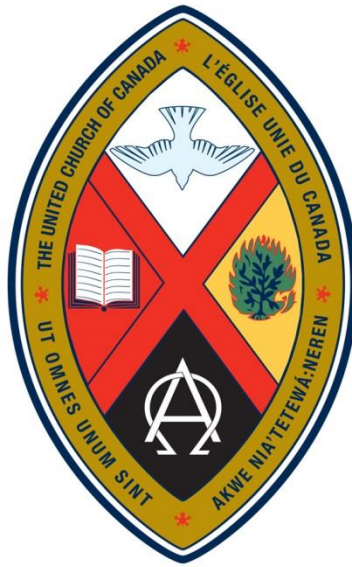


# Human Resources Policy Manual

(For the staff of the General Council Office and Regional Councils  
of The United Church of Canada)



The United Church of Canada / L'Église Unie du Canada

## Introduction

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These policies have been developed with consideration for the United Church and the people who work in it. They attempt to balance the needs of the organization with the needs of individuals, but are also influenced by government legislation, policies that exist in other organizations and in other parts of the church, our ability to pay (as in salary and benefit programs), and the theology and priorities of the church. They should be consistently applied, widely communicated, and open to review.

The Executive of the General Council, has oversight for the development of human resources policies.

Policies in the Human Resources Policy Manual apply to all staff, both Order of Ministry and lay, in the General Council Office and Regional Councils of The United Church of Canada, regardless of the source of funding for their salaries.

The Ministry and Employment Unit, together with the appropriate managers, are responsible for interpreting, implementing, monitoring, and ensuring compliance with these policies. Related operating procedures and policy exceptions are the responsibility of the Ministry and Employment Unit.

When government legislation changes or new legislation is adopted, and the resulting legislation provides benefits or conditions of employment that are broader or more generous than that provided for under existing policy, the Ministry and Employment Unit will draft and propose revised policy and, in the interim, will ensure that, in the applicable jurisdiction, operational practices are amended to be in compliance with the revised/new legislation.

Policies are reviewed every three years. Any employee or employing unit/Regional Council is encouraged to provide input regarding existing policies or new policies for consideration. Policy questions should be directed either to your immediate supervisor or to the Ministry and Employment Unit.

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## SECTION 1: EMPLOYMENT

## Employment Equity

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to maintaining a fair and just workplace in the calling, appointment, development, and advancement of staff. As much as it is in its power to do so, the church will eliminate discriminatory employment barriers and practices and work to increase the participation of women, Indigenous people, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities, in all occupational categories and at all levels of employment.

### **Policy**

Women, Indigenous people, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities are entitled to be considered for employment, hired, treated, trained, and promoted in a way that is free of barriers, including systemic and deliberate practices and policies that discriminate against them.

### **Procedures**

1. Recruitment, employment, development, and promotion practices and policies shall be as free as possible from both systemic and deliberate barriers.
2. Positive measures for recruiting, employing, training, and promoting members of defined groups shall be implemented.
3. The General Secretary will report on its progress in employment equity regularly to the Executive of the General Council.
4. Job descriptions will list the requirements needed to perform the job satisfactorily. Employing units/Regional Councils will ensure that the competencies and qualifications are bona fide requirements and do not preclude specific groups.
5. Some staff positions require membership in The United Church of Canada. The Ministry and Employment Unit shall ensure that extreme care is taken to justify this requirement before recruiting begins and will liaise with the regional Human Rights Commission as required.

## Position Approval

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to ensuring fair and equitable staffing and a consistency of position descriptions across all occupational categories and at all levels of employment. This policy outlines the process for approval of a new position.

### **Policy**

The senior staff person of the employing unit/Regional Council is responsible for recruitment of current vacancies and realignment of existing staff positions within approved budgets.

Approval for new permanent staff positions, that are additions to employing units in the General Council Office, must be approved by the General Secretary. This will be reported at the next Executive or Sub-Executive for information.

In the Regional Councils, any new positions must be authorized by the Regional Council Executive.

## Position Descriptions

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to ensuring that position descriptions are accurate, comply with legislation, and provide coverage for the tasks required to carry out the work of each unit/Regional Council.

### **Policy**

Employing units/Regional Councils are responsible for writing position descriptions in a format consistent with the template established by the Ministry and Employment Unit, and assigning appropriate titles, so that the strategic goals of the unit/Regional Council can be met. Final authority for position descriptions rests with the Executive Officer/Minister, Regional Council Executive Minister, in consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit.

### **Procedures**

1. Position descriptions should include the tasks and responsibilities of the position, its relationship to other positions, the conditions under which the work is performed, and the qualifications required.
2. Position titles should be brief and descriptive of the work, and, where possible, be consistent with other similar positions in the General Council and Regional Councils.
3. Changes to position descriptions must be submitted to the Ministry and Employment Unit to ensure compliance with category benchmarks, human rights legislation, and employment equity objectives, and to determine whether the changes are significant enough to warrant a category review.

## Position Evaluation

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to providing a fair and equitable position evaluation system for all positions in the General Council Office and Regional Councils. Position evaluation determines the category of a position using an external system designed to compare positions in relationship to others within and outside the organization. The process takes into account internal equity, established benchmarks, and external market comparisons.

### **Policy**

Positions will be evaluated by the Ministry and Employment Unit based on current duties and responsibilities, and are evaluated in relationship to other positions within the organization.

### **Procedures**

1. Position descriptions will be sent to the Ministry and Employment Unit following approval by the senior staff person of the employing unit/Regional Council.
2. All communication regarding outcomes will be made by the Ministry and Employment Unit to the senior staff person of the employing unit/Regional Council.
3. The effective date for evaluations will be the first of the month following the date the finalized position description is received by the Ministry and Employment Unit.
4. Should an employee request that the categorization be reconsidered, the appeal process as follows:  
Step 1:  
Employees may appeal the categorization of their position to the Ministry and Employment Unit within one month of the date of notification, if after discussing the position description with the supervisor, it is subsequently found that relevant information was missing.  
  
Step 2:  
If the incumbent is not satisfied with the response from step 1, they may appeal the decision to the General Secretary, who, along with advice from the Executive Officer of the Ministry and Employment Unit or Regional Council Executive Minister will reconsider the relevant information received. A final and binding decision will then be made.



## **Recruitment and Selection of Staff**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to ensuring a fair and consistent recruitment and hiring process in all units and at all occupational levels in the General Council Office and Regional Councils.

### **Policy**

When a vacancy is declared, a new/revised position description will be prepared by the employing unit/Regional Council, and sent to the Ministry and Employment Unit. Proposals for new staff positions must be approved prior to submission for categorization. See Position Approval - Policy 1.1.

The Ministry and Employment Unit is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate procedures are followed in all recruitment and selection processes. It will take into account the accessibility needs of all applicants with disabilities; remove unnecessary barriers that restrict employment; notify all applicants of the availability of accommodation through all steps of the recruitment process and provide accommodation plans, as requested.

### **Procedures**

1. Appropriate approval must be obtained and communicated, in writing, to the Ministry and Employment Unit in order to begin the process for all positions in the General Council Office and Regional Councils.
2. Recruitment for all positions will include postings, advertisements, and the use of agencies, as deemed suitable. For internal candidates, please refer to the Transfers section in this policy, below.
3. The approval/appointment level to hire is listed on Tables 1a and 1b.
4. Candidates under consideration for employment will be notified of the availability of accommodation for applicants with disability during the recruitment process.
5. Candidates will be interviewed by a Selection Committee, the members of which are listed on the Committee Representation Tables 2a and 2b. The Ministry and Employment Unit will assist the Selection Committee as requested or required.
6. If a selected applicant requests accommodation, the Ministry and Employment Unit will consult with applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to a disability.
7. Successful applicants will be notified of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

8. Hiring approval/appointment for all positions is as follows:

Approval or Appointment Levels – General Council Office	Table 1a
<b>Moderator</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elected by the General Council</li> </ul>	
<b>General Secretary</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appointed by the Executive of the General Council</li> </ul>	
<b>Positions Reporting to the General Secretary</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Executive of the General Council and General Secretary, Executive Ministers/Officers</li> <li>General Secretary for other positions</li> </ul>	
<b>All Other Positions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Minister/Officer</li> </ul>	

Approval or Appointment Levels – Regional Councils	Table 1b
<b>Regional Council Executive Minister</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Secretary and the Executive of the General Council</li> </ul>	
<b>All Other Positions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Council Executive Minister, and/or Search and Selection Committee, and/or Staff Committee depending upon the Regional Council structure</li> </ul>	

- Selection Committee representation (minimum requirements) for committees with elected member participants: It is desirable that members reflect regional representation, lay/ordered, ethnic diversity, and gender balance, and every effort will be made to accomplish this. Depending upon the nature of the position, members with appropriate technical skills may also be represented.
- Composition of the Selection Committee will be reviewed in advance by the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit, to ensure consistency throughout the organization as it relates to the hiring process.

Committee Composition – General Council Office	Table 2a
<p><b>Administrative/Technical/Program/Specialist/Manager</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate supervisor</li> <li>• 1 Ministry and Employment Unit facilitator (acts as staff resource)</li> <li>• Consideration should be given to including other members of the organization, depending upon the nature of the position</li> <li>• There may be positions with high visibility within the United Church where it is recommended that an elected member also be included</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Executive Minister/Officer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Secretary</li> <li>• Chair of a related committee or designate</li> <li>• 1–2 Executive of the General Council members as designated by the General Secretary or designate</li> <li>• 1 Ministry and Employment Unit facilitator (acts as staff resource)</li> </ul>	

Committee Composition – Regional Councils	Table 2b
<p><b>Administrative/Technical/Program/Specialist/Manager</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Council Executive Minister or designate</li> <li>• 1 human resources representative acting as staff resource (Staff Committee member or designate, or staff member from Ministry and Employment Unit, General Council Office, depending upon the Regional Council structure)</li> <li>• Consideration should be given to including other members of the Regional Council, depending upon the nature of the position</li> <li>• There may be positions with high visibility within the United Church where it is recommended that a Regional Council Executive member also be included</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Regional Council Executive Minister</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Secretary</li> <li>• 2–3 representatives selected by the Regional Council Executive, or designate</li> <li>• 1 human resources representative acting as staff resource (Staff Committee member or designate, or staff member from Ministry and Employment Unit, General Council Office, depending upon the Regional Council structure)</li> </ul>	

11. Reference checks will be conducted on all hires.
12. Transfers:
  - Internal candidates are encouraged to advise their supervisor of their intent to apply prior to submitting an application.
  - All internal candidates in all employing units/Regional Councils will be given consideration for any vacancies for which they are qualified.
  - For vacancies in categories 1–7 that occur within the immediate employing unit/Regional Council, staff may be transferred directly into a vacant position without posting the position, if the position is the same category.
  - An employing unit/Regional Council, in consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit, may move a term employee into the permanent position during the term without posting the position, provided that the term staff has previously gone through the full cycle of the selection process.
  - Any position changes between Regional Councils, or between a Regional Council and the General Council Office, are considered transfers or promotions, and not a new employment relationship.
  - Reference checks or consultation with past/current supervisors will be conducted. The hiring employing unit/Regional Council has the option of doing this directly with the current supervisor or having the Ministry and Employment Unit act on its behalf.
  - Start dates will be negotiated between the supervisors, in consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit.

## Term Employment

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada provides opportunities for term employees to be employed for a defined period of time. Term employment includes employees who are employed on an “as-needed” basis, including those seconded from other courts of the church. Term employees are paid through the General Council payroll. This policy does not include fee-for-service arrangements, as these individuals are not employees of The United Church of Canada.

### **Policy**

1. To ensure a fair and transparent process, approval must be received by the Ministry and Employment Unit who will initiate the recruitment process, similar to that for all positions in the General Council Office and Regional Councils. Term employment vacancies will be filled according to the regular recruiting procedures.
2. Under normal circumstances, term employment will not be for longer than three years. However, in exceptional circumstances, an extension for specific projects will be considered, in consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit.
3. For term positions of one year or more, applicable benefits will be offered unless the employee is already a member of the plan.
4. The terms and conditions of the term position, including salary placement within the category, will be determined by the hiring unit/Regional Council, in consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit.
5. Employment situations that are considered “fee for service” and that may require a specific contract for work in the General Council Office and Regional Councils, and that are not term employment as defined above, must be reviewed with the Ministry and Employment Unit before arrangements are made.

## **Recruitment and Selection of the General Secretary**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to ensuring a fair and consistent recruitment and appointment process for the position of General Secretary of the General Council of The United Church of Canada.

### **Policy**

The General Secretary is appointed by the Executive of the General Council or General Council. When the Executive of the General Council declares that the General Secretary's position is, or will be, vacant, the General Secretary's Supervision Committee will review and update the job description.

The Ministry and Employment Unit is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate procedures are followed in all recruitment and selection processes. The Executive Officer of the Ministry and Employment Unit will be available to provide support and advice as requested by the Selection Committee.

### **Procedures**

1. A Selection Committee will be appointed by the General Council Executive on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee. The composition of this committee will be as follows:
  - The Moderator (who will act as chair)
  - The Chair of the General Secretary's Supervision Committee
  - Three members of the Executive of the General Council, nominated from its membership
  - One member-at-large from the United Church
  - If required, two additional appointments from within The United Church of Canada to provide a balance of gender, regions, lay/ordered, and experience
2. The Selection Committee will be made up of at least six, but not more than eight, members.
3. The Selection Committee may also include an executive search professional recommended by the Ministry and Employment Unit, who will participate as a non-voting consultant in the process.
4. Posting and advertising for this position will be done as widely as possible. This includes posting the vacancy within The United Church of Canada constituency (for example, courts of the church, General Council Office), The United Church of Canada website and any other appropriate medium. It may also be posted nationally through job websites, newspapers, electronic media or other venues.
5. The Selection Committee will screen candidates and short-list a minimum of two candidates to be interviewed.
6. Before a candidate for the position of General Secretary is recommended to the General Council or Executive of the General Council, an independent professional assessment may be done with the leading candidate(s) to ensure compatibility with the leadership expectations and culture of the United Church. The assessment may be facilitated by an outside professional consultant and the findings made available to the Selection Committee in its discernment process.

7. Reference checks will be done, and a decision may be made to have a third-party conduct references with input from the Selection Committee. The timing and number of references required for either short-listed or final candidate(s) will be determined by the Selection Committee.
8. Before the General Secretary is appointed, the Selection Committee will provide the name to the Executive of the General Council or General Council for approval. The name of the candidate will be kept confidential pending the appointing body's approval.
9. As soon as the General Secretary is appointed, the Ministry and Employment Unit will draw up the terms of appointment for this position, consistent with the policies of The United Church of Canada.
10. Should the incumbent leave the position within six months of being appointed, the original Selection Committee will be reconvened to determine the future strategy and timelines for a new appointment.

## **Employment of Relatives**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to ensuring fair employment practices as related to the employment of relatives. Employment of relatives that has the potential of creating difficulties in supervision, hindering conflict resolution, or creating a conflict of interest is not permitted. Extreme care and judgment must be exercised by employing units/Regional Councils to ensure that neither employees nor the church are placed in such potentially difficult situations.

### **Policy**

No employee will be directly or indirectly supervised by a relative. Relatives of staff with hiring authority in an employing unit/Regional Councils will not be employed in the same employing unit/Regional Council unless approved by the unit supervisor/Regional Council Executive Minister on the advice of the Ministry and Employment Unit.

Employment of relatives by the same employing unit/Regional Council or in other employing units/Regional Councils is prohibited in cases where one party has access to information that may be prejudicial to the other, thereby creating a conflict of interest.

### **Procedures**

1. In order to help protect the employee(s) and the General Council Office and Regional Councils from adverse criticism, open disclosure of situations as stated above is required prior to hiring. During the recruitment process, reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that there is no conflict of interest. Employing units/Regional Councils will consult with the Ministry and Employment Unit before proceeding with a hiring in such situations.
2. For purposes of this policy, a “relative” means a member of the employee’s immediate family, usually considered to be the partner or spouse, child, stepchild, birth or adoptive parent, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister, brother, grandparents, or stepparents.



## **On-Boarding and Training**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada will provide on-boarding for new employees in order to introduce them to the purpose and work of the General Council, employing units, and Regional Councils and to ensure the newly hired employees receive an effective and standardized introduction to the United Church's mission, vision, employment policies, practices, benefits, and to provide training in accordance with government regulations.

### **Policy**

All new employees in the General Council Office and Regional Councils will receive orientation within the first month of employment. Ministry & Employment Unit in collaboration with the Unit/Regional Council will coordinate the process of onboarding for all new employees.

The onboarding will include an overview of the organization, unit or Regional Councils and information on human resources policies and procedures.

New employees will be required to complete the following mandatory training within the first 4 weeks of their employment:

- all required Health & Safety training
- all required personal information protection training
- all accessibility standards training
- all required human rights training
- all required job duty training to address any accommodation needs, if applicable
- all other training required by law

The United Church shall inform all new employees with regards to its policies supporting employees with disabilities as soon as employment begins.

Refer to Professional and Vocational Development Policy 2.15 for all other training provided by the Church.

### **Procedures**

1. Human Resources will collect required employee documentation for the following:
  - Tax deduction forms including Social Insurance Number (SIN)
  - Proof of eligibility to work in Canada
  - Employee benefit enrolment or exemption forms, where appropriate
  - Other documents deemed necessary from time to time

2. As a minimum, each new employee shall receive, information, and/or training about:
  - United Church's Mission Vision and Values
  - Organizational charts
  - Conditions of Employment
  - Code of Conduct
  - Privacy Information Policy
  - Performance Standards
  - Map of locations
  - Complaints procedures
  - Harassment & Discrimination Policy
  - Policies used to support employees with disabilities; but not limited to policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account and employee accessibility needs due to disability.
  - Other information deemed appropriate by the hiring manger and as required by law.
3. Prior to completion of the probationary period, the manager and new employee shall complete and sign the On-Boarding Check List form which will form part of the employee's personnel file.
4. Ministry & Employment Unit will maintain records for all employee training including but not limited to, the names of the employees who received training, the content of the training, and the date. Records will be maintained in accordance with legislative requirements and will form part of the employees file.

## Code of Conduct

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to providing a satisfactory, fulfilling, and mutually rewarding working experience for all employees. The United Church strives to act, and be seen to act, in the best interests of the church and those it serves, and with the highest ethical standards. The Code of Conduct includes standards for professional behaviour, confidentiality, conflict of interest, ownership and copyright, media, and public conduct.

### **Policy**

The United Church of Canada believes that all people are children of God, created in the image of God and therefore worthy of respect and love. Living out that belief requires a deep sense of mutuality, trust, and accountability. As an employer, this is lived out by striving to create and sustain a workplace where these values are practiced every day.

All employees of The United Church of Canada are expected to behave in ways that are aligned with the organization's mission and values.

Mission Statement: Serving the Church, Living Out God's Good News

Organizational Core Values:

- **Respect:** We follow the Golden Rule, we care for those we work with and serve, we listen don't judge.
- **Integrity:** We do what we say, we make principle-based decisions, we always bring out the best.
- **Passion:** We care for the welfare of the United Church, we engage in our work with energy and enthusiasm, we seek excellence and quality in everything we do.
- **Diversity:** We recognize, value and honour differences, we seek breadth, depth and many voices, we welcome the opportunities diversity offers.

### **Professional Behaviour**

The United Church of Canada strives to provide a positive work environment where employees can contribute to a productive, respectful, and professional atmosphere, with equal opportunity for all. The General Council and Regional Council offices work to foster an open, trusting, and collegial work environment. This type of work environment can be achieved where individuals feel they are treated with dignity and respect without being subjected to discrimination or harassment. Any form of discrimination or harassment will not be tolerated at The United Church of Canada.

All employees are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner. Employees are expected to respect and comply with all organizational policies and guidelines, and to demonstrate respect and accountability to their colleagues. Employees are also expected to respect the ethos of The United Church of Canada and deal with all individuals during the course of their work, both internally and externally, in a manner that demonstrates the values of a caring, diverse, and respectful community.

### **Alcohol and Drugs**

While the use of medical drugs is clearly acceptable, employees may not use or distribute alcohol or non-medicinal drugs in the workplace. While The United Church of Canada is committed to providing support and assistance in dealing with dependencies, employees may not report to work while under the influence of alcohol, other drugs or intoxicants. “Under the influence” means that a reasonable person would consider effectiveness impaired to the extent that it could pose a hazard or embarrassment to the employee or to The United Church of Canada, or employment duties cannot be performed properly.

### **Confidentiality**

Employees of the General Council and regional council offices may, in the course of their work, come to know, be made aware of, or obtain confidential information concerning The United Church of Canada, its employees, and/or its constituents. This information must not be used for personal gain or disclosed to persons not authorized to be in receipt of the information, and must be held in strict confidence. This duty of confidentiality continues to apply after employees have left The United Church of Canada with no time limitations.

Communication of confidential information within and outside of The United Church of Canada will only be permitted when the recipient of the information has a legitimate need to know and the information is limited to that which is required to perform his or her duties. If an individual is in doubt about whether or not information can be shared, the individual should contact their manager.

This requirement of confidentiality applies to any asset of The United Church of Canada, including computer software, organizational records and other proprietary information, and to personal information of all kinds.

### **Confidentiality Agreements**

When entering into a working relationship with a third party, the General Council and regional council staff must advise the third party that they are not to divulge the information to anyone without written authorization from the General Council or regional council staff who are empowered to do so, and written confirmation from a third party must be received upon acceptance of these conditions.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Situations must be avoided where personal interests are, or may potentially be, in conflict with an employee’s duty to The United Church of Canada. When faced with an actual, perceived, or potential conflict of interest, the employee is required to exercise the judgment of a responsible person, uninfluenced by considerations other than the best interests of The United Church of Canada. If an employee knows that an actual, perceived, or potential conflict of interest exists, the employee must immediately provide all details of the conflict to the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment. If there is uncertainty as to whether a conflict may exist, the employee should discuss the matter with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment.

### **Ownership and Copyright**

For the purposes of this Code, the term “Work” means all books, music (including lyrics, tune and any other musical composition), photographic, cinematographic and artistic works, computer programs, and all other intellectual property, products and materials in written or other format, and all improvements made in relation to any of the foregoing, that are created, authored, developed or produced by employees of the General Council and the regional councils of The United Church of Canada as part of their employment duties.

Unless otherwise expressly agreed or provided for under General Council policy:

- (i) The United Church of Canada retains the copyright, ownership and all other legal rights and entitlements to all Work; and
- (ii) employees of the General Council and regional councils may not use any Work, or permit, facilitate or assist in any use of any Work, except as part of their employment duties.

Upon separation of employment employees, are required to return immediately all correspondence, document, data information equipment belonging to The United Church of Canada.

### **Gifts Received from Third Parties**

An employee may accept gifts from persons or companies unrelated to The United Church of Canada which represent promotional items of minimal value. Reasonable business promotion benefits (normally not to exceed \$200.00 in value) may also be accepted, but may not be sold or converted to cash. Normally, a gift which exceeds \$200.00 is to be considered as one given to the organization and not to the person. If a gift is offered which exceeds \$200.00, the employee should discuss this with their manager.

### **Public Conduct and Media Contact**

Only authorized staff may speak to the media on behalf of The United Church of Canada and must be done on the authority of the General Secretary and Communications Unit.

For the General Council Office:

- The Moderator or designate
- The General Secretary
- The Executive Officer, Communications

For the Regional Councils:

- The Regional Council Executive Minister

When making comments in a public forum or on social media on any matter relating to the United Church, employees will reflect the mission and the values of the United Church.

### **Out of Hours Conduct**

The values, reputation and image of the United Church extend beyond the workplace. There can be instances where an employee’s conduct outside of work time has the capacity to adversely impact the work environment or the image and reputation of the United Church. Employees are required to avoid any actions which publicly disparage The United Church of Canada or any personal behaviour which could damage the reputation of The United Church of Canada.

Employees are required to always be mindful of their conduct outside of work and how it could adversely impact relationships at work, capacity to perform role and the image and reputation of the United Church.

**Procedures**

1. Regular Review of the Code of Conduct will be done by the Ministry and Employment Unit.
2. Any changes to the Code of Conduct will be communicated to all staff.
3. Employees are encouraged to review policy and its provisions, and commitment to comply.
4. Any violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action.

## Privacy and Personal Information

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*Note: This Personal Information Policy covers General Council and regional council offices. It does not apply to communities of faith, which can be guided by this policy and any applicable provincial or territorial legislation.*

### **Commitment to Privacy**

For The United Church of Canada, respecting privacy rights and personal information has always been an important part of our commitment to our members, volunteers, employees and partners.

The United Church of Canada is committed to protecting the privacy, confidentiality, accuracy, and security of personal information that is collected, used, retained, and disclosed in compliance with applicable federal, provincial and territorial privacy legislation. This includes, but is not limited to, the federal Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) (2000, c.5). For more detailed information, please refer to the [PIPEDA in Brief page](#) on the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada website.

Privacy legislation, including the federal PIPEDA legislation and provincial and territorial legislation, establishes rules for the collection, use and disclosure of “personal information.” It addresses two issues:

- the way an organization collects, uses, discloses, and protects personal information; and
- the right of individuals to access personal information about themselves.

### **The 10 Principles**

The United Church of Canada is committed to following the 10 principles for handling personal information as set out in Schedule 1 of PIPEDA. These principles are:

- accountability
- consent
- limiting use, disclosure, and retention
- safeguards
- individual access provision of recourse
- identifying purposes
- limiting collection
- accuracy
- openness
- challenging compliance

### **Personal Information**

Personal information includes any factual or subjective information, recorded or not, about an identifiable individual—that is, it is information which can, directly or indirectly, identify an individual. Personal information does not include the name, title, business address, or business telephone number of an employee of an organization.

Personal information includes information in any form (i.e. printed/electronic) including home address, home phone number, age, personal e-mail address, race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, mental or physical disability, family members' names, employee files, identification numbers, evaluations, disciplinary actions, the existence of a dispute and related opinions, comments, social status, income, credit and bank records, donation information, loan records, or medical records.

All personal information obtained, compiled, maintained, and disclosed for The United Church of Canada by third-party agents and contractors must comply with standards comparable to The United Church of Canada Privacy Information Policy and applicable federal/provincial/territorial privacy legislation. Contractual provisions requiring such compliance must be incorporated into all third-party agent and contractor agreements.

### **Collection of Information**

The United Church of Canada collects personal information for the following intended purposes:

- ministry personnel /lay employee records
- pension and benefits records
- information required for church records
- stewardship development and donor information
- elected member information
- legal/regulatory requirements
- financial and asset information

Personal information can only be used for the purposes for which it is collected. Specific permission must be sought if personal information is to be used for any other purpose than that for which it was initially collected.

### **Accountability**

The United Church of Canada is responsible for all personal information in its possession or custody, which means information, whether factual or subjective in nature, about an identifiable individual. This includes personal information that has been transferred to, or received from, a third party in the course of commercial activities for processing or other purposes for which consent has been given.



Personal information collected by The United Church of Canada includes, but is not limited to, health and financial information, such as:

- name and age
- address, telephone number, and e-mail address
- medical records
- identification numbers (such as Social Insurance Numbers)
- income, assets, and transaction information
- opinions, evaluations, and comments related to health and financial information
- credit records and loan records
- bank account or credit card information

### **Safeguards**

The United Church has a records and archives management process for the collection, management, retention, and disposition of personal information. Categories of individuals for which personal information is being collected and maintained include ministry personnel, lay employees, elected and appointed members, volunteers, donors, and retail customers. Personal information is contained in paper and electronic records within the possession or under the control of The United Church of Canada. Each employee and pensioner of The United Church of Canada, whether full-time, part-time, contract, or retired, has confidential and secure personnel, pension, benefits, and payroll files.

All personal information is the property of The United Church of Canada and all individuals have controlled access to their personal information. Personal information is to be stored under lock and key or is digitally secured if in electronic format, and only certain authorized individuals have access to it.

### **Retention and Transfer of Information**

Personal information is retained only as long as it is required to meet any potential obligations or legal or government requirements. Once the personal information is no longer required, it will be destroyed in compliance with federal and/or provincial territorial retention rules. When this personal information is no longer required, methods to destroy it are carried out using the same care as is used for preserving this information in compliance with the church's records retention schedules. In some cases, records are of archival value and transferred to the archives where restrictions are in place consistent with privacy standards.

If personal information is transferred to a third party for processing (for example, when printing cheques, managing claims and client statements, or for data processing) the person or organization providing the services on behalf of the church are required to protect confidentiality of all information in a manner consistent with that used in The United Church of Canada, or as required by law.

### **Access to Personal Information**

Each person has the right to access their own personal information that is in the possession or control of The United Church of Canada.

In order to access this personal information, requests should be made in writing to The United Church of Canada, Privacy Officers, stating as specifically as possible which personal information is being requested.

The United Church of Canada has the right to refuse a request for access to personal information if:

- the information is protected by solicitor-client privilege
- granting access would reveal confidential financial information
- doing so could reasonably be expected to threaten the safety or security of another individual
- the information was collected for purposes related to the detection and prevention of fraud
- the information was generated in the course of a formal dispute resolution process, or
- the information would likely reveal personal information about another individual
- the information was collected in the course of a disciplinary process within The United Church of Canada that is ongoing as of the date of the request.

**Contact Information**

For more information, please contact The United Church of Canada's Privacy Officers:

Cynthia Gunn and Kathy McDonald

Email: [privacy@united-church.ca](mailto:privacy@united-church.ca)

Website: [www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca)

## **Information Management and Technology**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada provides access to Internet resources and cloud-based services in order to provide its employees with the ability to conduct business efficiently and effectively on behalf of The United Church of Canada.

### **Policy**

Incidental personal use of technology, such as Internet resources and cloud-based services, is acceptable, as long as it does not consume resources unnecessarily, interfere with productivity, pre-empt any business activity, expose or inhibit data privacy, or otherwise breach this policy. These usage policies are designed to maintain security and confidentiality and to ensure that users do not engage in inappropriate conduct which could result in legal liability for The United Church of Canada.

The United Church of Canada has the right and the ability to access, monitor, and record local computer, Internet, network, and cloud-based service usage, including files stored in private areas of its networks and online services, to ensure compliance with these policies. The United Church of Canada has the right to grant, deny, or terminate a user's access to all technology systems owned or licensed by it. All data transmitted or stored on The United Church of Canada's systems or online services is the property of The United Church of Canada.

Technology resources and systems owned or licensed by The United Church of Canada include, but are not limited to:

- all desktop, laptop, and tablet personal computers;
- software (including Internet browsers) installed on computers and mobile devices;
- all networks and third-party services provided or arranged by The United Church of Canada;
- all mail, file, and data storage systems supplied or arranged by The United Church of Canada

### **Guidelines**

Employees are expected to:

- ensure internal contacts and related information are not given to anyone outside of The United Church of Canada and that passwords are not made available to others;
- use e-mail and other online communication forums appropriately and take responsibility for contents of e-mails that are created, keeping in mind the importance of considering the wider audience receiving the message;
- utilize electronic mail signatures in compliance with the organizational standard indicating job title, organization name, phone number, and land acknowledgement on all electronic mail messages. Images and personal quotes should not be included in signatures.
- co-ordinate e-mail or mailings with 100 recipients or more with the Communications Unit
- leave e-mail addresses on a website, give out or post e-mail addresses, only when required for United Church business purposes and only in compliance with CASL standards;
- ensure that attachments are virus and malware-free to the best of their knowledge, are legal and conforming to United Church standards;

- not install any programmes without authorization by the IT department;
- not use United Church email for any partisan political purposes;
- ensure messages and attachments belonging to another user are not altered in any way without the originator's permission;
- maintain confidentiality about The United Church of Canada and/or its members or volunteers in any online forums.

When an e-mail is sent to someone within The United Church of Canada, it is sent on The United Church of Canada's cloud-based email tenant, which is protected and secure. E-mails sent to anyone outside are transmitted over the open Internet, which is a public network. There is no guarantee that the message will be confidential or secure. When confidential or sensitive e-mail messages or attachments are being sent, clearly specify that such messages and attachments should not be forwarded or copied. Keep in mind that information being sent via the open Internet, and especially to external email, is not secure.

### **Passwords and Security**

- Employees will require a password to log in to their computer/tablet each day, and also to access cloud-based services.
- Employees will be prompted to change their passwords at regular intervals. Failure to do so in a timely manner may result in the inability to access the device and United Church services.
- Complex passwords will be enforced to improve security. Passwords should not include an employee's name and must include letters, numbers, and special characters.
- Passwords should never be shared with anyone who is not a member of IT Services.
- Employees with regular access to sensitive data may be required to use multi-factor authentication. This is a secondary step, in addition to a regular password, that will send an authentication code or request to a smart device or other service. The employee will then be required to either enter the code or approve the authentication request to gain access to online services.
- Antivirus and firewall software is installed on all United Church devices and services. It should never be disabled, and should always be allowed to update automatically unless otherwise instructed by United Church IT Services.

### **Primary Devices and Services**

- All major job functions utilizing technology should be done on a United Church issued computer or tablet. Organizational data, applications, or project files should never be stored primarily on personal devices. E-mail and calendars may be synced to personal devices with their manager's permission, so long as they adhere to the Mobile Device Policy.
- If working from home or a remote location, files may be downloaded locally for offline work. However, files should be uploaded to United Church network or cloud service storage immediately upon return to a place of work, or uploaded from remote to prevent possible loss of information.
- Unless written permission is granted from the IMTSC, employees must not use their personal email for regular job functions or communication. Use of a United Church issued e-mail account for work-related communications is required.
- Unless otherwise authorized in writing by IMTSC, employees must use United Church issued Microsoft services for storing and sharing files and information. Use of 3rd party products (Dropbox, Google Drive, Evernote, Salesforce, etc.) is not permitted for organizational use.

## Working Hours

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to maintaining consistent and predictable workflow through regular hours of work, and where possible, providing provisions for alternative work arrangements such as job sharing, flexible work schedule (flextime), and under exceptional circumstances, a compressed work week.

### **Policy**

The standard working hours for full-time staff are seven hours per day, 35 hours per week. However, it is expected that staff in categories 8 and above may work more than a standard work week from time to time due to the nature of work being undertaken.

Flexible work schedule (flextime) is defined as an arrangement where an employee can adjust their arrival and departure times subject to supervisory approval and the operational needs of the unit/Regional Council. Flextime may be arranged between employees and their unit/Regional Council, as long as the proposed working hours are convenient for the unit/Regional Council and staffing coverage is provided. Flexible working hours must take into account that the core office hours are 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Job sharing is normally defined as a situation where two employees share the same full-time position, and each employee is classified as permanent part-time. Requests to set up job sharing arrangements will be considered, in consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit, recognizing that this may involve added costs (i.e. benefits, office facilities) to the employing unit/Regional Council.

A compressed work week is normally defined as a four-day work week of 35 hours. Under exceptional circumstances, the employing unit/Regional Council, in consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit, may permit permanent full-time employees to work a compressed work week. Compressed work weeks are most appropriate in situations in which employees do not have to keep pace with incoming work on a daily basis or where there are several employees that perform the same job. The needs of the employing unit/Regional Council are foremost and must be taken into account. All requests for a compressed work week must be approved by the Executive Officer/Minister or Regional Council Executive Minister of the employing unit/Regional Council in consultation with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit.

Should working hours be less than 35 hours per week, vacation will be pro-rated based on the work week.

Lunch hours and rest periods must be consistent with each province's Employment Standards Act.

**Procedures**

1. Normal working hours of the General Council Office are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., including lunch and breaks, Monday through Friday. The Regional Councils may have different start and end times.
2. Employees cannot skip their lunch break in order to have more time off.
3. The Ministry and Employment Unit must be consulted prior to approving any changes to an employee's work hours. This includes changes to regular hours, compressed work week, job sharing, and flexible hours.

## **Probation**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to providing new employees with enough time at the beginning of the employment relationship to learn the scope of the position. This is referred to as the probationary period; it allows opportunities for both the unit or Regional Council and employee to assess the fit for the position.

### **Policy**

The probationary period for all categories is three months. Supervisors are responsible for providing continuous feedback to the employee during this time, setting out clear expectations and identifying areas for improvement, if necessary. The employee also has a responsibility to identify potential problem areas as they arise. On completion of the probationary period, the supervisor will meet with the employee to discuss past performance and future goals.

### **Procedures**

1. At the end of the 3-month probationary period supervisors must complete an assessment for new staff within their Unit by using the United Church's Probationary Review Tool.
2. A copy of the probationary review must be provided to The Ministry and Employment Unit for the employee's personnel file
3. The probationary period may be extended for an additional period not to exceed six months, if the supervisor considers that the employee has potential and that additional support is required. If there is an extension, the employee must be notified in writing at the beginning of the extension period.
4. If an employee's performance is not satisfactory, regardless of the training and support given, termination may come at any time during or at the end of the probationary period.
5. The Ministry and Employment Unit must be consulted in all cases where an extension is being considered, or where termination may result.

## **Moving Costs**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada reimburses eligible permanent, full-time employees in categories 8 and higher for their actual housing search, moving, storage, and travel expenses to the extent that they are reasonable and/or properly authorized. This policy applies when staff positions are filled by people who are required to move to accept employment.

### **Policy**

Eligible employees who are required to move to accept employment will be reimbursed for reasonable and/or properly authorized moving and related costs. The new staff member must remain in their position for a minimum of one year. If the staff person terminates employment within three years, they will reimburse the United Church on a pro-rated basis.

### **Procedures**

1. When the Ministry and Employment Unit becomes aware of an upcoming move, the “Moving Guidelines Information” package will be provided. The guidelines include all relevant details on moving expenses.



## **Resignation**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada has expectations related to the resignation of an employee.

### **Policy**

Employees planning to end their employment with The United Church of Canada must formally notify their employing unit/Regional Council in writing. It is expected that two weeks of written notice will be provided, with consideration being given to a longer notice period if possible.

### **Procedures**

1. Formal notification will be made in writing to the employing unit/Regional Council, with a copy to the Ministry and Employment Unit. The resignation date is the last day an employee is physically at work.
2. An exit interview will be conducted by the Ministry and Employment Unit or designate.

## Termination

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### **Purpose**

This outlines the policy and procedures related to the termination of an employee.

### **Policy**

In all cases of termination, payment in lieu of notice and amount of severance shall follow government regulations, employment standards, and case law where appropriate, with consideration given to such factors as length of service, career relocation prospects, reason for termination, and other circumstances prevailing at the time.

In the event that the termination is “for cause” the preceding may not apply.

### **Procedures**

1. The Ministry and Employment Unit will make reasonable efforts to ensure that the manager has taken all the appropriate supervisory steps leading to a decision to terminate an employee.
2. Terminations can be moved forward only after consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit.
3. All termination decisions must be first approved by the Executive Officer/Minister or the Regional Council Executive Minister of the employing unit/Regional Council, in consultation with the General Secretary.
4. The Executive Officer of the Ministry and Employment Unit then will meet with the General Secretary to review and seek approval for the pending action in advance of the termination date.
5. The Ministry and Employment Unit will advise and work with the manager to ensure appropriate support is in place for the termination meeting.

## SECTION 2: COMPENSATION AND LEAVES

## Salary and Benefits

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada seeks to embody the values of justice and fairness for all its employees, and establishes salary and benefits with those values as guiding principles.

### **Policy**

The United Church of Canada's salary and benefits policy attempts to:

- attract and retain committed, competent, and qualified employees;
- provide fair and equitable compensation to all employees by ensuring that salaries are internally equitable and externally competitive with medium-sized business (except in the case of senior management in categories 10 and higher, whose salaries will not lag by more than 10 percent with those of non-profit organizations);
- reward years of experience and performance in a given job in accordance with established salary schedules.

Salary will be paid in recognition of the responsibilities and requirements of the position.

Salary objectives, practices, and procedures are accessible to all staff.

All positions shall receive a salary category designation. Some categories have different rates for members of the Order of Ministry and for lay staff. The "lay equivalent" rate compensates for the housing tax exemption granted by Canada Revenue Agency to members of the Order of Ministry. This adjustment is based on the belief that members of the Order of Ministry and lay people in the same category should receive equivalent "take home" salaries.

Economic adjustments are calculated by using relevant information, with a formula which has been determined by the Executive of the General Council.

The United Church of Canada holds the obligation to ensure that benefits information is provided to employees upon hiring. Any changes made thereafter to the benefits programs shall be made known to all employees.

### **Procedures**

1. Salary increases which result from an economic adjustment to salary ranges generally take effect on January 1st. Salary increases which reflect progression within salary ranges occur on the anniversary date of employment in the position, and are based on satisfactory work performance.
2. A move to a higher category job or an upward re-categorization of an existing job is considered a promotion. The employee's anniversary date changes to the date of employment in the new position.
3. Employees who choose to move to a lower category will normally be paid at an appropriate level in the lower range.

4. Fluctuations in the marketplace can sometimes result in a particular group moving ahead in a range at a faster pace than others. Human Resources identifies these fluctuations through the ongoing analysis of salary data for all positions, which may include commissioning a salary survey, and will report these fluctuations to the appropriate body.
5. If a group has fallen significantly behind prevailing rates of pay, such that it appears that recruiting and retaining appropriately qualified staff is being affected, then a range adjustment may be recommended.

## Overtime/Compensating Time

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### **Purpose**

To outline the conditions under which employees will be compensated when required to work in excess of their normal weekly regular scheduled hours.

### **Policy**

The United Church of Canada is committed to providing a workplace where employees are fairly compensated for extra hours worked during a work week in a fair and equitable manner. Excessive overtime can be stressful, contribute to an unequal distribution of work and lead to an unhealthy working style. Therefore, the need for overtime, in all cases, shall be temporary. This Overtime Policy outlines procedures for staff to follow and supports applicable legislations.

For the purpose of this policy a work week is defined as Sunday to Saturday.

### **Guidelines**

Overtime under Employment Standards legislation refers to hours worked in excess of forty-four (44) hours per week (hours worked between 35 and 44 are not under legislation considered overtime for the purposes of overtime pay but are paid at the regular rate of pay).

Commuting between home and workplace is not considered as working, travel or waiting hours.

Overtime hours are encouraged to be compensated through time in lieu ("compensating time") except where other agreements are in place.

Compensating time should be used as soon as possible after overtime hours have been worked, not saved and combined with other types of leave.

Overtime hours and compensating time must be recorded, approved in advance by the employing unit/Regional Council and reported not less than monthly to the Ministry & Employment Unit at [nationalpayroll@united-church.ca](mailto:nationalpayroll@united-church.ca).

In accordance with the Employment Standards Act, staff whose work is managerial or supervisory in character do not qualify for overtime compensation under normal conditions. However, for intensive overtime initiated or required by the employing unit/regional council, the employing unit or regional council may provide compensating time with the agreement of the employee.

### **Air travel compensating guidelines**

Due to the extra demands associated with air travel, the following guidelines shall be used to calculate compensation time, if applicable.

- For flights over four hours in the evening and/or weekend the employee will receive one day as compensating time.
- For flights between 7-15 hours, the employee will receive two days as compensating time.
- For flights over 15 hours, the employee will receive three days as compensating time.
- For every 7 consecutive days on the road (including travel time), employees will receive two days as compensating time.

Employees are encouraged to manage their time effectively and efficiently in accordance with the above guidelines and/or seek guidance from supervisor.

**Procedures**

Regular Full Time Salaried & Hourly Employees:

1. All overtime hours must be approved, in writing, in advance by the manager. The approval must specify the number of hours being approved. Overtime that is not approved in advance will not be compensated.
2. In the event that the requirement for overtime cannot be planned in advance (for example in the event of an emergency), hours shall be tracked and reported to the manager as soon as possible and are subject to the manager's approval.
3. Overtime shall be kept to a minimum and must not form a regular part of the work schedule.
4. Upon request from the manager, employees may be required to work overtime. Such a request shall take into consideration any prior personal commitments that the employee may have made.
5. Overtime will be compensated at a straight time (1:1) for hours worked between 35 and 44 hours in a regular work week.
6. Overtime will be compensated at one and had half (1:1.5) for hours worked beyond 44 hours in a regular work week.
7. Where there is agreement between the employee and employer, employees may substitute time off in lieu of pay.
8. Compensating time is to be taken at a time that is mutually acceptable to the manager and employee and must be authorized by the manager.
9. Compensating time must be taken as soon as possible. Unless there are extenuating circumstances and consultation has occurred with Human Resources, compensating time beyond the three-month period will be lost.

Employees in a managerial/supervisory position:

10. For employees in a managerial/ supervisory role there is no provision for overtime time to be paid out, however, time in lieu may be accumulated 1:1. Not more than two weeks may be accumulated before it must be taken.
11. Compensating time is to be taken at a time that is mutually acceptable to the executive minister and employee.
12. Compensating time must be taken as soon as possible. Unless there are extenuating circumstances and consultation has occurred with Human Resources, compensating time beyond the three-month period will be lost.

## **Acting Pay**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada will provide for acting pay when an employee has been formally asked to take on an acting role related to a position in a higher category.

### **Policy**

When a staff person is formally requested by the employing unit to take on an acting role for 25 consecutive days or more, additional remuneration will be paid if the acting position is remunerated at a higher level than that which the person assuming the acting position currently receives. No other additional benefits shall be received or accrued.

### **Procedures**

1. Employing units/Regional Councils must consult with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit, prior to discussing acting pay with employees.



## Holidays

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### **Purpose**

To give employees time for rest and recreation, and in keeping with legislation, The United Church of Canada provides time off with pay for holidays.

### **Policy**

Employees in every province are entitled to holidays as determined by provincial legislation. In addition, the General Council Office and Regional Councils will be closed between Christmas and New Year's. Holidays, including the week between Christmas and New Year's, are granted with pay to all permanent and term full-time employees. The policy recognizes provincially legislated holidays.

When National Indigenous Peoples Day falls on a workday, staff in the General Council Office and Regional Councils will receive that day off.

For provinces where Remembrance Day is not a provincially legislated holiday, staff in the General Council Office and Regional Councils in Ontario and Quebec will receive that day off, if November 11 falls on a weekday.

The General Secretary has the discretion to determine an early closing prior to a General Council Office and Regional Councils holiday.

### **Other Religious or Ethnic Holidays**

Employees who wish to take time off to celebrate religious or ethnic not included on the list below may use other leave provisions.

### **Extra Holidays**

Three days between Christmas and New Year's

One day at the discretion of the General Secretary

The statutory holidays and observances schedule for the current year can be found on Narthex under Resources (Topic: Human Resources).

## Vacation

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada provides each employee with a vacation entitlement to give employees time for rest and recreation, and in keeping with legislation.

### **Policies**

The United Church calculates vacation entitlement based on the original date of hire.

For the purposes of vacation calculation, the original date of admission, commissioning, hiring, ordination, or recognition, so long as there has been continuous service, will be used to determine eligibility.

The vacation year is January 1 to December 31. Employees will be given credit for the entire month of hire, regardless of the commencement date. Employees may take their full vacation entitlement any time between the vacation year of January to December with their manager's approval before it has been fully earned. However, if an employee leaves before the end of the year, vacation days not yet earned but taken will be deducted from the final pay. Vacation will be pro-rated for the first year of service when less than one full year.

Vacation is accrued on the following basis:

15 working days (1.25 days per month)	= 1 to 4 years of service
20 working days	= 5 to 19 years of service
25 working days	= 20+ years of service

Full credit for vacation will be based on continuous years of service, while the employee is receiving regular salary.

### **Procedures**

1. Vacation may be taken at any time during the year as agreed to by the immediate manager. The unit reserves the right to designate times of the year when vacations may or may not be taken.
2. Employees may carry-over up to five days in any given year. Approval must be obtained from the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment, for carry-over of more than five days. All employees are encouraged to take their full vacation entitlement each year.

## Sick Leave

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to responding to its employees' needs when faced with sickness and/or injury.

### **Policy**

All permanent full-time and permanent part-time employees are eligible for up to 6 months of salary continuance, under the Restorative Care Plan (RCP), during a qualified short-term medical absence.

Incidental, or non-consecutive, medical absences beyond six days in a calendar year shall be reviewed by the manager. After ten days of non-consecutive medical absences Human Resources will review and determine whether to initiate a review by the third-party adjudicator to assess the drivers of the absence experience. They will review medical conditions and associated limitations relative to the employee's ability to meet expected attendance at work and to support the employee in minimizing the impact of the health condition on the employee's performance.

### **Procedures**

1. An employee must advise their immediate supervisor when they know they will be absent from work due to sickness/illness indicating the length of time they expect to be absent.
2. Absence from work for 5 consecutive working days or longer requires a physician's note to support absence.
3. After the 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive day a claim must be filed by completing the Medical Absence Report (with the physician's note) and submitting it to the Disability Management Coordinator in the Ministry and Employment Unit, who will submit the claim to the third-party provider.
4. Salary continuance for up to 6 months will be provided, if the leave is medically supported and approved by the third-party adjudicator.
5. A return to work following an extended absence will be managed by the third-party provider in collaboration with Disability Management Coordinator. Human Resources will work with the manager, if a gradual return to work with restrictions and or modifications is recommended.
6. Vacation continues to accrue during the time for which the employee is on an approved medical absence.
7. If it is anticipated that the employee will be applying for long-term disability, the third-party provider and Disability Management Coordinator will ensure that appropriate documentation is sent out to the employee and their physician.
8. After 6 non-consecutive medical absence days in a calendar year, the manager will review the circumstances with the staff person. After 10 days Human Resources will assess and recommend if a third-party adjudicator needs to assess the nature of the drivers of the absences.

9. If the third-party adjudicator confirms a qualifying illness, Human Resources, in consultation with the adjudicator and the manager, will develop an accommodation plan that takes into account the employee's limitations and restrictions vis a vis the service needs of the Unit.
10. If the third-party adjudicator does not support a qualifying illness, days taken as sick will be considered as vacation taken or leave without pay which will be reflected on employees next pay date.

## **Maternity Leave**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to supporting its employees in their work and family life. The church recognizes the unique situation brought about by pregnancy and provides leave for expectant mothers.

### **Policy**

Expectant mothers will be granted maternity leave commencing before, on or after the date of childbirth. Employees granted maternity leave will receive top up payment, provided the organization is presented with proof that she is in receipt of maternity benefits under a government insurance plan.

### **Guidelines**

If the employee is subject to the 1-week qualifying period before receiving government insurance plan benefits, they will receive 95% of their weekly rate of pay for 1 week. The top-up payment will be 40% of the employee's weekly rate of pay for 15 weeks.

### **Procedures**

1. The employee will complete the Maternity/Parental Leave Request Form, attaching a medical certificate stating her due date, and submit the signed form to Human Resources at least four weeks in advance of the date of her leave, unless there is a valid reason why notice cannot be given.
2. Upon receipt of the form, maternity leave before, on, or after the birth of her child will be granted. The period of the maternity leave will be subject to the maximums set out by government insurance plans (i.e. Canadian Employment Insurance Plan/Quebec Parental Insurance Plan).
3. If an employee has not yet begun maternity leave and her newborn child is hospitalized, or the employee has begun maternity leave and then returns to work while the newborn child is hospitalized, then the maternity leave can be extended for every week the child is in the hospital, for up to 52 weeks following the week of the child's birth.
4. Maternity leave granted under this policy shall be counted as "service" for purposes of salary and benefit calculations.
5. The employee may elect to continue pension contributions and group insurance plans during the maternity leave. If she elects to continue, she and the organization will each pay their share of the benefit costs during the period of the leave.
6. For term employees (whose employment has a fixed end date), the maternity leave will end on the date the employee's term employment is completed, if the end date is prior to the conclusion of the period set out by a government insurance plan.
7. Expectant mothers are entitled to time off with pay to attend prenatal checkups.

**Partner's Leave**

Five days of special leave at full salary and benefits will be granted to the partner of a person on maternity leave for needs directly related to the birth of a child. This leave is normally taken within the first week of the child's birth, but may be taken within four weeks of the birth of the child. This does not apply to blended families where the child is the natural offspring of one of the partners.

**Miscarriages and Stillbirths**

An employee who has a miscarriage or stillbirth more than 17 weeks before her due date is not entitled to a maternity leave

**Government Insurance Plans**

Information on the government insurance plans can be found on the Service Canada website and the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan.

## Parental Leave

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to supporting its employees in their work and family life. The church recognizes the unique situation brought about by new parenthood and provides leave for new parents.

### **Policy**

Parental benefits are payable only to the biological, adoptive, or legally recognized parents while they are caring for their newborn or a newly adopted child or children (under the age of majority in the province/territory in which the employee resides). Parental benefits for biological parents are payable from the child's birth date, and for adoptive parents from the date of the child's placement in the home.

### **Procedures**

1. The employee will complete the Maternity/Parental Leave Request Form attaching a copy of the birth certificate or proof of adoption of a child and submit the signed form to Human Resources at least four weeks in advance of the date of the leave, unless there is a valid reason why notice cannot be given.
2. Upon receipt of the form, parental leave will be granted. The period of the parental leave will be subject to the maximums set out by government insurance plans (i.e. Canadian Employment Insurance Plan/Quebec Parental Insurance Plan).
3. If the employee's child is hospitalized and the employee has not yet begun parental leave or the employee has begun parental leave and then returns to work while the child is hospitalized, the parental leave can be extended for every week the child is in the hospital, following the week of the child's birth or when the child comes into the employee's care.
4. Parental leave granted under this policy is counted as "service" for purposes of salary and benefit calculations.
5. The employee may elect to continue pension contributions and group insurance plans during the parental leave. If the employee elects to continue, the employee and the organization will each pay their share of the benefit costs during the period of the leave.
6. For term employees (whose employment has a fixed end date), the parental leave will end on the date the employee's term employment is completed, if the end date is prior to the conclusion of the parental leave set out by a government insurance plan.
7. If both parents are employees of The United Church of Canada, both parents may take a period of parental leave provided that the total period of the leave taken by both parents does not exceed the maximum leave period as per government insurance plan.

**Parental Top-Up Payments**

Employees granted parental leave will receive top-up payments, provided that the organization has been presented with proof that the employee is in receipt of parental benefits under a government insurance plan.

If the employee is subject to the 1-week qualifying period before receiving government insurance plan benefits, they will receive 95% of their weekly rate of pay for 1 week. The top-up payment will be 40% of the employee's weekly rate of pay for 8 weeks.

**Partner's Leave**

Five days of special leave at full salary and benefits will be granted to the partner of a person on maternity/parental leave for needs directly related to the birth/adoption of a child. This leave is normally taken within the first week of a child's birth/placement in the home.

**Government Insurance Plans**

Information on the government insurance plans can be found on the Service Canada website and the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) website.



## **Bereavement Leave**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to supporting its employees during times of loss and provides bereavement leave to those who require it.

### **Policy**

Up to four days of bereavement leave with pay is provided to all employees upon the death of a member of their immediate family or significant person.

The immediate family is usually considered to be the partner or spouse, child, stepchild, birth or adoptive parent, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister, brother, grandparents, or stepparents.

A significant person is usually a relative not included in the above, or a close friend.

### **Procedures**

1. All leaves granted will be reported by the employing unit/Regional Council to the Ministry and Employment Unit.
2. Depending on the circumstances, this policy may be combined with other leave policies if the employing unit/Regional Council and the Ministry and Employment Unit consider it appropriate.
3. Allowances may also be made by the manager for travel, in consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit, in extenuating circumstances.

## **Compassionate Leave**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to supporting its employees by providing reasonable time away with full pay for exceptional situations not covered under other leave policies. This is not an entitlement, and is granted on an “as needed” basis for unusual, unexpected circumstances.

### **Policy**

Compassionate leave with pay may be provided to all staff for personal emergencies at the discretion of the employing unit/Regional Council, in consultation with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit. Factors for determining an emergency include:

- the need for the employee to respond;
- a situation over which the employee has no control;
- a reflection of appropriate compassion as called for by the theology and traditions of The United Church of Canada.

Situations that require urgent and immediate attention, and where the employee is the only person able to respond, are covered in this policy.

### **Procedures**

1. An unexpected and immediate short-term crisis qualifies for this leave. Employees facing situations that go beyond the short term should refer to the Extended Compassionate Leave policy or consult with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit.
2. Compassionate leave may be up to five days per year and is not cumulative. Any compassionate leave of up to 5 days may be approved by the immediate supervisor. For very exceptional circumstances, compassionate leave may be granted for up to 10 days. The Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit, will have final approval for any leave granted over 5 days.

## **Extended Compassionate Leave**

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### **Purpose**

All employers have been legislated to ensure that employees are legally permitted compassionate or family medical leave time. This policy is in accordance with legislated family leave policies.

### **Policy**

All employees are eligible to take a leave of absence without pay for compassionate care leave. Employees may be entitled to government Employment Insurance Benefits and should contact Human Resources and Skills Development Canada directly.

Employees may be entitled to eight weeks of government employee benefits for compassionate or family medical leave where there is significant risk of death within 26 weeks of a family member.

Family members are defined as:

- partner, spouse;
- a parent, step-parent, or a foster parent of the employee;
- a child, step-child, or foster child of the employee or the employee's spouse.

### **Procedures**

1. An employee must give written notice that they will be taking extended compassionate care leave. If the employee must begin the leave before advising their manager, the employee will advise the manager as soon as possible after beginning the leave.
2. The extended compassionate leave procedures are outlined on government websites.
3. An employee returning from an approved leave will be reinstated to their former position or be provided with comparable alternative work.
4. Upon returning to work, an employee will be paid for the two-week employment insurance waiting time at their regular salary, upon submission of employment insurance payment notifications to the Ministry and Employment Unit.
5. Vacation will continue to accrue during the period of leave if the employee returns to work after the leave. If the employee does not return to work, vacation will not accrue. Vacation accrued during the period of leave can be added on to the end of the extended compassionate care leave if approved in advance.

## **Domestic and Sexual Violence Leave**

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### **Purpose**

In response to the Employment Standards Act, 2000 and its provision for families experiencing Domestic and Sexual Violence, The United Church of Canada is committed to ensuring that employees take time off from work to deal with the repercussions of violence. This policy establishes procedures and criteria.

### **Policy**

Subject to the presentation of reasonable evidence of the necessity of the leave, all employees, except an employee accused of an infraction related to this act or if the circumstances allow one to believe that it is probable that they committed the act, are eligible to take the Domestic and Sexual Violence Leave for up to 10 paid days per calendar year and up to 15 weeks of a protective unpaid leave. The leave can be taken in one or more periods, as necessary.

If an employee is a victim of family violence or is the parent of a child (aged 18 or under) who is a victim, they have the right to a leave to allow them to do the following, in relation to the violence:

- seek medical care for themselves or the child with regard to an injury, physical disability, damages or a psychological disability;
- obtain the services of an organization that provides services to victims of family violence;
- obtain psychological services or advisory services of another nature;
- move temporarily or permanently;
- obtain legal services or the support of organizations tasked with applying legislation, prepare for civil or criminal hearings or participate in such hearings;
- take any measure prescribed by regulation.

The first ten (10) days of the leave in each calendar year shall be with pay in accordance with the criteria set out above.

### **Guidelines**

Managers and Human Resources personnel are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of the employee and ensuring the written records regarding any such leave are securely stored in accordance with Privacy and Personal Information Policy 1.11

“Child” under the provision of this policy means, child, step-child or child under legal guardianship of the employee who is under eighteen (18) years of age.

Employees must have at least thirteen (13) weeks of employment to qualify for the leave.

### **Procedures**

1. The employee must give written notice to the Manager or Human Resources that they will be taking the leave as soon as reasonably practicable in the circumstance, together with reasonable verification of the necessity of the leave and the total leave period expected to be taken. If the employee must begin the leave before advising their manager, the employee will advise the manager as soon as possible after beginning the leave.
2. Upon receipt of the notice the employee will be granted the leave.

3. The employee will be paid at their regular rate of pay for the 10 days of leave.
4. Leave granted under this policy is counted as “service” for purposes of salary and benefit calculations.
5. Pension contributions and group insurance plans will continue during the leave provided the employee contributes or make suitable arrangements regarding payment of the employee’s portion of premiums.
6. On expiry of a leave under this policy, an employee who returns to work shall be re-instated in the same position or in a comparable position if the position is not available.
7. Upon returning to work, no later than 15 days, the employee will provide supporting evidence “reasonable in the circumstances”, if it is possible, concerning the reasons for the leave to Human Resources.

## Unpaid Leave of Absence

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to supporting its employees and provides for a leave of absence for those who require it.

### **Policy**

All employees may be granted a leave of absence without pay with the approval of the corresponding Executive Officer/Minister or Regional Council Executive Minister, with advice and consultation from the Ministry and Employment Unit.

Vacation and sick leave credits do not accrue during a leave of absence without pay.

The policy regarding benefit and pension coverage during a leave of absence is as follows:

- A leave of absence of more than 30 calendar days will be considered a break in continuous service for the purpose of benefit entitlement. The employee will keep benefits and service earned up to that date.
- In order to maintain provincial health care coverage, the employee will pay the full premium (employee and employer portions) directly to the payroll office. This applies only in provinces where health care premiums are paid by individuals.
- In order to maintain benefit coverage and membership in the pension plan, the employee will pay the full premium(s) (employee and employer portions) directly to The United Church of Canada's Pension and Benefits Centre, our third-party pension and benefits administrator.

### **Procedures**

1. If an economic adjustment is due during the leave of absence, it will take effect on the date the employee returns to work.
2. Any anniversary review and salary range increase due during the leave period will be postponed until after the employee returns to work. If the leave of absence is more than 30 days, the anniversary date is moved forward by the length of the leave, after which time the increase becomes effective. Subsequent anniversary dates will occur every 12 months (providing employment is continuous) from the new anniversary date.
3. All benefits will be reinstated and the usual payroll deductions made upon the employee's return to work.

## **Court Duty**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to supporting the civic responsibilities of its employees and provides leave for jury and witness duty to those who are called to serve.

### **Policy**

Employees who miss work for court duty will receive full salary and benefits as usual. Absence for subpoenaed witness duty is treated the same as jury duty. Employees are expected to return to work as soon as court duty has been completed.

### **Procedures**

1. Any fees an employee may receive for being on court duty may be retained by the employee.
2. Court duty must be reported to the Ministry and Employment Unit.

## **Professional and Vocational Development**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to supporting the ongoing professional and vocational development of its employees. This policy outlines guidelines and requirements for professional and vocational development opportunities and leaves for permanent employees in the General Council Office and Regional Councils

### **Policy**

All employees are expected to engage in continuous skill development and subject matter learning as part of their regular work responsibilities. This includes keeping current on subject matter relevant to their responsibilities and technical training offered in house. Plans for, and accommodation of, this continuous development will be identified, and subsequently accounted for in the employee's annual performance and development review with their manager.

Paid leave for professional development opportunities such as training, skills development, or education, or programmes required to maintain professional accreditation may be requested by all permanent employees. Such requests must be directly related to an employee's current work, known future work, or anticipated areas of expansion at the United Church.

### **Scope**

Short-term professional Development Leave: All permanent employees who have completed one year of service may request Professional Development Leave for up to 15 days per year. Professional Development Leave must be completed within a twelve-month period and may not be accrued.

Extended Professional/Vocational Development Leave: All permanent program and management staff in categories 8 and above who have completed five years of service, in the same role may request Professional/Vocational Development Leave for up to 12 weeks and again at successive five-year intervals. The extended leave must be completed within a twelve-month of start period. Eligibility for consideration of subsequent leave will not begin until five years after the completion of the last leave.

Permanent staff in category 7 who were employed prior to December 2008 will continue to be eligible to apply for this benefit.

Professional Development Assistance: All permanent employees who have completed one-year of service may request financial assistance towards the costs associated with their professional/vocational development program. These amounts will be subject to yearly budgetary considerations.

### **Guidelines**

Professional/vocational development leave requires the employee to engage in an intensive and disciplined program of study, assessment, or vocational development directly related to an employee's current work, known future work, or anticipated areas of expansion at the United Church. Such leaves will provide the employee with an opportunity to step away from the regular duties and routines of their position and focus on a specific aspect or aspects of their responsibilities or to assess the work that they do in the larger context of the mission and ministry of The United Church of Canada.



It is expected that such leaves will normally result in a new program or resource, documented revisions to or evaluation of an existing program, resource, or commitment of the United Church, or the development of a professional skill or capacity related to the employee's responsibilities.

The content and the length of the leave are subject to the approval of the immediate supervisor and the Executive Officer/Minister or Regional Council Executive Minister of the employing unit/Regional Council, in consultation with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit. Approval of a leave, and its timing, is contingent upon whether the absence can be accommodated in the unit or regional council's schedule and funding.

While time away from the regular routines and demands of one's position will provide an opportunity for personal and spiritual reflection, the extended professional/vocational development leave in the General Council and Regional Council office system first and foremost focused on clearly defined professional substantive outcome rather than as in the pastoral relations sabbatical provision in the United Church which is more focused on significant spiritual renewal, the latter recognizing the full-time pastoral and spiritual care demands upon ministers in pastoral ministry. Where positions in the General or regional councils have such a component or involves substantive and sustained spiritual demand, the staff approving a leave proposal may take this into consideration, in consultation with the Executive Officer/Minister of the Ministry and Employment Unit at least six months prior to the leave.

The program of research, study or assessment undertaken must be clearly job related, either to one's current position, or to a known change in position in The United Church of Canada. It may also be related to an area of expansion in the church, which includes training to enable growth into other areas or helping to equip staff for transformational change. The intent is to enable staff to grow professionally and to assist the church in fulfilling its mission and ministry.

Request for a leave is subject to the approval of the immediate supervisor, who will determine whether the opportunity will facilitate the work of the church and will be of mutual advantage to the employee and the employing unit/regional council. It is also subject to whether the proposed timing of the absence can be accommodated in the unit or regional council's schedule.

Final approval of the leave rests with the Executive Officer/Minister or Regional Council Executive Minister or the General Secretary, in consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit. Approval of the leave is subject to the requirements (skill level, time, service needs etc.) of the workplace, as well as budgetary considerations.

Travel costs associated with the leave may be expensed to the employee's or unit's travel budget upon approval by the executive minister/officer of the unit only if travel to a partner or resource is necessary to accomplish the objectives of the leave.

Employees have access to financial assistance to offset the cost of any programs/training or resources related to the leave. These amounts will be subject to yearly budgetary considerations. This information is available through the Ministry and Employment Unit.

**Procedures**

1. The accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, shall be taken into account to support Professional Development, when requested.
2. Employees requesting short-term or extended leave are required to complete the Professional Development Leave Request Form, seek approval from their manager, Executive Officer/Minister or Regional Council Executive Minister or the General Secretary and Ministry and Employment Unit well in advance prior to the leave.
3. Employees seeking financial assistance are required to complete the Professional Development Assistance Request Form, seek approval from their manager, Executive Officer/Minister or Regional Council Executive Minister or the General Secretary and Ministry and Employment Unit prior to registering for training.
4. The Ministry and Employment Unit must be consulted prior to any leave approval to ensure consistency with the policy and to confirm eligibility for a leave.
5. Requests for time off during normal working hours to participate in professional development opportunities that are not directly related to the employee's responsibilities may be approved by the immediate manager, in consultation with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit, as flex work time or as unpaid leaves of absence.
6. Extended professional and vocational development leave proposal will be discussed in the early stages of development with the applicant and the manager in the employing unit/regional council, with the Executive Officer/Minister or Regional Council Executive Minister of the employing unit/Regional Council, and with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit.
7. The timing of the extended leave, as well as the general area of focus, will be approved by the manager. The employee may then start to make plans regarding the leave's activities, before the final proposal has been formally approved.
8. The approval process for extended leave is meant to be consultative in nature in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the leave being proposed. Once consensus has been achieved, the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit, will confirm compliance with policy. The manager will then formally approve the leave.
9. The employing unit/regional council and the Executive Officer/Minister or Regional Council Executive Minister are responsible for determining the number of leaves that may be taken within that unit or council per year, taking into consideration budgetary limitations, service needs, and work requirements. Because of this, it may not be possible for a unit to grant a leave, or at the time requested.
10. Consultation and review of the leave proposal must be done at least six months before the proposed start date. Specific details are to be provided in writing no later than two months before the start of the leave.

11. Upon completion of the leave, the employee will provide written and/or oral reports to the Unit as determined when the leave was approved. All completed courses/training/certificates/ programs will form part of the employees file.
12. For programs that are graded courses, half the amount will be paid upon registration, and the second half upon successful completion of the course and presentation of the grade obtained.
13. There is no provision for carrying over unused professional development funds from year to year. There is also no provision for carrying forward leave from year to year.
14. Extended professional/vocational development leave shall not normally be taken in conjunction with other leaves i.e. vacation unless the manager is satisfied that the additional continuous absence does not compromise the work associated with the role or incur additional expenses to provide coverage for the work.

## Gifts to Staff

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada supports providing appropriate gifts to staff for special work-related or other occasions.

### **Guidelines**

At the discretion of the employing unit/Regional Council:

- 0-4 years of continuous service: \$25-50
- 5-9 years of continuous service: \$75
- 10-15 years of continuous service: \$100
- 15-19 years of continuous service: \$150
- 20-25 years of continuous service: \$200
- Over 25 years of continuous service: \$250

Options of gift baskets or gift certificates.

### **Policy**

1. Gifts may be presented to staff for work-related or special occasions in the form of gift certificates or purchased gifts. To ensure equity and transparency, the Ministry and Employment Unit will provide guidelines when determining the value of the gift. These gifts are paid for by the employing unit/Regional Council.
2. Each employing unit/Regional Council may, with the consent of the employee, choose to have a social gathering for an employee who has resigned or retired. Employing units/Regional Councils may, at their own discretion, expand farewell gatherings to include staff from other employing units/Regional Councils. Expenses for these gatherings will be borne by the employing unit/Regional Council.
3. On behalf of the General Council Office and Regional Councils, the Ministry and Employment Unit will send flowers, or donations in lieu of, to hospitalized employees and baby baskets to new parents. Flowers, or a donation in lieu of, will be sent in the event of an employee's death or a death in an employee's immediate family.

## **Membership in Professional Organizations**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada recognizes that certain positions require membership in a professional body or association, or that membership in a professional body or association may be beneficial to the work of the church.

### **Policy**

1. The United Church of Canada will pay membership in professional organizations when it is determined that such membership is a requirement for the position. The senior staff person of the unit, in consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit, will determine whether or not such membership is a requirement.
2. Opportunities may also arise where employees may wish to join a professional body or association that directly impacts their work. The senior staff person of the employing unit/Regional Council, will determine whether the affiliation in a professional organization will facilitate the work of the church and will be of mutual advantage to the employee and the employing unit/Regional Council.
3. Funding for all approved professional membership fees will come from the employing unit/Regional Council.

## **Election to Public Office Leave**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to supporting employees who campaign for and/or are elected to public office.

### **Policy**

The United Church of Canada requires that employees who are seeking election to either the Parliament of Canada or to a provincial legislature take an unpaid leave of absence. Provisions may also be made for employees who are subsequently elected to any public office; this may include either an extended unpaid leave of absence, or a change in employment status to permanent part-time.

### **Procedures**

1. An employee seeking election to either the Parliament of Canada or to a provincial legislature must take an unpaid leave of absence or vacation for the duration of the campaign.
2. If elected to a full-time position in a provincial or federal election, the employee must resign their position in the United Church.
3. An employee elected as mayor, where such position is a part-time position, may remain on staff with an appropriate reduction in pay in proportion to the amount of time that must be devoted to the mayoralty duties involved. The percentage of the reduction will be decided by the employing unit/Regional Council in consultation with the Ministry and Employment Unit.
4. An employee who is elected as councillor or school trustee may be granted unpaid time off to attend council or board meetings.
5. Any periods of leave of absence without pay to attend to the duties of elected office will not be used when determining length of service.
6. The service before and after such leaves of absence will be deemed to be continuous for all purposes.

## SECTION 3: EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

## The United Church of Canada Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

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### Accessibility in Ministry

#### What We Believe:

The United Church of Canada is committed to being an open, accessible, and barrier free environment, where there is full participation of everyone including people with disabilities. We strive to meet the needs of our employees, volunteers and all those who may interact with our organization including those who may have disabilities, both visible and invisible.

#### Unlocking Barriers

- People with disabilities who are **The United Church of Canada customers/clients** receive goods and services in a timely manner.
- People with disabilities who are **The United Church of Canada employees or volunteers** participate fully and meaningfully in service, mission, and employment
- **Information and communication** is available in accessible formats to The United Church of Canada staff, customers/clients, and volunteers.
- The United Church of Canada staff are able to **identify barriers to accessibility** and actively seek solutions to prevent, remove or reduce them on a continual basis throughout the organization.
- The United Church of Canada will provide **ongoing training** as it relates to people with disabilities through resources, orientation, and any other formats as needed.

#### Policy Statement on Accessibility

The United Church of Canada is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people in a timely manner, and will do so by becoming an open, accessible, and barrier-free environment where there is full participation of persons with disabilities in the church's ministry and mission.

#### Communication, Feedback and Customer Service

The United Church of Canada is committed to providing excellent customer service to all persons, including people with disabilities. The United Church of Canada employees will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. The United Church of Canada also provides an accessible customer service feedback process.

Feedback regarding the way The United Church of Canada provides programs, goods and services to persons with disabilities can be made by sending an email to: [unitedchurchaccessibility@united-church.ca](mailto:unitedchurchaccessibility@united-church.ca).

- All feedback will be directed to the Ministry and Employment Unit.
- Participants can expect to hear back within ten business days
- Confidentiality will be respected.

#### Use of Service Animals, Assistive Devices and Support Persons

The United Church of Canada welcomes people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal, support person or require an assistive device. Employees will be trained on how to interact with



these individuals in a manner that is respectful and insures their safety as well as the safety of the service animal and support person accompanying them.

**Organizational Commitment: Information and Communication Coordination**

The United Church of Canada is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. We will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communication needs. The United Church of Canada will take necessary steps to make all websites and content conform with WCAG 2.0, Level AA.

**Organizational Commitment: Emergency Information and Service Disruptions**

The United Church of Canada is committed to providing the customers with information about service disruptions. We will also provide staff with disabilities with individualized response information as requested.

**Organizational Commitment: Human Resources –Employment**

The United Church of Canada is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. We take steps to notify the public and staff that, when requested, The United Church of Canada can accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment process.

The United Church of Canada will formalize the process for developing individual accommodation plans and return to work policies for employees that have been absent including measures to address concerns related to a disability.

The United Church of Canada will develop a mechanism that take into account an employee's disabilities when using performance management and career development processes.

The United Church of Canada will take steps to prevent and remove ongoing accessibility barriers identified following an Accessibility Audit.

**Organizational Commitment: Human Resources –Training**

The United Church of Canada will provide training to staff and volunteers as it relates to people with disabilities. Training and resources will be developed in various formats.

Training will include the following:

- The purpose of the Accessibility Policy
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or support person
- How to learn about the use of various assistive devices
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing The United Church of Canada's services.
- The United Church of Canada policies, practices and procedures relating to the accessibility standards.

**Organizational Commitment: Other**

The United Church of Canada works extensively with volunteers, elected members and others who contribute significantly to directing the activities of the church. Such work requires the gathering of these members for meetings, in person and electronically. We strive to select venues which are accessible.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan - Unlocking Barriers

Unlocking Barriers	AODA Standards/Regulations	Activities	Compliance Deadline
<p>People with disabilities who are <b>The United Church of Canada customers and clients</b>, received goods and services in a timely manner.</p>	<p><b>Customer Service</b> S. 3(1, 3), S.4 (1a,1b,1c)</p> <p>Procuring or acquiring services or facilities</p> <p>S 6(2) Self-Service Kiosks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and Revise Accessibility Policy</li> <li>• Post Accessibility Multi-Year plan to website</li> <li>• Establish criteria for evaluating venues for meetings.</li> <li>• Point of sale device will allow persons with disability to access products.</li> </ul>	<p>June 30<sup>th</sup> 2020</p> <p>June 30<sup>th</sup> 2020</p> <p>June 30<sup>th</sup> 2020</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>People with disabilities who are <b>The United Church of Canada employees or volunteers</b> participate fully and meaningfully in service, mission, and employment.</p>	<p><b>Employment</b> S. 22, 23(1-2), 24, 25(1-3), 26(1-2), 27(1-4), 28(1-3), 29(1-2), 30(1) - 32(1)</p>	<p>Review and update HR Policies for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment and Selection of Staff</li> <li>• Accommodation based on Disability</li> <li>• Return to work Program</li> <li>• Performance Management</li> <li>• Professional &amp; Sabbatical Development</li> </ul>	<p>June 30<sup>th</sup> 2020</p>
<p><b>Information and communication</b> is available in accessible formats to The United Church of Canada employees, customers, and volunteers.</p>	<p><b>Information and Communication</b></p>	<p>Meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA Web Content Accessibility Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Intranet Website</li> <li>• Web Content</li> <li>• Guideline for creation of resources/materials</li> </ul>	<p>January 1 2021</p>
<p>The United Church of Canada will provide <b>ongoing training</b> as it relates to people with disabilities through resources, orientation, and any other formats as needed.</p>	<p><b>Training</b> Training - S. 7(1,2,3,4,5)</p>	<p>Develop program to ensure continual/ongoing training for current staff</p> <p>Develop program to ensure training for new staff</p>	<p>June 30 2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

## **Accessibility and Customer Service**

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### **Purpose**

In fulfilling our mission, The United Church of Canada strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. The United Church of Canada is also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access employment, goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other participants. This policy outlines how the General Council Office and regional council offices will work together to provide accessibility to ministry personnel, employees, volunteers and clients with disabilities.

### **Policy**

The United Church of Canada is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people in a timely manner, and will do so by becoming an open, accessible, and barrier-free environment where there is full participation of persons with disabilities in the church's ministry and mission.

In accordance with applicable legislation and regulations the policy on Accessibility and Customer Service will be reviewed annually, revised appropriately and posted at all General Council and regional council workplaces.

Each regional council will develop, implement, and post a specific Accessibility Customer Service Policy Program at their location, which meets applicable legislative requirements, as well as the requirements of this policy.

The program will be based on the elements outlined in this policy.

### **Accessible Customer Service Policy Program**

#### **Employment**

We notify employees, job applicants and the public that accommodation can be provided during recruitment and hiring. We notify job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodation is available upon request.

We will consult with employees when arranging the provision of suitable accommodation in a manner that is taken into account the accessibility needs due to disability. We will consult with the person making the request in determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication supports specifically for:

- a) information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and
- b) information that is generally available to employees in the workplace

Where needed, we will also provide customized emergency information to help an employee with a disability during an emergency. With the employee's consent, we will provide workplace emergency information to a designated person who is providing assistance to that employee during an emergency.

We will provide the information as soon as practicable after we become aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

We will review the individualized workplace emergency response information:

- a) when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
- b) when the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed; and
- c) when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

We have a written process to develop individual accommodation plans for employees.

We have a written process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work.

Our performance management, career development and redeployment processes take into account the accessibility needs of all employees.

### **Communication**

We will communicate with persons with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

We will train staff on how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.

Our Information Technology websites will meet the requirements of WCAG 2.0 Level AA.

### **Telephone Services**

We are committed to providing accessible telephone services to our participants.

Alternative means of communication, such as email, fax, etc., will be offered to facilitate the process for the caller.

When communicating over the telephone, staff will speak clearly at a speed that meets the needs of the caller.

### **Assistive Devices**

We will ensure that our staff is trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by people with disabilities while accessing our goods, services or opportunities.

We are committed to serving persons who require assistive devices to participate in and benefit from our programs, goods and services.

We will ensure that people are permitted to use their own personal assistive devices to access programs, goods and services or to participate fully in events, meetings or as a member of committees and task groups.

Upon a participant's request, every effort will be made to provide the requested assistive device and/or service.

Staff will be provided with guidelines on how to interact with individuals who use assistive devices.

### **Billing**

We are committed to providing accessible invoices to all of our customers/clients. Invoices will be provided in alternative format upon request. We will answer any questions customers/clients may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.

### **Use of Service Animals and Support Persons**

We are committed to welcoming people who are accompanied by a support person or service animal. Service animals will have access to all parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties with the exception of areas of where food is prepared.

Staff will be provided guidelines on how to interact with people who are accompanied by a support person or a service animal.

Fees will not be charged for support persons accompanying a volunteer committee/task group member.

### **Notice of Temporary Disruption**

Every effort will be made to provide staff/volunteers/participants with advance notice in the event of a planned disruption in the facilities or services usually used by persons with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, the anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

When service disruption is unexpected, information will be posted as soon as it is available.

### **Training for Staff and Volunteers**

The United Church of Canada's Ministry and Employment Unit will be responsible for coordinating training for all employees and others who deal with the public or volunteer members. Training will be developed and delivered in various formats. We train every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policies

Training includes the following:

- The purpose of the Accessibility Policy
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or support person
- How to learn about the use of various assistive devices
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing The United Church of Canada's goods and services
- The United Church policies, practices and procedures relating to the accessibility standards

### **Feedback Process**

The ultimate goal of the General Council and regional council offices of The United Church of Canada is to meet and surpass expectations while serving persons with disabilities.

Comments on our programs, goods and services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way The United Church of Canada provides programs, goods and services to persons with disabilities can be made by sending an email to: [unitedchurchaccessibility@united-church.ca](mailto:unitedchurchaccessibility@united-church.ca).

- All feedback will be directed to the Ministry and Employment Unit.
- Participants can expect to hear back within ten business days
- Confidentiality will be respected.

**Modifications to This or Other Policies**

We are committed to developing accessibility policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.

No changes, therefore, will be made to this policy before considering the impact on persons with disabilities or their families.

Any policy that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities will be modified or removed.

*This policy seeks to achieve service excellence to persons with disabilities. If anyone requires further information regarding this policy, please contact Ministry and Employment Unit.*

## Occupational Health and Safety

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all employees.

### **Policy**

All employees of the United Church will be provided with an appropriate space in which to work and proper equipment and tools to do the job.

It is the intention of the United Church to provide a safe workplace, safe equipment, proper materials, and to establish and insist on safe methods and practices at all times.

It is a basic duty of all those carrying executive responsibility to make the safety of employees a part of their daily concern. This responsibility must also be accepted by every individual who conducts the affairs of the organization, in whatever capacity they function.

The key to success lies in the willingness of all employees to recognize their responsibility and actively support accident and injury prevention activity.

### **Procedures**

1. All levels of management will actively support the safety program and ensure that employees are aware of all safety protocols. They will also respond to employee concerns such as environmental, ergonomic, and/or health issues arising from the workplace setting, potential workplace hazards, etc.
2. Safe work practice training will begin when an employee is hired and will be a continuing process throughout employment.
3. All supervisors are responsible for ensuring adherence to health and safety procedures.
4. Personal protective equipment will be used in accordance with safety procedures as directed by the supervisor or other authorized people.
5. Inspections of all General Council Office and Regional Councils' facilities, **as may be required by provincial legislation**, will be made on a routine basis and an annual Occupational Health and Safety audit will be conducted by the Occupational Health and Safety Committee.
6. The correction of hazards will be given priority.
7. Supervisors will immediately investigate every accident within their area and submit a detailed, written report to their immediate supervisor to be given to the Occupational Health and Safety Committee in accordance with incident reporting procedures (see #10 below).
8. Health and safety education and training will be undertaken by the organization.
9. Employees are required to observe safety regulations, report unsafe conditions, and wear appropriate safety equipment.
10. Incident reports are available from the Occupational Health and Safety Committee. Once completed, they will be forwarded to the committee for appropriate action.

## **Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, and Violence Prevention and Response**

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### **Theological Statement**

The United Church of Canada believes that all people are created in God's image and all people deserve the same human rights and freedoms.

The United Church of Canada's policies, practices, and procedures embody our beliefs while creating a work environment of mutual respect, care, protection, and empowerment that is free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, and violence.

### **Policy**

**The United Church of Canada is committed to providing safe environments for work, worship, and study that are free from discrimination, harassment, and violence.**

The church will not tolerate any behaviour by any person—including but not limited to its members, adherents, lay employees and ministry personnel, and elected members or volunteers—that constitutes discrimination, harassment, or violence.

All complaints of discrimination, harassment, and violence toward anyone within the church—including lay employees or ministry personnel, and elected members or volunteers—will be taken seriously and dealt with in a spirit of compassion and justice. Everyone has a right to participate in the processes under this policy in good faith, without reprisal or threat of reprisal for doing so.

Discrimination, harassment, and violence in the workplace are prohibited by the church and by provincial, territorial, and federal law. Every province and territory has human rights legislation; these laws apply in the church. Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent a complainant from filing a complaint under applicable human rights legislation. Many provinces and territories also have legislation that requires every employer to put policies in place to ensure an environment that is safe and free from harassment, discrimination, and violence.

This policy applies to all communities of faith and congregations, and to the General Council and regional council offices as well as other church organizations that adopt this policy. Communities of faith may elect to use this policy or develop their own customized policy provided that policy complies with their provincial or territorial legislation related to discrimination, harassment, and violence.

Harassment does not include constructive criticism, evaluating or monitoring performance or setting performance standards, corrective or disciplinary action, or organizational change for business reasons.

It is everyone's responsibility to address and to raise concerns about discrimination, harassment, and violence in the workplace.

### **Definitions**

**Discrimination** includes any distinction, exclusion, or preference based on protected grounds set out in human rights legislation that nullifies or impairs equality for opportunities in employment or equality in the terms and conditions of employment. Discrimination includes unwelcome comments or actions that relate to a person's personal characteristics—for example, race, gender, sexual orientation, and age.



It is the impact of the behaviour, not the intention behind it that determines whether the concerning behaviour is discriminatory. Discrimination is prohibited and is a violation of human rights legislation in place in each province and territory and within the church.

There are two forms of discrimination: direct and systemic.

Direct discrimination is an action, a behaviour, or a practice of treating a person unequally on the basis of any of the prohibited grounds. It may be overt and admitted or covert and denied. Examples of direct discrimination include making jokes or comments about a person's disability; imitating a person's accent, speech, or mannerisms; making persistent or inappropriate comments related to pregnancy or childbirth; or making inappropriate comments related to age or sexual orientation.

Systemic discrimination refers to entrenched and institutional practices, systems, and structures that operate to limit an individual's or group's rights to opportunities or exclude an individual or a group from participation on the basis of a prohibited ground. It is a pattern of discrimination that arises out of apparently neutral institutional policies or practices that is reinforced by institutional structures and power dynamics, and that results in the differential and unequal treatment of members of certain groups. Systemic discrimination does not occur when the requirement, qualification, or factor is in good faith and legitimate in the circumstances or is permitted by law.

**Harassment** includes improper and unwanted comment or conduct when such conduct might reasonably be expected to cause insecurity, discomfort, offence, or humiliation to another person. Harassment is a form of discrimination. Harassment usually results from a series of incidents, but one incident could form the basis of a harassment complaint.

Harassment may be written, verbal, electronic, physical, a gesture or display, or any combination of these. A complaint of harassment can be made based on inappropriate interaction between co-workers; between managers and employees; or between employees and members, adherents, or volunteers in a community of faith. (This is not meant to be an exhaustive list.)

Harassment can include jokes or innuendo, verbal abuse, pranks, hazing, inappropriate online conduct, unwelcome invitations, comments about appearance or clothing, setting impossible expectations, constant negativity, and/or undermining behaviour.

**Racial harassment** is unwelcome, unfair, or unsafe behaviour related to race based on prohibited grounds. Racial harassment includes behaviour related to a person's race, colour, ancestry, where a person was born, ethnic background, place of origin, or creed.

Racial harassment can include name calling, racial slurs, racist jokes, ridicule, insults, or different treatment because of racial identity; degrading a person of a particular group; or negative comments made because of a person's race, colour, citizenship, place of origin, ancestry, ethnic background, or creed.

Individual racism can range from targeted racial harassment and overt discrimination to micro-aggressions, which can include subtle events that occur on a regular basis such as constant slights, putdowns, or invalidation directed at a marginalized group.

Systemic or institutional racism consists of patterns of behaviour, policies, and practices that are part of the social or administrative structures of an organization and that create or perpetuate a position of

relative disadvantage for racialized people. These behaviours, policies, and practices often seem neutral but effectively exclude racialized individuals.

**Microaggressions** are the everyday putdowns and slights marginalized groups face every day from other people who sometimes do not know they're being offensive or patronizing. Microaggressions can be overt or subtle, and include discriminatory comments disguised as compliments.

**Sexual harassment** means engaging in a course of improper or unwelcome comment or conduct because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or should reasonably be known to be unwelcome. Sexual harassment can also be a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant, or deny a benefit or advancement to the recipient, and the person knows or should know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome.

The church has a sexual misconduct policy that may apply if the complainant is in a vulnerable position and the respondent is in a position of trust with respect to the complainant. Complaints that are found on investigation to fit within the scope of the Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy and Procedures will be dealt with according to the process set out in that policy.

Sexual harassment can include unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendo, propositions or taunting, persistent unwanted attention, physical contact of a sexual nature, or sexual assault.

**Violence** is the use of physical force against a person that causes or could cause physical injury. It also includes attempting to use physical force, and includes a statement or behaviour that could reasonably be interpreted as a threat to use physical force.

Domestic violence is violence between two people who currently have, or have had in the past, a personal intimate relationship, such as spouses, partners, or people in a relationship.

The organization will take all reasonable precautions to protect a person if a domestic violence situation is likely to expose someone to physical injury in the workplace or threaten their safety and the safety of others, and if the organization is aware or should reasonably be aware of the situation. Reasonable precautions will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may include developing an individual safety plan for the affected person.

The organization will reassess risks of violence as often as necessary and will implement measures to address identified risks. Measures may include security protocols, implementing additional policies and procedures, and providing training on how to respond to a violent or potentially violent situation.

**Workplace** includes any location, permanent or temporary, where an employee performs any work-related duty.

#### **Procedures to Respond to Complaints in Communities of Faith or Other Ministries**

This procedure is to be used where the respondent or respondents—the person or persons alleged to have discriminated against, harassed, or committed an act of violence toward another person—work for or are accountable to a community of faith or other ministry. If the respondents work for or are accountable to a regional council or the General Council Office, see the next section.

**If you experience or witness violence, call 9-1-1. Once everyone is safe and medical care is provided or sent for, the regional council executive minister or designate should be notified of the incident.**

Where urgent intervention is required, as an interim measure the regional council executive minister will alert the community of faith to take steps to ensure the complainant is safe and not subjected to further discrimination, harassment, or violence. In certain circumstances this could include placing the respondent on paid administrative leave.

### **Informal Resolution Options**

- C1. Where the complainant is able to do so and if it is practical and safe, they should communicate directly with the respondent. The complainant should tell the respondent that their behaviour or comment is unacceptable and is being experienced as discrimination or harassment, and ask the respondent to stop. One situation where this may work is when the complainant believes the respondent is unaware of the impact of their actions or conduct.
- C2. The complainant can request assistance and be accompanied by another person at the meeting with the respondent. The complainant may bring a person of their choosing with them to any meeting or process that is part of this policy.
- C3. If the complainant does not believe it is practical or safe for them to communicate directly with the respondent on their own, they can confidentially discuss the incident(s) with someone they feel comfortable with. The United Church of Canada has consultants who have been trained to review what the complainant has experienced and the options available to them. Alternatively, the complainant could speak to a member of the Ministry and Personnel Committee for the community of faith, or the pastoral relations minister for the regional council office.
- C4. Other options to consider before making a formal complaint include
  - a facilitated conversation with the assistance of an agreed-upon third party or a conflict resolution facilitator
  - mediation
  - conflict coaching through the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) through Morneau Shepell

Before any options of informal resolution are implemented, both parties must be in agreement that such an option can be pursued.

### **Formal Complaint Procedures**

- C5. If the matter remains unresolved for any reason, or if it is determined that informal efforts are not appropriate in the circumstances, the complainant must set out a detailed complaint in writing, including date and time of the incident(s), location, names of any witnesses, and a description of the incident(s). A consultant can assist with this process.

- C6. The complainant sends the complaint to the regional council Executive Minister for the region where the complaint occurred. If the complaint is not sufficiently detailed, further detail may be requested.  
Note: If the complaint concerns the regional council Executive Minister or any employee, volunteer or a person accountable to the regional council or General Council please see the procedures in the next section.
- C7. The complaint is provided to the respondent, the person who is being complained about, as soon as possible. A consultant may be asked to deliver the complaint. The respondent has the opportunity to submit a written response to the complaint, but that is not required.
- C8. If the complaint is against ministry personnel, the regional council Executive Minister advises and consults with the Office of Vocation Coordinator.
- C9. Pastoral care is made available to both parties. If a party or parties are working with a consultant, the consultant will discuss how they can access pastoral care. In other cases, the regional council executive minister will make the offer of pastoral care.
- C10. The regional council Executive Minister assesses the complaint and the response, if applicable, and determines a suitable course of action. The regional council Executive Minister considers whether the complaint reveals any broader systemic issues that should be addressed. It may be appropriate, where the respondent is ministry personnel, to refer the matter to the Office of Vocation for consideration by the Response Committee.
- C11. With the consent of the parties, the matter might be referred to a neutral third party, such as a conflict resolution facilitator, to work with the complainant and respondent to achieve a mutually agreeable resolution through mediation, a no-blame conciliatory meeting, a facilitated conversation, or another form of dispute resolution.
- C12. Where the complaint is still not resolved or the regional council executive minister determines that an alternative process or referral to the Office of Vocation is not appropriate, an investigator is assigned to investigate the complaint. A roster of trained investigators is available to conduct investigations and make findings. If necessary, other qualified investigators not on the roster may be assigned to investigate a complaint.
- C13. The regional council Executive Minister advises the ministry from which the complaint arose that a complaint has been received and the process that will be used to resolve it. The Executive or Sub-Executive of the regional council is also informed.
- C14. The investigator arranges to interview the parties and any witnesses. If possible, the interviews are held in person but may be conducted over the phone or using other technology.
- C15. The investigator writes a report that includes their findings and, if requested, recommendations. The report is sent to the regional council Executive Minister, who then communicates the resolution and recommendations as appropriate to the parties and to the governing body of the ministry for action on the basis of the report.

- C16. If the finding supports the allegations in the complaint, and if the respondent is an employee, appropriate corrective action will be taken. This may include progressive discipline of the respondent up to and including termination. If the respondent is a volunteer, corrective action could include sanctions related to the respondent's roles and responsibilities in the community of faith as well as their membership. Corrective action could also include training for the respondent and for the ministry. Corrective action could also include further policy revision, education, training, or procedures within the organization. The corrective action is based on the findings of the investigator, the nature of the complaint, and all relevant circumstances, including any previous discipline.
- C17. If the finding of the investigator is that the complaint is not substantiated, no further action is taken.
- C18. Confidentiality with respect to the findings of an investigation is maintained, except to the extent necessary to implement or defend the corrective or disciplinary action taken, or as required by law. Where corrective or disciplinary action is taken against either the complainant or the respondent, the other party is advised that action has been taken but is not provided with the particulars of that action.
- C19. All of the procedures should be carried out in a timely fashion—in most cases within a three-month period. Exceptions do occur, however, and in cases that require more time the parties are informed of the delay and, if appropriate, the reasons for the delay.

#### **Procedures to Respond to Complaints: Regional and General Council Offices**

This procedure is to be used where the respondent or respondents—the person or persons alleged to have discriminated against, harassed, or committed an act of violence toward another person—work for or are accountable to a regional council or the General Council Office. If the respondents work for or are accountable to a community of faith or other church ministry, see the previous section.

**If you experience or witness violence, call 9-1-1. Once everyone is safe and medical care is provided or sent for, the Human Resources Manager, General Council Office, should be notified of the incident.**

Where urgent intervention is required, as an interim measure the Human Resources Manager will take steps to ensure the complainant is safe and not subjected to further discrimination, harassment, or violence. In certain circumstances this could include placing the respondent on paid administrative leave.

#### **Informal Resolution Options**

- R1. Where the complainant is able to do so, and if it is practical and safe, they should communicate directly with the respondent. The complainant should tell the respondent that their behaviour is unacceptable and is being experienced as discrimination or harassment, and ask the respondent to stop. One situation where this may work is when the complainant believes the respondent is unaware of the impact of their actions or conduct.
- R2. The complainant can request assistance and be accompanied by another person at the meeting with the respondent. The complainant may bring a person of their choosing with them to any meeting or process that is part of this policy.

- R3. If the complainant does not believe it is practical or safe for them to communicate directly with the respondent on their own, they can confidentially discuss the incident(s) with someone they feel comfortable with. The United Church has consultants who have been trained to review what the complainant has experienced and the options available to them. Alternatively, the complainant could speak to their own supervisor or a colleague.
- R4. Other options to consider before making a formal complaint include
- a facilitated conversation with the assistance of an agreed-upon third party or a conflict resolution facilitator
  - mediation
  - conflict coaching through the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) through Morneau Shepell

Before any options of informal resolution are implemented, both parties must agree that such an option can be pursued.

#### **Formal Complaint Procedures**

- R5. If the matter remains unresolved for any reason, or if it is determined that informal measures are not appropriate in the circumstances, the complainant must set out the complaint in writing, including date and time of the incident(s), location, names of any witnesses, and a description of the incident(s). A consultant can assist with this process. The Human Resources Manager, General Council Office, may refer the complainant to a consultant.
- R6. The complainant sends the complaint to the Human Resources Manager, General Council Office. If the complaint is not sufficiently detailed, further details may be requested.  
Note: If the complaint is about the Human Resources Manager, the complaint is sent to the Executive Minister, Ministry and Employment.
- R7. The complaint is provided to the respondent, the person being complained about, as soon as possible. A consultant may be asked to deliver the complaint. The respondent has the opportunity to submit a written response to the complaint, but that is not required.
- R8. If the complaint is against ministry personnel, the Human Resources Manager advises and consults with the Office of Vocation Coordinator.
- R9. Where the parties to the complaint are employees, counselling and support are available through the Employee and Family Assistance Program of Morneau Shepell. If any party is not an employee or does not have access to the Employee and Family Assistance Program, and wishes pastoral care, that will be provided to them on request.
- R10. The Human Resources Manager assesses the complaint and the response, if applicable, and determines a suitable course of action. The Human Resources Manager considers whether the complaint reveals any broader systemic issues that should be addressed.
- R11. With the consent of the parties, the matter may be referred to a neutral third party, such as a conflict resolution facilitator, to work with the complainant and respondent to achieve a mutually agreeable resolution through mediation, a no-blame conciliatory meeting, a facilitated conversation, or another form of dispute resolution.

- R12. Where the complaint is still not resolved or it is determined that an alternative process is not appropriate, an investigator is assigned to investigate the complaint.
- R13. The Human Resources Manager advises the manager or supervisor of the respondent that a complaint has been received and the process that will be used to work to resolve it. If the complaint is about the Moderator or a member or members of the Staff Leaders, which includes the regional council Executive Ministers and the General Council management group, the General Secretary will be informed. If the complaint is about the General Secretary, the Executive Minister, Ministry and Employment, will inform the General Secretary Supervision Committee.
- R14. The investigator arranges to interview the parties and any witnesses. If possible, the interviews are held in person but may be conducted over the phone or other technology.
- R15. The investigator writes a report that includes their findings and, if requested, recommendations. The report is provided to the Human Resources Manager, who then communicates the result of the investigation to the appropriate person as set out in paragraph 13 and discusses the findings and appropriate outcome with that person.
- R16. If the finding supports the allegations in the complaint, and if the respondent is an employee, appropriate corrective action will be taken. This may include progressive discipline of the respondent up to and including termination. If the respondent is a volunteer, corrective action could include sanctions related to the respondent's roles and responsibilities in the General Council or regional council offices and in their community of faith as well as their membership. Corrective action could also include training for the respondent and for the ministry. Corrective action could also include further policy revision, education, training, or procedures within the organization. The corrective action is based on the findings of the investigator, the nature of the complaint, and all relevant circumstances, including any previous discipline.
- R17. If the finding of the investigator is that the complaint is not substantiated, no further action is taken.
- R18. Confidentiality with respect to the findings of an investigation is maintained, except to the extent necessary to implement or defend the corrective or disciplinary action taken, or as required by law. Where corrective or disciplinary action is taken against either the complainant or the respondent, the other party is advised that action has been taken but is not provided with the particulars of that action.
- R19. All of the procedures should be carried out in a timely fashion—in most cases within a three-month period. Exceptions do occur, however, and in cases that require more time the parties are informed of the delay and, if appropriate, the reasons for the delay.

### **Responding to Complaints of Systemic Discrimination**

A complaint alleging that a policy or procedure is discriminatory must first be brought to the attention of the chair of the governing body of the community of faith or the regional council Executive Minister or the General Secretary (depending on where the systemic issue is being experienced).

On receiving a complaint of systemic discrimination, reasonable efforts will be made to resolve the complaint if that is possible. Informal resolution could include amending a policy or procedure on agreement or bringing a proposal (see *The Manual*, section F, Initiating Action and Change).

If the matter cannot be resolved by these methods, a formal complaint may be brought forward to the regional council about a community of faith or to the General Council Executive if the complaint relates to denominational structures or policies alleged to be discriminatory.

Note that the three-month time frame within which complaints against individuals are usually resolved may not apply to complaints of systemic discrimination.

#### **Notes to the Policy**

**Accommodation:** The organization will accommodate the special needs of everyone involved in the process within the church to ensure full access and participation. Accommodation could include providing documents in alternative formats, off-site and after-hours meetings, interpretation, and translation.

**Bad faith, trivial, or vexatious complaints** made by complainants may themselves be a violation of this policy. A bad faith complaint is one that the complainant knows is false or is made for a purpose other than gaining a satisfactory remedy. The decision can be made to refuse to deal with such matters at any stage of the complaint or investigation process. Anyone who is found to have made such a complaint may be subject themselves to a range of penalties similar to those that may be taken when a respondent is found to have discriminated against or harassed another person.

**Confidentiality:** Confidentiality with respect to complaints is maintained to the extent possible, having regard to the circumstances giving rise to the complaint and subject to the church's obligation to conduct a thorough investigation. Information obtained about an incident or complaint of workplace harassment, including identifying information about any individuals involved, will not be disclosed unless the disclosure is necessary for the purpose of investigating or taking corrective action on the incident or complaint, or is otherwise required by law.

**Freedom from reprisal:** Every person with a concern or complaint has the right to bring it forward under this policy without reprisal or threat of reprisal.

**Records:** All materials related to the complaint, including the investigation and outcome, are retained in confidence according to the church's retention policies.

**Review:** This policy will be reviewed as necessary and at least annually.



## Annual Performance Review

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### Purpose

The Annual Review and Development Plan is designed to provide the employee with feedback on past performance, encourage development, support professional growth, and plan performance objectives.

### Policy

All employees will participate in an annual performance review and development plan process with their supervisor based on a common set of organizational competencies and values that all employees are expected to demonstrate in their work.

The central statement “Serving the Church, Living out God’s Good News” is the fundamental and aspirational **Vision** of The United Church of Canada. This is surrounded by five **Organizational Competency Areas**, which have been determined to be key to living out the central vision. The base reflects a common set of values that all employees are expected to demonstrate. It is important to accomplish objectives, but equally important that they are accomplished with the **Values** of The United Church of Canada; respect, integrity, passion and diversity.



The planning and review process is a participatory discussion in which the employee and supervisor provide input and assessment of the work carried out over the past year and develop plans for the coming year. There may be roles for which input from other colleagues, units, or regional councils will be requested.

The accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as individual accommodation plans, leaves, and return-to-work plans shall be taken into account for the purpose of the planning and review.

**Guidelines**

Managers are responsible for:

- Defining and documenting Performance Standards for each role in the work unit;
- Communicating Performance Standards to each incumbent;
- Training and coaching incumbents to achieve the Performance Standards;
- Reviewing and evaluating the employee's progress toward meeting the Performance Standards through regular supervisory contact;
- Establishing a climate that encourages employees to develop their full potential within the organization;
- Taking into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, leaves, and return-to-work plans in the performance review.

**Procedures**

1. Annual Performance Review and Development Plan forms are available from the Ministry and Employment Unit.
2. Supervisors will meet with employees to jointly complete the Annual Performance Review and Development Plan form.
3. Once completed, the employee and supervisor will both sign the Annual Performance Review and Development Plan form, acknowledging that the review has taken place.
4. The completed Annual Performance Review and Development Plan form must be forwarded to Human Resources and a copy provided to the employee.
5. The chair of the General Secretary's Supervision Committee is required to sign the final copy of the Annual Performance Review and Development Plan form for the General Secretary.
6. Progression through the salary scale will be based on a satisfactory performance review.

## **Problem Resolution**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to ensuring that there are appropriate procedures in place related to problem resolution and formal complaints between employees in the General Council Office and Regional Councils. It is recognized that employees may become involved in circumstances where conflict will arise between/among employees in non-supervisory relationships, and where complaints will arise over the application of policies that relate to terms and conditions of employment. It is further recognized that it is in the interest of all involved to have means in place that will assist in the resolution of these conflicts and complaints.

### **Policy**

It is The United Church of Canada's desire that employee disagreements be resolved as quickly as possible. When disagreements arise, it is understood that those involved in the dispute will attempt to resolve the situation together before others become involved. If no resolution is found, the affected parties are then expected to contact their respective supervisors, who will be given an opportunity to resolve the issue.

This policy is intended to encourage dialogue and positive confrontation of issues so that resolution can occur as quickly as possible. If there is no resolution, the Ministry and Employment Unit will be advised and other methods of problem resolution will occur.

This policy is intended to assist in the resolution of:

- conflicts between/among employees who are not in a supervisory relationship; and
- complaints over the application of policy and procedures that impact on the terms and conditions of employment of an employee(s).

It is in the best interest of everyone involved with a conflict or a complaint to have the matter resolved as quickly as possible. An employee(s) who is in a conflict situation or has a complaint is encouraged to bring the matter to the attention of the other party or parties involved so that both may make reasonable efforts to resolve the matter.

### **Procedures**

#### **Problem Resolution for Non-Supervisory Relationship Conflicts**

1. An employee seeking to resolve a conflict with an employee with whom they are not in a supervisory relationship, should first raise the matter with the individual involved and seek to resolve the conflict.
2. If the employee seeking to resolve the conflict is unable to do so, the employee should contact their supervisor to seek assistance in resolving the conflict.
3. When a conflict situation among employees who are not in a supervisory relationship is brought to the attention of a supervisor:
  - The supervisor should gather information related to the conflict situation.
  - The supervisor should bring the parties together and attempt to find a solution to the conflict.

- If one of the parties is under the supervision of another individual, the supervisor should discuss the matter with the other supervisor prior to bringing the parties together.
  - If the conflict is not resolved when the parties meet, the supervisor should discuss the matter with the Ministry and Employment Unit.
  - Upon consultation, the Ministry and Employment Unit may allocate additional internal or external resources specializing in conflict resolution to assist the parties in resolving the conflict. This may include a directive to the employee(s) affirming behavioural expectations of the employer.
  - When a supervisor becomes aware of a conflict among employees in a non-supervisory relationship who are under their supervision, the supervisor should intervene to resolve the conflict through the above procedures.
  - Employees who refuse or fail to make reasonable efforts to resolve such conflicts, or refuse or fail to follow directives of a supervisor, will be disciplined by the employer.
4. If a group of employees raises a complaint against the Executive Officer or employees of the Ministry and Employment Unit, interviews will be conducted by an independent consultant and a member of the Executive of the General Council, appointed by the General Secretary, in consultation with legal counsel. Conclusions and recommendations will be reported to the General Secretary, who may take further action.
  5. If a written complaint is made in regard to the General Secretary, the employee should raise the matter with the Executive Officer, Ministry and Employment Unit, who will ensure it is brought to the attention of the General Secretary's Supervision Committee. The Committee will make the determination regarding further action. Matters related to the performance of the General Secretary are report to the Executive of the General Council who has final authority.

**Problem Resolution for "Terms and Conditions of Employment" Complaints**

1. If an employee has a complaint over the application of policy and procedures that impact on the terms and conditions of employment, the employee must first raise the complaint, verbally or in writing, with their supervisor. If the "terms and conditions of employment" complaint is with respect to supervision, the employee must first raise the concern with the supervisor. If the employee feels that the complaint is still outstanding, they shall raise the complaint, verbally or in writing, with the next level of supervision.
2. If the employee is not satisfied with the response received, the employee may raise the complaint, verbally or in writing, with the Ministry and Employment Unit.
3. The Ministry and Employment Unit shall gather relevant information on the complaint and make reasonable efforts to resolve the complaint with the employee and the supervisor involved.
4. If the complaint is over an action taken by or approved by the Ministry and Employment Unit and discussion with the Executive Officer of the Ministry and Employment Unit does not resolve the issue, the employee should bring the matter to the attention of the General Secretary for consideration and decision.

5. If the employee does not consider the decision of the General Secretary to be a correct and just response to the complaint, the employee may request, in writing, to have an external investigator appointed. The external investigator will conduct an impartial investigation and provide a written report to the General Secretary. If it is concluded that a policy is unclear, it may be necessary to review the policy and make changes so that there is more clarity. For all other matters, after reviewing the external investigator's report, the decision of the General Secretary will be final.

## **Workplace Accommodation: Disability**

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada is committed to removing barriers, wherever practicable, that limit, restrict or prevent people with disabilities from participating fully and equally in its workplaces.

The Policy applies to any employee of The United Church of Canada with a disability who requires accommodation on a temporary and/or permanent basis as well as to prospective employees who may require accommodation during the hiring process.

This Policy establishes processes for successful workplace accommodation and guidance to employees, managers and any other parties involved in the workplace accommodation process.

### **Policy**

The United Church of Canada is committed to meeting its obligations under all applicable human rights and accessibility legislation with respect to providing appropriate accommodation to person with disabilities (including those under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 ("AODA") and Part III Employment Standards of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation made under the AODA).

This Policy is designed to help identify and remove barriers in all aspects of the employment relationship. Where the removal of a barrier would result in undue hardship, accommodation will be provided to the point of undue hardship.

Requests for accommodation for employees with disabilities will be considered individually, on a case by case basis, having regard to the employee's particular medical restrictions/limitations.

An employee requiring accommodation will work collaboratively with their manager in the accommodation process. The Manager, Human Resources will be available for guidance and assistance, as required.

Individualized accommodations plans will be created for employees with disabilities, including those employees who require temporary workplace modifications following absences due to illness or injury.

Accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and individual accommodation plans will be taken into account when managing an employee's performance, and when facilitating opportunities for career advancement.

Accommodation requests will be taken seriously and dealt with in a timely manner. No person will be penalized for making a request, in good faith, for accommodation.

### **Definitions**

**"Accommodation"** means

Any modification to the work or the workplace, including the provision of assistive devices and changes to methods of working, location of work, and/or hours of work, that enable an employee to perform the essential duties of their position;

**"Barrier"** is defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act as

"anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice;"

**“Disability”** means,

- a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- b) a condition of mental retardation impairment or a developmental disability;
- c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- d) a mental disorder; or
- e) an injury or disability for which benefits are claimed or received under the workplace injury or illness insurance plan established by the applicable province.

### **Responsibility**

Each manager is responsible for ensuring the principles outlined in this Policy are adhered to throughout their respective operations.

The employee requesting an accommodation and their immediate manager are responsible for working together cooperatively with the goal of finding a reasonable accommodation and developing an individualized accommodation plan.

### **Process**

#### **Identification of Need**

The need for accommodation may be identified by an employee or prospective employee, or by the applicable manager at any time.

Employees or prospective employees may request the participation of a support person.

During the recruitment process, the United Church shall notify job applicants and the public about its commitment to accommodate those with disabilities, and shall advise those selected for an interview that accommodation is available upon request. If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the United Church shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant’s accessibility needs due to disability.

New employees shall be notified of the United Church policies regarding accommodating employees with disabilities as soon as practicable after their employment begins.

Existing employees will be provided with orientation with respect to this Policy and when new legislation is introduced and policies revised.

Where an employee’s medical treatment program includes the ingestion of medication that may impair the employee’s ability to perform the duties of their position, the employee will be required to inform their manager immediately of the effects of the medication so that appropriate accommodation(s) may be made.

### **Gathering of Relevant Information**

Employees requesting accommodation shall do so by submitting a request, preferably in writing, to their immediate manager.

Employees seeking accommodation are responsible for cooperating in the accommodation process by providing any relevant information, including relevant medical information and by participating in assessments relevant to the determination of their accommodation request.

The employee is not required to disclose the medical diagnosis of their disability. The request for accommodation should:

- a) describe the general nature of their disability;
- b) describe the limitations/restrictions caused by the disability that negatively affect the employee's ability to perform the duties of their position;
- c) describe any accommodation(s) sought and the anticipated duration that the accommodation(s) will be required;
- d) provide sufficient information to confirm the existence of a need for accommodation.

Additional information, including relevant medical information or opinions, may be requested to assist in the determination of whether reasonable accommodation can be achieved and/or how it can be achieved.

Where medical information from an employee's treating medical practitioner is requested, or where an evaluation by an independent medical expert is requested, the United Church's third-party medical adjudication service provider will coordinate the request and will receive the medical information.

The employee's personal medical information shall be kept confidential in accordance with Privacy and Personal Information - Policy 1.11. The employee's personal health information will be used by the United Church's medical adjudication service provider to assist the employee and the manager in the assessment and development of the accommodation plan. The employee's medical-related information will not be disclosed to the employee's manager without the employee's written consent.

### **Creating an Accommodation Plan for the Employee**

The employee and their manager will work together to canvass potential accommodation measures and identify the appropriate workplace accommodation(s) for the employee, in consultation with the Manager, Human Resources, the United Church's medical adjudication service provider and/or an external expert, as may be needed.

Once the appropriate accommodation has been determined, the details will be reduced to writing with a copy given to the employee.

For Ontario employees, in accordance with the AODA O. Reg. 191/11, s. 28(3), individual accommodation plans must be documented and must include:

- how the United Church will provide workplace information in an accessible format, if requested;
- how the United Church will provide accessible emergency information, if needed; and,
- any other accommodation that is to be provided.

The accommodation plan will be provided to the employee in a format respecting any accessibility needs, as appropriate.

The accommodation plan will have information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job.



### **Monitoring the Accommodation Plan**

The manager and employee will review the accommodation plan, as needed and at least once annually, to ensure to it is current and effective.

The employee will advise their manager of any changes in their medical condition that warrant a change to their current accommodation plan.

Any updates to the accommodation plan will be provided to the employee in a format that takes the employee's accessibility needs arising from their disability into consideration.

### **Disputes relating to the Accommodation Plan**

The United Church of Canada recognizes that the accommodation process is a collaboration between the United Church and the employee. However, the primary obligation and the final decision regarding accommodation rests with the United Church.

An employee is entitled to reasonable accommodation, not perfect or preference accommodation.

If the employee is of the view that the accommodation plan is not reasonable, the employee may request that the decision be reviewed by the Manager, Human Resources. If the Manager, Human Resources sustains the accommodation plan as determined by the manager, the Manager, Human Resources will provide the employee with written reasons.

### **Individualized Workplace Response Information**

The United Church of Canada shall provide individualized workplace emergency response information to disabled employees who require it, and to any person designated to assist the disabled employee, with the consent of the disabled employee, and shall review the individualized workplace response information upon the following events:

- a) when the employee moves to a new location in the workplace;
- b) when the employee's overall accommodation needs are reviewed; and
- c) upon review of The United Church of Canada's general emergency response policies.

### **Training**

All employees will be provided with adequate training with respect to the *Human Rights Code* (Ontario), the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the accessibility standards promulgated thereunder.

## Return to Work

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### **Purpose**

The United Church of Canada believes that the successful recovery of employees due to injury or illness depends on early intervention and assistance with rehabilitation and a return-to-work process.

### **Policy**

An employee who has been approved for the United Church Restorative Care Plan (RCP) due to an illness/injury by the United Church's third-party adjudicator is entitled to be re-instated to the pre-illness/injury position. Return to work following an extended absence will be managed by the third-party provider in collaboration with the Ministry and Employment Unit and the Disability Coordinator. \*The return-to-work plan will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as address the following:

- the employee's ability to perform the essential duties of their pre-illness/injury position and whether any accommodation or modified duties may be necessary
- whether suitable alternate work is available for the employee
- whether other employment is available for the employee

\*For more information on accommodation based on disability, please refer to Workplace Accommodation: Disability - Policy 3.6.

### **Guidelines**

If the employee is able to perform the essential duties of their previous position, the employee will be reinstated into that position or offered another position which is comparable in nature.

If the employee is unable to perform the essential duties of their previous role, they will be offered suitable alternate work, if it is available, at the regular wage rated associated with that position.

Every effort will be made to offer alternate work, if available, to the employee considering their abilities, knowledge, expertise, and education. If the employee refuses to accept the offer, the employee will be deemed to have resigned their employment with The United Church of Canada.

### **Procedures**

1. The third-party adjudicator will provide the Ministry & Employment Unit and the Disability Coordinator a letter confirming a return-to-work start date and any temporary or permanent accommodation requirements.
2. Human Resources will work with the employee's supervisor if a gradual return to work with restrictions or modifications is recommended.
3. Human Resources will meet with the employee to review recommended restrictions or modifications, if needed. With the employee, Human Resources will also review the demands of the position, workplace impact, and ability to accommodate.
4. Human Resources will conduct ongoing review of accommodations in collaboration with the supervisor and the employee.
5. Restrictions and modifications will be formally documented and filed in the employee's personnel file.

## Remote Working

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### **Purpose**

Some positions in the General Council and Regional Council Offices may be eligible to work remotely full- or part-time depending on the scope of responsibilities in a position. This may be a permanent or occasional work arrangement.

There may also be times when it is necessary for employees to work from home or a remote location temporarily. During public health crises or emergencies declared by The United Church of Canada or government authorities, usual office locations may be closed for indeterminate periods of time. Staff whose positions permit will be required to undertake their duties and responsibilities remotely, at times with little or no notice. As a crisis subsides, it may continue to be necessary for some staff to continue to work remotely full-time or on a graduated basis until public health and safety provisions allow for a full return to former practices.

The intent of this policy is to outline processes and expectations for employees working from a remote location either temporarily or permanently.

### **Policy**

The United Church of Canada considers remote work to be a viable alternative work arrangement in cases where the employee, the position, and the supervisor are well-suited to such an arrangement. Not all positions are suitable for remote working. The supervisor will assess the position's responsibilities, the employee's circumstances, and the employee's job performance in determining whether a permanent or occasional remote work arrangement is suitable.

This policy does not alter or replace the terms of an existing employment contract. Employees must comply with all policies, guidelines and practices that would apply if the employee were working in an office environment.

### **Process**

1. The United Church may require an employee to work remotely. Terms and conditions will be negotiated.
2. An employee may request to work remotely occasionally or permanently by submitting a written request to their supervisor.
3. The request will outline the employee's rationale for working remotely and provide confirmation that the employee has an appropriate work environment with equipment and tools necessary to carry out the responsibilities of the position without interruption.

4. The supervisor will review the request and assess the following before a decision is reached:
  - a) Whether or not the responsibilities of the position can reasonably be completed while working remotely;
  - b) Whether the operational requirements and working style of the work team and the unit are suitable for remote work arrangements;
  - c) The work schedule associated with the responsibilities of the position;
  - d) Specialized tools and resources that may be required to carry out the responsibilities of the position;
  - e) The employee's proposed remote location;
  - f) The equipment and workspace available to the employee to work remotely;
  - g) The employee's past performance in the position.
5. The employee and the supervisor will discuss the employee's request and determine if the position is appropriate for an occasional or permanent remote work arrangement.
6. The supervisor will recommend and seek final approval from the Executive Minister or Regional Council Executive Minister and consult with Human Resources before informing the employee of a final decision.
7. When an employee requests to work remotely, The United Church of Canada is not responsible for costs associated with remote workspaces, such as mortgage, rent, furniture, lighting, internet, utilities, insurance, personal cell phones, repairs, renovations, or other modifications when the arrangement is at the request of the employee.
8. When The United Church of Canada requires an employee to work remotely, other than when required temporarily during public health crises or emergencies declared by The United Church of Canada or government authorities, it is responsible for pre-approved general office supplies (toner, paper, postage). Accommodation requests will be reviewed on a case by case basis by Human Resources.
9. In consultation with Human Resources, the supervisor reserves the right to modify, suspend or terminate the employee's remote work arrangement at any time based on unit/Regional Council needs, operational needs, staffing requirements, or employee performance.

### **Guidelines for employees**

The following guidelines will apply to any employee who has been approved for a remote work arrangement either temporarily or permanently:

1. **Availability:** Working hours will be consistent with the core operating hours outlined in our policy. Employees are expected to be engaged in work-related activities and responsive to requests throughout the designated working hours for their position. When circumstances preclude availability during core operational hours, the employee must consult with their supervisor and obtain approval for an alternate schedule.

2. **Responsiveness:** Employees are expected to respond to requests from co-workers and supervisors within established hours arranged with the supervisor. Remote employees are expected to be available via email, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, or by phone, and provide timely responses to requests. Supervisors may establish minimum response times and required communication channels if the work involved requires faster response time (i.e. providing support). Employees are encouraged to be available on Microsoft Teams to respond to urgent requests during core work hours.
3. **Performance:** Working remotely should not affect an employee's ability to complete day-to-day functions, including communicating with colleagues, supervising staff, providing service to clients and members, etc. Employees must stay up to date on unit and work events and be available for team, unit, and office meetings. Employees must keep supervisors informed of progress on assignments and seek out support when needed.
4. **Overtime:** Employees working remotely may not work overtime hours without prior approval from their supervisor. Please refer to the Overtime/Compensating Time Policy 2.2 for further details.
5. **Connectivity:** Employees working remotely must have reliable telephone service (either a private line or through the VOIP app provided by the employer) and a suitable internet connection. A suitable internet connection must provide consistent bandwidth that is adequate for videoconferencing and uploading/downloading of large documents and other resources. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that adequate telephone and internet connectivity are available.
6. **Work Environment:** Employees are responsible for providing a safe workspace and furnishings while working remotely, ensuring they have a reasonably quiet and undisturbed working environment for taking calls, joining video calls, etc. Employees are responsible for ensuring that their remote work location is physically safe, that materials, resources and equipment provided by the United Church are secured, and that data and records of the United Church are appropriately stored and protected. It is the employee's responsibility to notify their direct supervisor immediately if the remote workplace becomes unsafe for any reason.  
  
**Security:** All employees are required to maintain security and confidentiality when working remotely and refrain from engaging in inappropriate conduct that could result in legal liability for The United Church of Canada. The United Church has the right and the ability to access, monitor, and record activities on work-issued computers, Internet services, networks, and cloud-based services under its control, including files stored in private areas of its networks and online services. The United Church may also monitor any internet traffic (personal or work-related) that passes through the VPN or local network to ensure compliance with the Information Management and Technology Policy.
8. **Work-related Visitors:** Unless explicitly authorized, employees working remotely may not receive work-related visits from clients, partners, members, or others at the remote workplace.
9. **Privacy:** All employees must ensure they comply with the Information Management and Technology Policy 1.12 as well as relevant Privacy and Information Protection policies. Employees must take care when creating or accessing documents or data that is confidential or subject to privacy legislation. Supervisors must review any privacy concerns with remote staff and discuss with Human Resources if there are significant risks that may arise from allowing the work to be done outside of the office environment.

10. **Equipment:** In compliance with the Information Management and Technology Policy 1.12, employees working remotely must follow ensure that:
  - United Church-approved or -issued devices are used only for United Church work activities;
  - Work documents should never be saved to personal computers or personal cloud storage;
  - Files and records are stored on United Church cloud services (e.g. SharePoint);
  - No files or records are stored on third-party cloud services (e.g. Google, Dropbox, etc.);
  - Software, especially antivirus and antimalware, are functional and updated regularly.
11. **Specialized tools and equipment:** In addition to computers and telecommunication devices, specialized office equipment (printers, scanners, other equipment) may be supplied to the employee to complete their work from home. These devices remain property of the United Church and must be returned at the end of employment. Specialized equipment and furnishings provided by the United Church to as part of a workplace accommodation also remain property of the United Church and must be returned at the end of employment.
12. **Technical Support:** All employees using devices issued by The United Church of Canada may access technical support through the Help Desk ticketing system. For issues with hardware, the employee must make arrangements with Help Desk to have equipment evaluated, updated, serviced, or replaced as appropriate. Employees may not have devices serviced by a third party unless explicitly instructed to do so.
13. **Reimbursable office expenses:** Employees working remotely may receive reimbursement for general office supplies (i.e. toner, paper, postage) with prior approval of their supervisor.
14. **All policies apply:** All other policies outlined in the Human Resources Policy manual apply to employees working remotely (i.e. Vacation, Sick Leave, Overtime, etc.).