

# **Personnel Policy Manual**

**Wildflower Church:**

**A Unitarian Universalist Congregation**

**P.O. Box 40395**

**Austin, Texas 78704**

This manual is intended for reference only and does not constitute an employment contract.

**Adopted by Wildflower Church Board of Trustees December 18, 2008**

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# I. Employment Policies and Practices

## A. Statement of Purpose and Scope

This manual has been prepared to help staff understand the personnel policies and procedures of Wildflower Church: A Unitarian Universalist Congregation (Church). Employees are required to read this manual, sign a document of understanding and keep it for reference.

This manual is not an employment contract and can be modified and changed at any time. The Church reserves the right to amend, supplement, or rescind anything in this manual, as it deems necessary.

Every attempt will be made to consistently apply these policies; however, the Church reserves the right to deviate from these policies, as it deems necessary since every employment situation cannot be anticipated.

These policies apply to all full-time, part-time, exempt, and nonexempt staff and any contract personnel. Employment in Texas is *at will*, which means that an employee or the employer can terminate employment at any time, for any reason, with or without notice.

This manual supersedes all previous Personnel Policy manuals. If any provision in this manual is found to be invalid, incorrect, or unenforceable, it will be corrected in the next revision. The other provisions will remain in effect.

Employees with questions or comments about this manual should ask their supervisor for clarification..

The Minister and Director of Religious Education are considered professional staff and subject to specific contract requirements. These professional staff members are also covered by the provisions of this Manual, but where the Manual and their individual employment contracts conflict, the provisions of their contracts or Letter of Call and Ministry Agreement prevail.

## B. Church Staff Organization

The Minister and Director of Religious Education form the Management Team, and meet at least monthly to oversee smooth functioning of Church operations.

The staff and volunteers for each service area are responsible to their direct supervisors. Their relationships are shown below.

### **Church staff includes:**

- Minister
  - Director of Religious Education
    - RE Assistant(s)
    - Childcare Supervisor and Childcare Staff
    - Other RE Staff
  - Office Staff

Job descriptions for Church staff are kept on file in the Church office and are subject to review by the Board of Trustees.

## **C. Equal Employment Opportunity**

The Church is an Equal Opportunity Employer and affirms its commitment to equal employment opportunity for all individuals. Decisions about recruiting, hiring, training, promotions, compensation, benefits and all similar employment decisions must be made in compliance with all federal, state and local laws and without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identification, national origin, age, disability or any other classification protected by law. Any discrimination in the workplace based upon any protected classification or sexual orientation is illegal and against policy.

Employees who have questions about discrimination in the workplace, or who believe this policy has been violated, should report their concerns immediately to their supervisor or the chair of the Personnel Committee or Committee on Ministry. Retaliation against individuals who make a claim of discrimination or participate in the investigation of such a claim is prohibited by this policy and will not be tolerated.

## **D. Hiring Practices**

1. Recruitment and Selection: The Church recruits employees through newspaper advertising, state and private placement agencies, or other postings. Employee selection is based on work experience, interviews and reference checks.
2. Background Checks: The Church will conduct a Criminal Background Check (CBC) and reference check on all applicants considered for employment. Such applicants and employees are required to sign the CBC consent form. Employees who will work with children under the age of 18 years are also required to sign the *Code of Ethics for Working with Children and Youth*. The

complete CBC procedure, the consent form, and the Code of Ethics are included in this Manual as Appendix A.

3. New Employee Procedures: A written notice of hire is provided to new employees and initiates the creation of a personnel file, maintained by the supervisor or the Personnel Committee. New employees are issued keys to various doors, closets and cabinets, as needed in their work. They must sign a form acknowledging receipt of all keys to church property and must return the keys when employment ends.

## **E. Initial Review Period**

During the first 90 days of employment, new employees and employees who are transferred to another position will have an opportunity to learn about the job and its duties. The immediate supervisor will have an opportunity to determine if the employee is a good fit in the job and is able to satisfactorily learn and perform the job's requirements. At the end of the 90 days the supervisor will complete a performance evaluation of the new employee, during which time the supervisor and the employee will discuss job performance and continued employment. Upon satisfactory completion of the initial review period, the employee will be considered a regular employee. Satisfactory completion of the initial review period does not alter the employment-at-will relationship. Employees must continue to perform satisfactorily even after the initial review period is completed. Although regular employees typically work on an ongoing basis, there is no guarantee that any job position will continue indefinitely. Any position may be eliminated at any time at the discretion of the Church.

## **F. Employment Classifications and Hours of Work**

To determine policies and benefits, the Church classifies employees by the manner in which their work is assigned and by their regular work schedule.

### **Work Assignments**

**Non-exempt Employees:** A non-exempt employee's work is assigned and scheduled by the supervisor. Non-exempt employees should *not* work more hours than they were hired to work, unless approved in advance by the supervisor. Non-exempt employees complete a time sheet each week and are paid according to the time sheet. If they work more than 40 hours per week, they receive overtime at a rate of one and one-half time their hourly rate of pay.

**Exempt Employees:** An exempt employee works in a professional capacity, usually self-directed in performing his or her job responsibilities, and reports to the minister or the Board of Trustees. Exempt employees are paid an annual salary that is noted in their employment contract or Letter of Call and Ministerial Agreement.

### **Regular Work Schedule**

Full-time employees work at least 40 hours per week.

Part-time employees work at least 20 hours per week.

Less-than-part-time employees work less than 20 hours per week.

Some employees may be scheduled for work on Sunday mornings. Individual work schedules may change from time to time. Attendance at meetings at the request of the employee's supervisor will be considered time worked. Employees are expected to attend any staff retreats or off-site events which are part of their employment.

## **G. Personnel Files**

The Church will maintain a confidential personnel file for each employee. The personnel file may be reviewed by the minister, the Board, the chair of the Personnel Committee, the supervisor, and others as deemed necessary by the Board. An employee may make an appointment to view the contents of his/her personnel file in the presence of the supervisor or a member of the Personnel Committee or Committee on Ministry. All personnel files will be kept in a secure location.

If the Church receives any confidential medical information about the employees, including detailed doctor's statements, descriptive insurance forms and claims, notes from the employee describing his or her medical condition, such medical information will be kept in a separate medical file. The medical file will be kept in a secure location and may be viewed on a need-to-know basis only.

Employees are responsible for keeping up-to-date all the information provided to the Church at the time of hire. This information is essential for many purposes, including benefit administration, mailing information to the employee's home, and contacting friends or family in case of emergency. The chair of the Personnel Committee **or the employee's immediate supervisor** should be promptly notified of any changes in:

- Address and telephone number,
- Marital status (including legal separation),
- Legal change in employee's name,
- Dependents,
- Changes in beneficiaries,
- Person to notify in case of emergency, and
- Any relevant changes in licensing or education.

The contents of the personnel files are the property of the Church and are not public information.

## **H. Attendance and Punctuality**

All employees are expected to be present and on time for their scheduled work hours. Scheduled absences must be approved in advance by the supervisor. Employees who are unable to report to work on time must call their supervisor as soon as possible to report the absence and the expected time of return to work, and to inform the supervisor about any changes in this information. Unexcused tardiness and absences can result in a written warning, which will be placed in the personnel file. More than two written warnings may result in dismissal.

Any employee who fails to report to work without notice for three or more consecutive days will be considered to have voluntarily terminated employment, effective immediately.

## **I. Dependent Caregivers**

Employees who are primary caregivers for a child or dependent member of their household may ask to arrange a flexible work schedule that meets the demands of the caregiving schedule and the needs of the Church. When reasonable and possible, supervisors will accommodate requests for flexible work schedules.

## **J. Use of Telephones and Church Equipment**

Office phones are intended for church business. Personal calls must be kept to a minimum. Employees who must make personal long distance calls must use their own calling card or bill the call to their home phone number. Office machines, supplies, and all church resources are for church business only.

## **K. Credit and/or Debit Card Policy**

Credit and/or debit card(s) will be in the name of the church with a list of the names of the authorized user(s) maintained by the Treasurer. The list will be reviewed and reauthorized in July and January of each year or as needed for personnel changes. An individual's name will be removed from the list upon leaving office or employment with the church. Each authorized individual issued a credit and/or debit card will keep the card in a secure location at all times.

The intent of the cards is to provide:

- a. payment for supplies, and materials for the church office and church programs such as, but not limited to, paper products, refreshments/food for church events, equipment repair, supply delivery and other items for which vendors can not/will not invoice the church, and/or
- b. payment for registration to conferences and meetings, and prepaid travel expenses incurred for properly approved church activities.

A credit limit for the cards will be established and periodically reviewed by the Finance Committee.

The Church may also have various specific company charge cards. These should be kept in a secure location, with a list of authorized users maintained by the Treasurer.

Itemized receipts, a copy of an order form, or a registration form will be maintained by the Treasurer or his/her designee for all purchases paid by credit and/or debit card. The purchases made with a general credit card and/or debit may be reviewed for appropriate use by the Treasurer.

The cards may not be used for:

- a. personal purchases which would not normally be reimbursed from church funds,
- b. cash advances, or
- c. items for which invoices may be obtained from the vendor.

## **L. Expense Reimbursement**

The Church will reimburse employees for authorized expenses for approved budgetary items. Reimbursement requests are made to the Treasurer and must be accompanied by sales receipts or other appropriate documentation, and must include the requestor's signature as well as the authorizing individual's signature, where appropriate. Employees and lay people making purchases for the church will exercise due diligence in presenting documentation for exemption from sales tax.

## **M. Work Performance and Disciplinary Action**

Employees are expected to perform their job duties as directed by their supervisor and outlined in this manual, and to conduct themselves in a professional manner while at work. Violations may result in disciplinary measures that include verbal warnings, written warnings, and when necessary, termination of employment. All disciplinary action should be documented and maintained in the personnel file. Employees can use the grievance procedure (refer to *Resolution of Employee Grievances* in this manual) to appeal any disciplinary action.

## **N. Performance Evaluations**

Supervisors are expected to evaluate employee performance after the first 90 days of employment and then annually thereafter. Performance is evaluated based on the employee's fulfillment of the duties of the job description, other factors determined by the supervisor, and:

- Quality and quantity of work,
- Dependability,

- Attendance and punctuality,
- Effective interpersonal relationships with the congregation and staff, and
- Conduct relevant to the performance of job duties.

Professional staff other than called ministers will be asked to identify goals and objectives in advance so their work may be evaluated on the basis of clear criteria, which they have helped develop.

After each evaluation, the evaluation form must be signed by the employee and the supervisor, with one copy being placed in the employee's personnel file and one copy being given to the employee. Signing the form does not indicate the employee agrees with the evaluation, only that it has occurred. The employee may respond to the evaluation in writing within 10 working days after the evaluation occurs. Such written response will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

## **O. Workplace Harassment**

The law prohibits harassment of employees on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, age, or any other classification protected by law. All employees, including supervisors and managers, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, for any act of unlawful harassment they commit.

The Church prohibits harassment or other conduct showing hostility or aversion toward an individual because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identification, or any other classification protected by law. The Church will not tolerate unlawful harassment of its employees, including sexual harassment, whether committed by a fellow employee, a member of management, a vendor, or a member or guest of the Church.

Prohibited conduct includes any conduct that:

- Creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment,
- Interferes with an individual's work performance, or
- Adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Examples of conduct that can constitute harassment include but are not limited to:

- Epithets or slurs,
- Threatening or intimidating acts,
- Written or graphic material,
- Written, verbal, or physical acts intended as jokes and pranks.

Sexual harassment includes any behavior that expressly or implicitly ties work retention or advancement to sexual favors.

Examples of conduct that can constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- unwelcome sexual flirtation, touching, advances or propositioning,
- verbal abuse of a sexual nature,
- graphic suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body; or sexually degrading words describing an individual,
- repeated and unwelcome suggestions regarding, or invitations to, social engagements or social events,
- any indication, expressed or implied, that any aspect of employment conditions, depends or may depend on the granting of sexual favors or on a willingness to accept or tolerate conduct or communication of a sexual nature,
- unwelcome or coerced physical proximity or physical contact which is of a sexual nature or sexually motivated,
- the deliberate use of offensive or demeaning terms which have a sexual connotation, or
- inappropriate remarks of a sexual nature.

Retaliation or reprisal against employees who report sexual harassment claims is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Any violation of this policy will be treated as a serious matter and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees who have knowledge of any category of harassment or believe they are being harassed by another employee, a supervisor, or any other person encountered in the course of employment, should immediately report the incident to the minister, the chair of the Personnel Committee or Committee on Ministry, or the president or vice-president of the Board, and follow the standard grievance procedure. Every complaint or report of harassment will be promptly investigated.

Although investigations will be conducted with sensitivity to confidentiality issues, investigative information will be communicated as appropriate to those with a need to know. If the investigation indicates that a violation of this policy may have occurred, timely and appropriate action will be taken.

If a complaint of harassment is filed against an employee, that employee will have an opportunity to give a full response to the allegations. Employees found to be in violation of this policy are subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

## **P. Resolution of Employee Grievances**

Effective communication is essential for productive working relationships. To that end, employees are encouraged to discuss any concerns about work or suggestions for improving operations in the following manner:

1. The employee should present any complaint or grievance to his/her supervisor and together discuss the problem, applicable rules or policies, and possible resolution.
2. If discussion with the supervisor does not resolve the matter to the employee's satisfaction, the employee should submit the complaint or grievance in writing to the chair of the Personnel Committee or Committee on Ministry either of whom will gather the evidence necessary to complete an investigation. The chair of the Personnel Committee or Committee on Ministry may interview the employee, involve the Personnel Committee, or appoint an ad hoc committee to advise him/her. The chair of the Personnel Committee or Committee on Ministry will then recommend a resolution of the problem to the supervisor and employee.
3. If the recommendation by chair of the Personnel Committee or Committee on Ministry does not resolve the matter to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may then seek a review by the Board. The resolution recommended by the Board will be binding upon the congregation and employee.

## **Q. Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace**

The Church is a drug- and alcohol-free workplace and prohibits employees from possessing, selling, or transferring illegal drugs, alcohol or inhalants used for improper purposes on church premises.

The Church also prohibits employees from using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol, inhalants, or drugs on church property during work hours, while conducting church business, or when it affects the church's position in the community. Employees found in violation of this policy will be subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. An exception to this policy is that alcohol may be available on the premises for authorized social events. Employees who attend such events in their official capacity may, in some circumstances, participate in drinking alcohol, but may never become intoxicated while in the capacity of representing the Church. Use of over-the counter and prescription drugs is permitted but must not affect the employee's performance, the safety of other employees, or church property.

## **R. Smoking**

The Church provides a smoke-free environment for the congregation; therefore all Church facilities and grounds are designated non-smoking areas.

## **S. Work Environment, Safety, and Building Security**

The safety of employees, members and visitors, is of paramount concern. All employees are expected to abide by accepted safety standards at all times. They should know the whereabouts of fire extinguishers and the first aid kits.

Any unsafe condition, equipment or practice observed by an employee should be reported immediately to the supervisor, minister, or chair of the Personnel Committee. All on-the-job accidents or injuries to employees, no matter how minor, should be reported immediately to the supervisor, minister, or chair of the Personnel Committee. In the event of an emergency or other threatening situation, an employee should call 911 immediately and notify coworkers.

Report all suspicious activities to a supervisor as soon as possible.

Because the church facilities are open to the public, theft or unauthorized entry can occur. Employees are encouraged to be alert and to take precautions to protect church and personal property, as well as their own safety and that of other employees, members and visitors. All employees are expected to take responsibility for keeping the Church's facilities safe and clean.

All doors remain locked unless a public event is taking place. No keys are to be duplicated except as approved by the Executive Committee (made up of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Board of Trustees). At least one office staff member should be present in the office during office hours.

## **T. Emergency Closings/Inclement Weather**

The Church office will follow Austin Independent School District (AISD)'s schedule for inclement weather closings and delayed openings. If AISD cancels or delays classes because of inclement weather, the Church office will be closed or will open late accordingly. If the Church office is officially closed for this reason, affected employees will have an excused absence with pay.

In the event AISD classes are not canceled, employees are expected to use good judgment and should not take unnecessary risks during inclement weather. An employee who feels unable to drive due to weather conditions or is otherwise unable to get to work because of the weather, must call his/her supervisor. Such discretionary time off will be charged against accrued leave time.

## **U. Resignation**

The Church requests that employees who resign provide at least two weeks written notice. Keys, credit cards and all church materials and equipment must be returned prior to the last day worked. Departing employees are encouraged to meet with their supervisor to review the status of their benefits.

The Church will pay all money due to a departing employee by the next scheduled payday. Employees will be paid for time actually worked since the last payday, and for unused vacation leave that they have accrued, but not for unused sick leave, floating holidays or personal leave.

Employees who voluntarily terminate with at least two weeks written notice are eligible for rehire. Rehired employees are treated as other new employees, including receiving a 90-day performance evaluation.

## **V. Involuntary Termination**

Texas is an *employment at will* state. That means that the church can dismiss employees at any time for any reason that is not illegal. An employee who has been terminated will be paid for work performed to the date of dismissal, and for unused vacation time, but not for unused sick leave, floating holidays, or personal leave.

# **2. Compensation**

## **W. Compensation Administration Policy**

The Church strives to pay salaries and benefits competitive with those of similar churches in the Central Texas area and consistent with the guidelines set out by the larger Unitarian Universalist community. It is the policy of the Church to maintain a program of internally and externally equitable salaries.

## **X. Pay and Payroll Deductions**

Paychecks are issued monthly and released to employees only, unless written authorization is provided to release the check to a designated friend or relative. A schedule of paydays is available from the Treasurer. When a scheduled payday falls on a holiday, checks will be issued on the preceding workday. Federal law requires automatic deductions from eligible employees' pay for income tax, FICA (Social Security) tax and Medicare. Other deductions, such as Life or Long-Term Disability insurance (paid by employees at their expense), will be made only with the eligible employee's written consent.

No contributions are made on behalf of employees for unemployment insurance, as Texas state law prohibits faith-based organizations from participation.

For purposes of calculating hours worked and overtime per week, the Church has designated a seven-day work period of Sunday 12:01 a.m. through Saturday midnight. Non-exempt employees will receive compensation for hours worked during this time period, and will receive overtime if those hours are more than 40 in a single seven-day work period. Overtime is awarded only when the actual hours worked exceed 40 per week. Un-worked holidays and other time off are not included when calculating overtime worked.

Under special circumstances an hourly employee may be asked to work extra hours. If hourly employees are asked to work extra hours, they can schedule compensatory or "flex" time within the *same seven-day work period*. The Church may also require

that this compensatory time be scheduled. Otherwise, they must be paid for the actual hours worked during the work period. Each seven-day work period must be viewed individually, and time may not be carried over into the next week.

## **Y. No Loans to Staff and Employees**

Under no circumstances will the Church extend loans to ministerial staff or other employees. Neither will the Church guarantee loans to staff or employees by financial institutions.

## **Z. Timesheets**

All hourly employees must fill out a timesheet, have it signed by the employee's supervisor and submit it to the Treasurer each pay period. Employees who report directly to the Board must report in writing all paid time off and have it available for review by the Board at any time.

# **3. Benefits**

The benefits outlined in this Manual represent significant additional compensation to eligible employees. Outlined below is a brief summary of the types of employee benefits currently available through the Church. This summary is not intended to and does not create an express or implied contract, promise or representation between the Church and the employee. These benefits are subject to change at any time at the discretion of the Church. In the event of any discrepancy between the benefits outlined below and the benefit plan itself, the plan will govern. Any questions about employee benefits should be directed to the supervisor or chair of the Personnel Committee.

## **AA. Retirement**

The Church offers a retirement plan administered by the Unitarian Universalist Association of America (UUA) to all employees who work 20 or more hours per week, who are 21 years of age or older and who have completed one year or 1,000 hours of service with this Church or another participating UU organization.

More detailed eligibility requirements and other provisions are outlined in the UUA retirement plan brochure.

## **BB. Group Insurance Programs**

The Church provides health insurance to all full-time employees, and workers' compensation coverage to all employees.

### **I. Health Insurance**

Employees who work full-time may enroll in the group health insurance plan sponsored by the UUA, and part-time employees working 20 hours or more a week are eligible for the same on a pro-rated basis. Employees who have health insurance through a family member or collateral employment are not eligible to participate. Further information concerning the plan may be obtained from the chair of the Personnel Committee.

## 2. Group Dental, Term Life, and Long Term Disability Insurance

Employees who work full-time are offered the option of purchasing group dental insurance, term life insurance, and long-term disability insurance through the group plan sponsored by the UUA. Further information concerning these policies is available from the chair of the Personnel Committee.

## 3. Workers' Compensation

The Church carries workers' compensation insurance that pays for certain medical expenses and provides partial income protection in the event of illness or injury arising out of or in the course of employment.

All on-the-job injuries or illnesses, regardless of severity, must be reported immediately to the employee's immediate supervisor or the chair of the Personnel Committee. Employees are required to provide a physician's statement in order to receive workers' compensation benefits, or to return to work.

# 4. Leave Policies

## CC. Holidays

Full-time employees and part-time employees working 20 or more hours per week are entitled to paid holidays. Part-time employees working less than 20 hours per week are not eligible for holiday pay, and are paid only for time actually worked on a holiday. The Church observes the following paid holidays each year:

- New Year's Eve (Close at noon)
- New Year's Day
- MLK Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve (Close at noon)

- Christmas Day (If Christmas falls on a Friday or Sunday, the following Monday is also a holiday.)

Staff of other faith traditions can negotiate paid time off to observe their religious holidays.

Holidays that fall on weekends will be observed on the following Monday. Employees whose regular day off is on an observed holiday can take another day off within one week after the holiday.

## **DD. Vacation**

The Church grants paid vacation to regular full-time employees at their regular rate of pay based on their length of service with the Church. Part-time employees working 20 or more hours per week are entitled to a prorated amount of vacation time. Vacation eligibility is as follows:

Vacation time accrues from the first day of employment and is prorated according to the number of hours worked each week. (For example, an employee who works 40 hours per week is assumed to have an 8-hour work day and can earn up to eight, 8-hour days or 64 vacation hours in their first year at work. An employee who works 30 hours per week is assumed to have a 6-hour work day and can earn up to eight, 6 hour days or 48 vacation hours in their first year at work. ) Vacation time accrues at the end of each month. Employees must work 6 months before they are eligible to take accrued vacation time.

Vacation time must be requested at least one week in advance (except in emergencies) and approved by the employee's supervisor. In the event of conflicting vacation requests, vacation will be granted by the employee's supervisor based on the needs of the Church and workload requirements.

Programming requirements of the Church may make it necessary for certain days or weeks of the year to be blocked out as times during which vacations cannot be taken.

Employees can carry over one-half (1/2) of their unused vacation time into the next year measured from the employee's date of employment with this Church.

## Vacation Schedules

Full-time employees (at least 40 hours per week) accrue vacation time according to the following yearly schedule:

<b>Years of Service</b>	<b>Number of Vacation Days</b>
1-6	10
7 or more	15

Part-time employees working 20 or more hours per week accrue vacation time according to the following yearly schedule:

<b>Years of Service</b>	<b>Number of Vacation Days</b>
1-6	5
7 or more	8

Part-time employees working less than 20 hours per week do not accrue vacation leave.

## **EE. Medical Leave**

### Paid Sick Leave

All full-time employees accrue one day of paid sick leave for every month worked, up to a maximum of twelve days per calendar year. One year's worth (12 days) of sick time may be carried forward into the following year. Part-time employees who work 20 or more hours per week accrue sick leave on a pro rata basis. Part-time employees working less than 20 per week do not accrue paid sick leave.

Sick leave is to be used only in the event the employee is unable to work due to the employee's own illness, injury or other medical condition or the illness, injury or medical condition of a family member. Sick leave may be used as part of medical leave or sick childcare leave and as otherwise required by applicable law. Sick leave may be used for routine dental or medical appointments.

Employees must notify their supervisor before their starting time if they are ill and unable to come to work. Employees may be required to provide a physician's statement regarding their absence.

### Medical leave without pay

Unpaid medical leave may be granted in instances where an employee's medical condition requires an absence from work for more time than the amount of available sick leave. This leave requires the approval of the employee's supervisor. Sufficient evidence of such a medical condition is required for a medical leave. The maximum unpaid medical leave time that may be granted is three months or until a physician releases the employee to return to work, whichever is shorter.

## **FF. Other Leaves of Absence**

The policies in this section describe various types of paid and unpaid leaves of absence provided by the Church. Leaves must be requested in advance in writing and require the approval of the employee's immediate supervisor. The exact nature of the leave and its anticipated length must be included in the written request. Appropriate documentation may be required by the supervisor. Employees are expected to return to work upon the expiration of the leave as granted. If prevented from returning as expected, the employee must immediately notify his or her supervisor.

### Personal leave without pay

In exceptional cases, all employees may be eligible for additional personal leave without pay. Requests must be made in writing and approved by the supervisor and the chair of the Personnel Committee.

### Military leave without pay

Employees who are members of the uniformed services of the United States (including the National Guard or other reserve unit) will be granted unpaid leaves of absence in accordance with state or federal law to perform military duties. Requests for military leave of absence must be made in writing and should include verification of the duty call from military authority, the date the leave is to commence and the expected date of return.

Employees may choose to use any accumulated vacation time for all or part of the period of military service. Leaves of absence in excess of any available vacation time will be without pay. In accordance with applicable law, eligible employees will be reinstated to the same job upon returning from an authorized military leave of absence.

### Funeral or bereavement leave with pay

Full-time employees and part-time employees working 20 hours or more per week may be eligible for a leave of absence for up to three days with pay for the death of a family member. The number of paid days off will be determined by the supervisor based on the circumstances. Part-time employees working less than 20 hours per week are not eligible for paid funeral or bereavement leave.

### Jury duty leave with pay

Full-time employees and part-time employees working 20 hours or more per week who are called for jury duty are paid their regular pay for up to 20 working days. Employees should appear for work upon being excused from jury duty on any day.

### Parental leave

Full-time employees are eligible for 30 calendar days of paid parental leave after the birth or adoption of a child. Additional unpaid parental leave may be taken for up to 60 additional calendar days. Part-time employees working 20 hours or more per week are eligible for 15 calendar days of paid parental leave after the birth or adoption of a child. Additional unpaid parental leave may be taken for up to 30 additional calendar days. Part-time employees working less than 20 hours per week are not eligible for paid parental leave.

## **GG. Vehicle Usage and Reimbursement**

Employees using their own cars for church-related business may be paid mileage at the current rate per mile as established by Internal Revenue Service. Mileage will be reimbursed monthly upon request by the employee and approval by the supervisor or Personnel Committee. Trips must be authorized by the employee's supervisor. Employees must have a current and valid driver's license and proof of insurance. Employees may not take unauthorized passengers on such trips.

All tickets for parking and traffic violations are the responsibility of the employee, and subsequent fines will not be reimbursed by Church.

## **HH. Personal Property**

The Church cannot be responsible for damage to or loss of personal property, including loss or damage to vehicles or other property in or on church property. Employees should report any lost items to the supervisor so the item can be returned if it is found. If an employee finds an item, it should be immediately turned in to the supervisor.

## **II. Workplace Threats and Violence**

Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against persons by anyone on church property are not tolerated. Anyone who verbally or physically threatens another, exhibits threatening behavior or engages in violent acts on church property may be removed and will remain off church property pending the outcome of an investigation. If the Church determines that a violation of this policy has occurred, the Church may take appropriate disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension and/or termination of employment, and/or legal action as appropriate. All employees will inform their supervisor or the chair of the Personnel Committee of any behavior they have witnessed or experienced, which they regard

as threatening or violent, when that behavior is job-related or is connected to employment.

## **JJ. Professional Behavior**

Employees should maintain a professional attitude and appearance that is appropriate to their position and the Church. Name badges should be worn when employees are on duty on Sunday. Personal mail and non-essential telephone calls at work are discouraged.

## **KK. Inspection Rights**

The Church has on its premises storage facilities such as desks, file cabinets, closets and storage areas for the use of employees. However, the Church can make no assurances that they will always be secure. The storage of any unauthorized alcohol, illegal drugs or drug-related paraphernalia is prohibited on Church premises. Therefore, the Church reserves the right to open and inspect any desk, file cabinet, storage closet or storage area at any time and without prior notice or consent. Employees may not use personal locks on church-owned desks, cabinets, closets or storage areas.

## **LL. Employment Authorization**

Federal law requires that prospective employees must show proof of eligibility to work in the United States in the position for which they are applying. When applicable, employees must provide an original document or documents to the employee's supervisor that establish identity and employment eligibility from the date employment begins.

## **MM. Work and Disciplinary Guidelines**

Certain guidelines must be observed by all employees to protect the integrity of the congregation. Violations may result in disciplinary measures including verbal warnings, written warnings or termination.

Engaging in any of the following examples of unacceptable conduct may result in disciplinary actions. These examples are intended only as a guide and are not all-inclusive:

- Failure to perform work in an acceptable manner,
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness,
- Leaving work without permission,
- Failure to report absences as required,
- Sexual harassment or harassment described in this Manual,

- The use, possession or sale, or being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances while working or while on Church premises (including meal and other breaks),
- Unauthorized possession of weapons,
- Disclosure of confidential information,
- Smoking in unauthorized areas,
- Failure to report-on-the job injuries,
- Working another job while absent,
- Failure to accurately complete or permitting another person to complete the employee's timesheet,
- Arrest and conviction for criminal offenses that are job related, including those that may affect the employee's ability to perform his or her job,
- Theft,
- Falsifying records or information (or misuse or unauthorized manipulation of any computer or electronic data processing equipment or system),
- Discourteous treatment of others,
- Taking Church property without paying for it or without written permission,
- Reckless, careless or unauthorized use of Church property, equipment or materials,
- Inappropriate or profane language, or
- Violation of any other Church policy.

## **APPENDIX A:**

**CODE OF ETHICS FOR PERSONS WORKING WITH  
CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT**

**CONSENT FOR CRIMINAL BACKGROUND HISTORY  
CHECK AUTHORIZATION/WAIVER/INDEMNITY**

**EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND RECEIPT**

## Code of Ethics of Persons Working with Children & Youth

Adults and older youth working with children and youth in the context of our Unitarian Universalist faith, have a crucial and privileged role. To help our children grow up to be caring and responsible adults can be a meaningful and joyful experience for the adult and a lifetime benefit to the young person. It is important to recognize that this role carries with it both power and influence. Whether acting as a youth advisor, chaperone, child-care worker, teacher, minister, mentor, or any other role, the adult has a special opportunity to interact with our young people in ways that are affirming and inspiring to the young people and to the adult. Adults who work with children and youth at Wildflower events are expected to always have the best interests of children and youth at heart.

### Expectations

Adults are expected to nurture the physical, emotional, and spiritual growth of children and youth by fostering an environment of kindness, trust, respect, and fun. Our charge to children and youth workers is to encourage kindness and genuineness among the children and youth, and to discourage unkindness and falseness. We intend to create an environment in which children and youth will be able to explore the spiritual and religious nature of their lives, both as individuals and communities. We expect that one person's enjoyment will not be at the expense of another person's health or self-esteem. In light of this, there are some specific expectations that Wildflower Church has of adults working with children and youth. They are as follows:

- **“Friendship” with Youth** – Although we hope that youth and adults will have genuine fondness for one another, any adult who looks to youth for “friendship” is not sufficiently mature to be in a position of responsibility over them. A “friendship” is reciprocal, where neither person has more responsibility for the health of the relationship than the other. This is antithetical to the adult/youth relationship, where the adult is the one who assumes primary responsibility for maintaining appropriate boundaries and cultivating an atmosphere of health and trust. It is expected that any relationships that an adult has with youth who have grown to adulthood will not become exploitative.

- **Unofficial Contact With Youth** – Sometimes a genuine mentoring relationship will develop between a youth and an adult. These can be not only healthy, but also transformative for both parties. However, it is our concern that a “predator,” who does not have the best interest of the youth at heart, will try to disguise an unhealthy relationship with a youth as a mentoring relationship. Therefore, if you wish to be in contact with a youth outside the normal channels of church sponsored events, it is imperative that your behavior both be and appear to be above reproach. Any relationship you develop with a youth outside of church-sponsored events must be with the knowledge and consent of the parents. This is for the protection of the youth from potential predators, but also for your own protection. If you have any concerns regarding what might be appropriate or

inappropriate behavior in these situations, please contact the DRE, the Minister or another member of the Safe Congregation Committee.

• **Sexualized behavior** – Adults play an important part in helping our youth develop healthy identities as sexual beings. Children, youth, and adults suffer damaging effects when leaders become sexually involved with young persons in their care. It is never appropriate to engage in any manner of sexual behavior with a child or youth. This refers not only to explicitly sexual behavior, but also to sexually provocative behavior or language. It is not appropriate to tell jokes with sexual content, for example, or to make “double entendres.” Physical expressions of affections such as hugs have their place, but it is best to allow the child or youth to initiate them, and the adult must be sensitive not to allow them to be prolonged.

• **Confidentiality** – Adults who work with children and youth under the aegis of the church are responsible not only to the children and youth, but to the church as well. **Remember: you are acting both ethically and legally as an agent of Wildflower Church.** Sometimes you will learn that a child or youth is the victim of abuse, is suicidal, has a serious drug problem, etc. **YOU MUST NOT KEEP SUCH INFORMATION TO YOURSELF.** For this reason, please try never to give children or youth the impression that you will keep secrets for them. **CONFIDENTIALITY IS NOT SECRET KEEPING.** For the most part, a covenant of confidentiality will mean that you do not repeat information told to you in confidence. However, when the information is of a major crisis nature, encourage the child or youth to seek help from a parent or other authority figure. In addition, you yourself **MUST** consult with a person in a position of greater authority in the church, which in this situation means a member of the Safe Congregation Committee, the DRE, or the minister, about an appropriate course of action.

### **Accordance with This Code of Conduct**

Any Wildflower staff member or volunteer working with children or youth who disagrees with any provision of the code is free to discuss their opinions with the Safe Congregation Committee. However, until such a time as the church chooses to alter any portion of its provisions, the worker must abide by the code as written.

By signing below, I indicate that I have read this Code of Conduct and the Wildflower Church Child and Youth Safe Congregation Policy and agree to abide by them. Further, I agree to refrain from any conduct that may constitute verbal, emotional or physical abuse. If I violate any of these provisions, the church leadership will take appropriate action, and I may become ineligible to work with children or youth at Wildflower Church.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name \_\_\_\_\_

# **Religious Education Employee Agreement**

**Wildflower Church: A Unitarian Universalist Congregation**

**Please take a minute to, understand, and sign this form (filling in the necessary information.)**

**I understand that I am applying for**

\_\_\_\_\_ **at Wildflower Church.**

I understand the requirements for the position that I'm applying for and am willing and able to fulfill the requirements of the position.

**I have never been convicted of a crime involving a minor, and I understand that if I should be involved in such a crime in the future, I must resign from my church responsibilities.**



## EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND RECEIPT

I have received a copy of Wildflower Church's Personnel Policies Manual, as adopted by the Board of Trustees on December 28, 2008. I agree to read this Manual carefully, and to abide by its policies and procedures. If I don't understand any part of the Manual, I will ask a member of the Personnel Committee or my immediate supervisor for assistance.

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Signature

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Date

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Printed Name