

**Personnel Policy Manual**

for

**FIRST PARISH BREWSTER**  
*Unitarian Universalist Church*



**Revised February 2023**

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## **I. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES**

### **A. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

*This FPBUU Personnel Policy Manual is not a contract and can be modified or changed at any time. The relationship between FPB and employee is legally defined as “employment at will”, which means that such employment may be terminated without penalty by either party. FPB may not be compelled to pay wages to persons no longer in their service, and employees may not be compelled to render their labor without their consent.*

We have prepared this Personnel Manual to help employees understand some of the policies and procedures of First Parish Brewster Unitarian Universalist (referred to herein as "FPB"). Employees should familiarize themselves with the Manual, as it will provide answers to some questions employees may have about their employment. Nothing in this Manual or in any other written or unwritten policies and practices of FPB creates an express or implied contract, promise or representation between FPB and any employee.

FPB’s policies generally will be applied consistently. However, FPB reserves the right to deviate from normal policy in certain situations. Since every employment situation cannot be anticipated, this Manual provides a general overview only.

From time to time, changes in the Manual may become necessary. Therefore, FPB reserves the right to amend, supplement or rescind any provisions of this Manual as necessary.

The Manual applies to all staff, whether full-time, part-time, exempt or nonexempt, except where otherwise stated. This Manual does not apply to ordained Senior Ministers called by vote of the congregation, except where indicated.

This Manual supersedes all previous employment policies, whether written or oral, expressed or implied. If any provisions of this Manual are found to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions will remain in full force and effect.

If an employee has any questions or comments about this Manual, or needs more information, the employee should ask their supervisor or Administration and Finance Director. An employee’s comments and suggestions are genuinely encouraged.

## **B. FPB HISTORY**

### A Brief History of First Parish Brewster

The original First Parish was organized in 1700 on the current site as a Congregational Church in the Pilgrim Tradition. In the early and mid-18th century Brewster was home to many prominent sea captains and the church became known as the Church of the Sea Captains. Their names remain on the pews. The church is an historic landmark in the Town of Brewster.

Over the first half of the ninetieth century the church evolved into Unitarianism and went with the denomination at the merger of the Unitarians and Universalists in the twentieth century—in 1961.

The current Meetinghouse, dedicated in 1834, is the third building on the site upon the hill. Dawes Hall, built in 1909, was used for many purposes, including as a sanctuary in cold weather during hard times. The Parish Hall was built in the 1980s and the Barn and Winslow House were purchased in the late 1990s. When the Meetinghouse began to show serious signs of decay in 2005, the leadership with the support of the parish and the wider community, raised the funds and restored the building to its present state.

First Parish is a leader in social justice, addressing a variety of societal concerns. It was the first Welcoming Congregation among all the UU churches. In 2014 we gained green sanctuary status.

By John Myers, 2015

## **C. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

FPB is an equal employment opportunity church for all qualified persons, without regard to race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, medical condition, veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation or gender expression. This applies to all employment practices, including recruitment, hiring, compensation, benefits, promotions, demotions, training, disciplinary action, and termination.

Employees who have questions about discrimination in the workplace, or who believe this policy has been violated, should report their concerns immediately to the Administration and Finance Director. If the complaint involves the Administration and Finance Director, then it should go to the Senior Minister. 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. SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment is prohibited and will not be tolerated. This policy applies to sexual harassment regardless of gender. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

- submission to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
- submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a factor in employment decisions affecting an individual; or
- the conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's employment or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment environment.

Some examples of conduct, which may constitute sexual harassment, depending on the circumstances, include but are not limited to the following:

- repeated and unwelcome suggestions regarding, or invitations to, social engagements or social events; or
- 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; or
- unwelcome or coerced physical proximity or physical contact which is of a sexual nature or sexually motivated; or
- the deliberate use of offensive or demeaning terms which have a sexual connotation; or
- inappropriate remarks of a sexual nature.

Employees who believe they have been sexually harassed by another employee, a supervisor, or any other person encountered in the course of employment should report in writing that conduct immediately to the Senior Minister or member of the Safer Congregation Committee. If there is a complaint against the Senior Minister, this complaint needs to be brought to the President of the Board of Trustees.

The person who receives the complaint will promptly investigate the complaint or report of sexual harassment or cause it to be investigated. If there is a complaint against the Senior Minister, this complaint will be investigated by the President of the Board of Trustees or Safer Congregational Committee. Although investigations will be conducted with sensitivity to confidentiality issues, investigative information will be communicated as appropriate to those with a need to know. The person who investigates the complaint will arrange a meeting with the employee within seven days of the submitted written complaint. If the investigation indicates that a violation of this policy may have occurred, timely and appropriate action will be taken. Often such situations may necessitate outside counsel, and it is highly recommended that FPB use this resource. The Senior Minister, President of the Board of Trustees and Personnel Committee Chair will always be consulted unless the complaint is against one of these individuals.

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.

All staff including clergy will have a CORI/SORI (Criminal and Sexual Offender Record Information) report on file. All new staff hiring will be subject to background checks and completion of the screening form. CORI/SORI checks will be the responsibility of the Director of Admin and Finance and Director of Lifespan Religious Education. New hires will be contingent upon clean reports about sexual offenses. (See APPENDIX, D. CORI/SORI POLICY for more information)

## **E. HARASSMENT**

FPB prohibits conduct that shows hostility or an aversion toward an individual because of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender expression or any other classification protected by law, and that:

- has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment;

- or
- has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance;
- or
- otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Some examples of conduct, which may constitute harassment, depending on the circumstances, include but are not limited to, the following:

- epithets or slurs; or
- threatening or intimidating acts; or
- written or graphic material;
- written, verbal or physical acts that purport to be jokes or pranks.

Any employee who believes they have been harassed by another employee, a supervisor, or any other person, in the course of employment should submit a description of that conduct in writing immediately to the Senior Minister. If there is a complaint against the Senior Minister, this complaint needs to be brought to the President of the Board of Trustees.

The person who receives the written complaint will promptly investigate the complaint or report of harassment or cause it to be investigated. If there is a complaint against the Senior Minister, this complaint will be investigated by the President of the Board of Trustees or their designee. Although investigations will be conducted with sensitivity to confidentiality issues, investigative information will be communicated as appropriate to those with a need to know. The person who investigates the complaint will arrange a meeting with the employee within seven days of the submitted written complaint. If the investigation indicates that a violation of this policy may have occurred, timely and appropriate action will be taken. Often such situations may necessitate outside counsel, and it is highly recommended that FPB use this resource. The Personnel Committee Chair and the President of the Board of Trustees will be available for consultation.

Retaliation or reprisal against employees who report 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.

## **F. GRIEVANCE POLICY INVOLVING WORKING CONDITIONS**

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:

In the event of any disagreement with respect to being treated fairly in matter of pay, benefits, promotions, or other specific working conditions, the employees are encouraged to first speak to their supervisor in an attempt to resolve the problem.

If discussion with the supervisor does not resolve the matter to the employee's satisfaction, the employee should submit the original grievance in writing to the Minister.

The Minister or their delegate shall gather the evidence necessary to complete an investigation and submit their findings to the President of the Board and chair of the Personnel Committee. The President will arrange a meeting with the employee and their supervisor, the Minister and a member of the Personnel Committee in an agreed-upon time. Upon review of this material, the Minister,

Board president, member of the Personnel Committee and supervisor will render a decision. The President will provide the employee with the final decision within seven days.

## **G. INTERNET POLICY**

FPB provides Internet access (including e-mail) to its staff members to assist and facilitate business communications and work-related research. These services are for legitimate business use only in the course of assigned duties. All materials, information and software created, transmitted, downloaded or stored on FPB's computer system are the property of FPB and may be accessed only by authorized personnel. If a personal computer or device is used for work related activity, FPB may have access to work related material and emails.

Inappropriate Internet use includes, but is not limited to:

- transmitting obscene, harassing, offensive or unprofessional messages; or
- accessing, displaying, downloading, or distributing any offensive or inappropriate messages including those containing racial slurs, sexual connotations or offensive comments about race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or any other classification protected by law; or
- transmitting any of FPB's confidential or proprietary information to anyone not authorized to receive it. This information includes member/friend data or other materials covered by FPB's confidentiality policy. More information on confidentiality can be found below, in subsection I.

FPB reserves the right to monitor employee use of the e-mail system or the Internet at any time. Employees should not consider their Internet usage or e-mail communications to be private. Personal passwords are not an assurance of confidentiality, and the Internet itself is not secure.

Any software or other material downloaded into FPB's computers may be used only in ways consistent with the licenses and copyrights of the vendors, authors or owners of the material. Prior written authorization from the Administration and Finance Director is required before introducing any software into FPB's computer system.

Only authorized staff members may communicate on the Internet on behalf of FPB. Employees may not express opinions or personal views that could be misconstrued as being those of FPB. Employees may not state their church affiliation on the Internet unless required as part of their assigned duties. Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

## **H. MEDIA INQUIRIES**

Requests for information about FPB from newspapers, television and radio media should be directed to the Administration and Finance Director.

## **I. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Employees may in the course of their employment have access to confidential information about FPB, including but not limited to information about members, friends or other staff members. Such information must remain confidential and may not be released, removed from the FPB's premises, copied, transmitted or in any other way used for any purpose by employees outside the scope of

their employment. All requests for information concerning past or present employees received from organizations or individuals should be directed to the Administration and Finance Director.

## **J. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Employees are expected to avoid conflicts of interest, defined as any situation where an employee may attain personal gain or which may be detrimental to FPB, either monetarily or to its public image, because of the use of information or personal contact which is not generally available except through employment with FPB.

Employees shall not engage in any business or transaction or have a financial or other personal interest which is incompatible with their employment duties or which would impair their judgment or actions in the performance of their duties for FPB. Employees who have questions about whether an activity violates this policy should discuss the matter with the Administration and Finance Director.

## **K. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT**

We understand that employees may take on employment outside their job with FPB. However, employees should not engage in any collateral employment or business activity that is incompatible or in conflict with their duties, functions or responsibilities as an FPB employee. Activities that may constitute a conflict include use of FPB's time, facilities, equipment or supplies, or the use of the title, prestige or influence of the congregation for private gain or advantage.

An employee shall not engage in any outside business activity which, by its nature, hours or physical demands, would impair the employee's performance of FPB duties, reflect discredit on FPB, or tend to increase FPB's payments for sick leave, worker's compensation benefits or long term disability benefits. Collateral employment should not result in outside telephone calls while on duty for the congregation.

## **L. EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES AND MEMBERS**

Employees' family members may be considered for employment; however, relatives may not supervise one another. "Relative" is defined for this purpose as a spouse, domestic partner, parent, sibling, child, grandparent, or grandchild.

## **M. PERSONNEL RECORD**

It is very important that employees keep up-to-date all the information provided to FPB at the time of hire. This information will be recorded on a Personnel Record Form and 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 Administration and Finance Director 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;
- Criminal and Sexual Offender Record Information (CORI); (SORI)



- Person to notify in case of emergency; and
- Any relevant changes in licensing or education.

## **N. INITIAL REVIEW PERIOD**

New employees and employees who are transferred to another position are required to complete an initial review period of ninety days, but this may be shortened or lengthened at FPB's discretion. Upon satisfactory completion of this period, the employee will be considered a regular employee. 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.

## **O. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

Employees will receive a written performance evaluation at the end of the first six months of employment and again at the end of the first year and each year going forward. Factors considered in assessing performance include but are not limited to quality and quantity of work; dependability; attendance and punctuality; effective interpersonal relationships with the congregation and colleagues; and professional conduct.

Employees are requested to identify goals and objectives with their supervisors in advance so that their work may be evaluated on the basis of clear criteria they have helped to develop.

The Administration and Finance Director will assure that annual evaluations of all staff have been completed and placed in the employee's personnel file, dated and signed by the employee and the supervisor. The written evaluation will be maintained in the employee's permanent personnel file.

## **II. WAGE AND HOUR ADMINISTRATION**

### **A. EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATIONS AND HOURS OF WORK**

For purposes of determining the applicability of various policies, practices, and benefits, employees are classified by the nature of the position to which they are assigned and by their regular work schedule.

Full-time employees are regularly scheduled to work 40 hours per week. Employees scheduled to work less than 40 hours per week will be considered part-time employees and their eligibility for benefits will be pro-rated according to the percentage of time worked, except as otherwise noted in this manual.

Employees who are subject to state or federal minimum wage and overtime laws are referred to as "non-exempt" employees. Those in administrative, management, or supervisory positions who are not subject to such regulation are referred to as "exempt" employees and include the Administration and Finance Director, Music Director, and Lifespan Religious Education Director.

### **B. TIMEKEEPING AND OVERTIME**

Non-exempt employees are required to submit a written and signed record of their time worked each day at the end of each month to the Administration and Finance Director. Any scheduled hours not worked, or time worked in excess of their regular schedule must be noted. Employees should not work overtime without written authorization in advance.

## **C. PAY AND PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

Pay adjustments generally will be considered for all employees once a year and any adjustments will normally begin at the beginning of the fiscal year. There is no guarantee of an annual pay adjustment. Pay is usually based upon such factors as cost of living increase, UUA guidelines, job responsibilities and the financial status of FPB.

Deductions made from employees' wages are reflected on the stubs of their paychecks. Federal law requires deductions from pay for income tax, Social Security and Medicare. Other deductions may include state and/or local taxes or wage garnishments. Some deductions are optional and are made only if the employee has authorized their deduction.

Employees are responsible for promptly notifying the Administration and Finance Director of any changes to or errors in their deductions. Any necessary adjustments usually are made and reflected in the employee's next paycheck.

## **III. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

Outlined below is a brief summary of the types of employee benefits currently available through FPB. This summary is not intended to and does not create an express or implied contract, promise or representation between FPB and the employee. These benefits are subject to change at any time at the discretion of FPB. In the event of any discrepancy between the benefits outlined below and the plan itself, the plan will govern. Any questions about employee benefits should be directed to the Administration and Finance Director.

### **A. GROUP INSURANCE PROGRAMS**

#### **1. Health Insurance**

For employees who work at least 20 hours per week, FPB makes available (as of the date of hire) and pays for a portion of their health insurance. FPB currently pays 80% of the premium for employees who work at least 35 hours per week and prorates coverage payments for those working less than 35 hours per week based on the number of hours worked. The insurance is the UUA Standard PPO "Gold" insurance plan and UUA Medicare supplemental insurance plan.\* For employees who are enrolled with the UUA group health insurance, FPB will pay 50% of health insurance premiums for their children for employees who work at least 35 hrs per week and prorates coverage payments for those working less than 35 hours per week based on the number of hours worked.

For example:

- Employee A works 40 hours per week and FPB pays 80% of Employee A's health insurance premium.
- Employee B works 30 hours per week and FPB pays 69% of Employee B's health insurance premium.
- Employee C works 20 hours per week and FPB pays 46% of Employee C's health Insurance premium.

This percentage of contribution is reviewed annually as part of the budget process.

\*Note: Employees who work at least 750 hours per year (approximately 15 hours per week, year-round) are eligible for the UUA health insurance plan, but FPB only pays a portion of the health insurance premium for those who work at least 20 hours per week, year-round.

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

Term Life and Long-Term Disability must be signed up for at the time of hire. Health and Dental Insurance have open enrollment every December if an employee doesn't sign up at the time of hire. Employees who work at least 750 hours per year (approximately 15 hours per week) are offered the option of purchasing, on their own, term life insurance, through the group plan sponsored by the UUA. FPB currently pays 100% of the premium for dental insurance for employees who work at least 35hrs/wk or 1820 hours annually. For employees who work at least 15hrs per week but less than 35 hours per week benefits will be prorated based on the number of hours worked. Further information concerning these policies is available from the Administration and Finance Director. For these same employees (who work at least 750 hours per year), FPB offers and pays for (through the employee's salary/wages) the UUA group plan for long-term disability insurance.

## **3. Workers' Compensation Insurance**

FPB 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, should be reported immediately to the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees are required to provide a physician's statement in order to receive worker's compensation benefits, or to return to work.

## **B. RETIREMENT BENEFITS**

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) maintains a defined contribution qualified retirement plan to assist eligible employees to accumulate tax-deferred savings for retirement. Under the plan, FPB contributes a percentage of the employee's wages, and the employee has the option of making additional voluntary contributions on a pre-tax basis.

All employees may enrollment in the plan for purposes of making their own employee contributions toward their retirement. For employer contributions, employees must meet the following criteria: employed by FPB for 1000 hours or more per year, a minimum of 21 years old, and completed one year of service with FPB or a combination of UUA organizations.

First Parish Brewster does not automatically enroll employees. If an employee wishes to be part of the retirement plan, the employee will need to complete the enrollment forms. The forms are available from the Administration and Finance Director.

FPB will contribute 10% of an employee's compensation base to the Plan. In addition, an employee may contribute up to 5% of their compensation base to the Plan. Compensation "base" means an employee's salary only and does not include any other compensation (value of health insurance premiums, professional development funds, etc.). This retirement plan is available only to

employees of First Parish Brewster (whose income is reported on Form W2) and is not available to any contract employees (whose income is reported on Form 1099). More information on the retirement plan is available from the Administration and Finance Director or from the UUA.

### **C. PAID TIME OFF (PTO)**

First Parish Brewster offers paid time off (PTO) to employees who work at least 10 hours per week that can be used as they wish for sick days, vacation and/or other personal needs.

The Administration and Finance Director oversees the record-keeping and use of paid time off (PTO). During the first six months of employment, an employee will accumulate PTO. However, an employee is not eligible to use PTO until after that six months.

#### **1. Earning Paid Time Off**

Employees earn time off based on hours worked and years of service.

During the first three years of employment, full-time employees earn 176 hours of PTO each year. If they work less than full time, this benefit will be prorated.

From four to ten years of service, full-time employees earn 216 hours of PTO per fiscal year. Again, if an employee works less than full time, the hours will be prorated.

After ten years of service, full-time employees earn 256 hours of PTO per fiscal year, prorated as above for part-time employees.

The amount of PTO available to an employee will be specified in the annual Letter of Agreement.

Employees may be given the week between Christmas and New Year's Day off without using their PTO.

#### **2. Accumulation of Paid Time Off**

PTO is available at the beginning of each fiscal year (July1-June30) and approved by the employee's supervisor or Minister. If an employee uses paid time off and terminates employment before the paid time off is accrued, it must be paid back. The total accumulated PTO hours for each employee is presented in the annual employee agreement. Two weeks of PTO earned by June 30 of the fiscal year may be carried over to the next fiscal year providing an employee uses it within the first six months of the following year.

#### **3. Upon Resignation**

If an employee resigns (after working beyond an employee's probationary period), an employee will be paid time for any time off an employee has accumulated as of the date of an employee's resignation.

#### **4. Applying for PTO**

Employees must submit a written request for PTO to their supervisor for approval. Overlapping requests will be negotiated so that the needs of the church are covered.

## **5. Emergency or Unplanned Leave**

If employees need emergency, unplanned leave, they must report their absence promptly to their supervisor before the emergency leave begins. These hours will be deducted from their PTO.

## **6. Short-Term Medical Leave**

Employees, who work a minimum of 10 hours per week, have been diagnosed with a serious illness or disabling condition by a physician and have exhausted their paid time off benefits, will be paid short-term medical leave sick benefits at 75 percent of their regular pay until the earlier of release to return to work by the physician, approval for long-term disability payments, or 90 days whichever occurs first. Paid time off benefits do not accrue during this period. Short-term medical leave goes into effect after all paid time off hours have been used. If an employee is covered by the Congregation's health insurance, the Congregation portion of the health insurance premium will continue to be paid by the Employer during the unpaid medical leave. Employees will remain responsible for their contributions to these plans.

## **D. HOLIDAYS**

The following paid holidays are observed each year:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Patriot's Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Indigenous People's Day (Columbus Day)
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas (or another holiday to be arranged with your supervisor)

If an observed holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday generally will be observed as the holiday. If an observed holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday generally will be observed as the holiday. If employees are required to work on an observed holiday, they generally will be granted another day off.

## **E. LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

### **1. General provisions**

The policies in this section describe various types of paid and unpaid leaves of absence provided by FPB. 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. 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 their

supervisor.

## **2. Personal leave without pay**

Employees can request in writing days for unpaid personal leave from their supervisors and such requests must be approved by the supervisor, the President of the Board of Trustees (or designee), and Chair of Personnel Committee (or designee).

## **3. 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 on a voluntary or involuntary basis. 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.

## **4. Funeral or bereavement leave with pay**

Employees working 20 hours or more may be eligible for a leave of absence for up to 10 days (prorated on FTE, Full Time Equivalent) with pay for the death of an immediate family member. The number of paid hours off will be determined by the supervisor and Administration and Finance Director based on the circumstances.

## **5. Jury duty leave with pay**

Employees called for jury duty are paid their regular pay for up to twenty working days. Employees should appear for work upon being excused from jury duty on any day.

## **6. Parental Leave with pay**

In the case of the birth or adoption of a child, the employee shall be granted twelve weeks of paid leave after one year of employment. Unpaid leave should be extended only after all paid leave has been used. Accrued paid time off can be used for the unpaid portion of parental leave. If an employee is covered by the Congregation's health insurance, the Congregation portion of the health insurance premium will continue to be paid by the Employer during the parental leave. Employees will remain responsible for their contributions to these plans. The employee must give 30 days' notice of parental leave to their supervisor.

## **F. VEHICLE USAGE AND REIMBURSEMENT**

Employees using their own cars for church-related business will be paid mileage at the current rate per mile as established by Internal Revenue Service. The employee, with approval by their supervisor, will be reimbursed for mileage upon request. The employee's supervisor must authorize trips. 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. The employee must pay all fines promptly and will not be reimbursed by FPB.

## **G. CREDIT CARD POLICY**

FPBUU may supply a credit or debit card (CARD) to some staff members. The following governs use of any CARD supplied to staff by FPBUU:

- CARDS are to be used only for legitimate expenses of FPBUU. Documentation for each transaction must be provided by the staff member making the charge. The Administration and Finance Director (AFD) will define and manage the process used for submission of the documentation and will ensure that staff are consistently supplying accurate documentation. Whenever possible, receipts should be included. Included in the documentation is a description of which budget line item, special fund, or endowment expenditure this expense is coming from.
- CARDS may not be used for personal expenses. If a card is accidentally used, the staff member involved should notify the treasurer as soon as possible and provide a check payable to FPBUU to cover the cost of the transaction.
- CARDS should not be used for cash withdrawals. Exceptions are allowed in the case of an emergency, and with approval of a member of the Board, preferably the Treasurer or Board President.
- Use of a CARD should not be beyond the assigned credit limit, which is supplied to each CARD holder when given the card.

## **H. PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES**

U.S. tax law provides that congregations and other organizations employing ministers and other religious professionals may consider certain items as usual business expenses. Such expenses are not included in the compensation paid to individuals; they are part of the necessary expenses of the organization and are not reported for income tax purposes. The Minister(s) and Directors of FPBUU are entitled to professional expenses per their letters of agreement.

Items of enduring value purchased with non-taxed professional expense funds are the property of the congregation. Such items may subsequently be purchased at their depreciated value by the employee. Items will reduce by 1/3 each year, if the employee leaves FPBUU before 3 years they will reimburse FPBUU the depreciated cost of the item or leave the item.

The items below are allowable as professional expenses. However, basics that a staff member needs in order to perform their job should be funded through an appropriate budget line. (For instance, an employee should not need to pay for their office supplies or furniture through their professional expenses.)

### **Allowable Expenses**

Automobile expenses will be reimbursed as described above while on official business (such as to meetings, hospital or home visits, trips for educational purposes or to purchase supplies, travel with

a youth group or a church school class, etc.). The costs of commuting to and from home to work are not allowable as business automobile expenses.

Travel expenses while away from home overnight for work or business, including air fare, taxis, rental automobiles, lodging, meals, and incidentals are all professional expenses. This includes costs to attend professional conferences.

Entertainment expenses directly related to the mission or programs of the organization are considered professional expenses. These may include entertainment at home or in restaurants of members or potential members of the congregation.

Books and journals acquired and used for professional purposes may be treated as business expenses.

Computers and related equipment costs may be treated as a business expense through a Section 179 deduction if the items are used 50% or more for professional activities. It is customary today to consider computers and peripherals as essential for the performance of one's duties.

Educational expenses such as tuition, books, and supplies are professional expenses if related to one's professional status or responsibilities, or to maintain skills needed in one's work. Travel solely for entertainment cannot be treated as a professional expense. Travel in connection with educational activities, conferences, or worship services will usually be legitimate.

Where the purpose of travel is both personal and business, the expense may be pro-rated as partly a business expense and partly a personal one.

Dues for membership in professional organizations are legitimate expenses.

Telephone expenses, except for the basic charge for a home phone, may be counted as business expense if related to the performance of one's duties.

Religious garments or robes may be purchased and cleaned with funds for professional expenses, but this does not apply to garments worn as ordinary clothing.

#### **IV. OTHER FPB POLICIES**

##### **A. ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

Each employee is expected to be prompt and regular in his or her attendance at work. Personal appointments should be scheduled before or after work hours, if possible. The supervisor must approve all scheduled absences in advance. Employees who are unable to report to work at their scheduled time must call their supervisor as soon as possible to report the absence and the expected time of return to work. Employees must call in each day they are absent, unless otherwise authorized by their supervisor.

The employee's supervisor must approve unscheduled absences. If the employee expects to be absent the following day, he or she should inform the supervisor of that fact at the same time.

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



## **B. 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 a manner acceptable to FPB.
- Absenteeism or tardiness.
- Leaving work without notice.
- Failure to report absences as required.
- Sexual harassment or harassment described in this Manual.
- Entering into a romantic relationship with someone you serve in your capacity as a staff member at FPB.
- The use, possession or sale, or being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances (other than those used for bona fide medical purposes) while working.
- Unauthorized possession of weapons.
- Disclosure of personal data.
- Smoking tobacco or cannabis on any church grounds and buildings.
- Failure to report on-the job injuries.
- Working another job while absent.
- 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 or dishonesty.
- Falsifying records or information (or misuse or unauthorized manipulation of any computer or electronic data processing equipment or system).
- Discourteous treatment of others.
- Taking FPB property without paying for it or without written permission.
- Reckless, careless or unauthorized use of FPB property, equipment or materials.
- Improper or profane language.
- Violation of any other FPB policy.

## **C. SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT**

Non- exempt employees who resign are expected to give at least two weeks written notice in order for the congregation to find a suitable replacement. Exempt employees must give at least four weeks' written notice.

When an employee is leaving their position, they will be offered an exit interview with a member of the board and a member of the Personnel Committee.

## **D. SAFETY AND ACCIDENTS**

The safety of employees, as well as 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 kit.

Any unsafe condition, equipment or practice observed by an employee should be reported immediately to the supervisor or Administration and Finance Director. All on-the-job accidents or injuries to employees, no matter how minor, should be reported immediately to the Administration and Finance Director. In the event of a fire or other emergency, the fire department and/or police should be called immediately, and all staff and members of the congregation should leave the premises.

#### **E. PERSONAL PROPERTY**

FPB 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 Administration and Finance Director so that the item can be returned if it is found. If an employee finds an item, it should be immediately turned in to the Administration and Finance Director.

#### **F. WORKPLACE THREATS AND VIOLENCE**

Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against persons by anyone on church property will not be 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 FPB determines that a violation of this policy has occurred, FPB 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 shall inform the Administration and Finance Director or their supervisor of any behavior, which they have witnessed or experienced, which they regard as threatening or violent, when that behavior is job-related or is connected to employment.

#### **G. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR**

If a FPBUU member is hired as a staff member, they will be asked to rescind their membership in order to keep clear boundaries between the congregation and staff. When they leave their position at FPBUU, a conversation will be had with their supervisor on whether they wish to reinstate their membership and the outcome will be documented in their employment file. Employees should maintain professional behavior and appearance that is appropriate to their position and the FPB community. Personal mail and non-essential telephone calls at work are discouraged.

#### **H. INSPECTION RIGHTS**

Churches, like other organizations, are sometimes the victims of thieves. 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, FPB 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.

#### **I. 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.

## **APPENDIX**

### **A. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE JOB DESCRIPTION:**

Purpose: It is the purpose of the Personnel Committee to assist and support FPB in the appropriate, safe, fair, and fiscally responsible use of its human resources. The Committee serves the Board of Trustees and the Senior Minister in an advisory capacity. It will be made up of two to four members with personnel and/or management experience.

Duties include: Assist in the development of job descriptions, salary administrative practices, benefits, and other employment policies needed to comply with applicable Massachusetts and federal laws; serve on each hiring sub-committee established when a position is vacated or created; participate in grievance procedure if employee has followed the procedure and a resolution has not been reached.

### **B. HIRING PROCESS**

The Board has the final authority to hire, terminate, or change terms of employment in consultation with the Senior Minister

Terminated employees may continue to be enrolled in the company's health insurance plan by law (C.O.B.R.A.) for 18 months after separation provided the employee pays the entire cost of the insurance by the first of every month.

Each staff position has a written job description, approved by the Board, outlining the general duties of the job, annual Paid Time Off, and other benefits. Your job description will be reviewed each year at the time of your annual evaluation. Proposals for any major changes from the original job description will be approved by the Senior Minister, in consultation with the Personnel Committee, prior to the job opening being posted. The Senior Minister will then submit the proposed changes to the Board of Trustees for approval.

### **C. PROCEDURES FOR REPLACING STAFF OR HIRING NEW STAFF**

1. An ad hoc Hiring Team made up of the supervisor, congregational member(s) with expertise in the area of focus (a parent for CYM or choir or member of the orchestra for music director, for example) and a member of the Personnel Committee, will be formed.
2. The existing job description will be reviewed by the supervisor, Senior Minister, and the Personnel Committee and an approved job description will be reviewed by the Hiring Team.
3. The salary and benefits, recommended by the Hiring Team in consultation, as needed, with the Senior Minister and Personnel Committee, will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees.
4. The Hiring Team will post the position advertisement in the weekly Angle, on the website and in other relevant media and receive resumes.
5. The Hiring Team will review resumes/applications and conduct interviews of selected candidates. The Hiring Team is responsible for checking applicable references.

6. The Hiring Team, in consultation with the Senior Minister, will make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees for their approval.

#### **D. CORI/SORI POLICY**

As required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, employees of FPB must have a background free of conduct that may adversely affect the church's ability to provide for the safety and well-being of the congregation. Upon application for employment and periodically thereafter (at the discretion of the Minister and Board of Trustees), Criminal and Sexual Offender Record Information (CORI/SORI) will be requested.

Where Criminal and Sexual Offender Record Information (CORI/SORI) checks are part of a general background check for employment or volunteer work with children and youth, the following practices and procedures will be followed;

The Administration and Finance Director and the Director of Lifespan Religious Education will be certified to request CORI/SORI checks.

The Minister (for job applicants and staff) and the Director of Lifespan Religious Education (for CYM volunteers) will be certified to access CORI/SORI records.

Only individuals in these staff positions are authorized by First Parish Brewster to review CORI/SORI reports. All CORI/SORI reports are filed separately from other personnel files in a locked file cabinet in the Senior Minister's office. The Senior Minister and the Administration and Finance Director are the only individuals with access to the key.

FPB maintains two certifications to request and receive CORIs/SORIs:

1. The Director of Children and Youth Ministries is authorized to request and receive CORIs/SORIs via the Internet.
2. Administration and Finance Director is authorized to request and receive CORIs/SORIs by mail.

## PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Personnel Policy Manual of First Parish Brewster (**Revised February 2023**). I understand that it is my responsibility to read the Manual and to comply with the policies, practices and rules of FPB.

I specifically understand and agree that my employment is at will and for an unspecified period of time and that either the FPB or I may terminate the employment relationship, at any time, with or without reason and with or without notice. I specifically understand and agree that this statement of policy contains all of the terms relating to termination of employment and that no representations may be made contrary to the foregoing, either express or implied. I understand that this statement of policy is not subject to change.

I understand that this Manual supersedes all previous policies, written or oral, express or implied. I also understand that this Manual is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document, and that FPB reserves the right to add, change or rescind any policy, practice or rule at any time with or without notice.

I understand that my signature below indicates that I have read and understood the above statements and have received a copy of the Personnel Policy Manual,

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature