Personnel Manual Prototype For Congregations And Districts

"For there is a proper time and procedure for every matter . . ."

Ecclesiastes 8:6

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

June, 2003

FOREWORD

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you." Philippians 4:8,9 (A comment from Paul, in prison, encouraging excellence in ministry through his example.)

The **Personnel Manual Prototype for LCMS Congregations and Districts** presented here is meant to be a suggested guideline for use by congregations and other ministries. Those using this resource should rework and customize it to fit their particular situation. **Prior to releasing the customized version to employees, it should be reviewed to make sure it meets local, state, and federal legal requirements.**

TO: ALL EMPLOYEES

The following pages contain policies and procedures established for individuals employed by INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT.

Please read this handbook carefully. Although this does not constitute a contractual agreement, we hope it will provide guidance and answer your questions. Any further questions may be directed to the person responsible for Human Resources.

May God bless you in all you do.

Sincerely,

INSERT TITLE/ NAME OF APPROPRIATE BOARD

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CONGREGATIONAL/DISTRICT PERSONNEL MANUAL

SECTION 1.000

INTRODUCTION

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1.100: WELCOME!

Welcome to INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT! We consider you to be a gift from God and look forward to working with you as a member of our ministry team. Your gifts and talents which you bring to your position are most appreciated. We are committed to working together with you in service to our Lord through this ministry.

As an employee of the church (or school, if separate), you represent this ministry in both your work life and private life. Our hope is that you would always be sensitive to how others may see you as you live out your daily life. We encourage you to strive toward living a life that is an example to others of your relationship with God and your belief in the Church's Mission Statement.

We pray that you will look to your Lord daily as you are about your work in a way that is suggested in this portion of a prayer from "The Lutheran Book of Prayer."

> *"Grant that I may day by day put forth efforts which are pleasing to Thee, helpful to my fellow men, and sufficient to provide for my daily needs. Keep me mindful that my service must be done not merely to men but to Thee. Help me to remember that in all things, my sufficiency is of Thee and that whatever I do is to be done to Thy glory. Give me joy in my labor; sincerity in my service, and unselfishness in all my striving. Help me to be faithful in all things, for the sake of Him who died for me." Amen*

1.200: INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The following pages contain a general overview of procedures and policies established by our congregation for its employees, as well as an explanation of certain benefits provided with this employment. We want you to feel that, although there are policies and procedures to follow, you also sense participation in the servant role to the members of INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT. We hope you will find joy in your work and friendship among your co-workers.

It is important you read, understand, and become familiar with the handbook and comply with the standards, which have been established. Please talk with INSERT TITLE OF RESPONSIBLE PARTY if you have any questions or need additional information.

It is obviously not possible to anticipate every situation that may arise in the workplace or to provide information that answers every possible question. As a result, the church reserves the right to modify, supplement, rescind, or revise any policy, benefit, or provision from time to time, with or without notice, as it deems necessary or appropriate. However, at all times, the congregation will comply with all applicable laws.

If there is a conflict between the provisions, benefits, and policies in this employee handbook and those set forth in the terms of a staff member's call or contract, the terms of the call or contract shall prevail provided they do not conflict with the Bylaws or constitution of the Synod.

1.300: MISSION STATEMENT

INSERT CONGREGATION'S OR DISTRICT'S MISSION STATEMENT.

1.400: STATEMENT OF FAITH

INSERT CONGREGATION'S OR DISTRICT'S STATEMENT OF FAITH.

CONGREGATIONAL/DISTRICT PERSONNEL MANUAL

SECTION 2.000

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2.100: YOUR EMPLOYMENT

2.105: Employment At Will

As a non-rostered or non-contracted employee of INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT, the employment relationship is one of mutual consent. The employment relationship is terminable at the will of the employee or INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT, that is, either you or INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT may end this relationship at any time, with or without cause.

2.200: EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT is in full agreement with the intent of the Civil Rights Laws. It is our firm belief that the basis of employee selection for hiring, promotion, transfer, training, job assignment, hours of work, rate of pay, and working conditions should be according to ability, not age, race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, disability, or any other factors not considered pertinent to performance.

Because we are a church body, certain positions demand extensive understanding of and commitment to the doctrinal view of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. For such positions, it is necessary for us to seek out individuals with specific religious training and/or synodical recognition. In addition to the extent allowed by State Law for all positions, the congregation may give preference in hiring on the basis of religion, including persons who are members in good standing of a Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod congregation.

The position of pastor, associate pastor and assistant pastor (if applicable) or positions identifying ordained clergy status as a requirement at INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT are required to be held by ordained ministers of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Based on religious belief, only males are ordained ministers in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Therefore, for those positions, females will not be considered for employment.

2.300: 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, you will be required to provide documentation verifying your identity and legal authority to work in the United States, which includes the completion of Form 1-9, Employment Eligibility Verification.

2.350: NEW HIRE ACT

By federal law all employers are required to report newly hired employees to the designated state agency in the state where the employees are hired within 20 days of the hire date. This

requirement is the result of legislation designed to improve child support enforcement by locating parents who have neglected to pay support.

2.400: EMPLOYMENT OF MINORS

For employees less than 18 years of age, the hours of employment and working conditions strictly follow the regulations set forth by federal and state laws.

2.500: EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES (Optional)

Relatives of individuals on staff normally will not be offered employment with us. Requests for exceptions may be made to the Church Council who may approve the hiring. A relative is defined as any person related to the employee by blood, marriage, or adoption.

2.600: EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION

There are four classifications of employees as follows:

> **REGULAR FULL-TIME -** Any worker who works more than 20 hours a week and more than 5 months per year.
>
> **REGULAR PART-TIME -** Any worker who works up to, but less than full-time, but no more than 20 hours a week for a period of more than 5 months in a year.
>
> **TEMPORARY -** Any worker employed, full-time or part-time, five months or less per year.

You MAY/WILL be asked to sign a statement recognizing your part-time or temporary status and that you therefore, are not eligible for benefits.

2.605: Overtime and Minimum Wage

Certain job positions are exempt from coverage under the **Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)**, which governs the payment of minimum wage and overtime. Some of the types of positions that are exempt from the FLSA are those of a managerial, administrative or a professional nature, although job titles do not control classification as exempt or non-exempt from the FLSA.

2.700: JOB DESCRIPTIONS

In order to mutually understand what is expected of a new employee and for what the employee will be held accountable, a job description is utilized.

Employees will generally be given a job description before they start working. A job description summarizes your duties and responsibilities and gives you important information about your

new job. Please read and study your job description carefully and discuss it with your supervisor if you have any questions.

The church reserves the right to revise and update your job description from time to time, as it deems necessary and appropriate.

2.800: PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Based on actual work performance, a review will be conducted with you by your supervisor on a predetermined date. This is a formal and documented review. Casual and undocumented discussions with your supervisor will also be a part of your performance evaluation.

PURPOSE: All employees participate in a performance review session, at least annually, with their supervisor. This review is intended to provide support for the individual; to improve the performance of the individual by providing meaningful, constructive feedback on the adequacy of performance; and to assist in the development and fulfillment of professional and personal growth goals, as well as the ministry plan of the congregation. Your signature on the review form will serve as notice that the review has taken place and not whether you agree or disagree with the contents.

2.805: Initial Performance Review

In order for you to become acquainted with your new position and for your supervisor to be assured that you are suited to your new position, all new regular employees will have an initial performance review during the first three months after commencing work. Additional reviews may be conducted if performance warrants. Approximately one year after initial review(s) IS/ARE conducted, annual reviews will be conducted.

The purpose of the performance evaluation is to let you know how you are doing. Written performance evaluations may include commendation for good work, as well as specific recommendations for improvement.

You will have the opportunity to discuss your performance evaluation with your supervisor. Although you should not wait for formal reviews to ask questions, this is a good time to ask questions and clarify important points. Performance evaluations help the church make important decisions about job placement, training and development, and pay increases. A satisfactory performance evaluation does not guarantee a pay increase nor does it alter, modify, or amend the employment-at-will relationship between you and the church.

CONGREGATIONAL/DISTRICT PERSONNEL MANUAL

SECTION 3.000

BENEFITS

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3.100: INTRODUCTION

The congregation maintains a benefit program to help meet the needs of its employees. The following information in this section outlines your benefits as an employee of the church.

3.200: VACATION

Regular full-time employees will be given vacation on their anniversary date based on their length of continuous service with the congregation, as follows:

Length of Continuous Service	**Vacation**
After INSERT NUMBER years	INSERT NUMBER Days
After INSERT NUMBER through ENTER NUMBER years	INSERT NUMBER Days
After INSERT NUMBER through ENTER NUMBER years	INSERT NUMBER Days
After INSERT NUMBER years or more	INSERT NUMBER Days

An employee's anniversary date corresponds to the month and day the employee was hired as a regular full-time employee.

Requests for vacation time must be made in writing and should be submitted to the appropriate supervisor for approval at least one (1) month in advance for vacations of at least five (5) days. Shorter notice may be allowed for vacations of four (4) days or less provided it does not interfere with scheduled work. Seniority will apply when more than one person requests the same vacation day(s).

Vacation is a reward for faithful service and employees are encouraged to use all their vacation time as a means of rest and recuperation. Unused vacation WILL OR WILL NOT be carried-over into the following year. In no case will pay be granted in lieu of vacation.

Holidays that fall during a scheduled vacation will be paid as holidays and will not be charged against the employee's vacation.

Regular full-time employees will receive pay for unused vacation time for the current year upon termination of employment.

3.300: HOLIDAYS

The congregation observes the following holidays for which all regular full-time employees will receive regular pay:

LIST HOLIDAYS

The following general provisions apply to holiday pay:

1. Holidays will be observed on the calendar day designated by the church for observance.

2. Holidays falling on Saturday will be observed on Friday and holidays falling on Sunday will be observed on the following Monday.

3. A holiday that falls on a scheduled vacation day or on an employee's time off for sickness will be recorded as holiday time.

4. An unexcused absence the day before or the day after a holiday will result in loss of holiday pay.

3.400: SICK LEAVE

Sick leave credits are awarded to regular full-time employees at the rate of INSERT NUMBER hours per month, for a total of INSERT NUMBER hours in each calendar year of employment. Months worked include the month of employment, if the employment began on or before the 15th day. Sick leave must be used concurrently with any FMLA leave when the employee is on FMLA leave due to the employee's own serious health condition or as otherwise permitted under applicable law.

It is your responsibility to contact your supervisor as soon as possible when you are unable to report for work. A physician's certification is required for any illness beyond INSERT NUMBER working days.

Sick leave credits cannot accumulate beyond the calendar year and no pay for unused sick leave will be granted at year-end.

3.500: BEREAVEMENT PAY

Time off with pay for regular full-time employees may be approved in the event of a death in your family.

If death should occur in your immediate family (spouse, child, parent, parent-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law), up to INSERT NUMBER days will be approved to attend the funeral.

If there is a death of a close relative (grandparent, brother, brother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law), up to INSERT NUMBER days will be approved.

If additional time off is needed and approved, the additional time taken will be charged to vacation, INSERT OTHER TYPES OF AVAILABLE LEAVE, and/or forfeit time.

3.600: OTHER LEAVES

3.605: Introduction

The church makes leaves of absence without pay available to employees who have completed at least one year of continuous service, for any length of time up to a maximum number of days

that is recommended by the appropriate board or committee and approved by Church Council. Written requests must state the reason for the leave, as well as the beginning and ending dates. Requests for leaves will be granted at the sole discretion of the church, based on the facts and circumstances surrounding each individual request. Employees who return to work at the end of a leave of absence will normally be returned to their former job classification if an opening exists. If there is no such opening, they will be considered for a comparable position if one is available. Leaves of absence are also granted where state and/or federal law mandates. In particular, the church complies with leaves for jury duty and in situations where the State Family Care and Medical Leave Act or the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act applies. In any situation regarding leaves of absence, the employee should notify the appropriate supervisor at the earliest possible date to discuss the leave.

3.610: Personal Leave

Personal Leave - a leave of absence for personal reasons such as doctor, dentist, and other personal appointments. A total of INSERT NUMBER days leave is granted (with)(without) salary or pay status changed.

3.620: Jury Duty

Jury Duty - a leave of absence to serve on jury duty.

Employees will be granted a leave of absence, WITH OR WITHOUT pay, to serve on jury duty, as required by law.

Upon completion of jury duty, a Verification of Attendance Form must be presented to the church. Employees who are excused from jury duty for the day, or are excused early, should report to work when it is practical to do so.

If an employee is called to serve on jury duty at a time that would unreasonably interfere with normal business operations, the church may request that the required service be rescheduled for a later date that would be more convenient for the church.

3.625: Study Leave (OPTIONAL)

3.630: Sabbatical Leave (OPTIONAL)

3.635: Military Leave

Military Leave - a leave of absence for required active or reserve military service.

For regular employees required to participate in military annual training, INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT will make up the difference between military pay including all allowances and your regular salary, with no loss of earned vacation time. Absences should be cleared with the appropriate person well in advance of leaving for training or active duty. INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT complies with applicable state and federal law concerning leaves for military service.

3.640*:* Workers Compensation Leave

Workers Compensation Leave - a leave of absence because of work-related illness or injury.

The church complies with applicable state and federal law concerning leaves for work-related illness or injury. It is important that you report any work-related injury to your supervisor as soon as it happens. Employees on leave because of work-related illness or injury will be reviewed on an individual basis by INSERT PROPER TITLE/NAME OF COUNCIL.

3.645: General Provisions

The following general provisions apply to all leaves of absence:

1. A request for an extension of a leave of absence, when possible, must be made in writing prior to the expiration date of the original leave, and when appropriate, must be accompanied by a physician's written statement that certifies the need for the extension.

2. Failure to return to work on the first workday following the expiration of an approved leave of absence may be considered a voluntary termination.

3. Coverage under the church's group employee benefit plans will be continued on the following basis:

   INSERT INFORMATION

4. Employees will not accrue length of continuous service for the portion of a leave of absence in excess of thirty (30) days, unless otherwise provided by law.

5. Employees on leave of absence will be subject to lay off on the same basis as employees who are actively at work.

6. Employees on leave of absence must communicate with the church on a regular basis, at least once each month, regarding their status and anticipated return to work date.

7. Employees on leave of absence who seek or accept other employment without the church's prior written approval may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination. **(Check state law)**

8. Employees who falsify the reason for their leave of absence may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination.

9. A leave of absence must be approved in advance, in writing, by the Church Council or the appropriate approving body when possible, except in situations where mandatory approval is prohibited by law.

3.650: Family and Medical Leave

Your employer recognizes that leave of absence from active employment may be necessary for family or medical reasons. The following leave of absence policy complies with the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA).

Employees eligible for family and medical leave are those who (based on your individual employer):

1. Are one of 50 employees of INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT within a 75 mile radius;
2. Have been employed by INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT for at least 12 months; and
3. Have worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12-month period for INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT.

An eligible employee may take leave for the following reasons:

1. The birth of the employee's child;
2. The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;
3. The care of a child, spouse, or parent ("family member") who has a serious health condition; or
4. The serious health condition of the employee.

Length of Leave: An eligible employee may be entitled up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave within a 12 month period without loss of seniority or benefits. The amount of leave available to an employee at any given time will be calculated by looking backward at the amount of leave taken in the 12 month period immediately preceding the requested leave. An employee who fails to return to work immediately following expiration of the authorized leave period is subject to termination. All leave taken, which would qualify under FMLA (e.g. workers' compensation leave), will be counted against the employee's leave entitlement under FMLA.

Substitution of Paid Leave: During a family or medical leave provided under this policy, an employee shall first exhaust all available vacation and/or paid leave time before continuing such leave on an unpaid basis.

Certification: If an employee takes a leave of absence because of the serious health condition of the employee or employee's "family member," the employee must submit to the INSERT TITLE OF RESPONSIBLE PARTY written medical certification from a health care provider of the serious health condition. Failure to provide such certification may result in a denial or delay of leave. Your employer reserves the right to require that the employee receive a second (and possibly a third) opinion from a health care provider (at the employer's expense) certifying the serious health condition of the employee or the employee's "family member." The employer reserves the right to require the employee to provide re-certification of the medical condition for which leave is taken.

Before returning to work, an employee who is on a leave of absence as a result of his or her own serious health condition must submit a health care provider's written certification that the employee is able to return to work. Failure to provide such certification may result in the delay or denial of job restoration.

During the employee's leave, the employer may also periodically inquire as to the employee's intent to return to work.

Intermittent or Reduced Leave: Leave taken because of the employee's or "family member's" serious health condition may be taken on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis when medically necessary. If an employee seeks leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis, the medical certification submitted should state that the intermittent or reduced schedule leave is medically necessary. The employer may require an employee taking intermittent or reduced schedule leave to transfer temporarily to an alternative position for which the employee is qualified that better accommodates intermittent or reduced schedule leave or may modify the employee's current position to better accommodate the employee's recurring periods of leave.

Insurance Premiums: During the employee's family or medical leave of absence, the employer will continue to provide health insurance coverage for the employee and their eligible dependents. An employee who does not return will be required to repay all insurance premiums paid by the employer during the leave unless due to a medical condition or other circumstances beyond the employee's control.

Job Restoration: Upon return from family or medical leave in accordance with this policy, the employee will be returned to the same or an equivalent position with no loss in benefits accrued prior to the leave of absence. An employee who does not return to work at the end of an authorized leave is subject to termination.

Certain "key employees" may not be eligible to be restored to the same or an equivalent job at the conclusion of their leave. The employer will notify such employees of their "key employee" status and the conditions under which job restoration may be denied, if applicable.

Employee Notification: An employee who expects or anticipates taking family or medical leave is required to notify the INSERT TITLE OF RESPONSIBLE PARTY preferably in writing of the expected date of commencement and expected duration of the leave at least 30 days in advance of the leave, or if the need for the leave is not foreseeable, as soon as practicable. In cases where need for the leave is foreseeable, an employee's failure to provide 30 days' notice prior to taking leave may result in denial or delay of leave. An employee requesting leave under this policy should submit a completed Application for Leave Form to the INSERT TITLE OF RESPONSIBLE PARTY.

An employee who anticipates the possibility of taking family or medical leave, or has any question about the application of this policy to your particular situation, should contact the INSERT TITLE OF RESPONSIBLE PARTY.

3.700: GROUP EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS

Because of its Christian concern for its employees, INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT provides benefit programs in order to help its employees with expenses related to illness, injury, or death, as well as to provide retirement income.

Eligibility: All regular full-time and regular part-time employees are eligible for enrollment in the Worker Benefit Plans.

Benefits Provided: The Concordia Retirement Plan provides retirement benefits. The Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan provides disability income and death benefits. The INSERT NAME OF PLAN IF OTHER THAN CONCORDIA Concordia Health Plan provides medical and vision coverage. The provisions of the Worker Benefit Plans supersede any information provided below. For further details about the benefits of these Plans, booklets are available either in the church office or can be requested by calling the Worker Benefit Plans office.

Enrollment: You will be asked to fill out an Enrollment Form and Beneficiary Form, and these forms will be forwarded to the Concordia Plans office for processing. The Plans office will then mail you a letter confirming enrollment as well as your own booklets and other informational materials.

Cost: The congregation pays 100 percent of the cost for the Concordia Retirement Plan and Concordia Disability and Survivor Plan. For the Concordia Health Plan, the congregation pays INSERT PERCENT of the cost for your INDIVIDUAL OR FAMILY coverage.

Termination of Benefits: Coverage for you and your dependents through the Concordia Plans will discontinue effective at the end of the calendar month in which termination of regular full-time or regular part-time employment occurs. Information about extension of coverage on an individual basis will be mailed to you by the Plans' office.

3.800: WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE

INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT maintains Worker's Compensation coverage in compliance with applicable law. You should report any work-related injury/illness to INSERT TITLE OF RESPONSIBLE PARTY within 48 hours of the incident or as soon as possible.

3.900: UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION, FEDERAL AND STATE

Should you decide to leave the employment of the church or you are involuntarily terminated, you ARE OR ARE NOT eligible for either state or federal unemployment claims. THIS IS DUE TO THE CHURCH BEING EXEMPT FROM FEDERAL UNEMPLOYMENT TAX AND BEING EITHER EXEMPT OR OPTING NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT TAX PROGRAM.

3.905: CONTINUING EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS - Optional

Where it can be demonstrated that the congregation will benefit from an employee's participation in a job-related program or professional organization, the related expenses may at the congregation's sole discretion be REIMBURSED OR PARTIALLY REIMBURSED at INSERT PERCENT. Requests for reimbursement of authorized expenses related to the educational program or professional organization must be approved in advance by the Church Council.

CONGREGATIONAL/DISTRICT PERSONNEL MANUAL

SECTION 4.000

PERSONNEL STATUS

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4.100: TARDINESS AND ABSENCE

4.105: Introduction

It is important that employees are present at the start of their day to promptly begin work. Other staff and congregation members rely on workers being at their assigned tasks at scheduled times so that the work of ministry can be carried out smoothly.

4.110: Absences

Employees should contact their supervisor as soon as it is determined that they will be unable to report to work as scheduled. In the case of an absence due to illness, calling the supervisor at home the night before or prior to the scheduled start of the workday allows adequate time to arrange a replacement.

4.115: Tardiness

Tardiness or absence is considered "excused' only when the employee calls ahead of time and the tardiness or absence is for a compelling reason. If contact or a call cannot be made ahead of time due to physical limitations, earliest contact is required. The church shall determine what constitutes a compelling reason for an absence or tardiness. Tardiness or absence for a non-compelling reason, and failing to call the supervisor according to church policy, will be considered “unexcused”.

A consistent pattern of absence or tardiness, whether excused or unexcused, may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

An employee who fails to call in or report to work for INSERT NUMBER consecutive days, may be considered to have abandoned their job and may be terminated.

4.200: TERMINATION

The employment relationship between the congregation and its employees (excluding called and contracted workers) is of an at-will nature. This means that the employee is hired for an indefinite period of time. Thus, the employee is free to leave at any time he or she believes it is in his/her best interest. Similarly, the church may terminate the employment relationship whenever it deems appropriate.

4.205: Resignation

When an employee voluntarily resigns, a two-week notice of an employee's intent to leave employment is generally desired, but not required. Written notice should include the reason for leaving, the last day of work, an address where the employee can be reached in the future, and be signed and dated by the employee.

4.210: Involuntary Termination

An employee may be involuntarily terminated when the church determines that continued employment will not be to the benefit of the employee or church. Since the employment relationship of employees (excluding rostered and contracted workers) and the congregation is of an at-will nature, an employee can be dismissed without notice.

4.215: Layoff

When conditions dictate that the church must reduce staff through a layoff, the church at its sole discretion will determine which employees shall be laid off. Layoffs will be communicated to affected employee(s) at the earliest reasonable time to allow for productive transition.

4.220: Exit Interview

An exit interview with the employee conducted by a member of the appropriate church board or committee may be held shortly after resignation or termination. This opportunity will be used to clarify, as necessary, the circumstances for leaving, review any accrued benefits to be paid, checkout procedures, and final pay details.

4.300: TIME RECORDS: SIGNING IN AND OUT

+ *SIGN IN when reporting to work at the beginning of the day;*
+ *SIGN OUT when leaving for a scheduled meal period;*
+ *SIGN IN when returning to work after a scheduled meal period;*
+ *SIGN OUT when leaving work at the end of the day.*

An employee should not sign in until they are ready to begin work. Employees should not mark or sign the time record of another employee or knowingly allow someone else to mark or sign their time record.

Employees may not sign in or begin work early or sign out or work late unless the immediate supervisor has approved this extra time for purposes of pay. (See section on **Overtime Pay.)**

Any change or correction made in or on a time record should be initialed by both the employee and their supervisor.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination.

4.400: BREAKS AND MEAL PERIODS

Nonexempt employees who work at least 5 hours a day will receive an unpaid meal period of INSERT THE AMOUNT OF TIME GIVEN. However, nonexempt employees who do not work more than 6 hours a day may voluntarily waive their right to a meal period.

Meal periods will be scheduled in consultation with the supervisor so that the normal operation of the organization is disrupted as little as possible.

Nonexempt employees who work at least 3 ½ hours daily are authorized a paid break of at least 10 minutes. The break should normally be taken as close to the middle of the work period as possible.

4.500: PERSONNEL RECORDS

4.505: Introduction

The congregation needs to have complete and accurate information on each of its workers. This includes all nonexempt, exempt, rostered, contracted, full-time and part-time employees. Personnel may review their records upon request. The contents of personnel records are confidential and access to them is limited to those directly involved in the supervision and/or retention of the individual employee.

It is important that the church always have current information about its employees. Employees should immediately notify the congregation of changes in name, address, phone number, or marital status, etc. If for some reason there is a need to change a name and/or Social Security number, original documentation authorizing the change should be reviewed.

4.600: PROMOTION AND TRANSFER

The church's intent is to give qualified employees preference over others when filling job openings within the church. Openings should be announced to existing staff and sufficient time allowed for existing staff to respond prior to advertising the opening to the church-at-large or the general public. However, because of the experience, skills, and educational requirements of many jobs, promotions from within the church are not always possible.

An employee's past performance, experience, qualifications, and potential are factors that will be considered in making promotion and transfer decisions. The individual's personnel records shall be the official source of information.

CONGREGATIONAL/DISTRICT PERSONNEL MANUAL

SECTION 5.000

COMPENSATION

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5.100: PAYDAY

INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT has adopted the following pay schedule:

Employees are responsible for completing their time cards and having their supervisors sign them. The supervisor will forward the time card to the proper congregational officer so that it will be included in the payroll.

Checks may be distributed during the workday or mailed to the employee's home.

5.105: Advances

Salary advances ARE OR ARE NOT permitted.

5.110: Termination Checks

Termination checks shall be released upon return of all building keys and other congregational property which may have been entrusted to the care of the employee.

5.200: WAGE AND SALARY REVIEWS

The wage and salary structure for employees of the congregation are reviewed and proposed by the appropriate board or committee and approved by the Church Council.

Individual wage and salary reviews may occur at least once each year for every employee. Salary increases may or may not result from such salary reviews. Employee salary reviews may be held in conjunction with performance reviews.

5.300: PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS
(Reference Chapter 3 of Congregational Treasurer's Manual)

Employees who are not Ministers of the Gospel for tax purposes must have various deductions taken from their pay. These deductions include federal and state income taxes and Social Security and Medicare taxes. The Internal Revenue Service and each state Department of Revenue publish withholding tables annually based on personal earnings and the number of exemptions claimed by each worker to satisfy income tax withholding requirements. The worker, by use of the W-4 Form, states the number of exemptions claimed and any additional dollars wished withheld beyond the amount indicated in the tax withholding tables. The amounts withheld for Social Security and Medicare taxes are at a fixed percentage of earnings.

5.315: Garnishment

Garnishments are court ordered repayments of financial obligations by an individual. When so ordered, your employer must deduct the amount from your pay and remit it to the designated entity.

5.320: Other Payroll Deductions

Other payroll deductions are strictly voluntary and must be requested in writing by the employee. By offering these deductions, the congregation provides their workers with the opportunity to save dollars for their future and possibly to experience current tax savings not permitted through non-payroll deducted savings plans.

Voluntary deductions may include: All-Cause Accident Insurance through the Worker Benefit Plans; Church Extension Fund Payroll Savings, Tax-Sheltered Annuities (TSA), and Flexible Spending Arrangements.

5.400: OVERTIME

5.405: Overtime Compensation

Overtime compensation will be paid to non-exempt employees for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a seven-day workweek. The overtime rate of pay is one and one-half times the regular hourly rate of pay. Overtime is to be worked only when specifically requested by the supervisor.

Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime pay.

Overtime pay will not be routinely authorized.

CONGREGATIONAL/DISTRICT PERSONNEL MANUAL

SECTION 6.000

DISCIPLINE AND GRIEVANCE

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6.100: DISCIPLINE AND TERMINATION PROCEDURES

Employment is with the mutual consent of you and the church. Consequently, both you and the church have the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. (See Employment At Will, paragraph 2.105)

6.105: Disciplinary Action

If you fail to follow the church's policies regarding job performance and conduct, you are subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment. For other than major infractions, which can result in immediate termination, you will normally first be verbally counseled about the problem with the intent of clearing up any misunderstanding and establishing behavior expected in the future. Disciplinary action will be documented noting the type of disciplinary action taken, the date, and the subject matter addressed. Violation of policies can result in ineligibility for merit increases, probation, suspension, or termination of employment.

6.110: Exceptions

It is important to note that the severity of the offense may warrant not following a sequence of reminder-warning-reprimand-penalty, and that the disciplinary action taken may begin at any level. A reprimand, for example, could be given for a serious first offense, and your immediate dismissal could result without prior warning or suspension in the case of significant acts of misconduct or serious dereliction of duty as determined by the church in its sole discretion.

6.115: Non-Renewal of Contract

If you are a contract employee, INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT may choose not to renew your contract for any reason in its sole discretion including changes in fiscal or personnel circumstances.

6.200: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Church recognizes that occasionally employees may become dissatisfied with its practices, policies, or other work situations. The Church encourages a quick and reasonable resolution of any such situations, difficulties, or complaints. The following steps are suggested guidelines for the employee to ensure that the situations, difficulty, or complaint is most effectively and efficiently handled.

1. Where possible the employee is to first orally bring the matter to the supervisor's attention. (A full discussion and understanding of the matter by both the employee and supervisor is essential at this step.) The matter should be put in writing by the supervisor at this time.

2. If the grievance is not resolved between the employee and the immediate supervisor or if an employee wishes to bypass a discussion with the immediate supervisor, the employee

should then discuss the matter with the appropriate INSERT NAME OF COMMITTEE OR BOARD chairperson.

3. If the grievance is still not resolved, the employee will put the grievance in written form and send it to the president of the church who will convene a meeting with the employee and appropriate INSERT NAME OF COMMITTEE OR BOARD chairperson to discuss the grievance.

4. The next steps will be to review the complaint with the Church Council, and finally the Voters' Assembly.

In all instances, employees are eligible to take full advantage of their rights in accordance with the Synod's Bylaws, including the Synodical Dispute Resolution.

CONGREGATIONAL/DISTRICT PERSONNEL MANUAL

SECTION 7.000-8.000

WORKING TOGETHER

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7.100: INTRODUCTION

At INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT it is important that all employees work together as a team so that the rights and interests of both the congregation and employees are assured. Common sense, good judgment and acceptable personal behavior on the part of all employees will make INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT a desirable place to work.

7.200: MORALS POLICY

The command of Christ is that His mission for the Church should be carried out according to His will, and that in doing so, we maintain decency and order in our personal and professional lives. No practice or behavior inconsistent with or in conflict with individual moral and ethical conduct required by Scripture shall be tolerated from employees. Any failure to maintain these ethical and moral standards may be grounds for counseling and/or immediate dismissal from employment.

Persons who hold positions of responsibility or positions that put them and INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT in the public eye are often regarded as role models and exemplars of Christian leadership. These persons may be held to a stricter standard of behavior and practice than other employees in both their work and their personal lives. Counseling may be required, and these employees may face dismissal for behavior and practices deemed by INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT to be inappropriate to fulfillilng their function as role model and leader in carrying out Christ's mission on earth.

7.300: HARASSMENT

The church will not tolerate any form of harassment including sexual harassment or hazing. A supervisor who harasses or solicits favors (including sexual favors) from an unwilling subordinate in return for promotions, increased wages, continuance of the job, or any similar purpose will be disciplined, which may include termination of employment.

Likewise, unwelcome sexual propositions between employees may also constitute sexual harassment and will not be tolerated.

If an employee feels he or she is being harassed and cannot for whatever reason discuss the problem with the appropriate supervisor or manager, a discussion should take place between the employee and the INSERT TITLE OF RESPONSIBLE PARTY. A second option would be to use the Employee Assistance Program hotline. The number is INSERT TELEPHONE NUMBER.

A report of sexual or other harassment will be treated seriously, and a thorough investigation will be conducted. An employee who files a complaint will be treated fairly and courteously at all times, and will not be retaliated against for making such report. Confidentiality will be honored for all parties involved to the degree possible.

7.305: Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT to provide an environment free of discrimination. It is important for you to understand that jokes, stories, cartoons, nicknames and comments about appearance may be offensive to others. It is our policy to strictly prohibit any conduct that may constitute sexual harassment and to discipline any employee guilty of such conduct.

Sexual harassment is often difficult to define. However, as a guide, the following behavior may constitute sexual harassment. Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or inexplicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for an employment decision affecting the harassed employee; or the harassment has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Any employee who believes that he or she has been subject to sexual harassment or is aware of any sexual harassment shall immediately report the conduct in confidence to the pastor or the chairman of the Board of Elders without fear of retaliation. An investigation of the incident will be conducted looking at the totality of the circumstances. The employee(s) involved will be informed regarding the findings of the investigation and any disciplinary action to be taken. It is the responsibility of each member of the work team to create an atmosphere free of sexual harassment. In addition, it is the responsibility of each employee to respect the rights of other employees. This policy encourages any witness of an incident of sexual harassment to report such incident immediately. All reasonable efforts will be made to protect the confidentiality of the individual reporting the incident.

7.400: ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

The use, sale, transfer, possession, or being *"under the influence"* of alcohol, illegal drugs, or illegal controlled substances when on duty, on church property, or in church vehicles is prohibited (Exceptions include the sacrament of Holy Communion and/or use at church/district sponsored events.) In addition, off duty conduct that may adversely affect the reputation or interests of the church is prohibited. *"Under the influence"* for the purpose of this policy, is defined as being unable to perform work in a safe or productive manner, and/or being in a physical or mental condition which creates a risk to the safety or well being of the affected employee, other co-workers, the public, or church property.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination.

7.500: WORKPLACE SAFETY

INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT is committed to providing a safe environment for employees and visitors. In order to provide a safe work place, access to our work area may be limited to those with a legitimate business interest.

7.600: PROHIBITION OF VIOLENCE

It is the policy of INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT that there will be zero tolerance for violence. This includes joking and talking of violence. If violence in the workplace is displayed or threatened, the person responsible for such conduct will be subject to immediate disciplinary action. In addition to the appropriate disciplinary action, the employee and/or other parties involved may be subject to criminal proceedings as appropriate.

For the purpose of this policy, violence includes physically harming another, shoving, pushing, intimidation or coercion; however, INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT reserves the right to review incidents and expand on what may be considered violence. No weapons are allowed on the premises and no threats or talk of violence will be tolerated.

All employees are to assist in preventing violence in the workplace. You can help by reporting incidents that could indicate a coworker is in trouble. All reports will be investigated.

7.700: OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Employees are prohibited from engaging in outside employment, private business, or other activity, which might have an adverse effect on, or create a conflict of interest with, the church. **(Check state law for applicability.)**

7.800: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT is fully committed to conducting its responsibilities in a manner reflecting the highest degree of integrity and honesty. The success of INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT in conducting its affairs is the sum efforts of each individual—board, commission and committee member, officer and exempt employee—in executing his or her responsibilities with good judgment and in an ethical manner.

- Staff persons who receive honoraria or payments for sales or services rendered to the INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION, DISTRICT OR OTHER ENTITIES OR AGENCIES OF THE SYNOD shall disclose such information. (Reference—Honorariums/Royalties).
- Activities shall not be entered into which may be knowingly detrimental to the interests of the INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT.
- Information acquired in the course of carrying out church/district business shall not knowingly be used in any way that would be detrimental to the welfare of the Synod and its entities or agencies.
- No staff member or officer of the congregation/district shall vote on any transaction in

which the individual shall receive a direct or indirect financial gain.

- Gifts, entertainment or favors in excess of $100 per person per year from any individual or outside concern that does or seeks to do business with the church/district shall not be accepted.
- Any inappropriate activity shall cease or the position will be vacated.
- Each individual shall sign a statement, modified to the needs of the church/district, prior to accepting a position and thereafter, annually, in which the individual agrees to abide by this policy.
- Responsibilities shall be conducted in a manner reflecting the highest degree of integrity and honesty consistent with the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, the Synodical Handbook, church/district policies and civil laws. (For those employees not familiar with the Lutheran Confessions, Scripture should be used to interpret the expected conduct).

7.900: HONORARIUM POLICY (OPTIONAL)

Any activity performed by an exempt employee that is related to the employee's position description or is requested as a result of the employee's position shall be without additional compensation to the employee. This includes services to congregations, districts, convocations, conventions and other gatherings. An employee must obtain from his/her supervisor approval on all requests from other Synodical agencies for the employee's services and determine whether any remuneration, including honoraria and royalties, offered for such services will be accepted on behalf of the employee's church/district. In the case of the pastor/district president, the determination will be made by the appropriate board.

8.000: ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION POLICY (OPTIONAL)

1. Ownership of Messages

   The electronic communications systems, which include, but are not limited to, the telephone, electronic mail, voice mail, facsimiles, computers, the Internet and the World Wide Web, and all information stored on them are the property of your congregation/district and are provided at your congregation/district's expense. All information and messages that are created, sent, received, accessed, or stored on these systems constitute company records.

2. Business Use

   The electronic communications systems are to be used primarily to conduct company business. (**OPTIONAL)** REASONABLE PERSONAL USE OF SUCH SYSTEMS IS/IS NOT PERMITTED, BUT MUST NOT INTERFERE WITH AN EMPLOYEE'S PRODUCTIVITY. PERSONAL USE SHOULD BE LIMITED TO BREAKS, LUNCH AND OTHER NON-WORKING HOURS. Employees may not use the electronic communications systems for political causes; football pools or other sorts of gambling; illegal activities; seeking/inquiring about job opportunities outside of the organizations; list serves for non-work purposes; solicitations or advertisements for unrelated work purposes; or

creating, possessing, uploading, downloading, accessing, transmitting, or distributing materials of a sexual nature. Employees may not use the congregation/district's electronic communications systems to post non-work related information, opinions, or comments to Internet discussion groups and other such forums. Employees are prohibited from passing off their views as representing those of his/her congregation/district.

3. No Presumption of Privacy

Although employees are expected to use passwords to access some of the electronic communications systems, such communications are not private and security cannot be guaranteed. In surfing the Internet and World Wide Web, employees should remember that all connections and sites visited may be monitored and recorded. Employees should assume that any communications – whether business-related or personal – that they create, send, receive, or store on their company's electronic communications systems may be read or heard by someone other than the intended recipient. In particular, highly confidential or sensitive information should not be sent through e-mail, the Internet, or the World Wide Web. Your congregation/district reserves the right to keep an employee's e-mail address active for a reasonable period of time following an employee's departure to ensure that important business communications reach them; your congregation/district will review such communications.

4. Congregation/district's Right to Monitor Messages

Your congregation/district reserves the right to monitor, access, retrieve, read, and disclose to law enforcement officials or other third parties all messages created, sent, received, or stored on the electronic communications systems without prior notice to the originators and recipients of such messages. Authorized personnel may monitor the electronic communications of employees to determine whether there have been any violations of law, breaches of confidentiality or security, communications harmful to the business interests of your congregation/district, or any violations of this policy and any other company policy.

5. Message Restrictions

Electronic communications may not contain content that a reasonable person would consider to be defamatory, offensive, harassing, disruptive, or derogatory, including but not limited to sexual comments or images, racial or ethnic slurs, or other comments or images that would offend someone on the basis of race, gender, national origin, political beliefs, or disability.

6. Prohibited Activities

Employees may not upload, download, or otherwise transmit copyrighted, trademarked, or patented material, trade secrets; or other confidential, private, or proprietary information or materials in violation of any legal constraints. Employees may not

upload, download or otherwise transmit any illegal information or materials. Employees may not use their congregation/district's electronic communications systems to gain unauthorized access to remote computers or other systems or to damage, alter, or disrupt such computers or systems in any way, nor may employees – without authorization – use someone else's code or password or disclose someone else's code or password, including their own. Employees may not enable unauthorized third parties to have access to or use the electronic communications systems, nor may employees otherwise jeopardize the security of their congregation/district's electronic communications systems.

7. Message Creation

Employees must use the utmost care in creating electronic communications. Even when a message has been deleted, it may still exist on a back-up system, be recreated, be printed out, or may have been forwarded to someone else without it creator's knowledge. As with paper records proper care should be taken in creating electronic records, which may someday have to be produced in connection with legal and/or business needs.

8. Record Retention

As with paper documents created and received by an employee, it is each employee's responsibility to ensure that those electronic messages that should be retained are in fact saved. Those messages that need not be retained should be deleted.

9. Viruses and Tampering

Any files downloaded from the Internet and any computer disks received from non-congregation/district sources must be scanned with virus detection software before installation and execution. The intentional introduction of viruses, attempts to breach system security, or other malicious tampering with any of your employer's electronic systems are expressly prohibited. Employees must immediately report any tampering, or other system breaches to their supervisor.

10. Selling and Purchasing

The standard purchase and sales policies apply to all purchase and sales related activities conducted via the electronic communications systems.

11. Violations

Violations of this policy, including breaches of confidentiality or security, may result in suspension of some or all electronic communication privileges, disciplinary action, and even termination. INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT reserves the right to hold the employee personally liable for any violations of this policy.

8.100: PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Your appearance reflects not only on you as an individual, but on the church as well. We expect you to take pride in your appearance and strive to achieve a positive business-like image when representing the church.

8.200: LOST AND FOUND

Employees should not bring large sums of money, jewelry, or other valuables to work. The church will not be responsible for personal property that is lost, damaged, stolen, or destroyed.

If you happen to find personal belongings that have been lost by another person, please turn them in to your supervisor.

8.300: SMOKING

Smoking is prohibited in the building and the areas immediately around all entrances. This policy is established to provide a smoke-free environment for us and for all of our visitors to the building.

8.400: ACCESS TO CHURCH PROPERTY

It is important that the church have access at all times to church property, as well as other records, documents, and files. As a result, certain management employees and officers of the church reserve the right, but always respecting that information deemed to be of confidential nature (i.e., Pastor's confidential files, personnel files), to access employee offices, work stations, filing cabinets, desks, and any other church property at its discretion, with or without advance notice or consent.

8.500: BUSINESS EXPENSE REPORTING
(Reference Congregational Treasurer's Manual Chapter 6, Business Expenses)

Employees will be reimbursed in accordance with INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT reimbursement policies for all approved business-related expenses. Employees are requested to submit these reports in a timely manner to ensure proper accounting and prompt reimbursement.

8.600: USE OF CHURCH TELEPHONES

From time to time it may be necessary for employees to make and receive personal calls on church phones. However, these calls should be limited to no more than 5 minutes in length, and should be made, whenever possible, during scheduled break and meal periods. Employees are expected to use good judgment and common sense when it comes to personal phone calls. All costs for long distance calls must be reimbursed by you to the church after receipt of bills.

Employees who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

8.700: EMPLOYEE PARKING

Employees park at their own risk and 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.

8.800: CHURCH BULLETIN BOARDS

Posted information on employee bulletin boards is for the benefit of all employees. The church reserves the right to monitor and limit posted information on the bulletin boards and INSERT TITLE OF RESPONSIBLE PARTY is responsible for this monitoring. You will find posters that explain state and federal law, as well as updated information about church policy and procedures. You are responsible for checking church bulletin boards on a regular basis and for reading all posted materials.

8.900: REFERENCES

It is against the policy of INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT to provide letters of recommendation for any employee. A neutral reference providing date of employment and position title may be provided to a potential employer.

SECTION 9.000

EMPLOYEE STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

9.000: EMPLOYEE STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received a copy of the employee handbook and have read or had it read to me carefully. I further understand all matters set forth in the employee handbook and agree to abide by and adhere to INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT policies during my employment with INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT, as they may be modified from time to time. I further understand and agree that any provision of the employee handbook may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by the Church and School.

I understand that my employment with INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT is *not* for a specified length of time. Rather, I understand and agree that my employment is terminable at will so that both INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT and I remain free to choose to end our work relationship at any time, with or without cause. Likewise, I understand and acknowledge that nothing in INSERT NAME OF CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT employee handbook in any way creates an express or implied contract of employment between INSERT NAME OR CONGREGATION OR DISTRICT on the one part, and me, on the other part.

I understand that is it my responsibility to maintain and keep my handbook updated as new policies are created and distributed and/or policies are deleted or changed.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the Employee Handbook.

Employee's Name (Please Print)_____

Employee's Signature _____

Date _____

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