance for checking references for a candidate is available through a variety of sources. One useful resource is the Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM) at [https://shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/reference-check-checkup.aspx?\\_ga=2.50263973.221652130.1615992439-1451052209.1615992439](https://shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/reference-check-checkup.aspx?_ga=2.50263973.221652130.1615992439-1451052209.1615992439).

Summary of the article:

Employment reference questions should be tailored to the specific position in the mid council. Questions should be addressed to persons who observed the work of the candidate; supervisory references are most useful.

Common questions asked of references include those below.

- What were the individual's job responsibilities and salary?
- Was the individual successful in his/her/their role at your organization? Why or why not?
- What was it like to supervise the person?
- Was the person a valuable member of the team? Why or why not?
- What unique skills did the individual bring to your organization?
- What were her/their/his strengths?
- What were their/her/his weaknesses or areas that needed improvement?
- Was the person ever disciplined, and what were the circumstances?
- Do you think the individual is suitable for the job being applied for?
- Why did the person leave your organization?
- Would you rehire the person? Why or why not?
- What do we need to be aware of to ensure that we create an environment that will help the candidate succeed?

## Appendix E: Sample Job Offer Letter

Date

Dear [Ms., Mr., Rev., Dr.] \_\_\_\_\_:

We are pleased that you have accepted the offer to become the [job title] for the [organization title]. This letter serves as written agreement between you and the [organization title].

*For full-time:*

Your employment is full-time and begins on [date]. Your annual salary will be [\$\_\_]. Your full-time position is eligible for all [organization title] benefits. A performance evaluation will occur [ ] months after your start date and continue on the annual schedule.

*For part-time:*

Your employment is part-time for [ ] hours per week and begins on [date]. Your pay rate will be [\$\_\_] per hour. Your part-time position falls in the “limited benefits” category and, as such, you will receive all mandated benefits (such as worker’s compensation and Social Security), but you are ineligible for other [organization title] benefit programs. A performance evaluation will occur [ ] months after your start date and continue on the annual schedule.

*For temporary:*

Your employment is temporary [part-time @ # hours per week OR full-time]. It begins on [date] and [ends on date] OR [continues for \_\_ months]. Your pay rate will be [\$\_\_] per hour. Your temporary position falls in the “limited benefits” category and, as such, you will receive all mandated benefits (such as worker’s compensation and Social Security) but you are ineligible for other [organization title] benefit programs. A performance evaluation will occur [ ] months after your start date.

Your responsibilities as [job title] are described on the attached job description. You will be accountable to the [supervisor’s job title].

Welcome! We look forward to working with you in service of the [organization title] and its mission.

These terms of employment are offered and confirmed by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Presbyter (or other Executive Employee elected by the mid council)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Personnel Committee (or other commission or committee empowered by the mid council to extend employment offers)

I accept these terms of employment:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Attachment: Job Description

## Appendix F: Sample New Employee Orientation Checklist

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Instructions:

Section I: Completion is managed by designated office staff before start date.

Section II: New employee meets with designated office staff for completion. Each completed item is initialed by the person who handled the item; use "NA" where needed.

Section III: The completed checklist is returned to supervisor and placed in the employee's file.

### I. Before start date:

\_\_\_\_\_ Letter of Employment drafted by [ ] with final approval by [ ]

- signed by [ ] and the employee.
- original placed in employee personnel file, copy retained by employee and copy given to [ ]
- letter includes a welcome and employment terms: start date, job title, salary, benefits status, position status (exempt or nonexempt), term of employment (if applicable), full-time or part-time status (and number of hours), an attached job description, and other details relevant to the position.

\_\_\_\_\_ I-9 completed: administered by [ ] prior to or within first three days of start date; retained in a confidential I-9 file maintained by the [ ]

\_\_\_\_\_ Background check completed: administered by [ ]; retained in a confidential file maintained by the [ ]

\_\_\_\_\_ Office or workspace assigned by [ ]

\_\_\_\_\_ Email set up by [ ]

\_\_\_\_\_ Computer set up by [ ]

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone issued or set up by [ ]

### II. Upon start date and during first week:

#### Responsibilities of supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_ Review job description and outline of standing meetings

\_\_\_\_\_ Copy of and introduction to Personnel Manual

\_\_\_\_\_ Receipt of signed "Acknowledgement" retained in employee's personnel file

#### Responsibilities of [ ]

\_\_\_\_\_ Tour of building, including emergency procedures and exits

\_\_\_\_\_ Workspace or office location

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone/voicemail instructions

\_\_\_\_\_ Key/pass code issued

\_\_\_\_\_ Calendar system instruction

\_\_\_\_\_ Emergency contact information

Responsibilities of [ ]

- Mid Council Manual
- Application for presbytery membership requested
- BOP Change of Service form completed
- Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training completed (within 1 year) – Date \_\_\_\_\_

Responsibilities of [ ] - ALL FORMS IN THIS SECTION ARE RETAINED IN CONFIDENTIAL FILES FOR EACH EMPLOYEE AND MAINTAINED BY THE [ ]

- Board of Pensions benefits – Effective date \_\_\_\_\_
- Voided check for direct deposit of compensation
- W-4 completed
- G-4 completed
- Dental Program enrollment
- Enrollment for 403(b) Plan: \_\_\_\_\_ Application for Participation \_\_\_\_\_ Change Form

Responsibilities of [ ]

- Mailbox location and labels

Responsibilities of [ ]

- Update website: Staff photo and staff information
- Email introduction
- Computer introduction
- Phone/voicemail introduction
- Equipment Instruction (*e.g.*, copier, printers)

Responsibilities of [ ]

- Announcement in [newsletter or other venue]

III. \_\_\_\_\_ Completed checklist is returned to supervisor to place in employee file.

IV. There are other aspects of employee orientation that are important and should be given attention in the first weeks and months of the employee's tenure, including background on the council's history and culture, foundational documents, and key relationships such as organizational leaders and community partners. The search committee, or other group or individual responsible for hiring, should think through the information the employee will need to succeed and plan for communicating with the employee about them.

## Appendix G: Guidance on Topics to Include in Personnel Policy Manual

Any mid council that has employees should have a personnel policy manual. These are the topics typically addressed in a policy manual:

Theological Statement (*describes what distinguishes your employment culture from a secular one*)

### Hiring Staff

- Job descriptions (*importance and guidance for creation*)
- Selection process, including:
  - Inclusiveness
  - Nondiscrimination: Equal Opportunity and Americans with Disabilities
  - Interview questions (*guidance on lawful and effective questions*)
- Employment process, including:
  - Background checks and reference checks
  - Compensation (*how initial compensation is determined, as well as how salary reviews are conducted in subsequent years*)
  - Job offer
  - Hiring documentation
    - I-9s and Immigration Status
    - IRS compliance
  - Orientation/onboarding

### Benefits

- Personal time off (*how time off is accrued and used, such as vacation leave, sick leave, or a combined pool of days*)
- Holidays
- Leaves of absence (*such as jury duty, military service, sabbatical, educational leave, and medical leave; designation of which are paid and unpaid, approvals*)
- Medical benefits (*benefits paid by the organization and options available to employees, e.g., health reimbursement arrangement, etc.*)
- Retirement benefits
- Workers' Compensation Insurance
- Unemployment policy (*clarification of whether religious organizations are eligible for or exempt from participation in the state where the mid council resides*)

## Personnel Management

- Personnel Policies
  - Sexual Misconduct (*G-3.0106 requires that all councils adopt and implement a policy; for resources see <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/legal-resources/creating-safe-ministries/>*)
  - Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policies and Procedures (*G-3.0106 requires that all councils adopt and implement a policy; for resources see <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/legal-resources/creating-safe-ministries/>*)
  - Standards of Conduct (*approved by the General Assembly and recommended for inclusion in manuals*)
  - Standards of Behavior (*adopted by the General Assembly and useful as a model*)
  - Safety and Security (*e.g., inclement weather, concealed weapon policies*)
  - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (*policy with language that invites employees to request accommodations*)
  - Confidentiality (*defines proper handling of sensitive information and when exceptions apply*)
  - Employee Concerns and Complaints (*process for addressing employee concerns and protection from retaliation*)
  - Employment at Will (*definition; need to check state law for application in state where mid council resides; one source is <https://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/at-will-employment-exceptions-by-state.aspx>*)
- Standards for Employees
  - Attendance
  - Work hours
  - Overtime work (*definition and requirements for advance permission*)
  - Flexible schedules
  - Telework
  - Conflicts of interest (*including employment outside the organization*)
  - Substance abuse
  - Use/misuse of property (*telephones, copiers, computers, etc.*)
  - Internet and digital media use (*e.g., policies covering appropriate and inappropriate use of organization-owned computers and guidance on what is permitted and not permitted on the organization's social media accounts*)
  - Credit card eligibility and use
  - Business expense reporting
  - Honoraria
- Performance evaluation and corrective action
- Record retention (*official records for personnel, accounting, property; policy on access*)
- Separation/termination (*reasons, authority, and process, including notice requirements, return of property, etc.*)

## Appendix H: Sample Annual Evaluation Form Based on Job Description

(This sample evaluation form corresponds to the sample job description in Appendix A.)

**Employee Name:**

**Position Title:**

**FLSA classification:** Exempt

**Accountable to:** Title of supervisor’s position and/or name of group

**Accountable for:** Title of supervisee(s)

**Date written/revised:**

**Period of review:**

**Accomplishments** (Indicate progress related to goals below that were identified during last year’s review. Also list other accomplishments from this review period.)

A.

B.

C.

D.

**Essential Functions and Responsibilities:** (Note that the contents of this section correspond to the section of the same name in the employee’s job description.)

Performance Expectations Taken from Job Description	Comments Describe how performance compares with expectations. Describe strengths and areas for improvement.	Rating Performing or needs improvement
Lead the presbytery, including...		

Work with the churches, synod, Office of the General Assembly, including....		
Lead and manage the staff, including ...		
Participate in the wider community, including...		

<b>Core Competencies</b> Taken from Job Description	<b>Comments</b> Describe how performance compares with expectations. Describe strengths and areas for improvement.	<b>Rating</b> Performing or needs improvement
Models strong faith in Jesus Christ		
Demonstrates integrity and confidentiality		
Demonstrates effective management skills		

**Goals for the next review period.** Goals should be stated in a way that relates them to the organization’s mission and vision and should focus on new ways in which this position can contribute to achieving the plan.

- A. Develop strategic plan with staff for the organization
- B. Expand personal involvement with new worshipping communities

**Changes to job description.**

- A. Add item expanding involvement with community organizations

## Appendix I: Sample Outline of Corrective and Progressive Action Process

A corrective and progressive action process will guide the supervisor and the employee when performance or behavior does not meet expectations or requirements. Since state employment laws vary, it will be useful to have a process such as this reviewed by a human resources professional or legal counsel to ensure compliance within the particular state.

A corrective and progressive action process is separate from everyday feedback and coaching, and is used when a performance or behavior concern is repeated or continues. The objective is clear communication that enables the employee to know what is expected, when it is expected, and, ultimately, the consequences for not meeting expectations.

In all cases, respect for the individual should be demonstrated. Ideally the employee will respond constructively, the problem will be corrected, and a good working relationship will remain intact. Even in cases of termination, respect for the individual is essential.

The steps outlined below are the suggested sequence in progressive action situations. If initiated, the process must always be fairly and lawfully applied and documented. The first and second steps may be repeated at the supervisor's discretion. For steps three and four, the supervisor will benefit from consultation with an experienced human resources professional and/or legal counsel. In cases of serious misconduct, the procedure may start with the third step. In cases of illegal conduct, termination may be immediate.

### Recommended Steps

1. Verbal warning: A private meeting with the employee to explain the problem or violation, stating the expectation(s) and giving a time frame for correcting the situation.
2. Informal meeting: If the expectation is not met, an informal meeting may be needed to reiterate the problems and expectations and to discuss corrective actions. The informal meeting should be documented with notes in the supervisor's working file.
3. Formal warning: If, after the above communications, the expectation has not been met, a formal meeting should be held, identifying the seriousness of the need for corrective action, any coaching or resource(s) that may be appropriate, the expectation(s) to be met, the time frame for correcting the performance or behavior, and the consequences for failure to meet the expectation(s). These elements are documented in a written letter of warning and given to the employee with a copy in the official personnel file. The letter must be signed by the supervisor and the employee (or, if the situation warrants, "refusal to sign" noted by the supervisor).

4. Implementation of consequences: If the expectations are not met by the designated time, the designated consequences are written in a letter to the employee and implemented, such as:
- suspension (administrative leave), with or without pay;
  - demotion; or
  - termination.

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

**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 Sacrament, or a commissioned ruling elder) and there is a possible offense against Scripture or the PC(USA) Constitution, the *Book of Order* governs the process. The judicial process outlined in the Rules of Discipline addresses the relationship of the individual and the PC(USA), but it does not necessarily impact the employment of the individual. Similarly, the effectiveness of the employee and status of his/her/their employment is not always relevant in a judicial process. It is possible for an individual to be simultaneously engaged in a judicial process and in a progressive/corrective action process described above.