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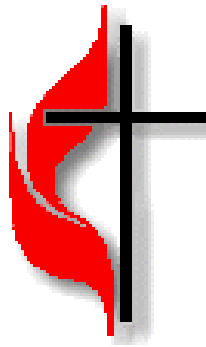
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Benbrook United Methodist Church



Employee Policies and Procedures Handbook

Effective 1 August 2008

SECTION 1: Introductory Statements

Welcome to Benbrook United Methodist Church!

We welcome you to what we feel are one of the finest staffs of any church in the nation. The key to successful ministry in any church is always outstanding people. It is our goal to find the best persons available for every aspect of the church's life, ministry and work.

As you enter into employment at Benbrook United Methodist Church, (hereafter known as BUMC), you enter more than just a job, position or church staff; you join a ministry team. This ministry team is committed to do everything possible to assist and support every staff person in his or her work. The success of the ministry team is as important as the success of one's particular areas of accountability and responsibility.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the senior pastor or chairperson of the Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee.

We wish you great fulfillment and joy in your work as you share your talents, abilities and professional training with staff and members of BUMC.

- The Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee

Introductory statement

This manual is designed to acquaint you with BUMC and provide you with information about working conditions, employee benefits and some of the policies affecting your employment. You should read, understand and comply with all provisions of the manual. It describes many of your responsibilities as an employee and outlines the programs developed by BUMC to benefit employees. One of our objectives is to provide a work environment that is conducive to both personal and professional growth.

No employee handbook and statement of policies can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. As BUMC continues to grow, and as the need may arise, the church reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of the handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate at its sole and absolute discretion. The only exception to any changes is our employment-at-will policy permitting you or the BUMC to end our relationship for any reason at any time. Employees will, of course, be notified of such changes to the handbook as they occur.

SECTION 2: Hiring and Employment Policies

Employment at Will

Employment with BUMC is entered into voluntarily, and the employee is free to resign at will at any time, with or without cause. Similarly, the church may terminate the employment relationship at will at any time, with or without notice or cause, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law. Employees are required to sign a written statement acknowledging that they are employed at the will of BUMC.

Policies set forth in this manual are not intended to create a contract, nor are they to be construed to constitute contractual obligations of any kind or a contract of employment between the church and any of its employees. No BUMC representative is authorized to modify this policy for any employee or to enter into any agreement, oral or written, contrary to this policy.

Unless otherwise covered in this manual, upon successful completion of a training period and/or a standard probation period, the employee will become eligible for all benefits available to that employee's position. However, completion of a training period or probation period does not change an employee's status as an employee-at-will.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The church is committed to equal employment opportunity for all qualified persons, without regard to race, color, gender, age, national origin, political affiliation, marital status, disability or status as a Vietnam era or special disabled veteran as required by law. This applies to all employment practices, including hiring, benefits, promotions, training, disciplinary action, and immediate termination.

All employees are expected to show respect and sensitivity toward all other employees, and to demonstrate a commitment to the church's equal opportunity objectives. Anyone who observes a violation of this policy should report it immediately to the violator's supervisor or to a member of the Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee (hereafter known as PSPR).

(See Committee Assignments, Section)

BUMC will utilize all reasonable efforts to comply with all requirements of federal, state and local laws and regulations relating to Equal Employment Opportunity.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including immediate termination.

Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986

The church is committed to full compliance with the federal immigration laws and will not knowingly hire or continue to employ anyone who does not have the legal right to work in the United States.

As a condition of employment, each employee will be required to fill out an I-9 Form and provide documentation verifying identity and legal authority to work in the United States.

Employee Classifications

Pastors

Serve by appointment by the Bishop and Cabinet; may be full or part-time.

Staff

Regular Full-time employees work a minimum of 32 regularly scheduled hours per week.

Regular Part-time employees work less than 32 regularly scheduled hours per week.

Temporary employees are employed to complete specific projects or for a maximum length of time.

Contractual (contract for service) employees are hired for a specific task and may be either salaried or hourly.

Job Descriptions

Each staff person will have a written job description outlining his or her basic responsibilities and duties. An employee has the right to know what is expected of him/her regarding job responsibilities and who, if anyone, he/she supervises or who supervises the employee.

Employees will have the opportunity to discuss their job description at the time of their annual evaluation with their supervisor or the Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee, if no supervisor is specified. The Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee will review job descriptions yearly after the annual evaluations have occurred, to ensure adequacy and appropriateness for the position.

(See Job Descriptions, Section)

Training Period

All new and/or rehired employees work on an introductory basis for the first 90 calendar days after their date of hire. If PSPR, with the recommendation from PSPRC and coordination with church council, determines that the designated introductory period does not allow sufficient time to thoroughly evaluate the employee's performance, the introductory period may be extended for a specified period. The employee will be provided documentation for the reasons for the extension.

The training period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. The church uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance. Either the employee or PSPR with the coordination of church council may end the employment at will at any time during the training period, with or without cause or advance notice.

Evaluation

Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. Additional formal performance evaluations are conducted to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals. Where there is no specific supervisor, PSPR will discuss job performance and goals during annual evaluation, unless a specific situation dictates an out of cycle evaluation.

Formal performance evaluations will be conducted at least once a year. Additional performance evaluations may occur at the end of the introductory/training period or anytime performance expectations need to be clarified. The evaluation may be conducted by the supervisor of the employee, if one is assigned, or by one or more members of the Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee. Completed evaluations will be filed in the employee's personnel file. Each employee is entitled to comment on his or her evaluation and have those comments documented and included in their file.

The performance evaluation allows the employee and supervisor/PSPR time to: (1) review and up-date the job description, (2) assess present working conditions, (3) discuss/assess past performance, and (4) develop goals for the upcoming year.

Records of disciplinary actions and other relevant documents are retained in the employee's personnel file.

Personnel Records

The church maintains personnel records for each hired employee. The personnel file includes such information as the employee's job application, resume, records of training, documentation of performance evaluations and other employment records, as appropriate.

In order to ensure that records are current, employees shall report any change in name, address, phone number, marital status, or any other pertinent information, to the chairperson Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee.

Personnel actions are handled in a manner that respects privacy and confidentiality to the extent provided by law. Every employee must respect these rights of co-workers.

Personnel files are the property of the church and access to the information they contain is restricted. The files are located in the church office. The only persons authorized to have access to personnel files are the senior or associate pastor and the Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee chairperson.

With reasonable advance notice, an employee is permitted to review their file, in a controlled environment that will guarantee confidentiality. Any employee wishing to review his or her personnel file should contact the chairperson of PSPRC or the senior pastor to arrange for a convenient time. Any staff member or PSPR member who has access to individual personnel information shall not discuss such information with other employees. Failure of staff personnel to comply with confidentiality requirements can result in discipline of the employee, including immediate termination.

Documents subject to inspection:

- Employment application
- Resume
- Emergency notification form
- Employee benefit verification form
- Job description

Documents not open to inspection:

- Letters of reference
- Records that may be produced in a judicial proceeding as part of a pending claim between the employer and the staff person.
- Records regarding an employer's investigation of alleged criminal activity.

- Performance evaluations/reviews

SECTION 3: Compensation

Wage and Salary Reviews

The Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee annually reviews the salary for each employee prior to Annual Church Conference. In setting the initial salary and in making annual salary adjustments, consideration is given to the following items: 1) current pay in the local community, or in comparable positions at other churches, 2) responsibilities of position as outlined in the job description, 3) training, education, and experience of employee, 4) performance of the employee, 5) possible salary recommendations by a supervisor, 6) cost of living, and 7) hours worked each week.

Generally, the Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee submits salary/budget recommendations to the Finance Committee. Ultimately, the church council makes the final decision about the wage and salary budget each year.

Payday

Paychecks are issued on the last working day of each month.

Payroll Deductions

The church complies with the various payroll deductions required by law, such as federal income tax, and social security taxes. The employee must authorize any other deductions, in writing.

Each paycheck stub will itemize amounts that have been withheld, so this information may be kept for tax purposes. Questions about deductions may be directed to the church Financial Treasurer and/or chairperson Finance. The church complies with applicable state and federal laws regarding the garnishment and assignment of wages.

SECTION 4: Benefits

Vacation

Vacations should be planned and coordinated with the pastor and/or PSPR. Temporary staff does not accrue vacation time.

Sick Leave

Sick leave is paid time off work due to illness or injury.

Sick leave cannot be used until after 90 days of employment.

Use of Sick Leave:

1. Absences due to illness or injury must be reported to the pastor by the normal required start time. Employees must explain the reason for and the expected length of the absence. Check with the church office for forms needed to report injuries. The chairperson Staff Parish Relations must approve and sign all injury forms and a copy to be supplies to the chairperson Trustees for insurance purposes.
2. Employees are expected to keep their pastor and/or PSPR appraised on a regular basis as to the expected date of return to work.
3. Accrued sick leave may be granted after completion of 90 days of employment.
4. Accrued sick leave may be requested for personal illness or for immediate family illness. Immediate family for this benefit is defined as parents, spouse and children.
5. Absences due to pregnancy and related conditions will be covered by accrued sick leave in the same manner as any other medical condition.
6. Unused paid sick leave may not be used for personal time off or as additional vacation. An employee out on sick leave should not be engaged in any kind of social, employment or volunteer activities. Misuse of this or any other benefit will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
7. Employees who receive paid sick leave benefits may be asked to provide medical verification of illness or disability. Failure to provide such verification may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

8. Progress reports from the doctor are required in cases of extended sick leave. It is the employee's responsibility to report absences due to sick leave in writing. Reports must be signed by the employee and then forwarded to the chairperson Pastor Staff Parish Relations.

9. Sick leave may be taken in increments of no less than 1/2 day.

10. After depletion of sick leave, additional absence shall be deducted from employee's salary.

11. Holidays falling within a period of paid sick leave are not charged against leave.

Maternity/Paternity Leave

Maternity/Paternity leave may be taken for the birth or adoption of a child. BUMC employees may take a total of six weeks maternity/paternity leave. All accrued sick leave must be used. The remainder of the six weeks shall be unpaid.

General Leaves of Absences

An employee may want to request a leave of absence for compelling reasons not included in the leave policy, such as:

1. Pursuit of educational goals for a limited time
2. Extended family crisis

Nothing in this policy is intended to authorize a violation of state or federal laws. The applicable law will always supersede any provision of this policy.

Jury or Witness Duty

The BUMC encourages employees to respond to the civic responsibility of jury duty. Employees who receive a summons for jury duty or a subpoena for witness duty should notify the pastor/PSPR immediately.

Military Leave

Employees who are called, voluntarily or involuntarily, to perform active duties or training with the armed services, including the National Guard and organized reserves of the Armed Forces of the United States will be granted time off for duty in accordance with the Uniform Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994.

Those reservists called up for active military duty during declared war or emergency situations will be paid the difference between their regular salary and military pay only as required by law. Employees who are granted military leaves of absence are entitled to full re-employment rights subject to the governing federal and state laws.

It is the employee's responsibility to provide their supervisor with a copy of the duty orders, and to report military leave absences on an attendance/absence report form. The employee and supervisor must sign reports.

Employees will not accrue vacation or sick leave during the period of their active service.

Compassionate Leave

An employee becomes eligible to use compassionate leave upon the completion of three months of service. Compassionate leave is allowed in the event of death of an immediate family member. The pastor must approve compassionate leave before compassionate leave is authorized.

Immediate family for compassionate leave is defined as, and is limited to, the employee's spouse, children, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, brothers, and sisters.

Unpaid Leave of Absence

A leave of absence without pay will be considered for extraordinary circumstances not detrimental to the ministry of the church. This can be granted only with the approval of the senior pastor or the Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee.

Continuing Education for pastors

Pastors shall be encouraged to continue their education throughout their career, including a carefully developed personal program of study augmented periodically by involvement in organized educational activities. In most cases, the pastor's continuing education program should allow for leaves of absence for study at least one week each year. Such leaves shall not be considered as part of the pastor's vacation and shall be planned in consultation with the church council as well as the bishop and district superintendent.

Continuing Education for Staff

Requests for work time to be used for continuing education must be made in advance to the pastor. When it can be demonstrated that the church will benefit from an employee's participation in an educational program or professional organization, the church may pay the related expenses.

SECTION 5: Rules and Regulations

Code of Conduct

BUMC is a Christian church. It bases its teaching and guidelines for lifestyle and work ethics on the teachings found in Holy Scripture. We expect the employee's conduct, on the job as well as off the job, to be in line with the moral, spiritual, and ethical guidelines of the scripture and the Book of Discipline of the Greater (Denominational) church. The church, by its nature, is a place where people may share confidential information. We hold all employees to the highest standards in maintaining the confidence of information learned through their employment by the church.

General Complaint Procedures

A complaint is any cause for employee dissatisfaction with employee working conditions. The grievance procedure is available to all employees and may be used when informal dispute resolutions have been unsuccessful or unacceptable.

The employee should make an oral complaint to the pastor/PSPR within five working days of the incidence of the alleged complaint. The PSPR shall convey the resolution to the employee within 10 working days.

If the complaint is with the pastor, then the complaint should be made with the Pastor Staff Parish Relations committee.

If the employee is dissatisfied with the resolution of the complaint, the employee may file, within seven working days, a written appeal to the pastor/PSPR. Within ten working days of the written appeal, the pastor and the employee shall meet and discuss the grievance, and consider relevant information. Within five working days of considering the appeal, the pastor or Staff Parish Relations will render a decision in writing to the employee.

Within five working days, the decision may be appealed, in writing, to the Staff Parish Relations committee, which shall consider the appeal within 30 calendar days. Within five working days of considering the appeal the Staff Parish Relations committee shall convey the decision of the committee, in writing, to the employee.

Within five working days, the Staff Parish Relations committee's decision may be appealed, in writing, to the church council, which shall consider the appeal at its next scheduled meeting. Within five working days of considering the

appeal, the church council shall convey the decision, in writing, to the employee.

If an employee does not conform to the time limits specified in the complaint procedure, the case will be disposed according to the last decision given. If the pastor/PSPR fail to conform to the time limits specified in a particular step of the complaint procedure, the employee may proceed to the next step of the complaint procedure beyond the church.

Harassment

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is illegal when submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a term or condition of employment, or is used as a basis for employment decisions. Sexual harassment, which has the purpose or effect of substantially, interfering with an employee's work performance or which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment, is also illegal.

Examples of unwelcome conduct that may constitute sexual harassment include:

Requesting or offering sexual favors in return for job benefits;
Cornering, patting, pinching, or brushing up against a person's body in a manner that is sexual in nature; open speculation or inquiries about a person's sex life; jokes, remarks, or innuendoes that are sexual in nature about a person or such comments about women and men in general which result in an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment; displaying sexually explicit material in the workplace.

Other Types of Harassment

Harassment of persons on the basis of their race, color, age, physical or mental disability, medical condition, ancestry, national origin, sex orientation, marital status, political affiliation, religion, or creed is a violation of law. The church will not tolerate such unlawful discrimination in the workplace.

The following behaviors regarding these classes are some examples of unlawful discrimination harassment:

Abusing the dignity of a person through insulting or degrading remarks or conduct;

Threats, demands, or suggestions that an employee's work status is contingent upon the employee's toleration of such behavior;

subjecting a person to demeaning and/or degrading activities in order to gain co-worker acceptance (i.e. hazing).

It is the church's responsibility to make a reasonable effort to prevent all forms of unlawful discrimination from occurring and to take immediate and appropriate corrective action when harassment is brought to their attention. The church affirms the right, in accord with this policy, to discipline any employee who engages in harassment. Also, the church may act on any failure to respond to an employee's complaints of personal observations of harassment.

An employee may file a complaint ***against*** a pastor by following Conference procedures. The sexual harassment complaint may be made to any pastor, deacon or diaconal minister in any church of our denomination, or to any member of the BUMC's Staff Parish Relations committee, or to the District Superintendent. Conference policies and procedures will be available through the church office.

An employee may file a harassment complaint based on sexual harassment or discriminatory harassment by anyone ***other than a pastor***, by contacting the pastor, chairperson church council, or the Staff Parish Relations committee, who shall be allotted time to complete an investigation and make a decision. If no decision is made, or the employee is dissatisfied with the decision the employee may appeal in writing to the PSPRC.

The committee shall be allotted time days to complete an investigation and make a decision. If no decision is made, or the employee is dissatisfied with the decision the employee may appeal in writing to the church council.

The church council shall be allotted time to complete an investigation and make a decision or decline to do so.

Section 6: General Information:

Personal Appearance

During regular office hours, all employees are expected to be dressed in neat and clean attire, and appropriate to the job responsibilities.

Use of church Equipment

From time to time employees may have personal business to conduct during the regular workday. Personal business should be kept to an absolute minimum to assure that they do not disrupt or interfere with an employee's work. Whenever possible, personal business should be conducted and personal phone calls should be made during scheduled breaks. Employees should reimburse the church for any personal long distance telephone calls billed to the church and should reimburse the church for any personal printing or copying that is done using church equipment.

All church property—including desks, storage areas, work areas, file cabinets, credenzas, computer systems, office telephones, cellular telephones, pagers, modems, facsimile machines, duplicating machines, vehicles, etc.—must be used properly and maintained in good working order. Employees who lose, steal, or misuse church property may be personally liable for replacing or fixing the item and may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

BUMC reserves the right, at all times and without prior notice, to inspect and search any and all of its property for the purpose of determining whether this policy or any other policy of the church has been violated, or when an inspection and investigation is necessary for purposes of promoting safety in the workplace or compliance with state and federal laws. These inspections may be conducted during or after business hours and in the presence or absence of the employee. Employees have no right of privacy as to any information or file maintained in or on the church property or transmitted or stored in the church's computer, voice mail, e-mail, or telephone systems. For purposes of inspecting, investigating, or searching employees' files or documents, the church may override any applicable passwords, codes, or locks in accordance with the best interests of the church, its employees, or its members. All bills and other documentation related to the use of the church equipment or property are the property of the church and may be reviewed and used for purposes that the church considers appropriate.

Employees may access only files, e-mail, voice-mail, or documents that they have permission to enter. Unauthorized review, duplication, dissemination, removal, damage, or alteration of files, or other

property of the church, or improper use of information obtained by unauthorized means, may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Use of the telephone for personal matters to be excessive should be brought to the employee's attention, and the employee may be subject to discipline if the behavior is not corrected.

Employee Parking

Because the church insurance policy does not cover personal property, the church will not be responsible for theft or damage to any vehicles parked on or near church property. Also, the church will not be responsible for personal property left in vehicles that is lost, damaged, stolen, or destroyed.

Smoking Policy

According to policies set by the Board of Trustees, BUMC is a smoke-free workplace. Smoking is prohibited in all areas of the church and on the church property.

Error in Pay

The church takes precautions to ensure that employees are paid correctly; however, if an error does occur, the employee should notify the pastor, Church Treasurer or chairperson Finance. The church will make every attempt to adjust the error no later than the employee's next regular pay period.

Operation of Vehicles

The use of church-owned or church-leased vehicles and rental of vehicles for church business are limited to authorized employees. These vehicles must only be used in work-related activities and may not be used for personal business or activities without the express prior approval of the chairperson Board of Trustees.

All employees authorized to drive church-owned or church-leased vehicles or to rent vehicles for use in conducting church business must possess a current, valid Texas driver's license and an acceptable driving record. Any change in license status or driving record must be reported to the chairperson Board of Trustees immediately. In the event that the license status or driving record of any employee whose job responsibilities include driving becomes unacceptable to the church's insurance carrier, that employee will be restricted from driving at the Board or Trustee's discretion.

A valid Texas license must be in your possession while operating a church owned or leased vehicle off or on the church property. It is the responsibility of the employees to drive safely and obey all traffic, vehicle safety, and parking laws or regulations. Certain employees may be authorized by the pastor or chairperson Board of Trustees to drive their own personal vehicles while conducting church business. These employees must maintain adequate personal automobile liability insurance. Employees doing so should promptly submit an expense report detailing the number of miles driven on church business. If an employee is not provided an automobile allowance, the church may pay mileage reimbursement in accordance with current IRS mileage reimbursement rates.

Use of technology and the Internet

BUMC's technical resources—including desktop and portable computer systems, fax machines, Internet and World Wide Web (Web) access, voice mail, and electronic mail (e-mail)—enable employees quickly and efficiently to access and exchange information throughout the church and around the world. This policy applies to all technical resources that are owned or leased by the church, that are used on or accessed from church premises, or that are used on church business. This policy also applies to all activities using any church-paid accounts, subscriptions, or other technical services, such as Internet and World Wide Web access, voice mail, and e-mail, whether or not the activities are conducted from church premises.

Each employee is responsible for the content of all text, audio, or images that they place or send over the church's technical resources. Employees may access only files or programs, whether computerized or not, that they have permission to enter. Violations of any guidelines in this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. In addition, the church may advise appropriate legal officials of any illegal violations.

NOTE: As you use the church's technical resources, it is important to remember the nature of the information created and stored there. Because they seem informal, e-mail messages are sometimes offhand, like a conversation, and not as carefully thought out as a letter or memorandum. Like any other document, an e-mail message or other computer information can later be used to indicate what an employee knew or felt. You should keep this in mind when creating e-mail messages and other documents. Even after you delete an e-mail message or close a computer session, it still may remain on the system and be recoverable.

Acceptable Uses

BUMC's technical resources are provided for the benefit of the church and its members. These resources are provided for use in the pursuit of church business and are to be reviewed, monitored, and used only in that pursuit, except as otherwise provided in this policy.

Unacceptable Uses

BUMC's technical resources are not to be used for personal gain. Church resources are not to be used by employees who wish to express personal and/or political opinions, send mass e-mails or chain letters. Solicitation for any non-church business or activity using church resources is prohibited. Use of the church's technical resources must not interfere with your productivity, the productivity of any other employee, or the operation of the church's technical resources.

Employees may not play games on church computers and other technical resources during work time. Employees are not to send e-mails or other communications that either mask their identity or indicate having been sent by someone else.

Access of any technical resources using another employee's password is forbidden. Access of libraries, files, data, programs, and directories must be related to your work duties. Unauthorized review, duplication, dissemination, removal, installation, damage, or alteration of files, passwords, computer systems or programs, or other property of the church or improper use of information obtained by unauthorized means is prohibited.

Sending, saving, or viewing offensive material is prohibited. Messages stored and/or transmitted by computer, voice mail, e-mail, or telephone systems must not contain content that reasonably may be considered offensive to any employee. Offensive material includes, but is not limited to, sexual comments, jokes or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any comments, jokes or images that would offend someone on the basis of his or her race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, or status as a disabled veteran, Vietnam era veteran, or other eligible veteran, marital status, sexual orientation, age, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law.

Any use of the Internet/World Wide Web to harass or discriminate is unlawful and strictly prohibited by BUMC. Violators will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge. BUMC does not consider conduct in violation of this policy to be within the course and scope of employment or the direct consequence of the discharge of one's duties.

Employees are not to copy and/or distribute copyrighted material (e.g., software, database files, documentation, articles, graphics files, and downloaded information) through the e-mail system or by any other means unless they have confirmed in advance from appropriate sources that the church has the right to copy or distribute the material. Failure to observe a copyright may result in disciplinary action by the church as well as legal action by the copyright owner. Any questions concerning these rights should be directed to the Board of Trustees.

Confidential Information

E-mail and Internet/Web access are not entirely secure. Others outside the church may also be able to monitor your e-mail and Internet/Web access. Internet sites maintain logs of visits from users; these logs identify which company, and even which particular person, accessed the service.

All employees should safeguard BUMC's confidential information, as well as that of members and others, from disclosure. Messages containing confidential information should not be left visible while you are away from your work area. It is recommended that e-mail messages containing confidential information should include the following statement, in all capital letters, at the top of the message: ***CONFIDENTIAL: UNAUTHORIZED USE OR DISCLOSURE IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.***

Security of Information

Although employees have passwords to access computer, voice mail, and e-mail systems, these technical resources belong to the church, are to be accessible at all times by the church, and are subject to inspections by the church with or without notice. The church may override any applicable passwords or codes to inspect, investigate, or search an employee's files and messages. Employees are not to provide a password to other employees or anyone else outside the church and should never access any technical resources using another employee's password.

Personal Website and Weblog Policies

Some BUMC employees may maintain personal websites and/or weblogs, or are considering beginning one. In general, BUMC views personal websites and weblogs positively, and respect the right of our employees to use them as an avenue of self-expression and outreach.

As an employee of BUMC, you are seen by our members and outside parties as a representative of the church. Therefore, as in all areas of daily life, a church staff member's personal website or weblog is a reflection on the church, whether or not the church is specifically discussed or referenced. If

you choose to identify yourself as a BUMC employee or to discuss matters related to the church on your website or weblog, please bear in mind that, although you may view your site as a personal project, many readers will assume you are speaking on behalf of the church. In light of this possibility, BUMC expects its staff to observe the following important guidelines:

Websites/Blogs

If you currently have a personal website or weblog, or are considering starting one, be sure to discuss this with pastor and/or the chairperson Board of Trustees.

Include a Disclaimer

On your site, please make it clear to your readers that the views you express are yours alone and that they do not necessarily reflect the views of BUMC. To help reduce the potential for confusion, we recommend you prominently display the following notice, or something similar, on the homepage of your site:

“I work at Benbrook United Methodist Church. Everything here, however, is my personal opinion and is not read or approved before it is posted. Opinions, conclusions and other information expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of Benbrook United Methodist Church.”

We recommend a disclaimer if your site is published under your name, even if it is entirely personal and does not mention Benbrook United Methodist Church or your employment, as readers will inevitably connect your personal life to your professional life.

Respect Confidentiality

You must take proper care not to purposefully or inadvertently disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to BUMC. Any employee who violates our policies regarding confidentiality will be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Respect the church and its Staff

Since your site is a public space, we expect you to be respectful to the church and our leaders, employees, volunteers and members. Any employee who uses a personal website to disparage the name or reputation of the church, its practices, or its pastors, officers, employees, volunteers or members will be subject to serious discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Respect Copyright

Do not use church logos on your site or reproduce church material without first obtaining written permission from the Board of Trustees.

Respect Your Time

All time and effort spent on your personal site should be done on your personal time and should not interfere with your job duties or work commitments.

Respect Our Beliefs

When working for a church, it is important to remember that employment decisions will be made based upon our Christian beliefs. If your personal website displays inappropriate images or reflects personal opinions or lifestyle choices that are contrary to BUMC's or the Methodist church's religious beliefs, you may be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment. For this reason, we encourage you to first seek guidance from the pastor if you have any questions.

Software Policy

If you want to install software on BUMC computers, you must contact the chairperson Board of Trustees and request to have the software installed. Employees are prohibited from installing any software on any church resource without prior permission from these this agency.

Involving the Board of Trustees ensures that the church can manage the software on its system; helps prevent the introduction of computer viruses, and meet its obligations under any applicable software licenses and copyright laws.

Computer software is protected from unauthorized copying and use by federal and state law; unauthorized copying or use of computer software exposes the church and the individual employee to substantial fines and exposes the employee to imprisonment. Employees may not load personal software onto the church computer system and may not copy software from the church for personal use.

Use of stationery and mail services

All engraved or printed church stationery, envelopes, and other work materials are for church use only. These materials may not be used for personal correspondence or non-church matters. When signing church letters on church letterhead, the employee's name must be used. The use of church

paid postage for personal correspondence or packages is not permitted, unless reimbursed by the employee. Employees should receive permission from the church office to use these materials.

Attendance and Punctuality

Each employee is expected to work all his or her scheduled hours, to report for work on time, and to work to the end of the work period. (An employee is expected to check-in and out through the church office when leaving the building.) Unscheduled absences and tardiness disrupts the work environment and may place additional work on the employee's co-workers and congregational volunteer members. The pastor/PSPR should approve all absences. If employees are ill or anticipate being late, the church office should be notified.

Church use of video surveillance

The church may use video surveillance for security reasons and to monitor conditions within the church. This surveillance shall not occur in restrooms.

Publicity Statements to the Media

All statements and media interviews related to Benbrook United Methodist Church and the church's official position on any matters shall be approved in advance by the pastor or the chairperson church council.

Church Business Expense Reimbursement

Employees may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in the course of conducting approved church business with the approval of purchase requests. These expenses may include air travel, hotels, motels, meals, cab fare, rental vehicles, or gas and car mileage for personal vehicles. All expenses incurred shall be submitted to the church Treasurer along with the receipts within 30 days of the date of the expenditure. Employees are expected to exercise restraint and good judgment when incurring expenses. Employees should contact church Finance chairperson in advance of such expenses.

Investigations of job applicants and current employees

The church may occasionally find it necessary to investigate current employees, where behavior or other relevant circumstances raise questions concerning work performance, reliability, honesty, trustworthiness, or potential threat to the safety of coworkers or others. Employee investigations may, where appropriate, include credit reports and investigations of criminal records, including appropriate inquiries about any arrest for which the

employee is out on bail. In the event that a background check is conducted, the church will comply with the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act and applicable state laws, including providing the employee with any required notices and forms. Employees subject to an investigation are required to cooperate with the church's lawful efforts to obtain relevant information and may be disciplined up to and including termination for failure to do so.

Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards are reserved for the exclusive use of the church for posting work-related notices or notices that must be posted pursuant to local, state, and federal law. From time to time, special notices and information for employees will be posted by the church on the bulletin boards. Please check the boards regularly for these notices. Employee postings are not permitted without obtaining prior approval from the church office.

Voting

If you cannot vote in a statewide public election before or after working hours, then you will be allowed sufficient time off to go to the polls to vote. Volunteering as an election official will be taken as unpaid leave.

References

All recommendation/reference requests regarding current or previous employees should be directed to Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee. No employee is authorized to release references or employment verifications for a current or former employee without prior permission and direction from chairperson Staff Parish Relations.

Criminal Activities on or near church property

BUMC recognizes the unfortunate reality that violent crimes do occur in the workplace. The potential commission of a violent crime in the workplace may threaten the safety of employees as well as visitors. Therefore, due to the church's concern for the safety of its employees and visitors make a conscious effort to observe your surroundings and report any suspicious persons or activities to the police. In the unfortunate event of a holdup or robbery, you should obey all orders issued by the perpetrator.

Failure to follow the perpetrator's orders may jeopardize your safety as well as the safety of visitors and other employees. Remember to stay calm, move slowly, and cooperate with the perpetrator. Do not argue, fight, display a weapon, or offer any other form of resistance. Concentrate on perpetrator's physical features, dress, voice, automobile, et cetera to assist with later identification. Remain where you are—do not attempt to follow or catch the

perpetrator. Quickly secure the area and call the police. Avoid touching anything or disturbing the area. Write down everything you can remember about the incident and the perpetrator. Cooperate fully with enforcement authorities after the occurrence of an incident.

Solicitation and Distribution

In order to avoid unnecessary annoyances and work interruptions, solicitation by an employee of another employee is prohibited while either person is on working time. Employee distribution of literature, including handbills, in work areas is prohibited at all times. Trespassing, soliciting or distribution of literature by non-employees on these premises is prohibited at all times.

Protecting church information

Protecting our church's information is the responsibility of every employee. Do not discuss the church's confidential business with anyone. All telephone calls regarding a current or former employee's position/compensation with our church must be forwarded to the Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee. The church's address shall not be used for the receipt of personal mail.

Visitors

If you are expecting a visitor, please notify the church office. If the Office Manager is not available, notify the pastor. All visitors must first check in at the church office. Visitors are not allowed in any area of the building without being accompanied. Under no circumstances will visitors be allowed in confidential, unauthorized or potentially hazardous areas. (See BUMC Safe Sanctuary Policy, attached)

Severe weather

Severe weather is to be expected during certain months of the year. Although driving may at times be difficult, when caution is exercised, the roads are normally passable. Except in cases of severe storms, we are all expected to work our regular hours. Employees may be provided time off with pay when necessary to comply with state and federal wage and hour laws. If extreme weather conditions require closing of the building, you can be notified via AM radio station WBAP, 820 and TV Channel 5 (NBC)

Concealed weapons

Possession, use or sale of weapons, firearms or explosives on work premises, while operating church equipment or vehicles for work-related purposes or while engaged in church business off premises is forbidden except where expressly authorized by the church and permitted by state and local laws.

This policy applies to all employees, including but not limited to those who have a valid permit to carry a firearm.

Employees who are aware of violations or threats of violations of this policy are required to report such violations or threats of violations to the pastor immediately. Violations of this policy can result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Termination of Employment

Resignation

Employees who voluntarily terminate their employment are requested to provide the PSPR with a written resignation at least two weeks prior to the termination date. The employee must include in the notice the last working day he or she will be on the job, and may include the reason for leaving. An employee leaving employment with the church is encouraged to have an exit interview with the pastor and/or the chair (or designee) of the Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee.

BUMC reserves the right to accept an employee's notice of resignation and to accelerate such notice and make the employee's resignation effective immediately or on any other date prior to the employee's intended last day of work that BUMC deems appropriate. In such instances, the employee will be paid only until his or her last day of active employment.

Monies and properties due the church must be returned or paid in full before the final paycheck is released. Items that should not be removed (or copied) from BUMC include any and all keys, information, manuals, files, computers to include laptops, printers, telephones, data retrieval devices and other confidential documents.

Involuntary Employment Termination

An involuntary employment termination is an employer's discretionary decision to end an employment relationship. Benefits associated with employment terminate on the last day actually worked. Monies and properties due the organization must be paid in full before the final paycheck is released.

Job Abandonment

The occurrence of three (3) consecutive workdays of unreported absence ("no call, no show") is considered to be job abandonment, and will, therefore, be treated as a resignation. Notifying the church of any absence is your responsibility. In the event that you are unable to personally contact the church due to circumstances beyond your control, you should designate a friend or relative to call on your behalf. If you (or your designee) are unable to speak personally to the pastor or the chairperson Staff Parish Relations, you (or your designee) may leave a message regarding the intended absence on

the church voice mail system, at 817-249-1257.

In the event of unreported consecutive absence, a letter of termination will be sent to your last known address by PSPR.

NOTE: Individuals whose employment has been terminated due to job abandonment will not be eligible for rehire, unless extenuating circumstances for the unreported absence are determined to be acceptable to the Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee, and a position for which the employee is qualified is available.

Retirement

Employees who are retiring are requested to provide PSPR with a written notification at least thirty days prior to the effective date of the retirement. BUMC on a limited, temporary basis may employ retirees; however, no benefits will accrue from this employment.

Exit Interview

The pastor or a Staff Parish Relations committee representative will conduct an exit interview for each terminating employee. The purpose of this conference is to collect all BUMC property and to ensure communication of suggestions or comments the terminating employee may make are documented.

Worker's Compensation Insurance

The church complies with applicable state and federal law for work-related illness or injury. Absences caused by work-related illness or injury will be reviewed on an individual basis by the church.

Law requires the coverage, and the employer pays the premium, with no deduction from the employee's pay. All employees are automatically covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance at the time they are hired.

If an accident occurs, it is important to get proper first aid and/or medical attention immediately. Any injury or illness should be reported to the immediate supervisor as soon as it happens, regardless of how minor it may be. Within 48 hours, a written report must be filed with the PSPR and the church insurance carrier. Failure to report a work-related injury in a timely manner may affect an employee's right to benefits.

Unemployment Compensation

Your church pays a special tax to the state to support unemployment insurance. Employees are protected against loss of income when unemployed through no fault of their own. Employees should contact the Texas Work Force Commission unemployment office for details on receiving benefits.

Drug-Free Workplace

The use of illegal drugs or abuse of controlled substances or alcohol in the workplace is detrimental to both the employee and the church. Employees have a right to work in a drug-free environment and to work with persons free from the effects of drugs and alcohol. Drug and alcohol abuse in the workplace interferes with and reduces operational efficiency.

Employees are expected and required to report to work on time and in appropriate mental and physical condition for work. It is the church's intent and obligation to provide a drug-free environment.

The unlawful manufacture distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance on the church premises or while conducting church business is absolutely prohibited. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, including immediate termination, and may have legal consequences.

The church recognizes drug and alcohol dependency as an illness and a major health problem. The church also recognizes drug and alcohol abuse as a potential health, safety and security problem. Employees needing help in dealing with such problems are encouraged to seek proper assistance. Conscientious efforts to seek such help will not jeopardize an employee's job.

Employees are required to report any conviction under a criminal drug statute for violations occurring on the church premises, or off the church premises while conducting church business. A report of a conviction must be made to the pastor or Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee chairperson within five working days after the conviction.

Compliance with the terms and reporting requirements of this policy is required as a condition of employment of all employees.

(Sample)

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

The employee handbook describes important information about Benbrook United Methodist Church (BUMC), and I understand that I should consult the church council regarding any questions not answered in the employee handbook. I have entered into my employment relationship with BUMC voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment. Accordingly, either I or BUMC can terminate the relationship at will or without cause, at any time, as long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described here are subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur. I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is not a contract of employment, or a legal document and it does not create any obligation on the part of BUMC to have “for cause” reason or any reason at all to terminate my employment. I have received the handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and understand the policies contained herein and am fully aware of my obligations at all times to fully comply with the responsibilities that are imposed on me as a condition of employment.

EMPLOYEE’S SIGNATURE

DATE

EMPLOYEE’S NAME (TYPED OR PRINTED)

(Sign two copies. One will be attached to the handbook; the other will be kept in employee’s file.)

(Sample)

Background Investigation Release

Benbrook United Methodist Church
1122 Bryant Street, Benbrook, Texas 76126

I _____/ssn _____ give my permission to the Benbrook United Methodist Church to conduct the following inquires as a condition for employment as _____/Benbrook United Methodist Church to:

1. Check and verify past employment history, school records and personal references.
2. Conduct criminal and background records check.
3. Conduct a pre-employment drug/alcohol screen, if required by Pastor Staff Parish Relations and/or Church Council.

We have subscribed our names this ____/____/____, by authority and on behalf of the congregation.

Employee Name

Pastor Staff Parish Relations Chairperson

(Sample)

Contract of Employment
Benbrook United Methodist Church
1122 Bryant Street, Benbrook, Texas 76126

TO: Name of Candidate, XXX-XX-XXXX (ssn)

Grace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. The Church Council of Benbrook United Methodist Church has authorized the undersigned, Chairperson Pastor Staff Parish Relations on behalf of the church, to offer you a contract of employment as

POSITION /Benbrook United Methodist Church

This contract of employment shall continue until canceled. Cancellation may be achieved, at will, by the giving of a two week written notice of intent by either party to the other.

While employed, you are to fulfill the responsibilities of this position as outlined in the attached job description, adhere to General Policy Statements of the church and respond to other requests of the pastor and/or the Pastor Staff Parish Relations Committee, as necessary.

For our part, we pledge to assist you in every possible way so that your ministry and work may be fulfilling for you, and useful to the church, as we serve Christ together. In the name of Benbrook United Methodist Church, we promise our prayers, our love, and our support.

For your needs, we agree to pay you the following salary on an annual basis:

\$xxxx.xx, less F. I. C. A. and Federal Income Tax from (Date of employment).

In testimony whereof, we have subscribed our names this XXth day of MONTH/ YEAR by authority and on behalf of the congregation.

Name/Employee

Name
Chairperson/PSPR

Attachment: job description