

HUMAN RESOURCE 101

WHY:

Ministry Designs

<https://ministrydesigns.com/human-resource-guide-for-churches/>

Before we really get started, don't forget to keep the big picture in mind. Human Resources is all about stewarding the most important "resource" of your organization – humans!

But for us as Christians, humans are never just resources, right? They are also made in the image of God. It's important to keep an eternal perspective, and remember that the care of souls is more important than the upkeep of the organization – as important as that is.

I like to remind myself that the most important question to ask when discussing any human resources issue in the church is: How will this decision show love to this staff person as a beloved child of God?

It's a good filter to have. Moving on...

What kind of church culture do you have?

There's one more big-picture question to ask before we dive into the nuts and bolts of human resources. This one is essential because it determines how you will understand every other HR question.

Here it is: Is your church a family culture church or a professional culture church?

Many churches are somewhere in between, but consider these important differences:

- In a family culture church, policies and procedures tend to be more informal and relationship-based.
- In a professional culture church, policies and procedures tend to be more formal and process-based.

You might assume that small churches are all family culture and large churches are all professional culture, but this isn't true. It's entirely possible for a small church to be led by a pastor who strongly favors professional process over personality, as is the opposite scenario.

What's important is not the size of the church, it's accurately naming what kind of church culture you have.

HR Considerations for Church Leaders

Both types of church cultures have their strengths and weaknesses, but we're talking about best practices in human resources here. Keep in mind, that means that your church will incorporate at least some professional culture into your church system, which brings us to our first HR consideration.

Remember, process is your friend

Process is your friend. In fact, it's even more than that.

It may seem counterintuitive, but having solid processes in place is an act of love. It ensures that you do the right thing and act justly toward everyone in your church system, even when things get heated and problems arise.

A good process also signals that individuals matter enough to be respected and treated fairly and equitably, not just based on personal whim.

RESOURCES

HR Resources (general)

- Alliance NW
 - o <https://www.alliancenw.org/resource-library/category/Human+Resources>
 - o Feel free to contact Julie at julie@alliancenw.org.
- Paid Resources
 - o https://store.churchlawandtax.com/human-resources-pdf-bundle/?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Human+Resources+PDF+Bundle&utm_campaign=CLT+Store+--+Member+--+1-17-2024+--+HR+Bundle
 - o <https://www.shrm.org/>
 - o <https://www.hrministrysolutions.com/>
- Free Resources
 - o <https://www.xpastor.org/>

Compensation/Salary Resources

- Living Wage Calculation
 - o <https://livingwage.mit.edu/>
- Salary Comparison
 - o <https://www.churchsalary.com/>
 - o <https://www.vanderbloemen.com/compensation>
 - o <https://www.xpastor.org/courses/church-compensation/>
- Salary Philosophy
 - o <https://www.churchsalary.com/content/articles/connecting-dots-applying-church-growth-metrics.html>
 - o <https://smartchurchmanagement.com/average-salary-pay-increase-projections/>

Dual Status Minister

- Definition
 - o Video <https://www.guidestone.org/Resources/Education/Videos/How-Does-Being-a-Minister-for-Tax-Purposes-Impact-the-Way-I-Report-and-Pay-Taxes>
- Housing Allowance
 - o <https://www.guidestone.org/housingallowance>
- SECA vs FICA
 - o <https://www.clergyfinancial.com/difference-fica-seca/#:~:text=Ministers%20have%20what%20is%20commonly,regulation%20and%20not%20an%20election.>

Independent Contractor vs Employee

- <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/independent-contractor-self-employed-or-employee>

Hiring/Firing

- Hiring

- Interviews
 - Reference Check
 - Background Checks
- Offer Letter (Template available)
 - Salary
 - Benefits
 - Retirement
 - Insurance (medical, dental, vision)
 - Long-Term Disability
 - Phone
 - Equipment
 - Time-Off
- New Hire Checklist
 - Background Checks
 - W-4
 - I-9's (<https://www.hrministrysolutions.com/blog/employee-record-guidelines>)
 - Equipment
 - Passwords
 - Benefit forms (Retirement, Insurance)
 - Employee Handbook & Acknowledgement
 - Email set-up
 - Direct Deposit (if available)
 - Housing Allowance (if licensed)
 - Job Description
 - Training's (i.e. Sexual Misconduct)
- Job Descriptions (examples available)
 - Include Ministerial Exception language if possible
 - <https://www.xpastor.org/staffing/job-descriptions/>
- Toolkit - <https://www.xpastor.org/staffing/hiring/free-church-hiring-toolkit/>
- Employee Handbook
 - Rational - <https://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/working-together/employee-handbook/>
 - TO Include

- Vacation/Sick Leave policy (including language on separation and unused balances)
- AI
- Compliance with Alliance Polity & Statement of Faith
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Payday
- Time Sheets
- Performance Reviews
- Health Care Program
- Benefits (i.e. Retirement, Life & AD&D Insurance, Long-term Disability)
- Workers Compensation Insurance (required by state)
- Sabbatical Policy
- Holidays
- State Paid Family Leave
- State Family Care Leave
- Bereavement Leave
- Military Leave
- Jury and Witness Duty Leave
- Employee Conduct (including work schedule, overtime, employee standards, confidentiality, personal sexual purity)
- Harassment
- Ownership of materials
- Outside Inquiries
- Grievance
- Whistleblower
- Discipline
- Conflict Of Interest
- Social Media
- STAFF HANDBOOK RECEIPT (acknowledge of document read)

- Firing

- Process
 - Documentation Critical
 - Follow Employee Handbook
- Separation Letter (template available)

- Offboarding - https://mcusercontent.com/07a24a21e0ae4b4646325d4d1/files/93606535-fbbb-4959-8044-2279eaecefd1/HR_Ministries_Offboarding_Toolkit.pdf

Ministerial Exception

- <https://fedsoc.org/fedsoc-review/the-ministerial-exception-after-hosanna-tabor-firmly-founded-increasingly-refined>
- Included in Offer letters

Laws

- Find ways to stay on top of laws that continually change
 - Church Law & Tax - <https://www.churchlawandtax.com/>
 - SHRM - <https://www.shrm.org/>
 - HR Ministry Solutions - <https://www.hrministrysolutions.com/>
- Washington
 - Job Posting Transparency - <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/employment-law-compliance/washington-state-issues-final-policy-pay-transparency-job-postings>
 - WA Paid Family Leave - <https://paidleave.wa.gov/>
- Oregon
 - OR Paid Family Leave <https://paidleave.oregon.gov/>
- Wage & Hour Laws - both those that qualify for ministerial exception and those that don't

Other

- Employee Review Policies & Practice (templates available)
- Employee Record Storage (doc available)

Sexual Harassment Trainings

- <https://teliosteaches.thinkific.com/>
- <https://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/resources/sexual-harassment-prevention-training/>