

**Human Resources Policy
Guidelines
For Parishes
2023**

**Archdiocese of Cincinnati
Department of Human
Resources**

August 2023

My Dear Friends,

Attached you will find the latest revision of the sample Human Resources Policy Guidelines for Parishes that I have approved. Employees of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and its affiliates are employed at will and nothing in the guidelines creates or is intended to create a contract of employment. The Archdiocese may amend or change the policy guidelines at its discretion.

The reason for this publication is two-fold, the first is because God loves and prizes us human creatures. The second is because parish priests are now expected to be skilled in Human Resources Management.

The basic good news of our Christian faith is that God loves us. God loves us so much that the Second Person of the Trinity became a human being in order to demonstrate God's love for us and to model the way in which God expects us to respond to that love. This is the foundational truth on which is based the Catholic Christian teaching about human dignity.

Every human being is a creature of infinite worth, a worth that does not arise from our own making but from God's love for us. No human being is a disposable commodity. We all share the dignity, the worth of being daughters and sons of God. The exercise of Christian life is simply the working out of that dignity in our relationships with God, with one another, and with ourselves. What does human dignity mean in practice? That is the question that we all face each day.

The reality of human dignity is at the root of the relationship between pastor and parish staff member, between various kinds of Church ministers, between employer and employee. What do pastors have the right to expect from those who work with and for them in the parish ministry? What do employees have a right to expect from those to whom they are responsible?

Obviously, everybody has the right to expect to be treated as a son or daughter of God. But when it comes to specific practices, what is expected is not always so obvious. Sometimes there are clashes of expectation in which one party believes that he or she is being treated in a way that is in disaccord with the dignity of a human person. Sometimes one party takes things for granted which the other does not. Sometimes there are honest disagreements in which both parties believe they are each acting in accord with the justice that human dignity requires.

Many priests in the contemporary Church find themselves dealing with issues like these. As pastors they are responsible for a number of fellow workers in their parish ministry: a school principal, schoolteachers, deacons, a coordinator or director of religious education, perhaps one or two involved in other ministries, plus maintenance and support personnel. They wish

to conduct themselves in a way which is in accord with the teaching of the gospel about human dignity, compassion, fairness. At the same time, they are aware that their responsibility to the diocese and to the parish demands that they exercise a certain degree of direction and supervision. They are both administrative leader and Human Resources Director of what is, in practice, a small corporation. Some priests, perhaps many, feel that they need some help in these responsibilities. This booklet is an attempt to provide some of that help.

The purpose of these sample Human Resources Policy Guidelines and policies is to enable priests and other Church ministers and employees to clarify ahead of time what each expects of the other. Both employer and employee, by reason of their dignity as human persons, have the right to be clear about what their relationship entails. These sample guidelines are intended to provide a model on which these relationships can be outlined and defined when the relationship begins so as to avoid misunderstanding and tensions later. It is not fair to expect an employee to carry out the demands of a position if these demands are expressed only in a general and vague fashion. It is not fair to an employer to be expected to evaluate someone's performance if there are no clear criteria on which such an evaluation can be based. It is not fair to anybody to have to work together in a situation in which prerogatives and benefits are not clearly established. Human dignity demands something more. So does the execution of pastoral responsibility.

Some of the items treated here are matters of ecclesiastical or civil law from which little or no deviation is acceptable. These items have been clearly indicated.

Other matters are presented as guidelines or samples which call for refinement or specification at the local level. These models should not be uncritically adopted but used as a starting point for more detailed treatment.

Most important of all, however, is that there are written policies available to everyone. They are the foundation of contemporary Christian Human Resources Management.

The tenor of working relationships can be enhanced, and misunderstandings, mistakes, and tensions can be avoided if everybody knows where they stand from the very beginning of a collaborative undertaking. We owe it to our shared human dignity and to the pastoral ministry of the Church to do whatever we can to make working together for the Church an authentically Christian experience. It is my hope that what is offered here will be a step in that direction.

Most Reverend Dennis M. Schnurr
Archbishop of Cincinnati

ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

HUMAN RESOURCES HANDBOOK FOR _____ PARISH

PLEASE PRINT

Employee Name:

Last

First

Middle Initial

Job Title:

Parish

Verification Statement

I verify that I have read and understand the policies and procedures outlined in the Human Resources Policy Handbook for _____ Parish. I understand that my employment is at will, which means that I am free to leave employment at any time and the Parish is free to terminate employment at any time, and that nothing in the handbook creates or is intended to create a contract of employment. I further understand that my at-will employment relationship with the Parish can only be modified by an agreement, in writing, signed by both myself and the Pastor. I agree to abide by these policies and procedures and also understand that the Parish may amend or change the policies at its discretion without notice.

Employee Signature

Date

RETURN FORM TO: Pastor

CONTENTS

1.0	Employment Policy	1
1.1	Selection of Personnel	1
1.2	Hiring Practice	1
1.3	Employees Affected by the Policies	1
1.4	Types of Employment	2
1.5	Employment Procedure	3
2.0	Working Conditions	4
2.1	Office Hours	4
2.2	Lunch Periods	4
2.3	Overtime	5
2.4	Reimbursement for Job-Related Expenses	5
2.5	Dress Code / Personal Hygiene	5
3.0	Job Performance	6
3.1	Job Classification and Description	6
3.2	Performance Evaluation	6
3.3	Human Resources Records	6
3.4	Health Problems	7
4.0	Employee Benefits	8
4.1	Paid Absence Benefits	8
4.1.1	Holidays	8
4.1.2	Vacation	8
4.1.3	Family and Medical Leave Act	9
4.1.4	Sick Days	9
4.1.5	Emergency Days	10
4.1.6	Civic Duty	10
4.1.7	Maternity/Paternity Leave	10
4.2	Unpaid Absence Benefits	11
4.3	Archdiocesan Benefit Plans	11
4.3.1	Group Health Care Plan	11
4.3.2	Group Life Insurance	12
4.3.3	Retirement Benefit – 401(k) Plan	12
4.3.4	Group Long Term Disability	13
4.4	Government Programs	13
4.4.1	Unemployment Compensation	13
4.4.2	Workers' Compensation	13
4.4.3	Social Security	13
4.5	Voluntary Benefit Programs	13
4.5.1	Dental Insurance	13
4.5.2	Term Life Insurance	14
4.5.3	Vision Insurance	14
5.0	Termination	14
5.1	Dismissal	14
5.2	Procedure for Dismissal of Employees	15
5.3	Reorganization/Reduction in Force	15
5.4	Resignation	15
5.5	Retirement	15

6.0	Administration	15
6.1	Administration of the Policies	15
6.2	Reference Checks/Requests for Information	15
6.3	Employee Problem Solving Process	16
6.4	Harassment	17
6.5	Information Technology	17
6.6	Fit for Duty	17
6.7	Conflict of Interest Policy	18
6.8	Ethics and Conduct Policy	18
6.9	Records and Retention	18
6.10	Gifts and Gratuity	19
6.11	Weapons in the Workplace	19
6.12	Corrective Counseling	19
6.13	Solicitation & Distribution	20
6.14	Social Media Policy	20
6.15	Workplace Violence Prevention Policy	20
6.16	Association with Programs	21
6.17	Issuance of Statements	22
6.18	Telephone Usage	23
6.19	Driving Policy	23
6.20	ADA Compliance and Requests for Accommodation	23
7.0	Volunteers	23

CAUTION!

The sections enclosed in shaded boxes are policies mandated by either the Archdiocese of Cincinnati or governmental regulatory agencies. These policies may not be changed at the parish level.

1.0 EMPLOYMENT POLICY

1.1 Selection of Personnel

_____ Parish is an Equal Opportunity Employer. It is the policy of the Parish to promote equal opportunity in the areas of recruitment, employment, training, development, transfer, and promotion where appropriate. Employment in the Parish and subsequent development, transfer or promotion will go to those individuals whose training and experience most nearly qualify them for the positions offered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, disability or national origin, or other applicable, legally recognized protected classification, except where such classification is a bona fide occupational qualification. By the very nature of many parish teachings and ministerial positions, a faith commitment may be a necessary requirement for employment.

Because the defense and promotion of human rights is inseparable from the Gospel mandate, the Parish will ensure equal opportunities for protected classes including, but not limited to, the disabled, minorities and women.

1.2 Hiring Practice

The Parish (when necessary and appropriate) advertises position openings, takes applications, screens applicants, and considers the qualified candidates for further interview. The hiring agent then has the final responsibility for the hiring and training of personnel. Prior to starting work, eligibility for employment must be verified according to the Immigration Reform & Control Act of 1986. The appropriate forms must be completed by the prospective employee and the employer and be kept on file.

Details of the employment procedure used by the Parish may be found in Section 1.5, Employment Procedure.

1.3 Employees Affected by the Policies

The lifestyles of those who make up the staff of the Parish vary considerably and generally consist of lay people, deacons, priests, and men and women religious. This situation creates rather complex relationships, insofar as the application of human resources policies is concerned. In some instances, there may be prior relationships, such as that of bishop to priest, which may take precedence. But in the interest of consistency and fairness in administration, these policies apply to all employees unless otherwise stated.

The very nature of a given position may require certain other conditions of employment. Any conditions or circumstances contrary to, or in addition to, these policies will be specified in the role description, the hiring letter or similar document.

Your employment classification determines which pay policies and benefits are applicable to you. The Fair Labor Standards Act, which is the federal law governing wages and hours, sets standards for an employee's classification.

_____ Parish complies with these regulations by assessing the job duties, level of authority and compensation of each of its employees against the standards set forth in the act as follows:

1. **Exempt Employees**

Exempt employees are those salaried employees holding executive, administrative, professional, or outside sales positions who are not covered by the Act.

2. **Non-Exempt**

Those employees not included in the categories above are Non-Exempt. Non-Exempt employees are generally paid by the hour and are eligible for overtime pay (at one and one-half times base) for hours worked in excess of 40 per week. Non-Exempt employees must work in concert with their supervisor regarding expectations of the hours to be worked each week and overtime hours, if any. Overtime hours must be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

While the Parish strives to pay employees correctly, sometimes mistakes can occur. If a mistake has been made, the Parish, once notified, will promptly make the necessary correction. Therefore, if an employee has questions or concerns about any deductions from their salary, immediately contact your supervisor, without fear of reprisal. Retaliation will not be tolerated. Reports of alleged improper deductions will be promptly investigated. If it is determined that an improper deduction took place, the employee will be promptly reimbursed for any such improper deduction.

1.4 Types of Employment

1. **Regular full-time:** An employee who is regularly scheduled to work at least 40 hours per week.
2. **Regular part-time:** An employee who is regularly scheduled to work less than 40 hours per week.
 - a. A regular part-time employee who is regularly scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week is eligible for prorated sick leave, vacation, holiday, long-term disability (LTD) insurance, life insurance, 401(k) Plan and workers' compensation, if the employee satisfies the eligibility requirements of each of these plans or programs.

- b. A regular part-time employee who is regularly scheduled to work fewer than 20 hours per week is not eligible for paid sick leave, vacation, and holidays, but is eligible for workers' compensation.
3. **Temporary or Seasonal:** An employee who is hired to work for a limited length of time (less than 3 months) to perform a specific task. This employee is not eligible for vacation or other Parish benefits but is entitled to coverage under Workers' Compensation Insurance.

All employees must be in full compliance with the Decree on Child Protection. This includes staying current with reading quarterly *SafeParish Bulletins*. Failure to comply at pre-hire or on an ongoing basis will lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

1.5 **Employment Procedure**

1. Advertising the Position

When a position becomes vacant, or a new position is created, the hiring agent makes known the position with the requirements and qualifications needed. Notice may be placed in any of the following when it is appropriate for the position: the Parish bulletin, neighborhood or local newspapers, Archdiocesan website or publications, or information may be sent to placement offices of local colleges or schools depending on the type of position available. Such ads/information will include the title of the position, whether it is a full or part time position, a brief description of responsibilities and duties, the deadline for application and where the application should be sent.

2. The Application Process

- a. A procedure has been established for the application process. For certain positions like a principal of a school, a search committee which includes Parish representation may be formed. The Pastor or his designate will chair the search committee.

Applicants for all other positions should follow a standard application process which includes:

1. Completion of an application form.
2. Pre-employment interview.
3. Assessment of the applicant's experience. A transcript of grades or copies of degrees, certificates or licenses may be required.
4. Reference checks. This includes verifying degrees earned at educational institutions and calling former employers to verify work dates and most recent position held. It requires the hiring

agent to attempt gaining information on other “softer” skills (i.e. reliability, promptness, time management skills, ability to work with others, etc.).

5. Objective work-related tests where applicable, e.g. typing, spelling, etc.

Present employees should be given the opportunity to apply for the position in order to utilize their training and expertise.

- b. New employees will be selected by the hiring agent. When a candidate is hired, the hiring agent notifies the candidate in writing, stating the position title, salary, name of supervisor and starting date.
- c. If the candidate accepts employment with the Parish, the Pastor or designate places the information (see item b above) in the employee's human resources file along with the candidate's application form and reference information.

3. Post-Hiring Procedures/Orientation

When the new employee reports to work, he/she will be given the necessary forms to complete and given an explanation of employee benefits as they apply to his/her type of employment.

New employees will also be given a complete job description and a copy of the Human Resources Policies of the Parish.

2.0 **WORKING CONDITIONS**

2.1 **Office Hours**

The normal work week is 40 hours for a full-time employee. Parish office hours are generally 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

As a general rule, regularly scheduled work hours should not be interrupted by personal appointments or medical appointments. When an appointment must be scheduled during work hours, the employee should consult with the supervisor for approval of the time arrangements.

2.2 **Lunch Periods**

Employees should schedule lunch in consultation with the supervisor to insure adequate coverage of the job.

2.3 Overtime

The Fair Labor Standards Act establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, and equal pay provisions for employees. Some employees are excluded from the minimum wage and/or overtime provisions by specific exemptions based on the salary/wage they earn and the type of work they do. Only those who are classified as non-exempt per the overtime provisions of the Act are entitled to overtime pay. Exempt employees are those salaried employees holding Executive, Administrative, Professional or Sales positions. To qualify for the Executive, Administrative and Professional exemption an employee must be paid at least a minimum salary of \$684.00 per week or \$35,568.00 annually.

Authorized overtime of non-exempt employees is compensated at the regular rate of pay up to 40 hours. Non-exempt employees will be paid 1.5 times the regular rate for hours worked in a week above 40 hours.

It is permissible, however, when an employee works extra hours during one or more days to provide time off during the same week at straight time, as long as total hours actually worked do not exceed 40 in the work week. For purposes of counting overtime hours, holidays, vacation, sick leave, and other paid time off are not counted toward actual hours worked in a week for calculating required overtime payments. (e.g., an employee whose total hours equal 48 hours during a week but includes 8 hours sick time is not entitled to any overtime pay).

All overtime must have the prior approval of the supervisor.

2.4 Reimbursement for Job-Related Expenses

Employees will be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of job-related duties. Local transportation to and from meetings, etc., will be reimbursed at the rate established by the Internal Revenue Service each year. Local transportation does not include traveling to and from home to work.

With prior approval of the supervisor, the cost of attending meetings, conferences, or other official business also will be reimbursed. Original receipts are required for reimbursement of expenses. For mileage reimbursement, travel to/from the location needs to be clearly identified on the expense reimbursement form along with the business reason for the travel and the number of miles driven.

2.5 Dress Code/Personal Hygiene

An employee's attire during work hours and work-related activities shall be appropriate to the duties of the position, to the safety of the employee and other individuals, and to the probability of public contact. Employees are required to use good habits of grooming, personal hygiene, and dress that are consistent with the responsibilities of one's position and service to the Roman Catholic Church. Resolution of questions concerning dress is at the discretion of the Pastor.

3.0 JOB PERFORMANCE

3.1 Job Classification and Description

Job classification refers to the title of the position. Job description refers to the list of duties and responsibilities of a given position. Individual job descriptions shall include the following and be provided to the respective employee:

- A job classification (title) which accurately conveys the function of the position.
- The minimum requirements and qualifications for the position.
- The duties and responsibilities of the position.
- The relationship of each classification to other classifications as it applies to lines of authority, responsibility, channels of communication and accountability.

3.2 Performance Evaluation

An employee's immediate supervisor will periodically evaluate the employee's performance. This evaluation may occur on an annual basis or at other time intervals. The purpose of the evaluation session is to allow the employee and the supervisor to set goals for the future, evaluate the success with which previously set goals have been met, commend the employee for work well done, and help improve performance when necessary. The job description is a useful guide for goal setting and evaluation.

Both employee and supervisor will sign the evaluation to signify that it has been read and discussed. The employee will receive a copy and a copy will be placed in the human resources file of the employee.

3.3 Human Resources Records

A cumulative human resources record is maintained for each employee in the office of the Pastor or in the office of his delegate. It contains: the employment application form; references; confirmation of employment; work assignments; written evaluations; correspondence; record of salaries and increments; sick leave, vacation and leave accrued and taken. All human resources records are confidential and available only to the employee and appropriate supervisory personnel. All medical records must be maintained separately from the Human Resource file per Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. No information is released without authorization of the Pastor or his representative or without the written approval of the employee.

It is required that all employees keep their respective supervisors and the Pastor promptly informed of any change in address, telephone number, marital or dependency status.

Human resources records are available to employees for review provided they make a timely and reasonable request and that the viewing of the file is done during business hours. Human resources records are the property of and remain the property of the Parish.

3.4 Health Problems

The Pastor or supervisor may request a physician's statement with an absence of three or more consecutive days, or when frequent short absences due to illness interfere with the ability to perform the duties of the job.

If an employee arrives at work with obvious symptoms of being sick such as fever, excessive coughing or sneezing, vomiting, or chills, that employee should be considered unfit for duty and should be asked by his or her supervisor to leave work. From the hour of departure, the employee will take sick leave and a plan for return to work should be determined by the employee and his or her immediate supervisor. During a time of pandemic, the Pastor will determine any additional protocols for making the work environment as safe as possible for all employees.

Entering onto the premises of the Parish and having personal contact with other employees involves a certain degree of risk, namely of acquiring a communicable disease, including COVID-19, and then potentially passing it on to others, including family members. Due to the highly contagious nature of COVID-19, the characteristics of the virus, and the personal contact with other employees, there is an elevated risk that an employee may contract the disease simply by being in the building, or at any Parish function.

After carefully considering the risks involved and having the opportunity to discuss these risks with any healthcare professional(s) of their choosing, each employee voluntarily and willingly accepts those risks in reporting to work. Employees who have underlying health concerns which may place them at greater risk of contracting any communicable disease, including COVID-19, should consult with a health care professional. Additionally, while adherence to safety and precautionary measures (e.g., social distancing guidelines, facemasks, handwashing, etc.) may reduce possible exposure to the risk of contracting a communicable disease, the possibility of serious illness and death remains.

Each employee has an obligation to the Parish and its employees to take certain precautions and make certain disclosures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as outlined by the State of Ohio and the applicable local public health department.

4.0 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

4.1 Paid Absence Benefits

4.1.1 Holidays

_____ Parish observes the following holidays:

January 1	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day (last Monday in May)	Christmas Eve (a half day)
July 4	Christmas Day
Labor Day	New Year's Eve (a half day)

When January 1, July 4 or December 25 falls on Saturday, it will be observed on the previous Friday. When any one of these dates falls on Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday. When Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve fall on Saturday, the employee will be eligible for one additional holiday to be taken later.

If, due to parish needs, an employee is required to work on a holiday, an additional day with pay will be granted.

Regular full-time employees are eligible for all holidays with pay. Regular part-time employees will be paid for those holidays which fall on their normal workdays. If the holidays do not fall on normal workdays, no additional time or compensation will be paid. Employees on lay-off, or leaves of absence, are not entitled to holiday pay.

4.1.2 Vacation

The length of vacation time is determined by years of employment. Full-time employees are eligible for paid vacation as follows:

- 1 week vacation – after six months of employment*
- *(To be taken prior to first anniversary date)
- 2 weeks' vacation - after 1 year of employment
- 3 weeks' vacation - after 5 years of employment
- 4 weeks' vacation - after 10 years or more of employment

Vacation time is accumulated from the date of hire. A regular part-time employee is eligible for vacation pro-rated in relationship to normal weekly hours regularly scheduled versus the normal work week.

Vacation schedules must be approved by the supervisor in order to ensure that the Parish duties will be covered at all times. Vacation pay will be included in the regular pay schedule. Any other arrangement for vacation pay must be authorized by the Parish administration.

An annual vacation is important for rest and renewal. Vacation may be taken at any time following the employee's anniversary date that is convenient for the Parish. Vacation time may not be accumulated from year to year except under unusual circumstances, and only with the supervisor's permission. Accrued vacation time not taken by the anniversary date of hire is forfeited. Vacation time may not be advanced prior to an employee's anniversary date.

If an employee leaves the employ of the Parish, unused earned vacation days will be compensated at the regular rate of pay.

4.1.3 Family and Medical Leave Act

Parish provides eligible employees up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave in compliance with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). FMLA is designed to help employees balance their work and family responsibilities by allowing them to take reasonable leave for certain family and medical reasons.

Family Medical Leave of Absence is available for eligible employees for up to twelve weeks during a twelve-month period for the following reasons: (i) the birth of the employee's child and to care for the newborn child; (ii) the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care; (iii) when the employee is needed to care for a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition; (iv) when the employee is unable to perform the functions of his or her position because of a serious health condition (as defined by the FMLA); or (v) for Military Family Leave (a qualifying exigency or care for an injured service member). The complete text of the Family & Medical Leave Policy is available online at: [Family and Medical Leave Policy](#).

4.1.4 Sick Days

Sick days for regular full-time employees are accumulated at the rate of one and one-quarter days per month (15 days per year) from the date of hire. Sick leave is cumulative to 130 working days (26 weeks). Sick leave for regular part-time employees scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week is accumulated on a pro-rated basis.

In the case of prolonged absence due to illness, including the inability to work for physical reasons associated with pregnancy and childbirth, a position (either the one held at the time leave began or a comparable position at a comparable rate of pay) may be held for 130 working days once in any 52-week period. The employer reserves the right to require written verification of illness after a reasonable length of time.

A maximum of 10 days per calendar year may be used for instances in which the employee is needed to care for the illness or injury of a spouse, child, parent, or close personal relation who depends upon the employee for care.

All absences due to illness are to be reported to the immediate supervisor prior to the start of the employee's workday. The parish will provide a system for the maintenance of sick leave records. Unused sick leave is not reimbursed with pay upon separation, and sick leave may not be used as extra vacation time.

4.1.5 Emergency Days

Up to ten of the fifteen sick leave days may be used each year for emergency reasons, i.e. flooded basement, car problems, or death in the immediate family.

4.1.6 Civic Duty

If selected to serve on a jury, an employee will be paid the difference between the compensation received from the court and the regular base pay. The employee must give the supervisor a copy of the notification of jury duty selection and a statement from the court showing the rate of compensation paid by the court. On any day that court is excused, the employee is expected to report for work at the Parish.

Employees who are subpoenaed by a court for personal or family matters may use an emergency leave day. Employees who are subpoenaed in connection with their work as an employee of the Parish will be paid their regular base pay for their time away from work to comply with the subpoena.

4.1.7 Maternity/Paternity Leave

In order to assist parents bringing newborn/adopted children into their homes, employees of the Parish will be provided with six weeks paid maternity/paternity leave, commencing with the birth/adoption of the child. In addition, parents suffering a pregnancy loss, including miscarriage or stillbirth, will be provided with two weeks of paid maternity/paternity leave. The leave must be completed within twelve weeks of the birth/adoption of a child or loss of pregnancy. This leave must be used minimally in weekly increments. Further time off may be requested in accord with the provisions of FMLA Section 4.1.3. In order to qualify for a paid maternity/paternity leave, the employee must have completed one year of employment with the Parish.

Upon receipt of acceptable proof of placement, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati will provide an employee up to 5 days per calendar year of paid leave following the placement of a child in connection with foster care. The purpose of paid leave is to enable the employee to fulfill an Ohio requirement of a doctor's examination, visits from other affiliated officials and general needs of the child. Should additional days be needed, refer to Section 4.1.3.

4.2 Unpaid Absence Benefits

Leaves of Absence

An employee may make a written request to the Pastor for a leave without pay for up to one year. The request must be for a compelling medical reason acceptable to and approved in writing by the above. Re-employment at the conclusion of a one year leave is dependent on the availability of an appropriate position. After six months of unpaid leave an employee's position may be filled. The employee may continue on unpaid leave for up to twelve months. Leaves covered by the FMLA are addressed in Section 4.1.3.

Military Leave

Employees inducted into the military, or who are members of the National Guard will be granted duty leave without pay and without loss of accumulated service as, and to the extent, provided by law. See Section 4.1.3.

4.3 Archdiocesan Benefit Plans

Eligible employees who regularly work 30 or more hours a week or teach 15 classroom hours a week and meet other eligibility requirements are entitled to Medical, Dental, Vision and FSA benefits, as well as Group Life Insurance, Long Term Disability (LTD) Insurance, and the 401(k) Plan. All employees who are scheduled to work 20 or more hours per week but less than 30 hours per week are eligible for Group Life Insurance, Long Term Disability (LTD) Insurance, and the 401(k) Plan. The eligibility and other terms and conditions of each of these benefit plans are established and governed by the insurance policies and formal plan documents which set forth their terms and conditions. The Archdiocese of Cincinnati reserves the right to amend or terminate any of the benefit plans described in Sections 4.3 – 4.5.3 at any time as permitted by law.

4.3.1 The Health Care Plan of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati

Parish employees participate in the Archdiocesan self-insured, comprehensive, major medical plan, presently administered by the Anthem Blue Access (PPO Plan). The Archdiocese of Cincinnati voluntarily complies with federal PPO regulations.

For an eligible employee not covered on another plan, the Parish pays the cost for single health care coverage less the employee contribution. If the spouse or child(ren) of a full-time employee is not eligible for other group health coverage, the cost (less the employee contribution) will be paid by the Parish for the family coverage. A married employee whose spouse and/or child(ren) are eligible for coverage under another employer group plan but chooses to cover his/her spouse and/or child(ren) under the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Health Care Plan, will be required to contribute a monthly premium for dependent coverage. Please note: there is no coordination of benefits, and participants can be on only one plan.

4.3.2 [Group Life Insurance](#)

Eligible employees are covered by a group life insurance policy. The premiums are paid entirely by the Parish. For further details, please refer to the plan booklet.

4.3.3 [Retirement Benefit – 401\(k\) Plan](#)

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati offers a 401(k) Plan that provides eligible employees the opportunity to make voluntary contributions with investment choices that have favorable tax advantages. The Archdiocese of Cincinnati will make bi-weekly contributions to the Plan equal to 4% of the employee's earnings. The 401(k) Plan is intended to help employees supplement their retirement savings

If you are a new or rehired Eligible Employee, you are subject to "automatic enrollment" in the Plan at a rate of 6% of your compensation. After you satisfy the Plan's general eligibility rules [i.e., age 21 and 30 days of employment], you will automatically be enrolled in the Plan as of the next administratively feasible after the entry date coinciding or following the satisfaction of eligibility and participation requirements with 6% of your paycheck deducted and contributed to the Plan as a Pre-Tax contribution. If you do not want to enroll in the Plan at the 6% contribution rate and you would like to contribute a different amount or no amount of your paycheck, you must timely complete the online enrollment process upon receipt of your PIN letter and instructions from Empower Retirement.

The 401(k) Plan replaces the Defined Benefit Plan and the 403(b) Plan. As of December 31, 2010, both Plans were frozen. The frozen assets of the Defined Benefit Plan will continue to be administered by UMR. Effective January 1, 2011, no additional benefit credit could be earned for future service or compensation. Also, current employees who have not yet vested in the Defined Benefit Plan can still become vested by achieving the required vesting period through continued employment.

Religious are covered by congregational retirement plans. The Parish contributes to these plans according to the schedule agreed upon by the Archbishop and the Major Superiors of Congregations of Religious serving in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

4.3.4 Group Long Term Disability

Lay employees are also covered by a long term disability plan to indemnify wages against loss during periods of total disability. The cost of the plan is paid entirely by the Parish. For details of eligibility and benefits, please refer to the plan booklet. Although religious men and women are not covered under this plan, an equivalent amount should be paid to the religious congregation.

4.4 Government Programs

4.4.1 Unemployment Compensation

The Ohio Unemployment law provides for the temporary assistance to employees who are lay persons or permanent deacons who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. Though exempt from this law for employees, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati voluntarily provides coverage. Premiums are paid entirely by the Parish. An equal percentage is paid to the congregation for men and women religious. The fund is presently administered by T & W Employer Services, Inc.

4.4.2 Workers' Compensation

All employees of the Parish are covered under Ohio law for job-related illness or injury. Premiums are paid entirely by the Parish. Job-related illness or injury must be reported immediately to the supervisor/business manager.

4.4.3 Social Security

Parish lay employees are covered under the Federal Social Security program for retirement benefits and other survivor and disability benefits. The Parish contributes the amount required for each lay employee as established by this program. An equal percentage is paid to the congregation for men and women religious.

4.5 Voluntary Benefit Programs

4.5.1 Dental Insurance

Parish employees who qualify for benefits are eligible to enroll in a voluntary dental plan. The cost of the plan is the responsibility of the employees. The Parish will utilize payroll deductions.

4.5.2 Term Life Insurance

Parish employees who qualify for benefits are eligible to enroll for voluntary term life insurance during open enrollment or when newly hired. The cost for this insurance is the responsibility of the employees. The Parish will utilize payroll deductions.

4.5.3 Vision Insurance

Parish employees who qualify for benefits may select single or family vision coverage administered by a third-party administrator. As a voluntary plan, the entire cost of vision insurance is the full responsibility of the employee.

5.0 Termination

5.1 Dismissal

An employee may be dismissed for unsatisfactory work performance, habitual or excessive absences or tardiness, violation of Parish policies or other inappropriate behavior. The decision to dismiss an employee shall be made by the immediate supervisor in consultation with the Pastor. Dismissal may occur after the employee has received a written warning and has been given an opportunity to improve performance or conduct. The warning statement is to be signed by both employee and supervisor and a copy is to be placed in the employee's human resources file. However, in some situations immediate dismissal may be appropriate. The reasons for immediate dismissal may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

1. Insubordination or intimidation;
2. Condition unfit for duty such as reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including medical marijuana;
3. Theft or misappropriation of property or funds belonging to the Parish, to employees, or to parishioners;
4. Conduct contrary to or detrimental to the religious and professional character of the Parish or the policies;
5. Serious breach of confidentiality.
6. Other inappropriate behavior of a significant nature or degree.

5.2 Procedure for Dismissal of Employees

A discharged employee will receive written notice of discharge and a copy will be placed in his/her human resources file. Unused accumulated vacation pay will be given along with earned wages. The employee will also be given written notification regarding other benefit status.

5.3 Reorganization/Reduction in Force

The Parish has the right to reorganize its work force and/or to reduce its work force, either permanently or temporarily, in its sole discretion. If the Parish makes the determination to reduce its work force, it will do so on the basis of its assessment of job requirements, performance, length of service, and any other factors deemed relevant by the Parish in its sole discretion.

If an employee is released as a result of a reduction in work force, the date of termination will be set with at least four weeks' severance pay and any unused vacation pay. Severance pay shall be at the employee's regular rate of pay.

5.4 Resignation

Employees are requested to give their supervisor a minimum of two weeks written notice of the intent to terminate.

5.5 Retirement

The Parish does not have a mandatory retirement age. For the normal retirement age with full retirement benefits, refer to the Archdiocesan Lay Employee Pension Plan and/or 401(k) Plan. The formal plan documents govern eligibility and other terms and conditions of the plan.

6.0 Administration

6.1 Administration of the Policies

The Pastor has the responsibility for the administration of the policies contained in this handbook and is also responsible for interpretation of these policies.

6.2 Reference Checks/Requests for Information

Requests for information about employees and/or former employees beyond the name, employment dates and position title will be handled at the discretion of the Pastor. If factual information must be released at the employee's request to secure a loan or proceed with a business transaction, the employee must first send a written authorization to the Pastor or Business Manager.

Reference checks will be directed to the pastor. An example of an exception to this policy would be the record of a terminated employee, discharged for activity resulting in a criminal conviction.

Written requests for information from the Social Security Administration, agents who administer unemployment compensation and other government agencies and as required by law may be answered without the employee's written authorization.

6.3 Employee Problem Solving Process

Parish human resources policies are intended to promote equitable treatment of all employees. On occasion, however, claims that an employment condition is unjust or inequitable, or that a provision of the human resources policies has been improperly, unjustly, or inequitably applied may arise. In the event that these situations cannot be resolved to the mutual satisfaction of employee and employer, a procedure for resolution of the situation may be initiated.

Process for Reconciliation

1. The employee prepares a formal complaint and a suggested solution in writing to his/her immediate supervisor.
2. If the problem is not resolved at this level, the employee presents the complaint to the Pastor. The Pastor has three days to meet with the employee to discuss the problem.
3. If the problem is not resolved at this level, the employee may request the formation of an independent panel of three persons. This panel is composed of one representative of the employee, one representative of the Pastor, and one representative chosen by mutual agreement of the other two panel members.
4. This panel of three meets as soon as possible to review the situation, hearing from all necessary parties.
5. The panel arrives at a decision within one week after the hearing. The decision of the panel is final. The review panel has no authority to add to, subtract from or modify the policy. The panel has no power to award a monetary settlement.

6.4 Harassment

Introduction

_____ Parish is firmly opposed to any form of harassment in the workplace. Specifically forbidden is harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability and sexual harassment. Not only is harassment offensive to the individual, it is offensive to the values of the Gospel and the Church's teachings on the dignity of the human person. Any employee should be able to work in an atmosphere free of harassment and intimidation.

The complete text of the Harassment Policy is available online at: [Harassment Policy](#).

6.5 Information Technology

All computer systems (including electronic mail and all word-processing equipment and materials) and the voice mail system are property of the Parish. The Parish reserves the right to monitor, inspect, or access an employee's computer, voice mail system or electronic media at any time with or without notice. The Parish also may retrieve any information or material retained in any such system. There is no expectation of privacy in any matter created, received, stored, or sent from any computer system or the voice mail system. Additionally, the recording of any conversations, whether in person or over the telephone, is prohibited unless it is by mutual consent. The complete text of the Information Technology Policy is available online at: [Information Technology Policy](#).

All employees are required to sign the [Information Technology Disclosure Statement](#). Failure to comply with any of the provisions of the Information Technology Policy will be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

6.6 Fit for Duty

The Parish expects all employees to report for work in a condition that will allow them to perform the essential functions of their job without jeopardizing the safety and security of the working environment for themselves and others. The Fit for Duty Policy provides a list of general warning signs that indicate that an employee may be unfit for duty and provides uniform procedures that must be followed when management determines that an employee is unfit for duty. The complete text of the Fit for Duty Policy is available online at: [Fit For Duty](#). Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this Fit for Duty Policy will be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

6.7 Conflict of Interest

The Parish expects responsible individuals to avoid conflicts of interest by not allowing outside obligations, financial interests or other activities to interfere with their obligations and commitments to their work. Responsible individuals are those who hold decision-making, or policy setting positions or significantly influence decisions with respect to investments or purchases of any other goods. Such employees have the responsibility to report any personal, family or business relationships that may conflict with their parish duties. The complete text of the Conflict of Interest Policy is available online at: [Conflict of Interest](#).

Responsible individuals are required to sign a [Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement](#). Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this Conflict of Interest Policy will be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

6.8 Ethics and Conduct

Employees of the Parish are held to the highest ethical standards and accountability. Each employee (exempt and non-exempt) must sign a statement assuring that he/she will adhere to the laws of government and ethical principles of the Church, will demonstrate the highest level of integrity, honesty and conduct and will not misuse his/her power and authority. The complete text of the Ethics and Conduct Policy is available online at: [Ethics and Conduct](#)

All employees are required to sign the [Ethics and Conduct Disclosure Statement](#). Failure to comply with any of the provisions of the Ethics and Conduct Policy will be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati has established a hotline to provide employees a simple, risk-free means for reporting financial misconduct by calling 1-888389-0381 or logging into a direct link to [EthicsPoint](#).

6.9 Records and Retention

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that necessary records and documents of the Parish are adequately protected and maintained to ensure that records no longer needed by the Parish are discarded at the proper time. This policy aids employees in understanding their obligations in retaining records, which include, electronic documents (email, Web files, text files, PDF documents, word processing documents, spreadsheets, databases, database data, backup tapes and other formatted files). The complete text of the Records and Retention Policy is available online at: [Records and Retention](#). Failure to comply with any of the provisions of the Records and Retention Policy will be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

6.10 Gifts and Gratuity

Employees of the Parish are prohibited from conducting business with customers or vendors on the basis of gifts or favors. No employee shall receive any improper payment or gratuity from any business enterprise which is a vendor, supplier or customer of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati or its affiliates. A business gift is anything of value received as a result of a business relationship and for which the recipient does not pay fair market value. Parish employees receiving gifts from vendors must complete and sign the Gifts and Gratuities Transaction Log. The complete text of the [Gifts and Gratuities Policy](#) is available online at: Gifts and Gratuity Policy. The Gifts and Gratuity's Transaction Log is available online at: [Gifts and Gratuities Transaction Log](#).

Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this policy will be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

6.11 Weapons in the Workplace

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati and its Affiliates (defined as any entity that is subject to the administrative authority of the Archbishop of Cincinnati under Canon Law) are committed to providing a safe workplace for their employees and all those who enter their property or premises. The term "premises" includes all buildings or land owned by the Archdiocese/Affiliates. Accordingly, the Archdiocese has adopted a policy on weapons in the workplace. The complete text of the policy can be found online at: [Prohibiting Weapons in the Workplace](#)

6.12 Corrective Counseling

The conduct of employees who work for the Parish is governed by established fundamental principles from church teachings and traditions. The excellent work record and reputation of the Archdiocese is dependent upon employees maintaining an orderly and harmonious working environment.

Employees failing to meet Archdiocesan standards will be subject to corrective counseling which focuses on encouraging the employee to meet expectations. Corrective counseling may begin with a verbal warning and can progress to termination if the undesirable conduct is not corrected. The Archdiocese has established thirty-five rules and regulations that employees must adhere to or receive corrective counseling. The list is not all inclusive. The complete text of the Corrective Counseling Guidelines is available online at: [Corrective Counseling Guidelines](#)

6.13 Solicitation & Distribution

It is the policy of the Parish to prohibit employees, volunteers, and non-employees from unauthorized solicitation of employees and/or distribution of materials on Parish premises unless approved by the pastor/administrator.

This policy was developed to prevent individuals from disrupting employees during their “work time.” “Work time” is defined as any time when the employee doing the soliciting, or the employee being solicited, is scheduled to be working. Lunch time and break periods are not considered “work time” for purposes of this policy. The complete text of this policy is available online at: [Solicitation and Distribution Policy](#)

6.14 Social Media Policy

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati and its Affiliates recognize that in today’s environment, with the increasing prevalence of the internet, employees, clerics, and volunteers will use the internet to conduct ministry work and to communicate with associates and friends. The internet provides various ways for individuals to interact and has changed the way we communicate and share information. The Archdiocese of Cincinnati and its Affiliates view the internet as an important educational and evangelizing tool to promote school and ministerial programs. The Social Media Policy was written to ensure that social networking tools will be used safely, without compromising their effectiveness. The policy sets forth language and boundaries to govern their use.

The complete text of the Social Media Policy is available online at: [Social Media Policy](#)

6.15 Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati and its Affiliates are committed to providing a safe workplace environment and protecting the safety of our employees, volunteers, the public and our operations. Prevention of violence in the workplace is a goal and responsibility that we all share. Aggressive or violent behavior, threats, harassment, stalking, bullying, verbal or physical abuse and other hostile or destructive acts are prohibited by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and its Affiliates.

The complete text of the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy is available online at: [Workplace Violence Prevention Policy](#)

6.16 Association With Programs

No Office or Department of the Archdiocese or its Affiliates shall sponsor a program (i.e. lecture, seminar, conference, etc.) or otherwise lend the name of the Archdiocese to any program without the permission of a Department Director who will keep the Archbishop informed. Prior to the permission from a Department Director, that Office or Department shall be responsible for being familiar with the entirety of the program and shall investigate to ensure that speakers at the sponsored programs uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church.

If any speaker at the program is a Catholic from outside the Archdiocese, (cleric, religious brother, religious sister or lay person) an acceptable letter of good standing must be obtained from his/her Diocesan official or religious superior/provincial. The letter is to be obtained by the Office or Department associated with the program. If the information in the letter of good standing is not acceptable, this fact should be brought to the attention of a Department Director.

6.17 Issuance of Statements

1. With regards to statements on issues, Offices and Departments are encouraged to craft their own when possible rather than signing on to those written by other groups. In situations where Offices and Departments think it important to join other groups in signing a common statement, the Office or Department should at a minimum participate in the drafting of the common statement. In all instances, the Department Director is to be kept informed.
2. Any Office or Department of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati or its Affiliates which wishes to prepare a statement for issuance in its own name, or for joint issuance with the Archbishop or with a Commission, Committee or Agency of the Archdiocese, or for issuance by the Archbishop alone, must present the statement in writing to the Archbishop for study.
3. If the Archbishop wishes to issue a statement as Archdiocesan policy, or jointly with the Office or Department, or as a statement of his own, he will do so using whatever channels seem appropriate.
4. If the Archbishop chooses not to make the prepared statement his own, or issue it jointly with an Office, Department, Commission, Committee or Agency, he may nevertheless permit the Office, Department, Commission, Committee or Agency to issue the statement in its own name. Each statement when issued in writing or orally must contain the following identification:

This statement represents the position of (Office, Department, Commission, Committee or Agency.) It is issued with the consent of the Archbishop of Cincinnati, but the position it espouses is not necessarily that of the Archbishop.

5. All such statements should be in accord with Church teaching and Archdiocesan policy, should serve a clear purpose which is consonant with the purpose of the Office, Department, Commission, Committee or Agency after timely consultation with the Archdiocesan Communication Office.
6. If the Archbishop does not choose to make this statement his own, or to issue it jointly with the Office, Department, Commission, Committee or Agency, or to permit its issuance as a statement of the Archdiocesan Office, Department, Commission, Committee or Agency, the statement is not to be issued.

6.18 Telephone Usage

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for employees of the Parish regarding the use of telephones and cell phones while conducting Parish business. The office telephone and the cell phone play a vital role in our business operation, but it is necessary in today's work environment to have guidelines regarding their safe and productive use both within the office and outside of the office. The complete text of the Telephone Usage Policy is available online at: [Telephone Usage Policy](#)

6.19 Driving Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for employees of the Parish regarding the use and/or operation of vehicles while conducting Parish business; to ensure that staff who drive vehicles in the course of their work demonstrate safe, efficient driving skills and other good road safety habits at all times and promote a safe driving culture within the organization. The complete text of the Driving Policy is available online at: [Driving Policy](#)

6.20 ADA Compliance and Requests for Accommodation

It is the policy of the Parish to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protecting qualified individuals with disabilities. The Parish provides reasonable accommodations for known physical or mental disabilities to qualified individuals to the extent required by law, provided that the requested accommodations do not create an undue hardship for the Parish and/or do not pose a direct threat to the health or safety of the requesting individuals and/or others in the workplace.

If an accommodation is required to perform the essential functions of one's job, the Archdiocesan Human Resources (HR) Department must be notified. The HR Department will then work with the employee and the employee's supervisor to identify possible accommodations enabling performance of the essential functions of the job. Equal opportunity is extended to qualified persons with disabilities in all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including recruitment, training, promotion, transfer, compensation, benefits, leaves of absence, discipline, and termination of employment.

Instances of non-compliance with this policy noted by the employee should be referred to the immediate supervisor or office/department director and/or the HR Department. The Parish prohibits and will not tolerate any form of retaliation by management or co-workers against an employee who submits an ADA compliance request.

7.0 Volunteers

Volunteers are a vital part of parish life, providing a variety of services otherwise unavailable to the Parish. Although they are not employees of the Parish, a certain

relationship is established, and it is important for both the Parish and the volunteer to understand the policy aspects of this relationship.

Because volunteers are not employees, they are not covered under the Archdiocesan benefit plans, including workers' compensation, unemployment, social security, health and life insurance, pension, and long term disability. These plans are established for employees and therefore exclude volunteers.

Volunteers should be made aware of the liability they accept when volunteering for Parish work. The Archdiocesan liability insurance does provide some coverage for volunteers if they are sued for unintentional negligence while engaging in the volunteer activity. Some aspects of potential liability are not covered. This should be communicated to the volunteer. Specifics in this area may be obtained from the Archdiocesan Finance Office.

All volunteers must be in full compliance with the Decree on Child Protection.