

## PERSONNEL POLICIES

**Subject:** Personnel Policy

**Date:** September 2017 (*Administrative Council adopted on September 27, 2017*)

**Policy Statement:** The Board of Trustees of Second Congregational Church, UCC, Bennington, VT shall adopt and maintain clearly defined policies to be used as guiding principles and performance expectations related to Second Congregational Church (2CC) paid staff.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this personnel policy is to put into writing the practices and procedures adopted by the Board of Trustees for all employees of 2CC.

- 1. Hiring and Calling Procedures:** 2CC does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of ethnicity, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, military service, sexual orientation or any other basis prohibited by law.

All persons hired or called shall have signed an authorization for a background check before they begin actual employment.

Pastors will be called in accordance with the procedures contained in ARTICLE IX PASTORS of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Second Congregational Church, UCC, of Bennington, VT.

- 2. Probationary Period:** The first three (3) months of employment are considered the probation period for all employees, except the Pastor. At the end of this time, a performance review will be conducted to determine the employee's progress and future with the church. During this probationary period an employee may be terminated if it is determined that the employee is unsuitable for the position.
- 3. Part Time Employment:** Part-time employees are those who work in any staff position on a regular basis, but less than 35 hours a week. Wages, hours and conditions of employment for jobs in this category will be set individually between the employee and the supervising area of ministry (Christian Ed., Music, Trustees), with the consent of the Trustees. Conditions of employment will be stated in writing and will be acknowledged by the employee.
- 4. Pay Periods:** Pay days are the 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of the month, or the Friday before, if the 15<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend or Monday holiday. Employees may choose to receive pay only on the 30<sup>th</sup>.
- 5. Holidays:** Employees shall receive federal holidays paid at their hourly rate if they are regularly scheduled to work, with the exception of those with responsibilities on Sundays, when holidays fall on Sundays.

6. **Vacations:** Employees are not eligible to take vacation time during their probation period. Part time employees will accrue vacation time on a pro rata basis, based on a 40-hour work week and may accrue vacation days up to three years. The term ‘year’ in this case is defined by the employee’s anniversary date.

1 year of service	5 work days
2 years of service	7 work days
5 years of service	10 work days
10 or more years of service	15 work days

Vacation accrued but not taken within the year at time of termination, shall be paid upon termination. 2CC, however, sees value in taking regular vacation time, both for physical and mental health.

7. **Personal/Sick Time:** Beginning with the first day of employment, employees will accrue one hour of earned personal/sick time for every fifty-two (52) hours worked. Employees may accrue sick time for up to three years. Sick pay not taken after 3 years will be forfeited. All accrued sick time at the termination of employment shall be forfeited. Employees may use the sick time for the following purposes:

- The employee is ill or injured;
- The employee requires professional diagnostic, preventive, routine, or therapeutic health care;
- The employee needs to care for a parent, grandparent, spouse, child, brother, sister, parent-in-law, grandchild, or foster child, including helping that individual obtain diagnostic, preventive, routine, or therapeutic health care;
- Accompanying a parent, grandparent, spouse, or parent-in-law to an appointment related to his or her long-term care;
- The employee needs to arrange for social or legal services or obtain medical care or counseling for the employee or the employee’s parent, grandparent, spouse, child, brother, sister, parent-in-law, grandchild, or foster child, who is
- a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking or who is relocating as the result of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking or
- The employee needs to care for a parent, grandparent, spouse, child, brother, sister, parent-in-law, grandchild, or foster child, because the school or business where the individual is normally located during the employee’s workday is closed for public health or safety reasons.

Employees should make “reasonable efforts” to avoid scheduling routine or preventative health care during their work hours. Employees shall notify their supervisor as soon as practicable of their intent to take sick time and the expected duration of their absence.

- 8. Family Leave Time:** Employees may be granted up to 5 workdays of unpaid leave in the event of death or critical illness of immediate family member. Further time may be granted with the approval of the Trustees.
- 9. Military Leave:** All employees who are members of the state military forces or of the reserve components of the United States Armed Forces shall be granted a leave of absence from their duties without loss of vacation time or salary on all days during which they are engaged in authorized training or duty ordered or authorized by proper authority, not to exceed 15 days per year. Such employees who are ordered to duty by proper authority shall be restored, when relieved from duty, to the position held by them when ordered to duty.
- 10. Leave of Absence Without Pay:** For unusual reasons, special leave without pay, approved by the Trustees may be taken.
- 11. Jury Service:** An employee shall be granted leave with pay and without loss of accumulated leave for jury duty. The employee shall be required to present documentation of the service and shall be allowed to retain any compensation for this service.
- 12. Annual Performance Reviews:** Annual Performance Reviews will be conducted in the month prior to eligible employee anniversary date. Staff performance reviews are conducted by the appropriate “supervising” body – Pastoral Relations Committee for the Pastor; Christian Ed Coordinator and Pastor for the Christian Ed personnel; Member of Deacons, Choirs and Pastor for Music Personnel; Chair of Trustees, Member of Personnel Committee and Pastor for Office Administrator and Janitor. No annual increase in pay is guaranteed. This decision is determined based upon the church’s financial state, employee accomplishments and budget availability.
- 13. Retirement:** There is no paid retirement benefit, except for the Pastor’s Pension.
- 14. Resignation:** Any employee, other than a Pastor, desiring to terminate their employment should give written notice of at least two weeks in advance of leaving. This notice should give the date for leaving. An exit interview should be conducted with anyone leaving at his or her own request.
- Resignation, termination or retirement of a Pastor shall be in accordance with the procedures contained in ARTICLE IX PASTORS of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Second Congregational Church, UCC, of Bennington, VT. An exit interview should be conducted with any pastor leaving at his or her own request.
- 15. Travel and Expense Allowances:** 2CC shall bear the expenses for authorized employee travel and related cost. Reimbursement shall be made for actual expenses incurred during authorized travel. Receipts shall be required for meals and lodging.

- 16. Workers' Compensation Insurance:** 2CC provides Workers' Compensation benefits to paid employees who suffer a work-related injury. All work-related injuries must be reported to the Board of Trustees within twenty-four (24) hours.
- 17. Medical Insurance Plan:** Part-time lay employees who work a regularly scheduled minimum of twenty (20) hours per week will be offered medical insurance through current church medical insurance plan. Benefit coverage shall commence on the first day of the month following 30 days of continuous service. Second Congregational Church will contribute 50% of the premium for single individual coverage. The employee may choose any coverage option offered by the plan, however, the contribution from the Second Congregational Church is fixed.
- 18. Grievances:** Any employee, who has a problem relating to his or her employment, should discuss the problem with the Pastor. The Pastor should discuss any problem with the Personnel Committee of the Board of Trustees. If necessary, unresolved employment issues may be referred to the Administrative Council.
- 19. Non-Discrimination:** It is the policy of 2CC that all persons are entitled to equal opportunity regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation or any other status or trait protected by state, federal or local laws. The church does not and will not permit employees to engage in unlawful discriminatory practices of harassment of any kind involving fellow employees, members, or visitors to the church.
- 20. Sexual Harassment:** It is the policy of 2CC that its employees and their work environment shall be free from all forms of sexual harassment and intimidation. Verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature by any employee, supervisor or volunteer, including sexual advances, request for sexual favors or other such conduct which tends to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment is strictly prohibited.

Sexual harassment does not refer to behavior or occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that is not welcome, that is personally offensive, and that fails to respect the rights of others, and therefore, interferes with out work effectiveness.

Sexual harassment may be overt or subtle. Whatever form it takes, verbal, non-verbal, or physical, sexual harassment is insulting and demeaning to the recipient and will not be tolerated in the workplace. Sexual harassment directed toward ay employees by a co-worker, supervisor or other individual (whether employed by the church or not) will not be tolerated.

Employees who believe they are being subjected to sexual harassment should follow the procedures outlined in the Safe Church Policy.

- 21. Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance:** Where reasonably possible or legally required, 2CC will make reasonable accommodations for qualified applicants or employees with a

disability. Interviewing committees should never question whether an applicant or employee has a disability. Rather, applicants should be asked only whether they can perform the essential functions of the job, with or without an accommodation.

As required by law, 2CC will provide reasonable accommodation for a known disability of an applicant or employee, unless the accommodation would cause an “undue hardship” on the operation of its business. It is the obligation of the applicant or employee to request an accommodation. If an applicant or employee has an obvious disability which would apparently affect his/her ability to perform a given job duty, the individual may be asked to describe how he/she will perform the duty. What constitutes a “reasonable accommodation” for a disability is determined by the circumstances.

2CC will not:

- Unlawfully limit, segregate or classify an applicant or employee in a way that adversely affects employment opportunities because of disability;
- Participate in a contractual or other arrangement or relationship that subjects a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to discrimination;
- Deny employment opportunities to a qualified individual because he/she has a relationship or association with a person with a disability;
- Use qualification standards, employment tests, or other selection criteria that screen out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability unless it is job-related and necessary for the business;
- Use employment tests that do not effectively measure actual abilities;
- Discriminate against an individual because he/she filed a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in an investigation or other action to enforce the provisions of the ADA.

All documentation regarding individuals with disabilities and the reasonable accommodations made or not made will be separately maintained and will be confidential. Any action affecting the employment of an applicant or employee with a known disability should be documented and reviewed by the pastor and the Administrative Council before implementation.

## Amendments

DATE APPROVED	DESCRIPTION OF ADDITION OR CHANGE	CHAIR OF TRUSTEES	ADMIN. COUNCIL
9/27/2017	Initial Issue		
6/12/2018	Para. 17 – Medical Insurance added		
12/14/2023	Para. 7 – Personal/Sick Time clarified		
12/14/2023	Para. 17 – Medical Insurance updated		