



The Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ

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Personnel Policies Manual

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Introduction

Welcome

Welcome to the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ. The Conference is in covenant with United Church of Christ churches throughout the State of Minnesota. We are pleased that you have chosen to join us.

Purpose and Scope of the Handbook

The purpose of this Personnel Policy Manual (“Manual”) is to outline the procedures and expectations that pertain to each employee. You are asked to read it and keep it available for reference whenever you have questions concerning employee relations, policies and procedures, or benefits eligibility in the Conference.

This Handbook describes the general administrative policies that govern the following:

- Section One:** Terms of employment, equal opportunity employment, and policies regarding the following: harassment, the use of drugs and/or alcohol, weapons, and company resources.
- Section Two:** Position categories, job classifications, and position descriptions
- Section Three:** Hiring, reporting and evaluation, disciplinary actions and complaint procedures, voluntary and involuntary termination
- Section Four:** Compensation, hours of work, holidays, vacations, sabbaticals, and other leaves of absence
- Section Five:** Health, retirement, and other employee benefits

This Personnel Policies Manual contains a summary of the policies in effect at the Minnesota Conference, United Church of Christ as of November 7, 2009. All previous policies and procedures to the extent they are inconsistent with this document are hereby revoked.

The contents of the Manual are intended for informational purposes only. The Manual is not a contract of employment on the part of the Conference or the employee. These personnel policies may be changed or amended upon the recommendation of the Personnel Committee and the approval of the Board of Directors (or the Executive Committee acting on behalf of the Board of Directors) with or without prior notification to the employee. A decision by the Board of Directors on the interpretation or application of the policies shall be final and binding on all employees.

You should feel free to discuss this Manual with your supervisor and suggest other provisions you think should be made a part of this Manual.

Personnel Committee as Advisors to the Conference

Responsibility for this Manual rests with the Personnel Committee of the Board of Directors, which administers personnel issues of the Conference. Committee positions are filled by election at the Annual Meeting for staggered two-year terms. The Personnel Committee is charged with maintaining current position descriptions for all employees and maintaining personnel policies and procedures. The role of the committee with respect to personnel administration is generally one of oversight. The committee delegates to paid employees the responsibility for daily operations and supervision that is consistent with these policies.

Section One

- ❑ **Terms of Employment**
- ❑ **Equal Opportunity Employment**
- ❑ **Harassment Policy**
- ❑ **Drug and Alcohol Free Environment**
- ❑ **Weapons Free Environment**
- ❑ **Company Resources**

1.1 Terms of Employment

Policy

The Minnesota Conference and its employees, with the exception of those with a call agreement, have an employment relationship that is known as “employment at will.” This means that an employee has the right to resign at any time with or without notice or reason, and the Conference has the right to terminate positions or employees at any time with or without notice or reason. No provision in this Manual is intended to create a contract between the Minnesota Conference and any employee, or to create any expressed or implied contract rights. Nothing in this Manual is to be construed as a promise of permanent employment or a guarantee that any employee’s employment will continue for any specified period or time.

Service Time

Service time is the length of time an employee has been employed by the Conference. It is used to determine the commencement of or level of certain benefits as described in this Manual. The date from which service time is computed will be the date on which the individual begins employment with the Conference. Time absent from work for sick leave, vacation, military, jury duty, and study leave, if any, will be included in the computation of total service time. Employees will not accrue service time during an unpaid leave of absence. A former employee who worked at least two years and is rehired within six months may have prior service time reinstated for purposes of benefit calculations.

No rights shall accrue to an employee by virtue of service time, except as specifically stated in these policies.

1.2 Equal Employment Opportunity

Policy

In accordance with action of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ and the Conference, the Conference is committed to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity. The Conference’s policy is to provide Equal Opportunity to all employees

and applicants for employment in accordance with all applicable Equal Employment Opportunity laws, directives, and regulations of federal, state, and local governing bodies or agencies.

As such, the Minnesota Conference will not discriminate against any employee, non-paid employees, or applicant for employment or adjunct status because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, age, or any other status protected by law. This policy prevails throughout every aspect of the relationship, including recruitment, hiring, placement, training, compensation, promotions, testing, lay-offs, recalls, fringe benefits, and training apprenticeship programs. Religious affiliation and / or a particular cultural sensitivity may be determined to be a bona fide occupational qualification for specific positions.

The complaint procedure found in Section 1.3 of this guide describes the process employees should follow if an employee feels that they have been subjected to discrimination.

1.3 Harassment Policy

Policy

It is the policy of the Minnesota Conference to maintain a work environment free from harassment. This policy prohibits verbal, visual, or physical conduct that discriminates or unreasonably interferes with work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment based on the legally protected status of an employee. Such behavior includes inappropriate remarks (e.g. epithets, slurs, stereotyping) about, or conduct directed at or related to an employee's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender (including pregnancy), marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, age, or other status protected by law.

Harassment is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. It is the policy of the Minnesota Conference that there shall be no harassment of any employee, adjunct employee, intern, volunteer or recipient of services. Any employee, volunteer, or intern who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Sexual Harassment

One form of harassment prohibited under this policy is sexual harassment. Sexual harassment refers to behavior of a sexual nature that is unwelcome and offensive to its recipients. It is a form of misconduct that is demeaning to another person and undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. Unwelcome sexual advances, sexually motivated requests for physical contact, or communication of a sexual nature constitute "sexual harassment" when:

- Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a condition of employment;
- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is used as a basis for an employment or other personnel decision affecting the recipient of the behavior; or
- The purpose or effect is unreasonable interference with the recipient's work performance or creation of an environment that is intimidating, hostile, or offensive to the recipient.

Examples of sexually harassing behavior prohibited under this policy are: unwanted physical contact, sexually-oriented propositions, obscene gestures, or the display of sexually explicit pictures.

Procedures

1. If an employee, volunteer or intern who feels that they have been subject to illegal harassment by an employee of the Minnesota Conference, or by any other person they encounter at the workplace, it is not only appropriate but required by this policy that they report their complaint as soon as possible.
2. Reporting complaints:
 - If the complaint involves someone other than the Conference Minister or the immediate supervisor, the complaint should be reported to the immediate supervisor.
 - If the complaint involves the immediate supervisor, the complaint should be reported to the Conference Minister.
 - If the complaint involves the Conference Minister, the complaint should be reported to the chair of the Personnel Committee or Conference Moderator.
3. All complaints of harassment will be investigated promptly and discreetly. The Minnesota Conference will protect the confidentiality of a harassment complaint to the extent reasonably possible, but cannot guarantee that such a complaint will be kept confidential, as disclosure of certain information may be necessary for the complaint to be properly investigated.
4. No retaliation or intimidation directed toward anyone who makes a complaint in good faith under this policy or who in good faith provides information on a harassment investigation under this policy will be tolerated. If the offensive conduct continues or recurs, or any retaliatory or intimidating conduct occurs, it should be reported immediately.
5. If the investigation concludes that harassment has occurred, resolution of complaints can include, but are not necessarily limited to, an apology, direction to stop the

offensive behavior, counseling or training, verbal or written warning, suspension with or without pay, or termination. Authorized ministers may be subject to a Fitness Review by the Committee on Ministry. If an employee is unhappy with the Minnesota Conference's response to a complaint, the employee is encouraged to contact the Personnel Committee about their concerns.

6. An employee against whom a complaint has been filed may be suspended prior to and during an investigation. Suspensions may be with or without pay pending determination by the Personnel Committee.

1.4 Reporting Illegal, Dishonest or Fraudulent Activity

Employees with knowledge of or a concern about illegal, dishonest or fraudulent activity are encouraged to contact their immediate supervisor or the Conference Business Administrator. Examples of illegal, dishonest or fraudulent activities are violations of federal, state or local laws; billing for services not performed or goods not delivered; and other fraudulent financial reporting.

The Conference will not retaliate against anyone reporting such matters provided that the reports are made in good faith and with the exercise of sound judgment. An employee who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

All reports of illegal and dishonest activities will be promptly submitted to the Conference Moderator who is responsible for coordinating the Conference's responsive actions.

Employees with questions regarding this policy should contact the Business Administrator.

1.5 Drug and Alcohol Free Environment

Policy

The Minnesota Conference supports a drug and alcohol free work environment. The Conference's goal is to establish and maintain a safe, healthy and efficient work force free from the effects of drug and alcohol abuse.

All employees are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol and illicit drugs while on the Conference's premises or during regular or business hours, with the exception of approved events. The use, possession, or sale of alcoholic beverages and/or mood altering nonprescription chemicals, and the abuse of prescription drugs on the Conference's premises or during working hours are prohibited.

Employees who appear to have a chemical dependency problem or other problem that interferes with the performance of their assigned duties will be encouraged to pursue

appropriate treatment. If treatment is refused or is not successful and performance is not acceptable, termination or other disciplinary action may result. Seeking treatment, in and of itself, will not preclude disciplinary action for policy violations or performance issues which may have occurred or continue to occur.

1.6 Weapons Free Environment

Policy

The Minnesota Conference specifically prohibits the possession of weapons, whether or not by permit, by an employee while on the Conference premises, while on Conference business, while on Conference-sponsored functions, or while conducting Conference business off the Conference property.

Weapons include firearms, knives, explosives, and other items with the potential to inflict harm. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, will be taken against any employee who violates this policy.

1.7 Conference Resources

Policy

The Minnesota Conference requires that all Conference resources (employees, equipment, electronic resources, etc.) be dedicated to Conference business. This means that non-Minnesota Conference uses of any Conference resources may not occur, unless approved by the Conference Minister and/or unless the use is considered minimal personal use.

Examples of resources that are included are Conference telephones, photocopy machines, fax machines, e-mail, internet mail, internet connection, Conference computer systems (hardware and software), buildings/facilities and employee time.

The following uses are never permitted:

- Accessing or distributing pornographic, obscene, scandalous, offensive materials or using any resources for criminal, or other inappropriate or illegal purposes.
- Asking or requiring a subordinate to do personal work for the employee.
- Using Conference resources for the employee's own personal business.

Minimal personal use of Conference resources is permitted, however, it is expected to be on the user's own time, is not to interfere with job responsibilities, and must not disrupt the operation of the resources for the Conference.

The use of non-authorized software on Conference computers is prohibited.

Conference employees should have no expectation of privacy in their communications while on Conference property or while using Conference resources. The Conference

reserves the right to monitor the use of Conference resources at any time without prior notice to the individual being monitored.

Section Two

- ❑ **Position Categories**
- ❑ **Job Classifications**
- ❑ **Job Descriptions**
- ❑ **Work Hours, Overtime, and Paychecks**

2.1 Position Categories

Personnel who work at the Conference fall into one of five categories:

- Conference Minister
- Associate Conference Ministers
- Program Ministers
- Support Staff
- Seasonal Staff

2.2 Job Classifications

All paid positions at the Conference are classified for payroll and benefits purposes.

Exempt vs. Non-exempt

Exempt employees are salaried employees who meet the requirements of exempt status under the Fair Labor Standards Act and are not entitled to overtime. The Conference Minister in consultation with the Personnel Committee will determine whether a position is exempt or non-exempt.

Non-exempt employees are paid hourly and must be paid at least the Federal minimum wage for all hours worked, and are entitled to overtime pay for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week.

Salary vs. Hourly

A salaried position is one in which an annual or monthly compensation rate is fixed and payment of that amount is made regardless of the number of hours worked. An hourly position is one in which an hourly compensation rate is set and payment varies, depending on the number of hours worked during a given time period.

Full-Time vs. Part-time

Full-time employees are normally scheduled to work an average of thirty hours or more per week, fifty-two weeks per year. Part-time employees are normally scheduled to work less than an average of thirty hours per week, fifty-two or fewer weeks per year.

Regular vs. Temporary

A regular employee is one who has been hired to fill a position that is considered ongoing or continuous. A temporary employee is one who has been hired to work for a limited and prescribed period of time. For example, a temporary employee may be hired to fill a job vacancy while a search process is underway, while another employee is on sabbatical or leave, or for specific short-term projects.

Some policies related to hiring, supervision, evaluation, and benefit coverage vary based on position category and/or job classification. If you are unsure of your position category or your job classification, please consult your job description or speak with your supervisor.

Implications of Position Categories and Job Classifications

- Non-exempt employees receive overtime compensation; exempt employees do not.
- Full-time, regular employees are eligible to receive full benefits.
- Part-time employees who work more than twenty and less than thirty hours per week are eligible for holidays, vacation, sick and personal days, prorated according to the regularly-scheduled hours per week, with forty hours per week being the standard. Insurance will be offered to these part-time employees. The Minnesota Conference will pay a prorated premium, and the employee will be required to contribute the balance.
- Temporary or interim employees are paid only for hours worked and receive no benefits unless otherwise explicitly negotiated.

2.3 Job Descriptions

Updating Job Descriptions

Supervisors are responsible for reviewing employees' job descriptions on an annual basis. Should job descriptions require revision, supervisors should forward the desired changes to the Personnel Committee for its review and approval. Appropriate times for updating job descriptions include points of transition (e.g., a new person is hired to fill a vacancy) and annual performance evaluations.

2.4 Work Hours, Overtime and Paychecks

Work Hours

A workweek is defined as the seven-day period within which overtime is calculated, beginning on Sunday and ending on Saturday. The minimum workweek for full-time employees is thirty hours. Depending on their job description or the needs of the Conference, employees may be expected to work evenings or weekends.

Specific working hours will be arranged for each non-exempt position. Job descriptions have been developed and priorities established to guide employees in the allocation of

their time. These are subject to annual review but may be reviewed more frequently as needed. Employees having difficulty accomplishing their assigned tasks within the hours and priorities specified should notify their supervisor.

Procedures Related to Time Records

Time records are the responsibility of all employees. Full-time non-exempt employees shall be provided an unpaid thirty minute lunch break and two paid breaks of fifteen minutes each a day. Non-exempt employees must report actual beginning and ending time for each lunch period and for each day worked. All time records must reflect vacation time, sick time and time spent at continuing education. An employee may not write on another employee's time record. All time records will be authorized by the supervisor or the Conference Minister as applicable.

Overtime Policy

Overtime work occasionally may be required and must be authorized in writing in advance by the supervisor or the Conference Minister, as applicable. Non-exempt employees will be paid for overtime at the rate of one and one half times their regular rate of pay only for time worked over 40 hours in a specific workweek. Paid time off hours for a vacation, holiday, etc. are not included in the calculation of time worked for the purpose of determining entitlement to overtime pay.

Absences / Tardiness

Should it be necessary for an employee to be absent or late for work, the employee must notify his or her supervisor at least one-half hour before start-time either by direct telephone contact or leaving a message on the supervisor's voice mail. Unreported absences or excessive tardiness or absence may, at the Conference's discretion, affect an employee's pay, or result in discipline (see Section 3.5).

Procedures Related to Paychecks

Employees are paid bi-weekly. If the scheduled payday is on a Conference holiday, paychecks are distributed on the working day previous to the holiday.

Section Three

- ❑ **Hiring**
- ❑ **Reporting and Evaluation**
- ❑ **Disciplinary Action and Complaint Procedures**
- ❑ **Voluntary Termination**
- ❑ **Involuntary Termination**
- ❑ **Personnel Records**

3.1 Hiring

The Minnesota Conference shall employ such persons as needed to fulfill its mission. Hiring will be based on qualifications considered requisite for the job, as defined in the job description. For called positions, where the call process is stipulated in the Bylaws, the process outlined in the Bylaws shall govern in the event of a conflict with this manual.

Procedures Relating to Searches, Hiring, and Letters of Offer for Non-Called Positions

General Search Procedures

A written job description must be approved by the Personnel Committee before a search can begin. It is the search committee's or position supervisor's responsibility to advertise the position, recruit prospective candidates, screen applications and interview applicants.

Letters of Offer

Supervisors are responsible for providing a letter of offer. Letters of offer will be reviewed and approved by the Conference Minister and should specify the title, initial compensation rate, start date, at-will terms, and any exceptions to the standards defined in the personnel policies (exceptions must have prior approval by the Personnel Committee). A copy of the job description and the Personnel Policies Manual shall be included with the letter of offer.

Pre-employment Screening

As part of the screening and selection process of new employees and volunteers, background investigations will be conducted where appropriate. These investigations may include inquiries to gather legal information regarding an applicant's history with regard to criminal activity, sexual misconduct, credit, character, personal characteristics, and general reputation. These investigations will take place only with the prior authorization of the applicant. Refusal to authorize such investigations or to cooperate with the process may result in not being offered employment or volunteer service, withdrawal of an offer of employment or volunteer service, or termination of employment or volunteer service.

3.2 Performance Management

Performance management is an important function for the Conference and is made up of several components, some of which are on-going work direction, monitoring, and scheduled performance appraisals. Formal reviews provide an opportunity to ensure that the employee's job description is accurate and up to date, as well as to clarify job expectations with the employee's supervisor.

In your first year, two performance reviews will be provided. Thereafter, performance will be reviewed annually. The supervisor may conduct performance appraisals as necessary.

The primary objectives of performance evaluation are threefold:

1. To ensure congruence between an employee's performance with the mission and purposes of the Conference and its programs;
2. To provide information to employees concerning their success in accomplishing the responsibilities of their jobs;
3. To encourage a formal process of goal-setting with employees.

Procedures for Annual Performance Evaluations

The Conference seeks open and ongoing communication between supervisors and employees. Annual reviews will be based on existing job descriptions and on goals and objectives for the current year. Annual reviews should focus on established performance goals and be conducted in a manner which fosters meaningful communication between the supervisor and the employee. When appropriate, peers and subordinates should provide additional performance input. Job descriptions should be updated during annual reviews, with proposed changes subject to approval by the Personnel Committee (see Section 2.3). Written reports documenting the review are to be filed in the employee's personnel file and stored in a locked cabinet to protect employee privacy.

The Conference Minister's annual appraisal will be conducted by the Personnel Committee Chair and the Chair of the Board of Directors/ Moderator of the Conference. The Conference Minister or a direct supervisor, as applicable, will be responsible for conducting the remaining employees' annual appraisals.

More frequent work performance feedback is encouraged and may be initiated by the employee or supervisor at any time. Such feedback may come from the employee's immediate supervisor and/or others, as appropriate (e.g., chair(s) or designated members from the teams or committees with whom the employee works, or the Personnel Committee).

3.3 Disciplinary Action and Complaint Procedures

Disciplinary Action

If problems persist after an initial conversation with the employee, the following series of disciplinary steps will generally be taken:

1. oral warning
2. written warning
3. suspension with or without pay
4. dismissal

Normally these steps are progressive and taken in order. However, the Conference, in consultation with the Personnel Committee, may skip one or more of these steps if, at its sole discretion, it determines that the circumstances warrant doing so.

Complaint Procedure

The Minnesota Conference strives to create a positive working environment, one that ensures appropriate lines of respectful communication between all employees, their supervisors, and other members of Conference committees and ministries. To support an overall positive working environment, a complaint procedure is available to any employee who has a concern about their position or any aspect of their work relationships. An employee who has a complaint is asked first to discuss the matter with the supervisor. If the employee does not receive a satisfactory resolution of the complaint, the employee may send a written statement of concerns to any member of the Personnel Committee with a copy to the Chair of the Personnel Committee, requesting that it be an agenda item at the next scheduled meeting. The Personnel Committee will work with the employee and supervisor to address the matter to the best of its ability. If unsatisfied with the decision of the Personnel Committee, the employee may appeal for a hearing before a three-person panel appointed by the Conference Moderator. The decision of this panel shall be final.

3.4 Voluntary Termination

Definition

Voluntary terminations are those that are initiated by the employee. Such terminations occur when an employee submits a letter of resignation or fails to report to work for three or more consecutive days without notifying their supervisor.

Employees who resign their position will receive no severance pay. At the time of separation from employment, an employee will be paid for unused vacation, prorated based on the portion of the year worked. Employees will *not* be reimbursed for any unused sick time upon termination of employment. All other benefits of employment will terminate on the day of separation.

Procedures

All resignations should be made in writing and submitted to the supervisor.

- Called ministers are requested to give at least two months notice of resignation, or as otherwise provided in the call agreement.
- Full-time exempt employees are requested to give a one month notice of resignation.
- Part-time exempt and non-exempt employees are requested to give two weeks notice. All notices of voluntary termination, including termination due to illness, accident, or disability are to be reported to the Personnel Committee as soon as possible.

Exit Interviews

When an employee resigns, the supervisor will conduct an exit interview prior to the employee leaving.

3.5 Involuntary Termination

Definition

Involuntary terminations are those initiated by the Conference. Terminations of this type include work force reductions and involuntary discharge.

Procedures Involved with Work Force Reductions for Employees Other Than Called Ministers

Reduction in the work force may occur because of a discontinuation of a position or program, change in the budget, or other circumstances. Decisions concerning reductions in the work force are at the discretion of the Conference, in consultation with supervisory employees (if appropriate) and the Personnel Committee. All reductions require the approval of the Conference Board of Directors. Procedures involved with work force reduction for employees other than called ministers are as follows:

- The official termination date will be established as the date last worked.
- Employees will be notified in writing, and the document will make clear that termination is due to a reduction in the work force and not a dismissal.
- Payment for unused vacation will be made, prorated based on the portion of the year worked.
- Employees will *not* be reimbursed for any unused sick time upon termination of employment.
- When full-time, regular employees who have served at least one year are terminated due to work force reductions, severance pay shall be provided in an amount decided at the discretion of the Conference but in no event greater than one week's pay for each full year of full-time employment up to a maximum of eight weeks. Regular

part-time employees who have served at least one year, and work more than twenty and less than thirty hours per week, shall receive pro-rated amounts on the same basis.

Procedures Involved with Involuntary Discharge of Employees Other than Called Ministers

Procedures involved with involuntary discharge are as follows:

- The official termination date will be established as the date last worked.
- Payment for unused vacation will be made, prorated based on the portion of the year worked.
- Employees will *not* be reimbursed for any unused sick time upon termination of employment.
- No severance pay will be given.

On the last day of work, the employee must return all Conference property (keys, credit cards, computers, etc.)

3.6 Personnel Records

Policy

The Conference office will maintain a confidential personnel record on each employee. This record will include the items such as, but not limited to, job application, performance reviews and related compensation and benefit documents. Employees may review this record upon request to their immediate supervisor. Employees may insert a statement in response to any information that is in dispute; this will become a permanent part of their file. Those who terminate will only be allowed access to their personnel record in accordance with state statutes.

Section Four

- ❑ **Compensation**
- ❑ **Holidays**
- ❑ **Vacations**
- ❑ **Sabbaticals for Ordained Clergy**
- ❑ **Other Leaves of Absence**

4.1 Compensation

Compensation Philosophy

The Minnesota Conference is committed to pay salaries and supplementary compensation as is necessary to attract, retain and motivate employees.

Honoraria

Honoraria and other payments which are earned by exempt employees while expressing the ministry of the Conference shall be turned in to the Conference.

Work for remuneration which is external to the Minnesota Conference (i.e., unrelated to the ministry to which the employee is hired) shall be done on the employee's own time and shall not interfere with his/her performance for the Conference.

Outside work which requires major time commitment should be accepted only after consultation with the Conference Minister and such arrangements will be reviewed annually. Outside work by the Conference Minister will be approved by the Board of Directors.

4.2 Holidays

Policy

In accordance with the Church Center policy, the Conference recognizes twelve holidays when the Conference offices will be closed.* All employees, working more than twenty hours per week who would normally be scheduled to work on a designated holiday will receive pay for scheduled hours as if they had worked. Holiday pay for regular part-time employees will be based on the employee's normally scheduled hours that would have been worked on the day of the holiday. Any employee who observes holidays not listed may use personal days, vacation or may take the day off without pay.

Holidays

New Year's Day	Memorial Day	Christmas Eve Day
Martin Luther King's Day	Independence Day	Christmas Day
President's Day	Labor Day	
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day	
	Day After Thanksgiving	New Year's Eve Day

*The Church Center policy is that holidays falling on Saturday will typically be observed on the preceding Friday. Holidays falling on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. When Christmas Day falls on a Thursday, the building will also be closed the following Friday.

4.3 Vacation and Personal Leave Days

Vacation Policy

All full-time exempt employees receive four weeks of vacation annually. All other employees working more than twenty hours per week/52 weeks per year are granted paid vacations at a rate proportionate to their average work week. Employees working forty hours per week will be granted vacation according to the following schedule:

<u>Years of Service</u>	<u>Annual Vacation Days</u>
0 through 3 rd year	10
4 th through 12 th year	15
13 th year or greater	20

Vacation benefits will be administered under the following guidelines:

- i. Vacation benefits for full-time employees will be earned monthly according to the following schedule. The part-time schedule will be prorated per the regularly scheduled hours.

<u>Annual Benefit</u>	<u>Monthly Accrual</u>	<u>Maximum Accrual</u>
10 days	6.67 hours	120 hours
15 days	10.00 hours	160 hours
20 days	13.33 hours	200 hours

- ii. The Conference will not make payment of additional salary to an employee in lieu of unused vacation, except upon termination as provided for in Section 3. Salary or wages for any unused vacation will be paid upon termination only as outlined in Sections 3.4 and 3.5.
- iii. With supervisor's approval, an employee can exceed vacation accrual by up to forty hours. An employee permitted to exceed vacation accrual will be in a negative balance that will be made up as the employee earns more vacation in the subsequent year. Any employee who leaves the

Conference with a negative balance will be asked to pay back all hours of the negative balance.

Personal Leave Days Policy

- i. Full-time and part-time employees have four (4) personal leave days per calendar year. Part-time employees working more than 20 hours per week earn days prorated per regularly-scheduled hours.
- ii. Personal leave days for new employees are prorated based on hire date according to the following schedule:

<u>Hire Date</u>	<u>Personal Leave Days</u>
January-March	4
April-June	3
July- September	2
October-December	1

- iii. No more than two personal leave days may be taken consecutively and personal leave days may not be taken in conjunction with vacation days.
- iv. Personal leave days do not carry over from year to year. Employees will not receive pay for unused personal leave days at separation of employment.

Scheduling Procedures

Written vacation and personal leave day requests should be submitted in writing to an employee’s supervisor as far in advance as possible. Every effort will be made to honor requests, but the Conference reserves the right to limit the number of employees on vacation or personal leave at any one time in order to insure the efficient operation of the Conference.

4.4 Sabbatical Leaves for the Conference Minister and Associate Conference Ministers

Policy

The Conference encourages its Conference Minister and Associate Conference Ministers to take periodic sabbatical leaves of absence for the purpose of providing renewal, spiritual and/or professional growth and to model the need for such growth among the clergy of the Conference. These leaves are in addition to vacation times. To support these leaves, the Conference strives to set aside funds in trust each year in order to hire a sabbatical supply during the leave period. Full salary and benefits will continue during a leave, however, vacation days are not accrued. Any accumulated, but “unused” sabbatical time is forfeited when these persons leave the employment of the Conference, whether the departure is voluntary or non voluntary (see Sections 3.4 and 3.5). It is understood that participants in this program shall remain in service at the Conference for at least one

full year following a sabbatical leave. In cases where this does not occur, the employee will repay to the Conference salary, benefits, and money drawn from the sabbatical fund. No part of a sabbatical leave may fall within the year prior to the date of retirement.

Accrual and Scheduling

A Conference Minister or Associate Conference Ministers with at least four years of service in the Conference from the date of hire or from their last sabbatical leave are eligible for a sabbatical leave of three months with full pay and benefits.

The Conference can only grant one sabbatical in the same calendar year. In the event that more than one minister wishes to take a sabbatical in the same year, first preference will go to the minister with the longest time since the last sabbatical, or the longest tenure at the Conference if no sabbaticals have been taken.

Procedures

A written plan for the sabbatical leave is to be submitted to the Conference Minister and the Personnel Committee for approval. In the case of the Conference Minister's sabbatical leave, such plan is to be submitted to the Personnel Committee and the Board of Directors. The written plan must be submitted at least six months before the start of the leave and should include the time period requested and the manner in which the sabbatical will support the stated purpose.

At the end of the sabbatical leave a full report is to be submitted to the above-mentioned bodies, offering an explanation of the experience and how new skills/insights might be integrated into the life of the Conference.

4.5 Other Leaves of Absence

Policy

Leaves of absence may be granted to employees, providing that any guidelines established for each type of leave are met. Approval of the Conference Minister or the appropriate supervisor is required. In general, requests for paid leaves of absence are granted only to employees who have been employed for at least one year. Employees are expected to notify their supervisor in writing of all leaves of absences, both planned and unexpected, as soon as possible. Supervisors are responsible for authorizing leaves, securing appropriate documentation and reporting leave actions to the Personnel Committee. Employees do not accumulate vacation, sick pay, or holiday pay during a leave of absence. The continuation of benefits during longer periods of leave is subject to the policies below.

Sick Leave

Sick leave can be used for personal illness or to care for a person in an employee's immediate family, defined as spouse or significant other, child, or parent. Sick leave may also be used for non-acute medical or dental appointments, provided that an employee obtains the prior approval of his or her supervisor.

Beginning with the first day of employment, sick leave is accrued at the full-time equivalent rate of one day per month. Part-time employees working more than twenty hours per week/52 weeks per year will earn pro-rated sick leave based on the number of regularly scheduled hours. Sick leave may be accumulated from year to a year up to a maximum of forty-five working days, or prorated by eligibility standard above. Current employees who have accrued more than this maximum will be allowed to keep their accrual.

In the event of a termination (voluntary or involuntary), all accrued sick leave will terminate at the date of separation, and no reimbursement will be made for unused sick leave (see Sections 3.4 and 3.5).

You may be required by the Conference Minister or supervisor to present a doctor's certificate when you are sick for more than five consecutive working days in order to continue to receive sick leave pay.

No sick leave pay will be given while you are receiving paid time-off benefits from other sources such as short-term or long-term disability, worker's compensation, or Social Security.

Disability Leave

Leaves of more than thirty days due to illness or accident may be classified as a short-term disability leave. When an employee's physician determines that the disability will exceed 30 days, the employee will need to contact the insurance carrier to apply for Short-Term Disability benefits. Employees may use any accumulated sick leave and/or vacation to supplement their disability pay (60%) up to a maximum of the equivalent of their normal pay (40%).

If a disability leave extends beyond ninety calendar days, it is considered a Long-Term Disability and is covered according to the terms of the Long-Term Disability Plan.

Parental Leave

The Minnesota Conference will grant a leave of absence to all full-time employees for up to two months in conjunction with the birth or adoption of a child. The Conference will continue to fully compensate during the two-month leave. The employee may use vacation or sick leave as a means to extend the leave period. This leave must begin within

six weeks after the birth or adoption of the employee's child or the date when the child is released from the hospital, whichever is later.

Funeral Leave

When death occurs in the immediate family, a full-time employee may request up to three days off with pay to attend the funeral. The immediate family is considered to include the employee's spouse or significant other, children, parents, in-laws, grandparents, grandchildren and siblings. Employees are expected to notify their supervisor in the event of a familial death as to their plans for taking funeral leave.

Military Duty

Regular full-time and part-time employees who are members of a U. S. Military Reserve or National Guard unit will be excused from work when called for military duty and training. The Minnesota Conference will adhere to all federal and state laws affecting military leave issues.

Jury Duty

All employees will be granted leave for jury duty. Regular full-time and part-time employees will be reimbursed the difference of jury duty pay and the regular rate of pay that would have been received for regularly scheduled hours for up to two weeks. Ordinarily, all other leaves for jury duty are without pay. Employees are expected to return to work during normal working hours if released from jury duty for the day.

School Conference Leave

Parents of school-aged children will also be provided an unpaid leave of up to a total of 16 hours during any school year to attend school conferences or school activities related to the employee's child, provided that the conferences or school activities cannot be scheduled during non-work hours. An employee may 1) substitute paid vacation days or personal leave days, or 2) take the time without pay. An employee wishing to take a school conference leave must provide reasonable notice prior to the leave and must make a reasonable effort to schedule the leave so as not to unduly disrupt the Conference's operation.

Voting

Voting in both primary and general elections is encouraged. Employees may take unpaid time off to vote before noon on Election Day if unable to vote before or after the regular work day.

Continuing Education

The Conference Minister, Associate Conference Ministers and Program Staff receive up to two weeks per year for continuing education. However, continuing education time shall not be granted in the same year as a sabbatical leave. All other employees may attend conferences, conventions, and seminars with the approval of their supervisor. The Conference will demonstrate its financial encouragement of employee development in an amount to be determined on an annual basis. The supervisor must give prior approval for all continuing education expenditures.

While on sick leave, parental leave, funeral leave, military leave or short-term disability, the Conference will maintain, at its cost, the same level of benefit coverage the employee had prior to leave.

- ❑ **Health Insurance**
- ❑ **Retirement Benefits**
- ❑ **Other Benefits**

Important Note

Employment with the conference does not guarantee eligibility for any particular benefit. Eligibility is determined according to the specific terms of the plan for a particular benefit.

5.1 Health Insurance

Medical, dental, disability, and life insurance coverage through the Pension Boards of the UCC is provided to all eligible employees and their families/same gender domestic partners. If an eligible employee declines medical coverage and provides certification of coverage, they will be reimbursed the equivalent cost of single coverage with the UCC Pension Boards previously described.

5.2 Retirement Benefits

The Conference will contribute an amount equal to 14% of salary (and housing, where appropriate) to the UCC Plan or other plan as requested by the employee.

5.3 Other Benefits

Social Security, Medicare, and Worker's Compensation

The Conference makes contributions on your behalf for certain required benefits. These include Social Security and Medicare (FICA) and Worker's Compensation

Accrual of sick leave and granting of vacation is suspended while an employee is on worker's compensation leave. Medical insurance coverage and pension benefits will continue to be provided on the same basis as provided while in an active status. Worker's compensation insurance provides coverage for medical care and expenses related to the employee's work related injury or illness.

Work-related injuries are to be reported to the employee's supervisor as promptly as possible.

Dependent and Health Care Reimbursement Plan

The Conference shall provide for all regular full-time employees a plan that allows employees to purchase health and dependent care benefits with “pre-tax” dollars, as allowed under Sections 125 and 129 of the Internal Revenue Service Code.

Automobile Expense Reimbursement

Employees shall be reimbursed for automobile expenses when an employee must use his or her own car in connection with their work for the Conference. The amount of reimbursement will equal the current mileage rates as determined by the IRS for business purposes.

RECEIPT OF MANUAL

I have read the Personnel Policies Manual of the Minnesota Conference, United Church of Christ, approved by the Board of Directors on January 2, 2009, and I understand and accept the guidelines set forth in these Policies.

As an employee of the Conference, I agree to comply with the guidelines and policies the Conference establishes. I also recognize the right of the Conference, through action of the Personnel Committee and/or Conference Board of Directors, to change, add, or delete items in this document with or without my prior knowledge or consent.

I also understand that the Personnel Policies Manual does not constitute an employment agreement or a contract of employment. Only the Conference Minister has the authority to enter into employment contracts or agreements on behalf of the Conference. I further acknowledge that my employment with the Conference is "employment at will" and may be terminated either by me or the Minnesota Conference, United Church of Christ, at any time with or without cause, except as defined in individual employment agreements.

Date

Print or Type Name

Signature