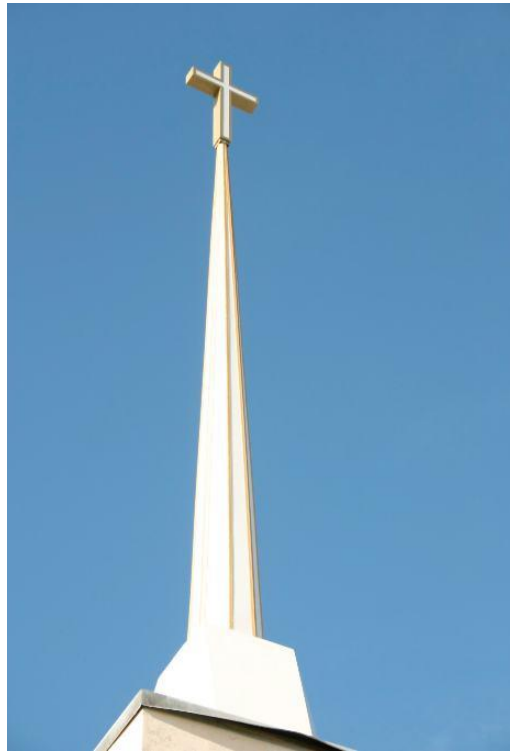


Highland Avenue Fellowship Church
1591 Highland Avenue
Melbourne, FL 32935



Employee Handbook

Effective Date: July 1, 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 Welcome and Introduction	4
1.1 Church Mission	4
2.0 Church Policy	4
2.1 Child/Youth Protection Policy	4
2.2.1 Behavior of Staff Members	4
2.2.2 Conflicts of Interest	6
2.2.3 Personal Relationships in the Workplace	6
2.2.4 Electronic Communications between Ministry Staff and Minors; Online Photos/ Videos.....	6
2.2.5 Attendance and Punctuality.....	7
2.2.6 Personal Appearance.....	7
2.2.7 Visitors in the Workplace.....	7
2.2.8 Solicitation & Distribution.....	8
2.2.9 Security/Workplace Violence Prevention.....	8
2.3 US Citizenship (See Appendix for I-9 Form) and Disabilities Act	9
2.4 Procedure for Employment	9
2.5 Employment of Relatives	10
2.6 Non Tobacco Use Facility.....	10
2.7 Drugs and Alcohol.....	10
2.7.1 Impairment at Work.....	10
2.7.2 Use of Controlled Substance.....	10
2.8 Discipline Procedure.....	10
2.9 Dispute Resolution.....	11
2.10 Whistle Blower Policy.....	13
2.11 Work for Hire.....	14
3.0 Job Descriptions	14
4.0 Employment Status	14
4.1 Employment-at-Will.....	15
4.2 Ministerial Employment.....	15
4.3 Introductory Period for Training and Evaluation.....	15
4.4 Employment Categories.....	16
4.4.1 Administrative/Clergy.....	16
4.4.2 Laity	16
4.4.3 Full-time Employee.....	16
4.4.4 Part-time Employee.....	16
4.4.5 Temporary Employee.....	16
4.5 Employment Classifications.....	16

4.5.1 Nonexempt	16
4.5.2 Exempt	16
4.6 Hours of Work and Office Hours	17
4.6.1 Overtime/Additional Work Hours.....	17
4.7 Emergency Closings.....	17
4.8 Regular Pay Procedures	18
4.9 Salaries and Performance Reviews	18
4.9.1 Social Security (FICA) Withholding Tax	19
4.9.2 Performance Reviews.....	19
5.0 Employee Benefits for Full-Time Employees.....	19
5.1 Medical Insurance	20
5.2 Retirement Pension Plan	20
5.3 Credit Union.....	20
5.4 Holidays	20
5.5 Paid Vacations.....	20
5.5.1 Vacation Eligibility	21
5.5.2 Vacation Accrual per Pay Period	21
5.5.3 Vacation Requests.....	21
5.5.4 Vacation Pay	21
5.6 Sick Leave.....	22
5.6.1 Sick Leave Policy Notes	22
5.6.2 Sick Leave Accrual Schedule	22
5.6.3 Sick Leave Usage.....	22
5.7 Medical Leave of Absence.....	23
5.8 Personal Leave of Absence	23
5.9 Bereavement.....	23
5.10 Continuing Education	23
5.11 Mileage Re-imbusement	23
5.12 Jury and Witness Duty Leave	23
5.13 Absence for National Guard, Military Reserve Service.....	23
6.0 Termination of Employment.....	24
6.1 Unemployment Insurance	24
7.0 Personal Files Access	24
8.0 Confidentiality of Information	24
9.0 Electronic and Telephonic Communications	25
10.0 Forms and Publications.....	25
11.0 Employee Handbook Review and Revisions.....	26
Appendix “A” Hiring Authorization Form	27

New Hire Employee Package Contents Listing.....	28
Employee Acknowledgement Receipt of Employee Handbook And Employment-at-Will Notice.....	29

1.0 Welcome and Introduction

The statements contained in the Employee Handbook are intended to serve as general information concerning Highland Avenue Fellowship Church (hereafter referred to as “HAFC”, or the “Church”) with respect to existing policies, procedures, practices of employment, and employee benefits. These policies are subject to change at the sole discretion of the Executive Board.

This Employee Handbook is developed to make employment with HAFC easily defined, and enjoyable. It is the goal of HAFC that all employees achieve success in their positions and have a sense of fulfillment and reward. **Nothing contained in the Employee Handbook is intended to create, nor shall the handbook be construed as creating an expressed or implied contract or guarantee of employment for a definite or indefinite term.** The responsibility for hiring and termination lies specifically with the Executive Board; therefore, no member of the church staff has the authority to enter into any agreement with the employee for employment for any specified period or to make any promises or commitments. It is understood that either the employee or the Executive Board may terminate this relationship at any time.

1.1 Church Mission

HAFC has a mission which defines the Church’s purpose and goal to disciple others. The mission statement is presented within the Employee Handbook so that all employees may better know the Church’s purpose within the surrounding community.

“The mission of Highland Avenue Fellowship Church is to equip every member for ministries which help others find, live, and share the love of Jesus Christ.”

2.0 Church Policy

2.1 Child/Youth Protection Policy

Each Church staff member who has contact with or supervises children and/or youth is required to study, abide by and follow the Highland Avenue Fellowship Church “Child/Youth Protection Policy.” This is a separate document that will be provided to affected employees, and thoroughly explained. This document requires the staff person’s signature indicating receipt and compliance.

2.2.1 Behavior of Staff Members

1. Staff members are expected to uphold the policies of the ministry, as well as all ministry doctrines and standards as articulated in the Bible, the Ministry’s statement of faith, and this code of conduct in all aspects of their lives both at and away from ministry employment and functions, including in their online activities. Online profiles and submissions of staff members will be subject to monitoring when deemed necessary by the ministry as the employer. Any negative postings about the ministry or its staff, expectations, standard of conduct, statement of faith, or other policies or positions will not be tolerated. Staff members are expected to serve as Christian role models in judgment, dignity, respect,

and Christian living both at and away from the ministry and are expected to faithfully attend ministry services and to take an active part in the total ministry program.

2. Although it is impossible to list all other forms of behavior that are expected of staff members, the following lists provide examples of expected behaviors:
 - a. Treating all members, visitors, and coworkers in a courteous and Christ-like manner;
 - b. Avoiding profane, violent, offensive, or vulgar language or assaulting, fighting with, or intimidating others within the workplace;
 - c. Complying with all ministry policies, including but not limited to those dealing with security and the prevention of workplace violence, attendance and punctuality, safety and health, communication systems, social media, copyright, financial integrity, prevention of sexual and other types of harassment, child protection, conflicts of interest, pay and benefits, whistleblower, document retention, transportation, counseling, and all others delineated within or apart from this handbook;
 - d. Reporting to the ministry leadership violations of ministry policies or any suspicious, violent, offensive, unethical, or illegal conduct, or conduct that is not in the best interests of the ministry by coworkers, members, or suppliers;
 - e. Cooperating with all internal and external ministry investigations;
 - f. Performing assigned tasks efficiently, appropriately, and in accordance with instructions;
 - g. Refraining from smoking or drinking alcohol on campus and, at all times, possessing, using, or distributing non-medical or illegal drugs;
 - h. Maintaining cleanliness, order, and appropriate personal appearance in the workplace;
 - i. Protecting and maintaining confidential information of the ministry;
 - j. Refraining from inappropriate romantic involvement between non-married staff or on ministry property including, but not limited to, kissing or any other contact that would contribute to undue familiarity;
 - k. Refraining from inappropriate contact or interactions with minors, including but not limited to, sending or responding to private texts, emails, social media communications, or other electronic communications; meeting with minors alone and out of view of other adults or teens; phone conversations with minors without parental knowledge or permission; or any other contact that would contribute to undue familiarity;
 - l. Refraining from immoral conduct, identifying statements of immoral acts, or the advocating for or advancement of immoral conduct. Immoral conduct is defined as bodily contact, actively undertaken or passively permitted, between members of the opposite sex or members of the same sex in order to satisfy sexual desires or any bodily contact that a reasonable person would understand to demonstrate a propensity or intent to engage in an immoral act. Identifying statement(s) of immoral acts are ones in which the employee does any of the following: engages in speech regarding sexual immorality; claims he or she is homosexual, bisexual, transgender, or otherwise identifies as being sexually immoral under biblical Christian standards; or uses words, language, or behavior, including by dress or other appearance or online activity that, in the discretion of the ministry, would indicate an intention to convey the impression that the employee engages in, advocates for, or approves of behavior or identity that is immoral under biblical Christian standards.

- m. Married employees must remain faithful to their spouses in every aspect of life, and single (unmarried) employees may not participate in any sexual activity and may not live in a state of cohabitation.
3. Staff members who deviate from these and other similar forms of expected behavior are subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Service with the Ministry is at the mutual consent of the ministry and the staff member, and either party may terminate that relationship at any time, with or without cause, and with or without advanced notice.

2.2.2 Conflicts of Interest

The Ministry expects that each staff member will use good judgment, high biblical and ethical standards, and honesty in all business dealings with and on behalf of the ministry. At all times, staff members have a responsibility to abide by the ministry's conflict of interest policy.

2.2.3 Personal Relationships in the Workplace

1. The service of individuals involved in a dating relationship in the same area of an organization may cause conflicts and problems with favoritism and staff member morale. Thus, it is expected that managers and supervisors will not be involved in personal relationships with staff members or volunteers that they manage where such a relationship could have a negative impact on the workplace or the ministry. Any potential relationships where this may occur should be discussed with and handled by the pastor before a dating relationship develops. Individuals in a close personal relationship should refrain from public workplace displays of affection or excessive personal conversation.
2. Staff members who engage in counseling on behalf of the church, regardless of the age or marital status of counselees, are strictly prohibited from engaging in any financial, dating, romantic, or sexual relationship with counselees. Under no circumstances may a staff member maintain a dating or romantic relationship with a minor.

2.2.4 Electronic Communications between Ministry Staff and Minors; Online Photos/Videos

1. Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from emailing, texting, sending or receiving "friend" requests (or the like), or sending any other private messages, including photographs and videos, through any social media sites to any children or youth at the Ministry. Any such communications must be sent to a group rather than to individuals, or individual messages must be communicated through parents or guardians. Any messages sent to children/youth that are not part of a group communication must also be copied to a parent at the same time. If copying a parent is inappropriate, any non-group communication must also be copied to a member of the pastoral staff (or his/her designee for such communications). All communications with children/youth and parents must comply with the Ministry's code of conduct and all applicable policies.
2. Staff members and volunteers are also prohibited from taking photographs or videos of children/youth at Ministry functions and/or posting them anywhere online, including on the Ministry's website, social networking sites, or on the staff member's private social networking sites unless a liability waiver/permission form has been signed by the parents and the staff member(s) has/have been authorized by the Ministry to do so.

2.2.5 Attendance and Punctuality

Employees are required to report to work punctually and to work all scheduled hours and any required overtime. Absenteeism and tardiness disrupt the workflow and place a burden on other employees and on the ministry as a whole. Employees should notify their supervisors as far in advance as possible whenever they are unable to report to work, know they will be late, or must leave early. The notice should include

the reason for the absence and an indication of when the employee can be expected to report or return to work.

2.2.6 Personal Appearance

1. Each staff member's dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards reflect on both the staff member personally and on the ministry. Staff members are expected during work hours, church service hours, and when representing the ministry to present a professional, Christian image. The following dress code and personal appearance guidelines are in effect at all staff functions and ministry services unless specifically stated otherwise by the church administrator. The ministry reserves the right to modify this policy from time to time.
2. Without unduly restricting individual tastes, the following dress code and personal appearance guidelines should be followed:
 - a. Both male and female staff members are expected to be tasteful and conservative in the styling of their clothing and hair. Extremes in styling or color are not permitted.
 - b. For all staff, a business casual dress code is in effect unless noted otherwise.
3. The ministry reserves the right to require any staff member whose personal appearance is considered by it to be inappropriate or immoderate to correct the matter immediately to the satisfaction of the ministry leadership.

2.2.7 Visitors in the Workplace

1. The Ministry expects that unknown visitors will come to the ministry looking for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs to be met. Regardless of their appearance or dress, all visitors should be courteously treated in a Christ-like manner. Unknown and unexpected visitors should be directed to the receptionist, if appropriate. The receptionist will then direct the visitor to the appropriate staff member, who will ensure, if appropriate and warranted, that the visitor's legitimate needs are considered, and that the visitor is presented with the Gospel.
2. At times, solicitors, vendors, contractors, parents of students, open house guests, or other persons will come to the ministry. These visitors should be directed to the receptionist who will provide them with guidance or will contact the appropriate staff member.
3. This ministry recognizes that the call to ministry service is a call to the entire family and that the ministry is a gathering place for members and friends of the ministry. Staff members should ensure, however, that visits by family, friends, and members do not unduly interfere with the staff member's performance of ministry duties.
4. To assist in providing a safe and healthy work environment for staff members and the people to whom the Ministry ministers, staff members are expected to exercise caution in all work activities. Staff members must immediately report any unsafe condition to their supervisors.
5. In the case of accidents resulting in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, staff members must immediately notify their supervisors and then the church administrator. Such reports are necessary to comply with laws and to initiate insurance and workers' compensation benefits procedures where applicable.

2.28 Solicitation and Distribution

This ministry encourages its staff members to share resources such as Christian books, electronic media, sermons, and articles with one another and further encourages its staff members to support ministry fundraising efforts. Staff members engaging in these activities should ensure that they do not unduly interfere with their own or other staff members' ministry duties. Solicitation of donations or sales to non-

Ministry-related causes should take place during time periods when staff members are not on duty, such as before and after work and during lunch breaks.

1. Ministry bulletin boards and ministry-wide emails include important announcements and memoranda concerning ministry and employment information and should be regularly read by all staff members. If staff members have a message of interest to the entire staff, they must submit it to the church administrator for approval before mass emailing or posting to any bulletin boards.

2.29 Security/Workplace Violence Prevention

1. This ministry is committed to preventing workplace violence and to making reasonable efforts to maintain a safe and secure ministry environment. Staff members are expected to exercise reasonable care for their own personal protection and personal property while on the Ministry's premises. The Ministry assumes no responsibility for loss, damage, or theft of personal property.
2. Unless permitted by law and permission is given by church leadership, staff members, church members (if applicable) and visitors are prohibited from possessing firearms, other weapons, explosives, or other dangerous materials on the ministry's property or at ministry functions, as well as in ministry-provided vehicles or in personal vehicles while on ministry business.
3. Staff members are prohibited from fighting, "horseplay," or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another staff member, visitor, member, or a member of the public at any time, including off-duty periods, will not be tolerated.
4. Staff members who observe or learn of suspicious individuals or activities or learn of threats or incidents of violence must report such information to their immediate supervisors or another supervisory employee as soon as possible and in writing if feasible. This includes threats by staff members, as well as threats by visitors, members of this ministry, or members of the public. The report must be as specific and detailed as possible. When necessary to protect life, health, or property or when otherwise appropriate, employees should call 911 before reporting the threat or incident to a supervisory staff member.
5. The Ministry will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats or incidents of violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical. To maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, employees may be placed on administrative leave, either with or without pay, pending investigation.
6. Staff members may be searched or questioned and are subject to surveillance whenever the Ministry believes this is necessary to maintain security. All personal property brought onto ministry property, such as vehicles, packages, briefcases, backpacks, purses, bags, and wallets are subject to inspection and search. Any staff member who wishes to avoid inspection of any articles or materials should not bring such items onto the ministry's premises. Desks, lockers, filing cabinets, and other storage areas or devices may be provided for the convenience of staff members, but remain the sole property of the ministry. **Staff members have no expectation of privacy in any employer-provided desk, locker, filing cabinet, or other storage area.** Accordingly, they, as well as any articles found within them, may be searched and inspected by any properly authorized agent or representative of this ministry at any time, either with or without prior notice. The Ministry may remove all ministry property and other items that are in violation of the ministry's rules and policies found in these storage areas and devices.

2.3 US Citizenship

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security requires that all employees provide specific information within three days of the date of hire. Employees must complete the most current Form I-9 as provided by the Department of Homeland Security. Specific documents, listed on the form, are required to establish

his or her identity and employment eligibility. Employees will be terminated for failure to provide required identification documents.

A valid form of State of Florida residency is required within 30 days of hire date if a new hire is not a Florida resident upon hire.

2.4 Procedure for Employment

Except as established in the Church's bylaws, it is the sole responsibility of the Church Administration (Pastor, and/or Church Administrator, and Executive Board Chairperson), acting upon behalf of the Church Executive Board, to hire capable and competent employees for the employment positions established by the Executive Board. In fulfillment of this responsibility, the Administration seeks to hire the best person who:

1. shares a common commitment to the mission of the Church,
2. best fits the qualifications of the position and the needs of the Church,
3. possesses the highest ethical standards,
4. is honest with self and with others,
5. is loyal to the best interest of this Church and to the people it serves,
6. is committed to the concept of teamwork,
7. is efficient and reliable,
8. is courteous to the feelings and opinions of others, and
9. maintains the confidentiality of the Church's business

The Administration shall provide employee data to the Treasurer for authorizing pay and establishing review dates. Appendix "A" contains the "Hiring Authorization Form" for this purpose.

Employment by the Church carries with it a responsibility to be constantly aware of the importance of good ethical conduct. Employees must refrain from taking part in, or exercising influence over, in any transaction in which their own interest may conflict with the best interest of the Church. The Church recognizes and respects the individual employee's rights to engage in activities outside his or her employ, which in no way conflict with or reflect poorly on the Church. The Church reserves the right, however, to determine when an employee's activities represent a conflict with the Church's interest and to take whatever action is necessary to resolve the situation.

2.5 Employment of Relatives

Spouses or other relatives may work for HAFC; however, close relatives cannot report to the same supervisor. Close relatives are defined as spouses, children, step-children, grandchildren, step-grandchildren, brothers/sisters, parents, grandparents, aunts/uncles, in-laws, and first cousins. Any deviation from this policy will require the approval of the Executive Board.

2.6 Non-Tobacco Use Facility

Highland Avenue Fellowship Church is declared a "non-tobacco use" facility. All persons, including employees, are not to use any tobacco products or "vaping" products on the Church premises. "No Tobacco Use" Signs may be placed in areas as deemed necessary by the Church Administration.

2.7 Drug and Alcohol Policy

As a part of the mission of the Church, it is policy to employ employees who are not impaired due to alcohol or drugs. The Church is a drug free workplace.

2.7.1 Impairment at Work

Whenever employees are operating ministry vehicles or are on the property of the Church or at any other venue or location where they are conducting ministry business or participating in Church activities, they are prohibited from possessing or consuming alcohol; using, possessing, buying, selling, manufacturing, or dispensing drugs or drug paraphernalia; or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs (“drugs” are defined as any substance, the sale, use or possession of which is unlawful, or any other controlled substance that may adversely affect the ability to safely perform job duties, including the operation of a vehicle or machinery). If an employee is taking over-the-counter or prescription medication that may actually or potentially impair his or her ability to work safely and effectively, the employee must immediately inform the appropriate supervisor. The original container identifying the prescribed drug, dosage, date of prescription, and prescribing physician must be provided to the Church upon request. The Church may require additional information from the prescribing physician regarding the drug and any potential adverse effects it may have in the workplace.

2.7.2 Use of Controlled Substances Generally

The presence of any detectable amount of any controlled substance or alcoholic substance in an employee’s body system, at or away from work, is strictly prohibited unless such substance is necessary for medical purposes. The legal use of prescribed or over-the-counter drugs is permitted so long as such use does not impair an employee’s ability to perform the essential functions of his or her job effectively and in a safe manner. Any employee who reports to work in violation of this policy shall be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination.

2.8 Disciplinary Procedure

Disciplinary Actions are required to correct improper behavior or inefficient work quality or quantity; therefore, guidelines on disciplinary procedures are needed. As a general rule, when a disciplinary problem does occur, the Church will attempt to resolve the issue using a progressive discipline process in the following manner:

If the disciplinary issue is more minor in nature an employee will first be given an oral warning regarding the disciplinary problem. If the issue continues, the employee will then be given a formal written warning, followed by a written reprimand and then potential suspension or termination.

If the disciplinary issue is of a serious nature, the employee may be immediately suspended or terminated. When time permits, prior to any suspension or termination, the immediate supervisor shall report to the Executive Board the offense(s) committed. The Executive Board will then make the determination on the appropriate discipline to be administered. If the employee requests it, they shall have the opportunity to discuss the discipline issued by the Executive Board prior to administration of the discipline. The Pastor or Executive Pastor will call a meeting of the Executive Board at the earliest available time and the employee will be allowed to present their grievance at the meeting. The determination of the Executive Board shall be final.

2.9 Dispute Resolution

The Ministry recognizes that disagreements are inevitable in the life of every ministry. The Ministry believes that the process for dealing with the expression and resolution of conflict given by Christ to believers within the church (recorded in Matthew 18:15-20) can also apply to managing interpersonal conflict relating to ministry service. Staff members are thus required to use these procedures for dealing with their grievances. The ministry will attempt to promptly resolve all disputes that are appropriate for handling under this policy. Staff members are reminded that the manner and spirit with which they pursue a grievance reflect their spiritual qualification for ministry service. Criticism, gossip, subversion, or disregard of ministry directives, dishonesty, or the encouragement of any of these actions will not be tolerated.

1. An appropriate dispute is defined as a staff member's dissatisfaction with the interpretation or application of a work-related policy by supervisors or other staff members. Examples of matters that may be considered appropriate disputes under this policy include:
 - a. A belief that ministry staff policies, practices, rules, regulations, or disciplinary procedures have been applied or administered improperly or unfairly to a staff member;
 - b. Treatment considered hostile by a staff member, such as coercion, harassment, or intimidation; and
 - c. Alleged discrimination because of a legally protected status.
2. Exclusive Remedy. The dispute resolution procedure is the exclusive remedy for staff members with appropriate disputes or complaints except where it is appropriate or legally required to also inform law enforcement. The ministry may, at its discretion, refuse to proceed with any dispute it determines is improper under this policy. As used in this policy, the terms timely fashion, reasonable time, and promptly generally will mean five working days.
3. Length of Disputes. Disputes will be processed until the staff member is satisfied, does not file a timely appeal, or exhausts the right of appeal under the policy. A decision becomes binding on all parties whenever a staff member does not file a timely appeal or when a decision is made in the final step and the right of appeal no longer exists.
4. Procedures for Addressing Grievances with the Ministry. Staff members who believe they have an appropriate dispute should proceed as follows:
 - a. Step One. Promptly bring the complaint to the attention of the immediate supervisor. If the dispute involves the supervisor, then the staff member may proceed directly to step two. The supervisor should investigate the complaint, attempt to resolve it, and give a decision to the staff member within a reasonable time. The supervisor should prepare a written and dated summary of the dispute and proposed resolution for the employee's personnel file (if applicable).
 - b. Step Two. Appeal the decision to the next level in the chain of command, if dissatisfied with the supervisor's decision or initiate the procedure with the next level in the chain of command, if step one has been bypassed. This appeal or initial dispute notification must be made in a timely fashion using a written form provided for this purpose. The supervisor's version of the dispute and decision will then be submitted using a similar written form. The next level in the chain of command will, in a timely fashion, confer with the staff member, the supervisor, and any other members of ministry leadership considered appropriate, will

investigate the issues, and will communicate a decision in writing to all the parties involved.

- c. Step Three. Appeal an unsatisfactory to the next level in the chain of command decision to the Executive Board. The timeliness requirement and procedures to be followed are similar to those in step two. The Executive Board will take the necessary steps to review and investigate the dispute and will then issue a written, final, and binding decision. If the procedures in steps one through three still do not resolve the situation, the matter may only be further pursued by means of binding Christian arbitration in accordance with number 9 below (“Prohibited Conduct in Handling Grievances”).
5. Effect and Timing of Decisions. Final decisions on disputes will not be precedent-setting or binding on future disputes unless they are officially stated as ministry policy. When appropriate, the decisions will be retroactive to the date of the staff member’s original dispute notification.
 6. Confidentiality. Information concerning an employee dispute should be confidential. Supervisors, department heads, and other members of ministry leadership who investigate a complaint may discuss it only with those individuals who have a need to know about it or who are needed to supply necessary background information or advice.
 7. Effect on Employment. Staff members will not be penalized for proper use of the dispute resolution procedure, and time spent by employees in dispute discussions with ministry leadership during their normal working hours will be considered hours worked for pay purposes. However, it is not considered proper use if a staff member raises complaints in bad faith or solely for the purposes of delay or harassment or repeatedly raises meritless disputes as determined in the discretion of the Executive Board. Implementation of the dispute resolution procedure by a staff member does not limit the right of the ministry to proceed with any disciplinary action that is not in retaliation for the use of the dispute resolution procedure. In addition, staff members and supervisors are prohibited from retaliating against a staff member who properly uses the dispute resolution procedure.
 8. Prohibited Conduct in Handling Grievances. Employees are prohibited from making demands, threatening to sue, or bringing a legal complaint in any matter against the Ministry as this clearly violates biblical teaching and practice and shall constitute sufficient grounds for immediate termination. All potential claims, disputes, or causes of action that are not resolved through the afore-described dispute resolution process must be resolved through binding Christian arbitration using the procedures approved by the board. Retaining or instructing an attorney to contact the ministry in any context other than the binding Christian arbitration procedures with regard to a potential claim or dispute will be interpreted as a threat to sue.
 9. Procedures for Addressing Interpersonal Conflict. Staff members who have a dispute with another staff member should proceed as follows:
 - a. Step One. The persons who have the disagreement should meet to discuss the issue(s) in a direct dialogue and attempt to negotiate the conflict. There should be no gossip or attempts to win third parties to either employee’s side of the issue. If honest dialogue between the offender and the offended takes place, the great majority of disagreements will be resolved at this level.
 - b. Step Two. If the direct dialogue and negotiation does not resolve the conflict, the offended staff member should initiate a meeting with the supervisor to discuss the problems and suggest solutions. Information concerning the interpersonal conflict should be kept

confidential. The staff members and supervisor involved may only discuss the situation with those individuals who have a need to know or who are necessary to supply essential background information or advice.

- c. Step Three. If the meeting with the supervisor is unsuccessful in resolving the conflict, the staff member should meet with the next level in the chain of command who should listen to both parties and then decide the matter if it can be done so objectively. If the conflict involves the next level in the chain of command, the matter should proceed to the Executive Board. In the event a satisfactory resolution is not achieved and the situation involves a potential legal dispute, binding Christian arbitration procedures should be initiated. If the dispute must be taken to arbitration, the arbitration policies adopted by this ministry will be followed.

2.10 Whistleblower Policy

The ministry is committed to biblical standards of moral and legal conduct. Consistent with this commitment, this policy aims to provide avenues for employees or volunteers to report suspected illegal activity, dishonesty, fraud, or other misconduct by anyone in this organization and to provide assurance that whistleblowers will be protected from retaliation for reporting.

Any person (“whistleblower”) who has a concern relating to suspected illegal activity, dishonesty, fraud, or other misconduct should report the issue to the church administrator or any member of the Executive Board. If the report involves a potential or suspected crime against a minor, such as physical or sexual child abuse, molestation, or neglect, or any other illegal activity that necessitates reporting to an outside governing body, the whistleblower must immediately report the issue to his/her supervisor and to law enforcement or the appropriate state agency responsible for receiving such reports.

A whistleblower must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates illegal activity, dishonesty, fraud, or other misconduct. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and will be handled according to the Ministry’s employment policies.

No administrator may take any retaliatory personnel action against an employee for reporting internally or to a government body in good faith, for refusing to engage in any criminal or unlawful activity, or for engaging in other protected activity. Any potential disciplinary matters involving the employee will be handled according to the Ministry’s employment policies.

2.11 Work for Hire

Unless another written agreement controls, any intellectual property work done by employees for the ministry is “for hire,” meaning that all intellectual property created for, generated during the course of, and used in the employment with the ministry will be and will remain ministry-owned property (e.g., sermons, books, booklets, teachings, recordings, devotionals, training materials, forms, programs, and other material). Any transfer of the ministry’s ownership in such intellectual property works will be on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of the Board with consultation of the ministry’s legal counsel and evidenced in writing signed by both parties.

3.0 Job Descriptions

Each employment position within the Church has a job description, which provides for an outline of the following job elements:

1. Church or Ministry Description (brief statement of basic work of church or ministry)
2. Ministerial nature of the position (all Church positions are ministerial)
3. Position title and definition;
4. Duties, responsibilities, and qualifications;
5. Lines of authority;
6. Legal and special issues (some jobs may require lifting or climbing duties, etc.);
7. Other items (dress code, church membership, etc.);
8. Signature (acknowledgement of job description).

It is the purpose of the job description to establish an expected level of performance for each of the above elements.

It is the intent of the Church to review each job description periodically, to keep it current with the day-to-day work activities that the position is required to perform.

Each staff member may review his/her applicable job description upon request; the originals are retained on file in the Church office.

All newly created position(s) must have a job description(s) developed and be approved by the Executive Board. Any revisions to existing job descriptions must be approved by the Executive Board.

4.0 Employment Status

Full-time employees are those employees who regularly work thirty-five (35) hours or more each workweek and shall be entitled to fringe benefits as contained in this document.

Part-time employees are those employees who are hired to work less than thirty-five (35) hours each work week and shall be entitled to fringe benefits as contained in this document.

4.1 Employment-at-Will

Employment with the Church is not offered, contracted, or promised for any specific length of time. Employees have the right to leave employment at any time, and the Church has the right to terminate employment at any time. The right of the employee or the Church to terminate the employment relationship “at will” is recognized and affirmed as a condition of employment.

4.2 Ministerial Employment

All employees of the Ministry are expected to exercise and express the religious character and mission of the ministry at all times. Employees are considered ministers of this organization, and willingness and ability to perform ministerial functions that align with and further the religious mission of the Ministry is a requirement of every position. “Ministerial functions” are defined as those actions in which the individual’s belief in and adherence to the ministry’s statement of faith are an integral part. Examples of ministerial functions include, but are not limited to, leading staff devotions and/or prayer, sharing the Gospel when called upon to do so during the workday, and the written or verbal communication of biblical teachings.

4.3 Introductory Period for Training and Evaluation

The first 90 days of employment are considered an introductory period to be used for training and evaluation. During this time, the supervisor(s) will evaluate the employee's performance to ensure that the employee is fulfilling the requirements of the job assigned, as well as discuss the future job-related goals that are expected to be accomplished. A supervisor may extend the length of the initial introductory period up to an additional 90 days if he or she determines that ample opportunity has not been given to the employee to demonstrate performance capabilities. A performance review will be given at this time.

The Church may elect to terminate employment of any employee within the 90 day probationary period without cause.

Pastor(s) and Church Administrator positions are exempt from the introductory period.

4.4 Employment Categories

4.4.1 Administrative/Clergy

Pastors and Church Administrators are defined as administrative/clergy.

4.4.2 Laity

Laity/lay persons are defined as "all others," as distinguished from clergy.

4.4.3 Full-time Employee

Employees who have successfully completed the introductory period and are scheduled to work 35 or more hours per week, will be considered a full-time employee. This classification entitles the employee to full Church benefits as defined in this document. The employee is required to work at least 35 hours per week for all 12 months of the year

4.4.4 Part-time Employee

Employees who have successfully completed the introductory period and work less than 35 hours per week are considered part-time employees.

4.4.5 Temporary Employee

Persons hired for short periods of employment (i.e., seasonal, peak periods, replacements, specific projects, vacations, summer, internship, etc.), are classified as temporary employees. Other than Workers' Compensation, temporary employees are not entitled to Church benefits.

4.5 Employment Classifications

All positions are classified as either "exempt" or "nonexempt." Position duties must meet the U.S. Department of Labor tests to be classified as "exempt." Upon hire, an employee will be notified whether he is considered a nonexempt or an exempt employee. If the employee's exemption status changes during his or her employment, the employee will be notified of that change. Classifications will be stated in the job description.

4.5.1 Nonexempt

Nonexempt employees are expected to work a normal workday and workweek, unless the Administration authorizes overtime in advance. Nonexempt employees will be paid overtime for all hours worked in excess of 40 in a workweek and must maintain a true and accurate record of hours worked. For further details, refer to the “Overtime Policy” section later in this handbook.

4.5.2 Exempt

Exempt employees do not receive overtime pay. The following sections detail the requirements to qualify for exemption.

4.6 Hours of Work and Office Hours

The Church’s normal office hours shall be established annually by the Executive Board at the same meeting that the annual budget is finalized and approved (normally the November meeting). For compensation purposes, the weekly pay period shall begin on Monday and end on Sunday.

Staff personnel may work on a daily schedule, which varies from the normal Church office hours, but must request any change in schedule in advance. The Pastor and/or Church Administrator must approve such a schedule, in advance.

All staff persons, except Clergy, are required to keep track of their hours on a time sheet. Some staff, whose work requires them to be on and off of the church grounds, must take the responsibility to inform the church office administrative assistant of their departure, the destination(s), and anticipated time of return.

In addition to normal work hours, salaried program and clergy will be expected to attend various meetings and perform other special duties outside of normal office hours without impacting availability during normal office hours.

The Church reserves the right to modify normal work schedules as needed. As an example, Custodial staff will work on a schedule arranged as necessary to provide required services sufficient to cover the Church programs.

In the event an employee cannot report to work on time for an unforeseen circumstance, the employee must report the circumstance to the Pastor/Church Administrator as quickly as possible. Excessive tardiness and absenteeism will subject an employee to disciplinary action, which may include termination.

The Pastor may be required to keep a log of estimated time worked off-site for the purpose identifying whether the position is requiring too much time for one person to perform their duties in a satisfactory manner. The determination if a log will be required will be made by the Executive Board and reviewed periodically by the Executive Board Chairperson and the affected Pastor.

The Church Administrator by the nature of the job description is expected to spend a majority of their work hours at the Church office and on campus. The Church Administrator may be required to keep a log of hours worked off-site as determined by the Executive Board and reviewed periodically by the Executive Board Chairperson and the Church Administrator.

4.6.1 Overtime/Additional Work Hours

Federal law requires that overtime be paid after forty (40) hours of actual work (physically present) in a workweek for all nonexempt employees. Nonexempt employees are prohibited from working overtime without prior approval from their supervisor, who must first obtain approval from the Administration. When ministry requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, nonexempt employees may be scheduled and will be required to work overtime hours. In emergency situations, when the Church's property may be at risk, the Pastor or Church Administrator may approve the overtime required to secure the Church's property without prior approval.

Actual hours worked will be counted toward overtime. Accordingly, the following will not be credited as hours worked for computing overtime: paid time off, personal time off, holidays, jury duty, bereavement leave, sick days, and the like.

4.7 Emergency Closings

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, power failures, earthquakes, or hurricanes may disrupt ministry operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of a work facility. If such an emergency occurs during nonworking hours, notification will occur remotely through the use of electronic communications.

When operations are officially closed due to emergency conditions, the time off from scheduled work for non-exempt employees will be unpaid unless the Executive Board communicates otherwise. However, with supervisory approval, non-exempt employees may use available vacation. If the ministry does not declare an emergency closing, non-exempt employees who fail to report for work will not be paid for the time off; however, those who are legitimately unable to come to work may request to use available vacation.

Employees in essential operations may be asked to work on a day when operations are officially closed. In these circumstances, employees who work will receive regular pay. Unless circumstances require operations to close for a full workweek or more, exempt employees will be paid their regular wages for any day or part of a day when operations are closed due to inclement weather or other type of emergency closure. In such cases, the administration may require exempt employees to use available vacation time.

4.8 Regular Pay Procedures

All required deductions, such as for federal taxes, will be withdrawn automatically from the employee's pay. Employees are responsible for reviewing paystubs for errors. Errors should be reported to the Church Treasurer immediately. All employees are required to use Direct Deposit for receipt of pay.

All employees will be paid on a monthly basis for the month being completed for the time timecards/timesheets are being turned in. All employees, except Clergy, are required to turn in timecards/timesheets on either a monthly or weekly basis. The pay date goal will be to distribute paystubs by the last day of the month; however, because of direct deposit the actual pay day (the date the funds are in the employee's account) is no later than the last business day of the month.

4.9 Salaries and Performance Reviews

The Church Executive Board establishes salaries for all positions. The Administration has the responsibility to propose the salary structure, the individual salaries, review salaries, and make such recommendations to the Executive Board for all non-administrative positions. This policy applies to salaries of all full-time and part-time staff persons. Salary compensation levels shall be made, though not exclusively, using the following criteria:

1. Current financial condition of the Church;
2. Performance of the employee;
3. Experience
4. Current pay in other churches for similar work;
5. Current pay outside the churches for similar work;
6. Job responsibility;
7. Training and education;
8. Cost of living;
9. Amount of time worked

4.9.1 Social Security (FICA) Withholding Tax

The federal Social Security program covers all employees. The prescribed percentage is withheld from the employee's wages and is matched by a like amount from the Church in accordance with the existing law. Ordained or licensed clergy may be exempt from the FICA withholding depending on their employment status as defined by the Internal Revenue Service.

All employees are required to file a withholding allowance certificate (W-4 form). Federal income taxes will be withheld from monthly wages at a rate corresponding to the number of allowances claimed.

4.9.2 Performance Reviews

To assist in the performance of each employee's work, it is important that employees be recognized for good performance and receive appropriate suggestions for improvements. Consistent with this goal, each employee's performance will be evaluated by the Pastor or Church Administrator or, in the case of the Pastor and Church Administrator, the Executive Board on an annual basis. Employees will also receive periodical evaluations of their performance. For non-exempt employees, such evaluations will normally occur after 90 days, on the first anniversary date, and annually thereafter. In addition, if an employee is promoted or transferred to a new position, the performance will normally be evaluated in writing after the employee has been in their new position for six (6) months. The performance evaluation form will be developed and maintained as part of the approved Church Policy and Procedure manual. The Administrative Assistant shall be responsible for notifying the immediate supervisor of an upcoming review four (4) weeks in advance of the review. The supervisor shall complete the review and submit it to the Executive Board for approval prior to administering the review to the employee.

All written performance reviews will be based on overall performance in relation to the job responsibilities as well as the job description and will also take into account the employee's conduct and demeanor as well as the other criteria discussed in the section entitled "Procedure for Employment."

In addition to the regular performance evaluations described above, the Pastor or Church Administrator may conduct special written performance evaluations at any time to advise of the existence of performance or disciplinary problems.

5.0 Employee Benefits for Full-Time and Part-Time Employees

Full-time employees (35+ hours per week) and Part-time employees (less than 35 hours per week) are eligible for most benefits on the first day of the month after 30 days of employment. An employee must be eligible and enroll in the benefit within 30 days of eligibility. Eligibility for holiday pay for hourly employees occurs 30 days after employment. Exempt employees are eligible for holiday pay immediately after employment. Vacation and sick leave are accrued based on hours worked.

The benefits are summarized in the table below for the employee's convenience. The sections that follow provide more benefits details.

5.1 Medical Insurance

The Church does not currently offer medical insurance plans. The Church may choose to provide a stipend to assist employees in purchasing medical coverage either through a government sponsored program or a private insurer. In the event a stipend is made available, proof of insurance will be required.

5.2 Retirement Plan

The Church may choose to coordinate a retirement program through a reputable investment company. The Church may choose to contribute to an employee's retirement accounts if applicable. The Church is in no way responsible for the outcome of any retirement account and participation is strictly voluntary on the part of the employee. Any and all Church contributions must be approved by the Executive Board and may be canceled at any time.

5.3 Credit Union/Banking

The Church does not currently affiliate with an accredited Credit Union or Bank

5.4 Holidays

Paid holidays that are observed by the Church are as follows. In the event that an employee is required to work on the holiday, they will take either the day immediately prior to, or following the holiday as their schedule allows, with approval of the immediate supervisor. If the Church is normally closed on the date of the holiday the employees will receive holiday pay for the date that the holiday is observed by the Church:

New Year's Day	Independence Day
MLK Day	Labor Day
Good Friday	Veterans Day
Presidents Day	Thanksgiving
Memorial Day	Day after Thanksgiving
	Christmas Day

5.5 Paid Vacation

For purposes of calculating vacation hours and usage the employee's hire date will be used.

Vacation is accrued each pay period based on length of employment and hours worked. Available vacation balance is included on the employee's pay stub. A maximum of two (2) times an employee's annual accrual may be carried forward to the next year.

5.5.1 Vacation Eligibility for Nonexempt Employees

Full time employees (40 hours per week and salaried employees) are eligible for 80 hours of vacation per year. After completion of five (5) years of service employees are eligible for 120 hours of vacation per year. After completion of 10 years of service employees are eligible for 160 hours of vacation per year.

Part-time employees who work less than 32 hours per week are eligible for prorated vacation hours based on their hours worked per year (based on 80 hours per year for a full-time employee).

Example of vacation hours calculated by hours worked:

<u>Position:</u>	<u>Annual Hours Worked</u>	<u>Annual Vacation Hours Accrued</u>
Full-time Employee (40 hour week)	2080	80 or 100%
Part-time Employee (20 hour week)	1040	40 or 50%
Part-time Employee (15 hour week)	780	30 or 37.5%

Although vacation begins to accrue the day the employee begins work, no vacation may be taken for the first 90 days of employment, and accrued vacation is not payable upon termination of employment, if termination occurs during the 90-day evaluation and training period or the employee terminates without giving notice or is terminated for cause.

Temporary employees are not eligible for vacation

5.5.2 Vacation Accrual per Pay Period

Vacation for full-time (40 hours per week) employees' eligible for 80 hours vacation per year will accrue at a rate of 6.67 hours per pay period (every month). Fulltime (40 hours per week) employees with ten (10) or more years of continuous service are eligible for 160 hours of vacation per year and accrued at a rate of 13.33 hours per pay period (every month). Part-time employees working a 20 hour work week will accrue vacation at a rate of 3.33 hours per pay period (every month). Part-time employees working a 15 hour workweek will accrue vacation at a rate of 2.5 hours per pay period (every month).

5.5.3 Vacation Requests

Vacation requests should be made at least two weeks prior to the desired vacation time. Supervisors must approve all vacation dates. Exceptions to the notice may granted for emergencies.

5.5.4 Vacation Pay

Pay for vacation time will be at the employee's regular rate of pay. An employee must work the regularly scheduled workdays before and after the paid vacation period to be eligible to receive vacation pay. A paid Church holiday that falls during the vacation period will be considered as a paid holiday and not vacation time. The Church believes that vacation should be taken.

5.6 Sick Leave

The sick leave policy provides employees with sick pay for absence from work due to illness, including time off to care for the immediate family.

5.6.1 Sick Leave Policy Notes

If an employee calls in sick on a scheduled workday for 3 days or more, the employee may be requested to provide a statement from the doctor.

Employees who are *not* ill or who do not have to care for sick family members are *not* eligible to take sick leave (i.e., employees who routinely call in “sick” on the first and last work days of the week are in violation of our sick leave policy). Two or more occurrences are grounds for discipline including suspension without pay or termination.

5.6.2 Sick Leave Accrual Schedule for Full and Part Time Employees

Full time employees (40) hours per week, exempt and non-exempt) are eligible for 80 hours of sick leave per year and shall be accrued at 6.67 hours per pay period with a maximum accrual of 240 hours.

Part-time employees who work a minimum of 20 hours per week are eligible for 40 hours of sick leave per year and shall be accrued at 3.33 hours per pay period with a maximum accrual of 120 hours

Part-time employees who work less than 20 hours per week are eligible for prorated sick leave hours based on their hours worked per year (based on 80 hours per year for a full-time employee) with a maximum accrual of three (3) times their annual accrual rate.

Example of sick leave hours calculated by hours worked:

<u>Position:</u>	<u>Annual Hours Worked</u>	<u>Annual Sick Hours Accrued</u>
Full-time Employee (40 hour week)	2080	80 or 100%
Part-time Employee (20 hour week)	1040	40 or 50%
Part-time Employee (15 hour week)	780	30 or 37.5%

- Sick leave begins to accrue the day you begin work
- Accrued sick leave is not payable upon termination of employment.

5.6.3 Sick Leave Usage

- For Non-Exempt employees sick leave is used in ¼ hour increments.
- For Exempt employees sick leave will not be charged for less than a full day’s absence
- Supervisors may require a doctor’s statement after three days of absence due to sickness or injury.
- Employees who take leave for planned treatment of a serious medical condition, are required to make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the operation of the Church.

5.7 Medical Leave of Absence

Medical (including pregnancy) leaves of absence may be requested by full-time employees. If the employee anticipates being absent for more than five (5) consecutive work days as a result of an illness, injury, or disability (including pregnancy), surgery or other medical procedure, or other medical condition.

This leave is **unpaid** except that all accrued but unused vacation and sick leave benefits will run concurrent with the medical leave and must be exhausted before the leave will be unpaid.

Employees must submit a written request for medical leave to their immediate supervisor as far in advance of the anticipated leave date as practicable. If the absence is due to an emergency, the employee

or a member of the employee's immediate family must inform the immediate supervisor as soon as practicable. This should be followed up with a written request, normally submitted within three (3) days of the beginning of the leave. All medical leave requests must be accompanied by appropriate medical certification from the attending physician, indicating the condition necessitating the leave request and the projected date of return to work.

If the leave request is granted, the employee is required to provide the Church with additional physician's statements at least once every thirty (30) days or more frequently if requested, attesting to the continued disability and inability to work.

Before being permitted to return from medical leave, the employee may be required to present the Church with a note from the attending physician indicating that the employee is capable of returning to work and performing the essential functions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation. Reasonable accommodation is action taken by the Church to assist or enable an otherwise qualified disabled person in performing the essential functions of his or her job.

Unless applicable state or local law requires otherwise, reinstatement cannot be guaranteed to any employee returning from medical leave, nor are employees who are reinstated guaranteed to have the same position, pay, or benefits as they had prior to the leave.

5.8 Personal Leave of Absence

Full-time employees who have completed three months of continuous service may request unpaid personal leaves of absence for a period of up to thirty (30) calendar days. Personal leave requests must be submitted in writing at least two weeks prior to the time such leave is to commence. If the personal leave request is necessitated by an emergency, the employee, or a member of the employee's immediate family must notify their immediate supervisor as soon as is practicable; this should be followed up with a written explanation of the nature of the leave and the expected length of absence. In such emergency situations, the written explanation must normally be submitted within three (3) days of the beginning of the leave.

Personal leave may be granted for justifiable reasons (e.g., child care or to care for an ill family member) at the Church's sole discretion, provided the leave does not seriously disrupt Church operations. Personal leave is not granted until all accrued unused vacation have been exhausted. Sick leave may not be used unless it is specifically for personal illness or to care for a sick family member as defined in the sick leave policy. Reinstatement cannot be guaranteed to employees returning from personal leave, nor are employees who are reinstated guaranteed to have the same position, pay, or benefits as they had prior to the leave.

5.9 Bereavement Leave

Full and part-time employees may be granted up to three (3) days off with pay in the event of a death in the immediate family (spouse, parent, child, step-child, grandchild, step-grandchild, grandparents, in-laws, or siblings). Written authorization is required from the immediate supervisor.

5.10 Continuing Education

Employees may request paid administrative time off for continuing education (not to exceed one week per year) from his or her immediate supervisor. The supervisor will then forward the request to the Executive Board Chairperson along with a recommendation to approve or deny the request based on applicability to the employee's job and the Church's operational needs.

5.11 Mileage Reimbursement

Certain positions within the Church are given, at the discretion of the Executive Board, a mileage reimbursement for on the job driving only. Employees will not be reimbursed for any mileage incurred driving to or from their primary business location. Employees should check with their immediate supervisor to determine eligibility for such benefit. The rate of reimbursement will be consistent with the rate established for taxing purposes by the Internal Revenue Service annually. All mileage reimbursements will be subject to available funding.

5.12 Jury and Witness Duty Leave

Any full-time or part-time employee serving on jury duty shall be paid his or her regular salary but shall reimburse the church any payment received from the court for jury duty. Such reimbursement will not include any travel allowance received.

All employees are allowed unpaid time off if summoned to appear in Court as a witness. To qualify for jury or witness duty leave, the employee must submit to their immediate supervisor a copy of the summons as soon as it is received.

5.13 Absence for National Guard, Military Reserve Service

All employees shall be granted time off without pay for up to two (2) weeks each year for national guard or military reserve duty or such other time as required by state or federal law.

In the event of an employee's call to active duty service in the military, any employee shall be granted a leave of absence. Such time shall be without pay, but the employee shall be eligible for reinstatement per applicable Florida and federal law provided the employee meets the reinstatement criteria. See immediate supervisor for more details.

6.0 Termination of Employment

Employees desiring to terminate their employment relationship with the Church are required to notify the Church at least two (2) weeks in advance. Failure to provide sufficient notice will result in a forfeiture of payment for any unused vacation accruals. Employees planning to retire should provide the Church with a minimum of two months' notice to allow ample time for the processing of appropriate forms.

As mentioned elsewhere in this Employee Handbook, all employment relationships with the Church are on an at-will basis unless otherwise indicated. Therefore, the Church reserves the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time for any or no reason.

6.1 Unemployment Insurance

Employees of the Church are not eligible for unemployment compensation.

7.0 Personnel Files Access

The Church maintains personnel files on each employee. These files contain documentation regarding all aspects of the employee's employment with the Church such as performance reviews, beneficiary designation forms, and disciplinary warning notices. The employee may review their personnel file upon

reasonable notice. If the employee is interested in reviewing their file, arrangements should be made with the Pastor or Church Administrator. An employee's personnel file remains, at all times, the property of the Church. To ensure that the employee's personnel file is up-to-date at all times, the employee should notify their immediate supervisor of any changes in the employee's name, telephone number, home address, marital status, number of dependents, and the individual to notify in case of an emergency.

8.0 Confidentiality of Information

It is the policy of the Church to ensure that the operations, activities, business affairs, and congregational information are kept strictly confidential. Employees found to be violating the confidentiality policy are subject to immediate discipline including termination.

9.0 Electronic and Telephonic Communications

All electronic and telephonic communications systems and all communications and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems are the property of the Church and as such are to be used solely for job-related purposes. The Church reserves the right to monitor all communication systems in order to ensure that it is being used for appropriate purposes. Personal software and business equipment for private purposes is strictly prohibited. (Examples include: facsimiles, telecopiers, computers, and copy machines).

Communication equipment and services provided by the ministry, including the messages transmitted and stored by them, are the sole property of the Ministry. Accordingly, the Ministry may access and monitor staff member communications and files as it considers appropriate. **Staff members do not have any expectation of privacy in any communications, files, or items made using or stored in or on the ministry's communication services and equipment, regardless of whether the communications, files, or items are designated or intended as private by the sender or the recipient.** Ministry administration may monitor at any time any staff member's use of any ministry communication service or equipment. Ministry communications property and equipment may not be removed from the premises without prior authorization from Church Administrator.

Staff members should ensure that no personal correspondence appears to be an official ministry communication, since staff members may be perceived as ministry representatives and therefore create liability for the ministry. All outgoing messages, whether by mail, facsimile, email, social media post or response, other internet transmission, or any other means, should be accurate, appropriate, and ministry-related. Staff members may not use ministry stationery or postage for personal letters. Incidental personal use by staff members of ministry communications services and equipment is allowed as long as the use does not interfere with the staff member's work or ministry operations, does not violate any ministry policies, and does not result in any additional expense to the ministry. Each staff member must reimburse any expenses related to the staff member's personal use of the ministry's communications services.

The Ministry's policies that prohibit offensive, intimidating, harassing, or disruptive materials in the workplace apply with equal force to material communicated through or stored on the ministry's communication services and equipment. Abuse of ministry communication services and equipment provided by the ministry in violation of law or ministry policies will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of service. Staff members may also be held personally liable for any violations of this policy. Staff members should notify their immediate supervisors or any other member of ministry leadership upon learning of violations of this policy.

Current church policy and guidelines on the use of e-mail in conducting business are as follows:

- All employees should be sensitive to the fact that e-mail can create a permanent written record. Therefore, no text should be included in an e-mail message that would not be included in any other written communication.
- No information marked "not for distribution" or "internal use only" may be transmitted via e-mail.
- Any questions about a specific item to be e-mailed should be directed to the employee's immediate supervisor
- The employee shall use email/internet services for Church business only. Personal use is prohibited.
- Staff members may not monitor, retrieve, or review any communication or file to which they are not a party, unless they have prior authorization.
- Staff members may not duplicate or download, from the Internet or from an email, any software or materials that are copyrighted, patented, trademarked, or otherwise identified as intellectual property without the express written permission of the owner of the material.
- As a condition of employment and continued employment, employees are required to sign a handbook acknowledgement form attached at the back of this handbook.

10.0 Forms and Publications

Forms and Publications required by the Church, or an agency in order for the Church to conduct business shall be obtained from the required agency at the time of need. This will ensure that the Church is using the most current forms and/or publications to conduct the business of the Church. Forms and publications include; but are not limited to:

- Any IRS form or publication required for employment and/or tax withholding such as:
 - W-4 Tax Withholding Form
 - Form I-9, Employment Eligibility
 - W-2 Forms
- Any Church form or publication such as:
 - Employee Job Descriptions
 - Employee Leave Forms
 - Hiring Authorization Forms

Any revisions to, or newly created forms used by HAFC will be reviewed and approved by the Executive Board prior to use.

11.0 Employee Handbook Review and Revisions

All established personnel policies will be reviewed as needed by the Pastor, Church Administrator, and Executive Board Chairperson, including consideration of any recommendation submitted by any employee. The Church Administrator will assume responsibility for review and revision of the policies to make certain the policies are up-to-date, operative, and in compliance with all federal, state, local laws.

APPENDIX "A"

HIRING AUTHORIZATION FORM

Full Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Social Security Number: _____ Job Position: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Approved for Hire:

Church Administrator Pastor : _____ Date: _____

Executive Board Chairperson: _____ Date: _____

New Hire Employee Package Contents Listing

- Child Protection Policy (Read and keep for your reference.)
- Primary screening form
- Consent to run the background
- Statement of Faith
- Fill out - Criminal History Information Request
- Employee Handbook
- W-4
- Form I-9 (with copies of valid drivers license or passport and Social Security card)

**Employee Acknowledgement
Receipt of Employee Handbook
And
Employment-at-Will Notice**

TO: Highland Avenue Fellowship Church

SUBJECT: Acknowledgment of Probationary Period, Receipt of Employee Handbook and Employment-At-Will notification.

I acknowledge receipt of the Highland Avenue Fellowship Church’s Employee Handbook.

I understand that I am responsible for familiarizing myself with the information. I also understand that the Church may occasionally change the policies, procedures, and practices outlined in this manual.

Under no circumstances shall this manual be construed as a contract for continued employment.

I understand that all electronic communication systems and all information transmitted by, received from, or stored in any and all Church systems are the property of the Church.

I also understand that the Internet, E-mail, voice-mail, and office machine systems are to be used solely for Church-related purposes and not for personal purposes, and that I have no expectation of privacy in connection with the use of this equipment or with the transmission, receipt, or storage of information in this equipment.

Employee printed name: _____

Signature of Employee: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Pastor: _____

Date: _____

Witness printed name: _____

Signature of Witness: _____

Date: _____

H AFC Employee Handbook

- 3/26/2023
Change “Elder” to Executive”-entire document