

UUCD Personnel Policy

Appendix C

SUBJECT: Employee Discipline

I. PURPOSE

To ensure that employees are treated fairly regarding discipline undertaken to correct undesirable work performance. This policy is not intended to form a contract or impose mandatory actions on the UUCD. The UUCD reserves the right to suspend the policy or modify it at its sole discretion.

II. PERSONNEL COVERED

Non-ordained Staff

III. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADMINISTERING

The Minister and the Personnel Committee Chair are responsible for disciplinary action of staff reporting to the Minister.

The Congregational Administrator and the Personnel Committee chair are responsible for disciplinary action of personnel reporting to the Congregational Administrator.

IV. POLICY

- A. Employees with three or more months of employment may not be terminated unless:
1. At least one written notice has been given on the appropriate performance evaluation form for a similar or different offense in the preceding 12-month period that would be cause for termination of employment.
 2. The employee has been given a reasonable time period to correct the deficiency (see V.C. below).
 3. At least one level of supervision above the employee has approved the termination on the performance evaluation form.

V. PROCEDURE

- A. An oral warning is given to an employee initially.
- B. A written warning is given if the deficiency has not been corrected within a reasonable time period, not to exceed three months. Examples of situations justifying written warning notices:
1. A performance evaluation overall rating of “Marginal” or “Unsatisfactory.”
 2. Unauthorized or unexcused absenteeism.
 3. Repeated tardiness.
 4. Violation of work or safety rules.
 5. Improper member relations or sexual harassment.

- C. Documenting a Performance Deficiency: When a situation justifies a written warning, the action must be documented. The performance evaluation form is to be used for a formal warning.

The written warning should set forth in detail the reason for the warning, together with the corrective action the employee must take. A time limit of one to three months (or a reasonable time period to enable the employee to correct the deficiency or improve her or his performance) for corrective action must be noted on the evaluation form. The written warning must be reviewed with the employee, and the employee should sign it; or, a notation should be made by the supervisor that the warning was read to the employee and she or he refused to sign it.

- D. Administering a Warning: An oral or written warning should always be done in private.
- E. Suspension for Fact Finding: Normally, employees who commit or who are suspected of committing any of the violations listed in VI.E., below, should be suspended for a period not to exceed three days, during which time a full investigation of the circumstances is to be made. The employee must be advised at the time of suspension that the investigation will be conducted and that she or he will be advised within three days of the decision reached. All facts must be obtained and reviewed with the Minister, or Congregational Administrator depending on the reporting relationship, and Personnel Committee chair for approval prior to making the final decision. When a decision has been reached, the employee must be advised of the decision in person.
- F. Suspension for Discipline: Suspension of an employee from work is a serious penalty and should be imposed only in extreme situations. Gross insubordination, or an instance in which an employee commits or is suspected of committing a serious violation of policy, are examples of instances that may justify suspension of one to three days maximum until a decision is reached concerning termination. See Section VI.E. below for additional reasons warranting suspension for disciplinary action.
- G. Distribution of a Warning: A copy of the warning must be given to the offending employee; the supervisor retains a copy and a copy is placed in the employee's personnel file.

VI. INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION

Because of the unsettling impact that a discharge without notice has on an employee and the job security of all personnel in general, it is vitally important that such discharges be administered with fairness and in good taste. A discharge without notice should take place only after careful review of all the facts and only after approval of the Minister, Personnel Committee, and the Board of Trustees.

- A. Less than Three Months Employment: All employees are considered to be in a "training" status during the first three months of employment. During this time, performance and suitability for a position are to be carefully evaluated. At any time during the first three months of employment an employee may be terminated without written notice if the facts support the action.

A supervisor must receive approval of a termination from his or her immediate supervisor during the first three months of employment via a completed Personnel Action Notice. Employees terminated during the first three months of employment will not receive severance pay or any other benefit accrual payout.

- B. Three Months or More Employment: All employees with three or more months employment must be given a written warning prior to termination as explained in V.C. above.
- C. Permanent Reduction in Workforce: An employee terminated because of a permanent reduction in membership or a church restructuring that permanently eliminates her or his position shall be considered to have terminated because of reduction in force. Employees terminated due to reduction in force shall be separated on the basis of job performance. Seniority will be considered when performance has been determined to be equal.
- D. Health Insurance: A full-time employee's health insurance coverage will continue through the end of the month in which the employee is separated from the church. Such employees may continue to be enrolled in the company's health insurance plan by law (C.O.B.R.A.) for 24 months after separation provided the employee pays the entire cost of the insurance to the treasurer by the first of every month.
- E. Reasons for Termination without Notice: The following violations will result in termination without warning, advance notice, and/or severance pay. They include but are not limited to:
 - Willful damage or gross negligence to property or equipment.
 - Possession of a weapon on church premises.
 - Drinking, intoxication, or possession of alcoholic beverages on the job.
 - Being under the influence of narcotics, use of narcotics, or possession or solicitation of narcotics for use while at work, other than prescription drugs as prescribed by a physician.
 - Gambling on church premises.
 - Absence without authorization for three or more work days (consecutive or otherwise) during any 12 consecutive months.
 - Disclosure of confidential or sensitive congregational information.
 - Assaulting or fighting with another employee or member on building premises, on or off duty.
 - Conviction of a felony or serious misdemeanor.
 - Willful falsification of records, such as an employment application, payroll information, or financial or insurance records.
 - Misuse or unauthorized manipulation of any computer or electronic data processing equipment or system.
 - Absence from work beyond the period for which a leave of absence has been granted.
 - Taking other unauthorized employment while on a leave of absence.
 - Theft of congregational property.
 - Willful violation of congregational policy.

VII. VOLUNTARY RESIGNATION

- A. Employee Notice to Company: A non-ordained employee is expected to give notice of at least two weeks in advance of employment termination.

The choir director is expected to give notice at least four weeks in advance of employment termination.

Approved by	Date Effective	Supersedes	Policy Number
Minister, Personnel Liaison & Officers	1/27/09		C1