# LITTLE RIVER EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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I. INTRODUCTION

This handbook documents personnel policies for Little River United Church of Christ ("LRUCC" or "the church"). This handbook, meant to be a guide, is not exhaustive. When a conflict exists between this handbook and any signed employment contract or ministerial call, then that contract or call will prevail. If any clarity is needed on any policy, please consult your supervisor.

Employer Responsibilities:
LRUCC will:
• Employ people in accordance with applicable federal and state laws including equal employment opportunity.
• Provide remuneration and employee benefits reasonable in light of the job performed and as voted on by Little River members in the budget process.
• Maintain safe and healthy working conditions.
• Provide a workplace free from intimidation, or hostile or abusive behavior.

Employee Responsibilities:
Employees will:
• Give a productive day’s work.
• Observe the established work hours.
• Behave in a considerate and kind manner towards other staff and visitors to LRUCC's building.
• Observe management direction and comply with applicable work rules and policies.
• Observe confidentiality respecting records and personal information
• Dress appropriately.

Equal Employment Opportunity

LRUCC affirms its moral and legal commitment to support and implement a program of equal opportunity which does not discriminate against any employee or applicant because of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or religion, except where there is a bona fide occupational requirement.

II. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Regular employment at LRUCC is 'at will' and not for any specific period of time, and in accordance with Virginia law may be terminated by the employee or the Church at any time for any reason or without cause.
The Church will issue a letter to all new employees confirming the initial terms of employment and describing the position for which the person is hired. Failure to issue such a letter shall not remove the necessity of complying with this Handbook.

Staff persons may not serve as officers of the church or be elected as members of any Board or Committee while they are employees of LRUCC. Spouses or domestic partners of staff may not be elected as officers and may not serve on the Church Council, the Personnel Committee, or any other position which may result in a conflict of interest.

**III. Definitions**

The following definitions serve to clarify terms used throughout the Handbook and to ensure that such terms are consistently interpreted and applied.

**Complaint Review Committee** (CRC): An ad hoc committee consisting typically of 3 to 5 people appointed by the Governance Board to address an employee complaint.

**EEO:** Equal Employment Opportunity.

**Exempt Employees:** Those employees whose positions are supervisory, administrative, or professional as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act and who are, therefore, not eligible for overtime pay or “compensatory time off.” In accordance with the State and federal statues, exempt employees are paid a salary to perform their duties without regard to hours worked.

**Full-time Employee:** Individuals in this category are regularly scheduled to work 37.5 hours a week. Full-Time Employees may be hourly employees or salaried depending on how they are paid and their job responsibilities.

**Harassment:** Harassment is unwelcome conduct based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information where the harassment is severe and pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive.

**Lay Employees (Non-Clergy):** All employees except the Ministerial Staff as defined below.

**Ministerial Staff:** Certain terms and conditions of the Ministerial Staff’s employment are governed by a “Ministerial Call” Agreement or a contract. To the extent that conflicts exist between the terms and conditions of a Ministerial Call Agreement or contract and this Handbook, the Ministerial Call Agreement will prevail. The Ministerial Staff now includes:

- The Senior Pastor
- The Transitional Pastor for Faith Formation
Non-Exempt Employees: Those employees whose job responsibilities entitle them to the overtime pay provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Part-time employees are those employed to work fewer than 37.5 hours a week.

Sensitive Information: Information about individuals that is typically considered private, such as medical information, financial information, home circumstances, etc.

Temporary Employees: Employees in this category are placed on the payroll and are designated to work a finite period of time, typically no more than one year and usually have a specific work schedule, either on a full-time or part-time basis.

Note: Independent Contractors are not employees at all but self-employed persons with whom LRUCC has, by written agreement, a client/contractor relationship – LRUCC being the client. They typically provide certain types of services to more than one client at a time. They are not placed on the payroll but instead invoice LRUCC for services provided at an agreed-upon rate.

IV. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS: TIME OFF

Employees eligible for paid time-off are full-time employees and part-time employees who work at least 20 hours a week. Employees who work fewer than 20 hours a week do not receive paid holidays, or leave.

Holidays

The Church recognizes the following 10 holidays during the year as paid holidays.

New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President’s Day,
Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran’s Day,
Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

Any holiday which falls on a Sunday or Saturday will be observed in accordance with the Federal holiday schedule that year.

Leave

Full time employees are eligible to accrue leave beginning with first day of employment. Employees with between 0 and 5 years of employment will receive 9.375 hours per full month (112.5 hours per year) of continuous employment. Employees with between 5 and
10 full years of employment will accrue 12.5 hours per full month (150 hours per year). After the tenth full year of service, the employee will accrue leave at the rate of 15.625 hours a month (187.50 hours per year).

Part-time employees who work 20 or more hours per week will be entitled to leave after 1 year of service. Part-time employees will be entitled to the number of leave hours that are the equivalent number of hours the employee is scheduled to work in one week.

Whenever possible, leave days for eligible employees should be planned in advance and approved by the employee’s supervisor.

If an employee is out for more than three (3) consecutive days, he or she may be asked to provide a physician’s excuse.

Depending on the length and circumstances of a sick leave absence, an employee may be asked to provide a physician’s verification that he or she may safely return to work and resume his or her duties.

**Bereavement Leave**

Full time employees may request and be granted time off because of the death of a close relative (spouse or partner, child, parent, grandparent, or sibling). An eligible employee will be allowed up to three (3) days leave, which will not be charged to the employee’s other leave. Additional time taken beyond the three days will be charged to leave.

**Jury Duty**

An Employee who has been called to appear at court for jury duty will be reimbursed for the difference of their pay as a juror and their regular pay.

**Leave Without Pay**

If circumstances are warranted, an employee may be granted leave without pay with the approval of their supervisor and the Senior Pastor. To be eligible for unpaid leave, an employee must have been employed at least six months.

**Weather-Related Leave**

The church will follow the schedule for Fairfax County government (not FCPS) for weather-related closings, Monday through Friday. Weather-related leave will not be
charged to an employee’s leave balance. If an employee is unable to work due to personal reasons when the office is otherwise open, the employee must use other leave.

V. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS: Social Security and Worker’s Compensation

Social Security

As required by law, LRUCC pays the employer’s portion of the social security tax, except where by lawful contract an employee elects to be treated as a self-employed person. The Church also deducts and remits the employee’s share of the social security tax.

Worker’s Compensation is provided for all employees as required by law.

The Church as a 501(c)(3) organization is exempt under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act. There are no unemployment benefits.

Benefits for full-time employees

Little River will contribute the full premium to the Pension Boards – Health Care Plan C for the employee.

Little River will contribute 3% to the UCC Annuity Fund administered by The Pension Boards – The United Church of Christ

VI. PERSONNEL STATUS AND ADMINISTRATION

PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

Lay Employees (Non-Clergy)

Each supervisor shall assess an employee’s performance against each of the accountabilities for the position and then decide what the overall performance rating should be for the period being evaluated. Evaluations shall be made at the following times:

1. The end of the ninety (90) day period for new employees; and
2. Annually-on the employee’s anniversary date
The purposes of the performance assessment are to:

- Give the employee specific feedback on the quality of his/her job performance;
- Provide an opportunity for the employee to participate in the review of his/her performance;
- Provide an opportunity for the employee and/or supervisor to record the employee’s special skills, talents, and accomplishments;
- Identify areas in which the employee needs to improve;
- Strengthen supervisory/employee relations; and
- Serve as a guide for the supervisor in identifying and planning further employee training needs.

The supervisor will hold a private conference with each employee to discuss the evaluation with the employee. In preparation for the evaluation, the supervisor may solicit input from other people as is appropriate to the job function. Moreover, this discussion enables the supervisor and the employee to have a mutual understanding of the content of the employee's position description as well as the relative importance of each area of accountability.

Following the discussion with the supervisor, the employee will be asked to sign and date an evaluation, indicating that it has been read and discussed with the supervisor.

Following the conference, if the supervisor is not the Senior Minister, the supervisor will submit the signed evaluation to the Senior Minister for review and signature. Employee evaluations will be distributed as follows:

- Original: to Confidential Personnel Files.
- Copy: to the employee.

**Clergy (Senior Minister, and other Called Ministers)**

The evaluation process for the Senior Minister, the Transitional Pastor for Faith Formation, and any and all other ministers called to serve at LRUCC are, or will be, addressed in a separate document drafted by the Personnel Committee in accordance with the terms of the respective Call Agreements or contracts.

**DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE**

**Misconduct**

LRUCC may consider the following offenses, committed on church grounds or when representing LRUCC, a basis for disciplinary action up to and including termination:
1. Being absent from work three (3) consecutive days without notice to, and authorization from, LRUCC
2. Falsifying records of LRUCC
3. Insubordination (includes refusal to perform assigned work)
4. Harassment of others
5. Unauthorized release of sensitive information
6. Flagrant or deliberate violation of safety procedures or practices
7. Use of profane, abusive, or threatening language
8. Unauthorized use or willful or wanton neglect of Church facilities or property
9. Malicious mischief, including defacing, damaging or destroying Church property
10. Theft
11. Possession or use of alcohol while on Church property
12. Possession or use of illegal drugs on or off Church property
13. Carrying a weapon on Church property
14. Tampering with/or steering contracts for personal gain
15. Fighting or attempting bodily harm to another individual while on Church property

The above is not intended to be all inclusive. There may be other offenses which are not noted that may call for comparable action if committed.

LRUCC will normally consider the following offenses as reasons for discipline and, if committed repeatedly, a basis for termination:

1. Absenteeism
2. Tardiness
3. Failure to give prompt and satisfactory reason to LRUCC for absences, tardiness, or leaving work during scheduled work hours
4. Sleeping during working hours
5. Violation of safety or housekeeping rules
6. Inadequate performance of assigned job functions and duties

The nature and severity of the offense and history of any prior offenses, if any, will govern the type and amount of discipline given. Nothing within this policy should be taken as limiting LRUCC's right to terminate an employee at any time for any reason.

**Complaint Procedure**

LRUCC will establish and maintain a procedure through which personnel complaints are given a fair and an impartial hearing and resolution when such complaints cannot first be resolved on an informal basis between the employee and supervisor.

If an employee is unable to resolve his/her complaint informally, the employee should direct his or her complaint in writing to the Personnel Committee or its designee. A Complaint Review Committee will be designated by the Governance Board to investigate the complaint. If
necessary, the Complaint Review Committee will have the ability to seek outside assistance to manage the investigation of the complaint. At the time of the establishment of the small group, the Governance Board will notify the complainant that a review is being conducted. This group will respond to or render a response to the employee’s complaint within 72 hours or as soon as possible thereafter.

LRUCC will not retaliate against any employee who makes a complaint.

VII. Standards of Conduct

Any employee who has a complaint of sexual or other harassment should contact his or her supervisor or any member of the Personnel Committee. An investigation (in accordance with the Church’s complaint procedure) will be conducted into the allegation of harassment. Confidentiality will be kept as much as practicably consistent with a thorough investigation.

Any employee of LRUCC who harasses another employee as defined in this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Any supervisor who has knowledge of sexual or other harassment that occurs within the Church and takes no action to eliminate it will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Sensitive Information

The church is frequently a resource and haven for troubled individuals. Additionally, the church is privy to financial information. Staff must not divulge information to others regarding, among other things, who is consulting the ministers, and any financial information about individuals.

Email Internet and other electronic conduct
• The telephone, email, and internet connections are for church business. If a password is necessary to access information, you must provide a password to your supervisor. It may be necessary for employees to occasionally use the church email, internet or telephone for personal use. Personal use should be limited to reasonable times and places and not interfere with work. Abuse of church resources is cause for dismissal.

Dress Code
• Appropriate dress and hygiene are important in presenting a positive image to visitors and members of the church. Office dress may be described a business casual. Clothing that is not acceptable for office staff are blue jeans, shorts, workout clothes, leggings, t-shirts with logos, tops that display the midriff, sweat
shirts, ripped or torn clothing, halter tops, flip-flops, beach sandals, and athletic shoes. For additional guidance, an employee should consult his or her supervisor.

**Progressive Discipline**

If utilized, any of the following disciplinary steps may be taken:

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Evaluation
- Probation
- Termination

**Personnel Records**

A record will be kept of the pertinent employment records which will include the following items:

- Employment application form
- Letter of Employment
- Form I-9 UCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services form to verify employment eligibility)
- Job Description
- All W-4 forms
- All Evaluations
- All Evaluations (signed)
- All W-2 forms

**Smoking**

It is the policy of LRUCC to provide a completely smoke-free and healthy work environment for employees, members and visitors. Accordingly, smoking anywhere within the Church facility or outside on the church grounds is strictly prohibited.

**VIII. Compensation**

**Policy**

The salary range of each position will be established by the Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Personnel Committee and the appropriate Board or Committee overseeing the position, and according to required skills, duties, and responsibilities necessary for each position. Compensation will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.
Procedures

Supervisors in consultation with the appropriate Board or Committee and the Personnel Committee will ensure that position descriptions for the employees they are responsible for are reviewed and updated periodically. Position descriptions should include the following information:

a. Duties and responsibilities
b. Skill requirements and essential functions
c. Supervisory requirements
d. Exempt versus non-exempt classification

Proposed changes in job descriptions will be submitted in writing by the supervisor to the Personnel Committee. The supervisor may at that time recommend salary changes to the Personnel Committee of the Church Council.

Wage and Salary Reviews

TBD

Overtime Pay

All non-exempt employees will be paid 1½ times their regular rate of pay for authorized hours worked over 40 hours in a work week, unless otherwise provided by law. Employees may not work more than their usual scheduled hours unless the employee’s immediate supervisor determines that overtime is necessary. Overtime must be approved by the Senior Pastor or his or her designee.

Scheduled holidays, leave for vacation or illness or other personal reasons will be not be considered hours worked for purposes of calculating overtime.

Exempt employees are not entitled to overtime pay or additional compensation for holidays worked.

Time Sheets

Non-exempt employees must record their daily hours on the time sheet or Payroll Report. Employees who are absent when the form is to be submitted must make arrangements with their supervisor to verify hours recorded when they return. The daily hours must without exception reflect all hours actually worked.

Exempt employees are expected to maintain a record of their hours worked and attendance.

Payroll

Checks

All employees of LRUCC receive their paycheck on the date established by PayChex.
Annual Statement

At the end of each calendar year, a statement will be provided showing the employee’s earnings with the amount of the federal, state, and local income taxes and Social Security taxes.

Reimbursement for expenses and mileage

Employees who use their personal auto for church business are entitled to be reimbursed at a mileage rate as determined by the IRS. The request for reimbursement for mileage, parking, or other business-related expenses needs to be submitted on a voucher within 60 days and approved by the supervisor or designated official.