

**SYNOD OF LINCOLN TRAILS  
PERSONNEL POLICIES  
Revised 10/29/11**

1.00 A THEOLOGY OF EMPLOYMENT

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a community of faith called into being by God's grace in Jesus Christ. As such it is a community of people known by its convictions as well as by its actions.

- a. This community of faith celebrates creation as an ongoing phenomenon of God in the world. It acknowledges the sovereignty of God over the world and the Lordship of Jesus Christ over the Church.
- b. This community of faith is made up of people called by God into a covenant relationship. Here, gifts are recognized and used for the purposes of God. This community of faith values the contributions of all its employees.
- c. This community of faith is a servant community. It offers its life for the world.
- d. This community of faith is an interdependent community within which particular responsibilities are accepted and acted upon.

This Church is living testimony that the God who creates life, frees those in bondage, forgives sin, reconciles brokenness, makes all things new, is still at work in the world. Implicit in Christian theology are certain basic assumptions about persons which should be taken into account in the Church's employment practices if the Church is to be faithful to its best insight. Without such faithfulness, the Church will distort its witness. Through faithfulness, the Church will make life together in work more meaningful, productive, and rewarding.

The basic assumptions are inherent in the central teachings of the Christian faith regarding the nature of persons. They are benchmarks which can guide the church in its employment practices. Persons are created in the image of God. God is the creator; therefore, the creativity of those made in God's image must be recognized and protected. Failure to allow this creativity denies God's creation and the continual creativity through persons.

The Christian Gospel sets people free from bondage to assume responsibility for themselves. This means that in the acceptance of this freedom, a person finds worth and dignity. To deny the opportunity for the exercise of this freedom is to deny the worth and dignity of the individual.

A covenant agreement is the proper expression of a mutually-agreed-upon, functional order in relationships. Employment is such an agreement in which two parties agree to function together in a certain way to achieve an agreed-upon objective or purpose. As an employer, the Church must recognize and incorporate into its particular personnel system these basic assumptions of faith, or it risks the possibility of being unfaithful to its own witness.

2.00 THE SYNOD AS AN EMPLOYER AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PERSONNEL POLICIES

A basic principle in the structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is that the agencies and councils of the Church have assigned responsibilities to enable the Church to carry out its mission. In order to carry out its assigned functions, the Synod employs staff to assist in preparing for and in implementing its decisions.

The following Personnel Policies of the Synod of Lincoln Trails are established with regard to all staff which it employs for service. These policies are designed to be consistent with all applicable provisions of the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). These policies are to be developed and regularly reviewed by the committee responsible for personnel. These policies, and any subsequent changes, shall be approved by the Synod.

3.00 THE COMMITMENTS UNDERLYING THESE PERSONNEL POLICIES

These personnel policies are based on commitments by the Synod and the staff:

- a. the Synod will recognize and affirm the full potential of each staff member and develop, support, and strive to use the full range of human resources potential
  - b. staff members will devote their interest and energy to their work and the goals of the Synod.
- These commitments reflect an open partnership in which objectives are shared and in which both Synod and staff members acknowledge their responsibilities to each other.

4.00 PRINCIPLES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF PERSONNEL POLICIES

The following principles guide the development and administration of all personnel policies and processes:

4.01 Equal Employment Opportunity

To establish and administer a process that will enable the development and implementation of employment practices that are administered without discrimination in the areas of race, color,

national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, creed, religious affiliation (except where religious affiliation is determined to be a bona fide occupational qualification), or disability.

- 4.02 Compensation  
To establish and administer a process of compensation wherein the staff member's compensation is determined on the basis of job evaluation, equitable salary scales, and increments determined in light of economic factors, and an annual performance review and evaluation.
- 4.03 Reimbursement of Expenses  
To establish and administer a process wherein authorized expenses incurred by staff members, in the performance of their work assignments, are reimbursed through an adequate, uniform, voucher-based system.
- 4.04 Career Development  
To establish and administer a process of career development which will afford staff members the opportunity to acquire new skills and knowledge and/or refresh old skills and knowledge, consonant with the need of the Synod and with their own career goals and objectives. Staff members may receive assistance, through financial grants and needed time away from the job, to participate in Synod conducted or approved training programs. The process of staff development will be an integral part of their annual performance review and evaluation.
- 4.05 Benefits  
To assist in meeting the needs of the staff members for medical services and insurance, pension coverage, regular vacations, regular and special leaves, etc., consonant with the goals and financial capacity of the Synod.
- 4.06 Quality of Work Life  
To establish and sustain a process that assures the staff member of equitable working hours, necessary equipment to perform tasks, humane treatment, clean, pleasant, and safe working conditions, etc., to the extent these are feasible within the goals and financial capacity of the Synod.
- 4.07 Complaints and Grievances  
To establish and administer a process that will insure all staff members a fair and equitable opportunity for quick resolution of work problems, including the right to choose a co-employee as an advocate, and for the hearing and resolution of misunderstandings and complaints that may arise in the administration of the personnel system.
- 4.08 Communication  
To communicate to all staff members the personnel policies and procedures pertinent to their employment, including identification of the offices, persons or committees involved in the administration, and over-sight of the system.

## 5.00 EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES, TERMINOLOGY, AND PROCEDURES

- 5.01 Employer  
The legal corporate employer of all Synod staff is the Synod of Lincoln Trails of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a legal corporation in the State of Indiana.
- 5.02 Non-exempt and Exempt Categories  
The Fair Labor Standards Act provides for non-exempt and exempt positions with respect to overtime. Persons employed in non-exempt positions shall be paid overtime wages for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week. Overtime pay is at the rate of one-and-one-half-times the regular hourly rate. All overtime work must be approved by a supervisor in advance.  
  
If the normal work week for a non-exempt position is fewer than 40 hours a week, all hours worked up to 40 hours a week will be paid at the regular hourly rate.  
  
Those persons employed in exempt positions are not paid overtime wages for hours worked either in excess of the normal work schedule or 40 hours a week. Such staff members are expected to manage their schedule to provide them with a minimum of two days off each week.
- 5.03 Teaching Elders  
In accordance with federal and state statutes and Church policy, all Teaching Elders employed by the Synod are considered self-employed persons, engaged in the exercise of their ministry, and are not subject to withholding for certain taxes. They are, however, included in all other policies which apply to "staff members," except where excluded by federal or state law. All elected staff persons who are Teaching Elders shall be given a written call stating terms of employment. All calls shall be submitted to the Teaching Elder's presbytery for approval.
- 5.04 Elected and Appointed Staff
  - a. Elected Staff: Some positions are filled by Synod election. These positions are always "exempt" and are usually executive in nature. Persons in such positions are nominated by means of a process approved by the Synod and elected by the Synod to indefinite terms. All such persons shall be called to office in accordance with the provisions of the Form of

Government Persons in such positions shall receive annual performance reviews and a comprehensive review and evaluation at least every five years.

- b. Appointed Staff: All other positions are filled by appointment of the Synod Executive. The committee responsible for personnel shall determine which of these positions are "exempt" and which are "non-exempt." Appointed staff shall serve for an indefinite period, unless otherwise specified, and shall receive an annual performance review and evaluation.

5.05 Position Descriptions

A position description shall be required for each elected and appointed position. The position description shall be in accordance with guidelines established by the committee responsible for personnel and subject to annual review.

5.06 Contract Staff

The Synod may contract with a person with specific skills for a time-defined task. Contract Staff are not eligible for any benefits available to employees and are required to disclose any conflict of interest before work begins.

5.07 Temporary Agency Workers

If workers are needed for short-term (usually less than three months) projects, the Synod may contract with temporary agencies for help. Temporary agency workers are not eligible for any benefits available to employees. It is expected that temporary agencies will meet all obligations required by federal, state and local laws.

5.08 Volunteers

It is the policy of the Synod to provide opportunities for persons to serve the church on a non-compensated basis. Persons who volunteer to help out on an occasional or regular basis with no expectation of payment are considered volunteers. These persons are not filling staff roles and are not eligible for any of the benefits of regular or term employees or adjunct staff. Volunteers must provide basic identification data before they begin work. Volunteers working with children are required to provide additional information as required by law.

6.00 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

It is the policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Synod that they will not discriminate in employment policy and practices and will promote equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment. The Synod will be guided by the mandate of the Form of Government, the various policies of the General Assembly, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and related laws and executive orders of state and local authority. All employment policies and practices will be administered without discrimination based on race, color, sexual orientation, creed, religious affiliation (except where religious affiliation is determined to be a bona fide occupational qualification), national origin, sex, age, marital status, or disability. The Synod will practice affirmative action which takes into account past and present inequities of treatment and discrimination. The Synod will be accountable for implementing its plans in recruitment and in policies and processes covering compensation, benefits, promotions, transfers, training, career development, dismissal and other forms of discipline, recreation, and all other areas of staff member treatment.

7.00 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

7.01 Internal Transfers within the Synod Staff

The Synod may fill a vacant position within its organization by internal transfer without churchwide advertising or internal posting in order to:

7.02 Advertising

Advertisement of vacancies in both elected and appointed Synod positions shall be included in appropriate publications of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as well as other publications as may be designated by the Synod. Notice shall be mailed to each agency, synod and presbytery in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) All advertizing shall be extended long enough to enable response from interested applicants.

7.03 Employment at Will

When not contravened by state law, employment is at will and may be terminated at any time with or without cause by either the employee or the employer without notice, except for discriminatory reasons.

7.04 Reasonable Accommodation

The Employer will make reasonable accommodation for the known physical or mental limitations of qualified individuals with disabilities unless to do so would impose an undue hardship on the Employer.

7.05 Physical Examinations

Employment may be conditioned on the satisfactory result of a post-offer medical examination if the examination is required of all entering employees in the same job category regardless of disability. The results of the examination are used only in accordance with the Americans and Disabilities Act. Medical information resulting from post-offer medical examination must be maintained separately from other employment records and treated as a confidential medical record. Pre-employment medical examinations or medical histories are not allowed and will not be considered or maintained in the confidential medical record.

8.00 OTHER EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

8.01 Probationary Employment

The first three (3) months of employment of appointed personnel are considered a probationary or a trial period giving the employee and the supervisor an opportunity to evaluate interest and qualifications for the position under actual working conditions. Prior to regular employment, a performance appraisal is prepared and discussed with the staff member by her/his supervisor. When all requirements for regular employment are completed satisfactorily, regular employment will begin with the next pay period.

8.02 Nepotism

To affirm and facilitate equal opportunity for all staff members and employment candidates, care will be exercised in the employment and assignment of persons who are direct relatives of people in the Church's employ. Individuals shall not be employed by, or through, the involvement of direct relatives and they shall not be assigned to a position where a direct relative is in a position to influence the staff member's salary, promotion, or other aspect of personnel practice.

8.03 Sexual Misconduct/Harrasment

The Synod community depends on trust and civility. A willingness to recognize the dignity and worth of each person is essential to our mission. It is the responsibility of each person to respect the personal dignity of others. The Synod of Lincoln Trails expects members of the Synod community to demonstrate a basic generosity of spirit that precludes expressions of sexual misconduct or sexual harassment.

Therefore, it is the policy of the Synod to maintain a workplace and volunteer environment free of any form of sexual misconduct or intimidation, including sexual harassment, by any Synod employees, including supervisors, or by non-employee work contacts. Should allegations of sexual misconduct or harassment be made, they will be fully and fairly investigated. Corrective or disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from employment, will be taken as warranted.

Any Synod employee who believes in good faith that there has been a violation of this policy should report the violation as soon as possible to the Synod Executive. The complaint will be investigated promptly, objectively, and confidentially by the Synod Executive and the committee responsible for Personnel.

8.04 Conflict of Interest

No staff member shall accept any gift, gratuity, grant service, or any special favor from any person(s) or business which provides or receives goods and services or which seeks to provide or receive goods and services to or from the Synod. However, minor courtesies such as luncheons, dinners, or similar arrangements in connection with business discussions may be received.

All staff members shall avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest, special interest, or any other inappropriate conduct. If a staff member discovers that she/he may be in a position of conflict of interest, she/he shall immediately report this conflict to the Synod Executive.

8.05 Privacy

The Synod shall guarantee the confidentiality of medical and employment records in accordance with the privacy guidelines established by the General Assembly.

8.06 Honoraria

Ordinarily, Synod personnel will not retain honoraria for any services rendered as a part of their normal job function.

8.07 Governmental Investigations

In the event of an inquiry by the police, F.B.I., or other governmental investigational agency or official concerning the work of a Synod agency, its activities, records, or personnel; or in the event a staff member of an agency is sought to be queried by such governmental agency, the following shall be the policy in this area:

- a. all such inquiries shall be referred to the Synod Executive.
- b. no information or documents of any kind will be released until the Synod Executive has consulted with and attained the clearance of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly or her/his representative in matters regarding governmental investigations
- c. staff members shall be informed if there is an inquiry regarding their personnel records.

- 8.08 Employee Personal Public Witness  
It is the policy of the Synod to value the creativity and integrity of its staff and reaffirm the right of employees to exercise freedom of conscience. All persons employed by the Synod, when they are working as or holding themselves out as Synod employees, are expected to give a full and fair representation of the position of the Synod in matters of policy, social witness statements, or theological or doctrinal positions. However, the possibility of personal dissent from a policy of the Synod, and as articulated by any of its entities, or the possibility of making a personal public witness is not precluded by employment with the Synod and is a reasonable expression of freedom of conscience.
- 9.00 SALARY ADMINISTRATION
- 9.01 Philosophy and Principles  
The Synod is committed to salary administration which will provide: fair pay for the work performed; incentive for personal achievement and growth; and flexibility to meet changes in organization, functions, positions, and personnel over a period of time. Salary levels will be maintained in a manner which results in their being consistent internally, responsive to changes in economic indices, and in keeping with the Church's philosophy and objectives.
- 9.02 Salary Review and Increments  
All individual salaries will be reviewed annually by the Synod and will also be reviewed when there are changes in duties or responsibilities which may call for a change in position classification. Individual salary changes will be made based on performance, considerations of relative equity within organizations, position in salary range, and appropriate career progression relative to these factors. Length of service alone is not considered a valid reason for an increase.
- 9.03 Staff Salaries, Teaching Elders  
In accordance with Form of Government, changes in terms of the call of a staff member who is a Teaching Elder must be reported to her/his presbytery.
- 9.04 Availability of Salary Information  
All staff salary information of the Synod will be available to the General Assembly.
- 9.05 Housing Allowances  
Under the Internal Revenue Code, a Teaching Elder may exclude from her/his gross income, for tax purposes if it is designated in advance, any housing allowance paid as part of her/his compensation. The Internal Revenue Service ruled that a Teaching Elder may exclude from her/his gross income "only an amount equal to the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances such as a garage, plus the cost of utilities" or can exclude "the amount of compensation used for (1) furnishings, running expenses and real estate taxes to the extent they do not exceed the fair rental value and (2) utilities."
- 9.06 Equalization for Compensation  
It is understood that the exclusion of the housing allowance from taxable income for a Teaching Elder and the payment of the employer portion of the social security (FICA) for an elected lay employee are approximately equal benefits.
- 10.00 REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES
- 10.01 Vouchered Expenses  
Elected staff persons of the Synod will be reimbursed for expenses on a vouchered basis as follows:
- a. mileage at the IRS allowable rate
  - b. expenses (airfares; lodging; meals; tolls; parking; etc.) incurred in relationship to out-of-town meetings
- 10.02 Corporate Charge Card  
The Synod will provide one corporate charge card for each elected staff person.
- 11.00 STUDY LEAVE
- 11.01 Annual Study Leave for Elected Staff  
Elected staff are eligible for two weeks study leave annually with full salary.
1. The purpose of the study leave is to improve the skills and potential usefulness of the staff member for the church.
  2. Annual study leave and allowance may be cumulative from year to year for up to three years.
  3. Study leave expenses must be vouchered for reimbursement. The costs to the Synod, in addition to salary, will not exceed that staff person's accumulated study leave allowance plus up to \$2,500 (not cumulative) for travel, room, and board from the Staff Travel Budget.
  4. Study leave will not be granted as part of the severance conditions when a staff member leaves the employ of the Synod.

11.02 Study Leave for Appointed Staff

When it can be demonstrated to be for the good of the Synod as well as for the staff member, study leave for appointed staff may be approved by the Synod Executive.

11.03 Sabbatical Policy

To provide elected employees time for Sabbath and rejuvenation, a time of sabbatical may be granted with the following provisions:

- a. the staff member must have completed three years of credited service
- b. the request will normally be made 6-9 months prior to the leave to the committee responsible for personnel
- c. at least 3 years must have elapsed since any previous sabbatical leave
- d. the maximum length of extended study leave will be two (2) months. It may be taken in conjunction with earned vacation within a particular year.
- e. the costs to the Synod, in addition to salary continuation, will not exceed that person's accumulated study leave allowance plus an approved amount for travel, room and board from the Staff Travel Budget
- f. the on-going work of the particular position and the total functions of the Synod will be primary factors in considering the timing of sabbatical leave

12.00 PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

12.01 Annual Performance Review

An annual performance review and evaluation will be conducted for both elected and appointed staff. The evaluation will be documented in writing and a copy given to the staff member.

12.02 Corrective Action

It is the policy of the Synod to maintain standards of employee performance, attendance and conduct which will allow the employers to fulfill its missions. The goal of corrective action is to assist an employee to achieve an acceptable level of performance, attendance or conduct.

To insure fair and equitable treatment to all employees, the following elements should be part of any corrective action:

- a. The employee should be informed of the unacceptable performance or conduct and advised of the consequences of continued unacceptable actions/performance;
- b. If appropriate, an action plan should be developed with the employee to resolve the problem;
- c. the Synod Executive should prepare a report in writing of any corrective action; this report will be retained in the employee's personnel file;
- d. The employee may respond in writing and have the response placed in the employee's personnel file.

Examples of corrective action include verbal warnings, written warnings or suspension. Failure by the employee to respond to a plan for corrective action may result in further actions up to, and including, dismissal.

All corrective actions must be administered in a nondiscriminatory manner in compliance with the Synod policies on equal opportunity employment and affirmative action.

13.00 SEPARATION PRACTICES

The term "separation" shall refer to any and all terminations of the relationship between a staff member, elected or appointed, and the Synod.

13.01 Voluntary Resignation

A voluntary choice of separation freely made by the staff member may take place after one month's written notice to the committee responsible for personnel for elected staff members or two weeks written notice to the Synod Executive for appointed employees. All such staff members will receive pay for accrued vacation. Vacation pay is forfeited if such notice is not given.

13.02 Termination Without Prejudice

An appointed staff member's employment may be terminated by the Synod for reasons other than those enumerated under Dismissal for Cause in paragraph 13.03 below. Termination without prejudice will be upon the recommendation of the Synod Executive. An elected staff member's employment may be terminated without prejudice upon recommendation of the committee responsible for personnel to the Synod.

Staff members terminated without prejudice will be entitled to notice, severance allowances, and out placement assistance as outlined and limited in paragraph 13.05b and paragraph 13.05c below.

13.03 Dismissal for Cause

Dismissal for cause may take place by written notice from the Synod Executive or the person acting on her/his behalf, giving specific reasons for termination. Notice will be given or pay in lieu of

notice of one month for elected staff members or two weeks for appointed staff members. No severance allowance will be paid, but staff members who are dismissed will receive the cash equivalent of the unused earned vacation.

The reasons for dismissal for cause shall include but not be limited to:

- a. unsatisfactory performance
- b. insubordination in the line of assigned duties
- c. neglect in the care and use of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) property and funds
- d. repeated, unexcused absence and/or repeated absences or tardiness
- e. illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct
- f. repeated failure or refusal to observe Synod policies
- g. sexual harassment.

Discharge of a staff member is always considered to be an action of last resort taken after remedial measures have proven ineffective or when the staff member's conduct is such as to preclude further employment. Written documentation is required prior to recommendation for dismissal unless immediate dismissal is considered to be necessary for the safety of persons or property. All dismissals of employees of the Synod will be reviewed by the committee responsible for personnel for concurrence.

#### 13.04 Suspension

If unacceptable behavior (e.g., insubordination, harassment of other staff members, apparent involvement in dishonest or unethical acts, etc.) requires absence from the work place, the Synod Executive may suspend the staff member, pending verification and evaluation of the circumstances. Suspended staff members will receive pay during the investigation process.

Suspension without pay may be invoked by the Synod Executive in circumstances where an offense has been clearly established requiring disciplinary action but not warranting immediate dismissal. Normally suspension will be invoked after verbal and written warnings are issued to staff members regarding inappropriate conduct on the job. Suspension shall be considered to be a warning to the staff member that repetition would subject her/him to dismissal. Suspension without pay may be for a period of up to two weeks. Notice of suspension must be given in writing by the Synod Executive with a copy to the committee responsible for personnel. The staff member shall also be notified in writing of her/his right to use the complaint procedure outlined in this policy and shall have the right to defend his/her position with or without an advocate. If an advocate is used, it will be at the staff member's expense.

#### 13.05 Reduction of Force

##### 13.05a Reduction of Regular Staff

If the Synod, because of a fundamental change in long-range objectives, reorganization changes, or a serious change in financial outlook is required to make a reduction in workforce, the decisions and procedures by which staff members will be released will be fairly and consistently applied to all staff of the Synod. Written notice will be issued by the Synod Executive and/or committee responsible for personnel to all regular staff announcing the reduction and reasons for it.

Reduction of force will be accomplished in a manner that preserves overall organizational effectiveness. It will be based on objective criteria such as job performance, individual experience, and qualifications, job worth, and the number of persons with similar skills. Staff members of outstanding performance and exceptional qualifications should be the last to be affected by a reduction in force, giving appropriate consideration to affirmative action commitments and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967. The steps in the termination process will be as follow:

- a. a moratorium on the hiring of new staff
- b. affirmative action and age discrimination analysis
- c. staff member performance and qualification analysis
- d. formal notice of termination from the Synod Executive
- e. completion of termination procedures and work force reduction severance and benefits allowance.

##### 13.05b Out Placement Assistance (Reduction of Force or Termination Without Prejudice)

Each terminated staff member will be offered personal assistance, career planning, guidance, and help in locating employment elsewhere.

13.05c Schedule of Allowance and Assistance (Reduction in Force or Termination Without Prejudice)

Six months' notice will be given to elected employees and three months' notice will be given to appointed employees. If during the notice period the employee secures employment elsewhere:

- a. the obligations of the employer with regard to the remainder of the notice period are forfeited.
- b. the obligations of the employer with regard to the severance allowance continue in force.

In addition to the period of notice, a severance allowance will be given in relation to the length of continuous service with the Synod as follows:

<u>YEARS OF SERVICE</u>	<u>WEEKS OF SEVERANCE ALLOWANCE</u>
Up to 1 year	0
1 yr up to 2	2
2 yrs up to 3	4
4 yrs up to 5	6
5 yrs up to 6	7
6 yrs up to 7	8
7 yrs up to 8	9
8 yrs up to 9	10
9 yrs up to 10	11
10 yrs up to 15	12
15 yrs up to 20	13
20 yrs up to 25	14
25 yrs and above	15

Payment of severance allowance will be achieved in one of the following two ways as determined by the Synod after consultation with the staff member:

- a. a lump sum payment - the total amount of the salary due as severance will be paid in not more than two (2) payments. The payment or payments shall be completed within six (6) months of the staff member's last day of work
- b. continued salary - the staff's salary will be continued on the regular schedule through the severance period.

The Synod's share of the staff person's pension and other benefits payments will be continued to be paid by the Synod during the severance period if payment of severance is on the basis of continued salary noted in b. above. Pension and other benefit payments will not be continued if the severance allowance is made in one (1) or two (2) lump sum payments. No additional vacation entitlement will accrue during the severance period. No severance allowance shall exceed the limits listed here.

13.06 Termination of Teaching Elders

All conditions for separation shall be compatible with the provisions of the Form of Government and the Rules of Discipline of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

13.07 Exit Interviews

All departing staff members will have an exit interview.

13.08 Death in Service

In the event of the death of either an elected or appointed staff person, the salary of that person will be continued to the spouse or dependent for four (4) weeks from the date on which the death occurs. Death benefits are also provided through the pension and benefits plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

13.09 Retirement

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Pension and Benefits Plan provides retirement benefits. (See the provisions of the plan for further information.)

13.09a Transition to Retirement

Staff members who wish to plan for a gradual transition to retirement are encouraged to explore with the Synod Executive and the committee responsible for personnel possibilities for alternative responsibilities, part-time responsibilities, special project assignments, or other arrangements which would be beneficial to the staff member and the Synod.

14.00 VACANCY PROCESS

If the vacant staff position is that of Synod Executive, the committee responsible for personnel may consult with appropriate staff in the Office of Middle Governing Body Relations of the General Assembly – as well as with the Executive/General Presbyters of the presbyteries within the Synod of Lincoln Trails. If the vacant

position is that of an Executive Assistant or other appointed staff person, the Synod Executive shall consult with the committee responsible for personnel.

15.00 COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

It is the Church's policy to facilitate the development of open, orderly channels of communication among all levels of the organization. Staff are encouraged to take initiative in seeking answers to their questions or solutions to their work-related problems through immediate discussion with their supervisors. In doing so, they are assured by these policies of freedom from reprisal. While the Synod Executive is the normal avenue through which staff members raise concerns, other channels will be available to staff members to discuss a concern with someone outside the immediate working situation, to check information, clarify personnel policies, or obtain guidance.

Any complaint will be investigated quickly and carefully by the Synod Executive and the committee responsible for personnel. Any complaint against the Synod Executive should be discussed with the Executive as soon as it arises. The complaint will be investigated quickly and carefully by the committee responsible for personnel. Any complaint by the Synod Executive will be referred immediately to the committee responsible for personnel.

A written record of all decisions, in all complaint procedure meetings, shall be kept with the confidential files of the Synod Executive, and in the staff person's personnel file. Letters of decision from any convening authority shall contain provision for the complaining party to indicate acceptance or rejection of the decision. The record may be inspected by the involved staff person at the staff person's request. The file records containing the confidential documents are not to be shared for use in any employment decision, unless the staff person is made aware of such use.

16.00 BENEFITS

16.01 Social Security

All personnel are covered by the Federal Old Age and Survivors Benefits Act (Social Security). The staff member's share of the tax is withheld from wages of staff who are not Teaching Elders. Staff who are Teaching Elders are considered self-employed, and Social Security taxes are neither withheld, nor paid for them.

16.02 Health Insurance

Major medical protection for staff persons and dependents is provided to participants in the program of the Board of Pensions.

16.03 Pension

All regular employees who work at least 20 hours per week will be enrolled in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Pension Plan.

16.04 Holidays

The same number of holidays will be given to staff at all levels in any location. The holidays for staff of the Synod are:

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday

Presidents' Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Thanksgiving and the day following

Christmas Day and the following day (providing two consecutive days off other than Saturday and Sunday)

One additional day

A total of 12 days

When a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, it will be observed as a holiday on the nearest Friday or Monday respectively. When a holiday occurs during a staff's vacation or sick leave, the staff will be granted an off-setting day off.

16.05 Sick Leave

Permanent employees will receive ten (10) working days of sick leave each calendar year, cumulative up to 120 days, to be used in case of illness. Sick leave entitlement during the first year of employment will be prorated according to the length of employment, using a ratio of one day for each two months of employment. The ten (10) days of additional sick leave will be credited on January 1 of each successive year of employment. Total credited service will be included in computing entitlement of sick leave.

At the time of termination of employment (either voluntary or involuntary), staff shall have no claim for pay in lieu of unused sick leave.

Medical doctor certification may be required for the payment of sick leave benefits. Pregnancy is to be treated for purposes of sick leave and Off-The-Job Disability Benefits in accordance with the Federal Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978.

16.06 Worker's Compensation Insurance

All staff members shall be covered by worker's compensation insurance, provided by and in accordance with the law of the state in which employed, to provide benefits in case of an on-the-job accident.

16.07 On-The-Job Travel Accident Insurance

All staff traveling on the Synod's business are covered by the Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance provided and managed by the PC(USA) Risk Management office.

16.08 Off-The-Job Disability Benefits Insurance

If an employee remains disabled by illness or Off-The-Job injury after exhausting all accumulated paid sick leave benefits, the employee will be also entitled to the following:

- a. Continued benefits for up to 26 weeks, calculated from the eighth day of the disability. The amount of the benefit will be equal to 60% of the employee's average pay for the 12 months preceding the disability absence. In cases where the employee has not been employed for 12 months, the pay base for these benefits will be calculated by averaging the pay for the partial year served. This 26 week entitlement, as prescribed, includes the time during which the employee is in receipt of full pay benefits except for the first seven days of disability.
- b. An employee may be eligible for long term disability benefits as a participating member of the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Long term disability benefits under these plans commence after 90 days of disability.

These long term disability benefits are in the amount of 60% of the members effective salary on the date disability began as provided in Section 11.3 of the Plan. When payable by the Benefits Plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), they will supersede the entitlement to benefits provided under (a) above (from the 90th day of disability until the 26 weeks entitlement in (a) has run out). For an employee still on full pay sick leave benefits after 90 days of disability, commencement of long term disability payments will be deferred until full pay sick leave benefit entitlement has been exhausted.

- c. Benefit coverage (except vacation and sick leave accrual) and service credit will continue during the entire leave, with the cost of benefits paid by the Synod.

These disability benefits are designed to meet the requirements of state governments which have legislated such benefits. However, if in any situation an employee is entitled to Off-The-Job Disability benefits payments under state or local law in excess of the entitlements described above, credit for the entity's payments will be taken in meeting the legally required benefit.

16.09 Unemployment Insurance

The Synod, as a not-for-profit corporation, is not liable for State Unemployment Insurance, nor can it voluntarily contribute to such a program.

16.10 Vacation

A vacation with pay is provided for all permanent employees. Vacations are not cumulative, and must be used within the calendar year, except when special provision has been made by the Synod Executive.

Full-time elected employees are entitled to one full month vacation (**22 working days**) per year. Full-time, appointed employees are entitled to an annual paid vacation, each varying with the length of their service with the Synod, from 10 working days vacation (for one year of service) to 20 working days for 10 or more years of service. Vacation time shall be increased by one working day per year after the first year.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> year of service, and annually thereafter, all appointed employees will be granted 25 working days annual vacation. In the 16<sup>th</sup> year of service, and annually thereafter, all elected employees will be granted 5 weeks vacation (27 working days) annual vacation.

Vacation for appointed employees who have worked less than one year will be based on a ratio of one day for each two months of employment and will be taken from the 10 working days vacation for the first full year of service.

16.11 Leaves of Absence, With Pay

Leaves of absence, with pay, are provided under the following circumstances:

- a. For regular training period in the U.S. Armed Forces (up to two weeks annually).
- b. For jury duty (up to two weeks annually; in exceptional cases, the Synod Executive may grant additional leave of absence with pay for jury duty). The employee's pay from the Synod will be reduced by the amount of reimbursement received from the court so that the employee's effective earnings are unchanged for the period of the leave.
- c. For marriage of a staff member who has one or more years of credited service with the Synod (up to three days).
- d. For personal or family emergencies or for other personal business which can not be cared for outside of working hours (up to three days annually). Time off the job with pay is permitted in the serious illness of a child or spouse.
- e. In case of death in the immediate family (husband, wife, parent, parent-in-law, child, brother, sister, grandparent) the staff member will receive full pay for absence of the day of death up to and including day after burial. This leave should not exceed four (4) working days.
- f. Adequate time off for voting where election hours and work schedules would work a hardship on staff members.

16.12 Parental Leave

In addition to other benefits, an employee who has been employed by the Synod for at least one year is entitled to parental leave in the period immediately preceding and following the arrival (birth or adoption) of a child as follows:

- a. Maternity Leave
  1. The employee will normally apply for leave at least one month in advance of the expected arrival of the child, specifying the amount of leave time desired.
  2. The leave can be for up to six months. The leave may include a period in advance of the expected arrival of the child as well as some after the child has arrived. The leave normally should be unbroken except for any periods of absence due to medical reasons.
  3. Up to six weeks of the leave may be with full salary, housing and benefits. The remainder of the leave, if longer than six weeks, will be with benefits only.
- b. Paternity Leave
  1. The employee shall normally apply for the leave at least one month in advance of the expected arrival of the child, specifying the amount of leave time desired.
  2. The leave may be for up to two weeks with full salary, housing and benefits.
- c. Sick leave and/or vacation time are separate issues and are not to be confused with parental leave; each is taken on its own merit and eligibility.
- d. Benefit coverage (except vacation and sick leave accrual) and service credit will continue during the entire leave, with the cost of benefits paid by the Synod.
- e. If both parents are employed by the Synod, only one parental leave may be granted. However, leave may be shared by the two parents.
- f. Upon completion of the parental leave, the employee may be returned to his or her position. If the Employer found it necessary, for business reasons, to fill the position during the employee's leave, the employee may be offered a different but comparable position, if available, which the employee is free to accept or decline without prejudice.

16.13 Leaves of Absence, Without Pay

In extraordinary circumstances, leaves of absence without pay may be granted upon recommendation of the Synod Executive. Approval of a leave of absence will be based upon the reason an employee is requesting a leave of absence, the amount of time requested, the employee's performance and the need to retain the employee on the job. Pension dues will not be paid by the employer for any leave of absence without pay which exceeds four weeks but these payments may be made by the employee in accordance with the terms of the applicable plans.

16.14 Relocation Assistance Policy

The Synod will reimburse new elected employees for certain expenses. The reimbursement policies are based on the IRS conditions for deductible expenses:

- a. moving costs up to a limit of 12,000 pounds of packing and crating household goods and personal effects
- b. in-transit insurance
- c. temporary storage up to a limit of one (1) year
- d. moving costs for one personal car
- e. house hunting travel expenses for the staff member and spouse (one round trip covering a period not to exceed three (3) days) including lodging and meals
- f. transfer travel expenses for final trip of the family
- g. temporary housing expenses at the new location (not to exceed 30 days)

17.00 INTERIM STAFF PERSONS

To provide continuity of administrative and/or program services in the Synod, interim staff may be appointed to fill a vacancy in an approved (validated) position, to serve until the position is filled (or abolished.) All provisions of these policies shall apply to interim staff positions.

18.00 PART-TIME STAFF MEMBERS

Part-time staff members are those who are employed to work less than the full weekly schedule. If they are not Temporary staff members and are employed at least twenty (20) hours a week, they are eligible for the following:

- a. holiday pay, if the holiday falls on one of the regular scheduled working days for that part-time staff member
- b. jury duty pay
- c. merit increases in salary
- d. regular pay up to 40 hours; time-and-a-half pay over 40 hours in any work week
- e. vacation and sick pay in proportion to hours worked each week
- f. worker's compensation
- g. social security participation
- h. severance allowance in proportion to hours worked each week
- i. participation in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) pension plan, to the extent permitted by the Board for part-time staff members.

If a part-time staff member is later placed on a full-time basis, prorated credit will be given from the first day of her/his part-time employment for purpose of sick leave, vacation, and other benefits.

The Synod is encouraged to explore the possibility of a job sharing approach with regard to some of its employment opportunities.

19.00 BENEFITS FOR TEMPORARY STAFF MEMBERS

Those employed for a short period, usually less than three months, are not paid for holidays, sick leave, or other leaves, and do not earn vacation leave during their temporary employment. They are not eligible for the pension plans or other health benefit entitlements. If they work more than the normal weekly work schedule, they will be paid at the regular rate for hours up to 40 per week, and time-and-a-half for above 40 hours, in the case of appointed employees. If a temporary employee joins the regular staff, her/his temporary employment is not considered as credited service in computing entitlements to vacation and other benefits.

2000 Personnel Policies - 2007  
Revised 5/2007 – Approved 7/20/2007 and 10/20/2007  
Revised 6/14/2011  
Revised 7/14/2011  
Revised 10/29/2011 – Approved 10/29/2011