



Personnel Handbook

Introductory Statement

Welcome to *The Village MCC* (Hereafter called 'the church').. We value each person who volunteers to become part of the team at the church and we look forward to working with you.

This personnel handbook is designed to provide guidance and help to assure uniformity and the handling of personnel practices for all paid and non-paid contracted members of staff. This handbook is not exhaustive and is intended to guide the processes used by the Pastor and all other paid or non-paid staff.

All personnel policies and guidelines are governed by the Bylaws of Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) and the Constitution of the church. These policies and their implementation are intended to comply with all current employment laws and regulations.

The contents of this Handbook compliment any contracts, concerning the terms and conditions of employment or any other matter.

It is not possible to anticipate every situation that may arise in the workplace or to provide information that answers every possible question. Further, the church is a growing and evolving organisation and, therefore reserves the right to establish, administer, change or delete policies, guidelines, benefits and procedures at any time.

Terminology:

Contracted member of staff – this term relates to any person who has signed a contract with the church as a team member, coordinator, or staff member, whether holding a paid or voluntary position.

Policies

the church has a number of policies that should be read in conjunction with this handbook. These include:

- Conflict of Interest
- Protecting Children
- Safeguarding
- Direct Dealing
- Equal Opportunities
- Health and Safety
- Data Governance

EMPLOYMENT

Conflict of Interest

Please read the conflict of interest policy

Criminal Record Checks and Disclosure of Criminal Records

All contracted members of staff will be required to undergo criminal record checks in line with current legislation. Disclosure of past criminal history will not automatically exclude individuals from taking up

a post; each situation will be looked at by the board and will take into consideration the nature of the offence, how long ago it happened, and how far the individual has travelled since that time.

Discipline or Discharge

Discipline and/or discharge may result for many reasons including, but not limited to, inappropriate behaviour and/or unsatisfactory performance.

Inappropriate behaviour is defined as including, but not limited to, misbehaviour on the job, refusal to do work reasonably expected, wrongful use of or taking of the church property and violation of any policies or practices of the church.

Unsatisfactory performance is defined as including, but not limited to, failure to meet performance standards, inability to complete tasks in a timely competent way, uncooperative behaviour, or negative attitudes that affect the work or morale of others. The process will follow current employment law at the discretion of the Board.

Equal Employment and Discrimination Free Environment

To be read in conjunction with Equal Opportunities, General conduct, and Harassment policies.

the church values and respects diversity and prohibits discrimination in any aspect of employment. the church is an equal opportunity employer and prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, colour, creed, gender, religion, marital status, age, national origin or ancestry, medical condition including but not limited to, genetic characteristics, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or mental disability, except where a bona fide occupational qualification exists.

the church prohibits slurs, epithets, jokes and harassment based on those characteristics. It is policy of the church to attain a workforce that reflects the diversity of the available jobs market from which it hires.

This policy applies to employment practices including, but not limited to; recruitment, advertising, hiring, compensation, benefits, promotions, training, transfer, disciplinary action, termination, and other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

the church expects staff to:

- Treat other contracted members of staff with respect and value their differences
- Not make offensive or insulting remarks to or about others in the workplace or whilst engaged on the church business outside the workplace
- Not engage in harassment or unlawful discrimination
- Cooperate fully with any discrimination or harassment investigation
- Avoid slurs, epithets, jokes and harassment as stated above
- Discuss any questions or concerns about your treatment with the designated member of the board.

It is the responsibility of all contracted members of staff to adhere to this policy and to notify the designated board member if they believe a violation has occurred or may occur. Any established incident of discrimination will result in disciplinary action including possible termination.

Performance Reviews

Each performance review should be a positive and interactive process whereby both the church and the individual being reviewed receive information about their success in meeting the responsibilities of the job, and the church can learn about its strengths and weaknesses as an employer of that contracted member of staff. In general, it is the goal of the church to conduct a performance review every year.

Personal Performance and Behaviour

Each contracted member of staff of the church is expected to conduct their self in a manner that does not reflect adversely upon the church. Each contracted member of staff must recognise their

susceptibility to public scrutiny in their public and personal lives. Therefore, contracted members of staff are asked to avoid behaviours or actions that would bring unfavourable public impressions on themselves and the church. Each contracted member of staff shall:

- Be prompt and regular in attendance at work or other required the church sponsored events
- Dedicate primary efforts to the church employment with any secondary employment subject to approval by the Board (Full time paid staff only)
- Avoid conflicts in working relationships with other contracted members of staff of the church and MCC at large.
- Adhere to any code of ethics and avoid conflicts of interest or using the position for personal gain.
- Not accept gifts or gratuities in any personal or professional capacity that could create the impression that the giver was seeking favour from the contracted member of staff. All such gifts should be declared to the board.
- Not serve any board or commission that affects the duties or personal interests of the contracted member of staff in a way that could create disadvantage for other contracted members of staff or advantage for the contracted member of staff.
- Not engage in conduct away from work, which although not criminal may reflect adversely upon the church, including online networking and social websites.
- Not use unlawful substances, or abuse lawful substances which will impair the contracted member of staff's ability to function as a valued and competent contracted member of staff of the church.
- Follow all rules for care and use of the church property and any other property for which the church is responsible/liable.

Personnel and Confidentiality

It is important that the church always has current information regarding each contracted member of staff. Contracted members of staff must notify the board of any changes in personal information such as name, address, telephone number, marital status, next of kin etc. as soon as feasibly possible. Personnel files will be maintained for each contracted member of staff as necessary to meet applicable employment laws and to administer personnel policies. All personnel files will be held in confidence. Any requests for information for applicants, contracted members of staff and past contracted members of staff must be referred to the board.

Probationary period

New contracted members of staff of the church will undergo an agreed probationary period (to be determined by the board) where contracted members of staff must demonstrate their abilities to handle the responsibilities of their position for which they were hired. During the probation period either party may terminate the contract by providing one week's notice.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

As the church grows and becomes more financially able to offer paid work, these practices and guidelines will be updated to ensure they meet the needs of contracted members of staff and the employer.

Authorised Travel and Expenses

In the course of a contracted member of staff duty, it may be necessary to travel for purchases and other errands as assigned or as part of the job description. At no time is a contracted member of staff allowed to travel for the church for reasons outside those allowed by MCC or the church guidelines. Reimbursement for authorised travel is at the national set rate. Accurate records of travel expenses are the contracted member of staff's responsibility.

Other expenses incurred by the contracted member of staff as directed by the church will be reimbursed according to the church policies.

Timekeeping

All paid contracted members of staff will be expected to keep a record of their working hours to ensure contractual agreements are being met.

Non paid members of staff may also be asked by the Board to keep a record of time spent on the church activities to ensure a work/life balance is being achieved. If it is apparent that this is not the case, the board may take action to address the issue and ensure contracted members of staff are receiving support in this area.

WORKPLACE GUIDELINES

As the church grows and becomes more financially able to offer paid work, these practices and guidelines will be updated to ensure they meet the needs of contracted members of staff and the employer.

Absence

Contracted member of staff should inform the Board as early as possible of any known absences.

Church Member Relations

Contracted members of staff are expected to be polite and courteous to every member, or attendee, or any other person communicating with the church. When a contracted member of staff encounters an uncomfortable situation they do not feel capable of handling, the church member or other person should be immediately referred to a member of the Board.

Never place a telephone caller on hold for an extended period. Direct incoming calls to the appropriate person and make sure the call is received. All enquiries are to be dealt with promptly and professionally.

All correspondence and documents, whether to members or others, must be neatly prepared and error-free.

Code of Conduct

All contracted members of staff are bound by the the church and MCC current General Conduct policy. the church policy regarding breach of this code is specified in your contract of employment. The policy applies to you while you are on the church premises or while you are engaged in the church business away from the church premises. You should report any known or suspected situations involving misconduct to the Board.

The following are examples of unbecoming conduct, disloyalty and dereliction of duty. Please refer to the Code of Conduct for expectations. This list is not exhaustive.

Unbecoming conduct

- Pattern of public drunkenness or substance abuse
- Misappropriation of the church funds or property
- Any sexual relations with persons below the age of consent
- Non-consensual physical abuse or violence
- Pattern of deceit or dishonesty
- Inappropriate violation of confidentiality
- Sexual harassment, i.e. any sexually related behaviour that is unwelcome, offensive and which fails to respect the rights of others
- Having sexual relations with a member of the congregation
- Libel or slander.

Disloyalty

- Patterns of deliberate or malicious acts which damage or bring harm to a person, congregation or other church body within MCC
- Initiating or performing a ministry which is unauthorised and unaccountable to MCC
- Undermining the authority and ministry of the Pastor or the church
- Misrepresenting the church or representing the church when not authorised to do so.

Dereliction of Duty

- Failure to report acts of misconduct.

Dishonesty

- Fraud or dishonesty including acts of violence involving or committed against contracted members of staff
- Theft - by contracted member of staff or congregant,.
- Vandalism, such as deliberately destroying or damaging private or the church property or deliberately spoiling work or wasting materials
- Falsifying records, or providing false information about other work related items, such as hours worked or expenses claimed.

Confidentiality

At the church confidentiality is of utmost importance. Each contracted member of staff is responsible for safeguarding any confidential information obtained during employment. In the course of your work, you may have access to confidential information regarding the church, its members, its affiliates, or perhaps even fellow contracted members of staff. You have the responsibility not to reveal or divulge any information unless it is necessary for you to do so under 'Limited Confidentiality' (where some one is at risk of harming themselves or another). Access to confidential information should be on a "need-to-know" basis and must be authorised by a Board member. the church will not tolerate any breach of this policy.

Contracted hours

All contracted staff whether paid or unpaid should endeavour to keep to their contracted hours and should only exceed these in exceptional circumstances. Regular discussion with the Board regarding responsibilities should ensure that no one person is taking on more than is reasonable.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

the church is concerned about the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or controlled substances (unless prescribed by a medical doctor to treat an existing medical condition) as it affects the workplace. Use of these substances, whether on or off the job can detract from an contracted member of staff's work performance, efficiency, safety, and health, and therefore seriously impair the contracted member of staff's value to the church. In addition, the use or possession of these substances on the job constitutes a potential danger to the welfare and safety of other contracted members of staff and exposes the church to the risks of property loss or damage, or injury to other persons.

The following rules and standards of conduct apply to all contracted members of staff either on the church property or whilst conducting the church business off the premises Behaviour that violates our policy includes:

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- Possession or use of an illegal substance, or being under the influence of an illegal or controlled substance while on the job;
- Driving a the church vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, or an illegal or controlled substance; and
- Distribution, sale, or purchase of an illegal substance while on the job.

Violation of these rules and standards of conduct will not be tolerated. the church also may bring the matter to the attention of appropriate law enforcement authorities. In order to enforce this policy, the

church Board of Trustees reserves the right to conduct searches of its property and to implement other measures necessary to deter and detect abuse of this policy. Searches will be conducted with an independent person present.

A contracted member of staff's conviction on a charge of illegal sale or possession of any controlled substance will be treated seriously because such conduct, even though acted off duty, reflects adversely on the church. (In addition, the church must keep people who sell or possess controlled substances off its premises in order to keep the controlled substances themselves off the premises.)

Any contracted member of staff who is using prescription or over-the-counter drugs that may impair the contracted member of staff's ability to safely perform the job, or affect the safety or well-being of others, must notify a Board member of such use immediately before starting or resuming work.

The church will encourage and as required and appropriate, reasonably accommodate contracted members of staff with alcohol or drug dependencies to seek treatment and/or rehabilitation. Contracted members of staff desiring such assistance should request a treatment or rehabilitation leave. The church is not obligated, however, to continue to employ any person whose performance of essential job duties is impaired because of drug or alcohol use, nor is the church obligated to re-employ any person who has participated in treatment and/or rehabilitation if that person's job performance remains impaired as a result of dependency. Additionally, contracted members of staff who are given the opportunity to seek treatment and/or rehabilitation, but fail to successfully overcome their dependency or problem, will not automatically be given a second chance to seek treatment and/or rehabilitation. This policy on treatment and rehabilitation is not intended to affect the church's treatment of contracted members of staff who violate the regulations described previously. Rather, rehabilitation is an option for a contracted member of staff who acknowledges a chemical dependency and voluntarily seeks treatment to end that dependency.

Misuse of the church Property and Resources

- Misuse of the church credit cards or calling cards
- Use of email, phone and internet resources for anything other than the church related official business
- Unauthorised use of or inappropriate access to the church records

Threats

- Threats including conveying intent to injure a contracted member of staff or damage the church property or cause interruption of the church operations. The intent can be communicated in person, or by mail, telephone, email, internet or other means
- Disorderly conduct on the church premises including fighting, aggression and bullying.

Other

- Insubordination such as refusing to comply with reasonable work related requests or instructions
- Disruptive behaviour that prevents other contracted members of staff from performing their jobs
- Unlawful or inappropriate manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, use, transfer, solicitation, purchase or sale of alcohol and/or controlled substances or other drugs on the church premises or while engaged in the church business off the church premises
- The abuse or misuse of drugs, whether legally prescribed drugs or not.
- Gambling on the church premises or while engaged in the church business off the church premises, or use of the church resources with gambling activities, 'Excepting the church fundraising activities e.g. raffle, tombola. etc.'
- Expectation of different treatment than other member of staff where there is conflict or matters of dispute

Harassment

Harassment of any kind including sexual or on the basis of race, colour, sex, national origin,

citizenship, religion, age disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status. (please refer to harassment policy)

Health and Safety

All contracted members of staff are responsible for health and safety issues. All activities undertaken should comply with the health and safety policy and any breach in the policy should be reported to the appropriate Board member.

Lone Working

- The board acknowledges that it is necessary for contracted members of staff to work alone. Particular care should be taken when lone working, and the following guidelines should be adhered to:
- Where ever possible conduct the church business in a public place
- Always carry a charged mobile phone
- Always carry a personal alarm

When attending a lone appointment, ensure a colleague has the following information:

- Address of meeting
- Intended start and finish time of meeting
- Make contact with your appointed colleague before and immediately after the meeting

If the appointed colleague has not heard from you an hour after the agreed check in time, they are authorised to take steps to ensure your safety. For example, making contact by phone, informing a member of the board, contacting the police.

Smoking

In accordance with current legislation, smoking is prohibited in any enclosed public area.

Use of Electronic Media

The church uses various forms of electronic communication including, but not limited to computers, e-mail, telephones, Internet and web sites. All electronic communications, including all software, databases, hardware, and digital files, remain the sole property of the church and are to be used only for the church purposes and not for any personal use.

Electronic communication and media may not be used in any manner that would be discriminatory, harassing, or obscene, or for any other purpose that is illegal, against the church policy, or not in the best interest of the church. No content shall be posted on any the church or affiliated the church Internet or intranet site without having the specific approval of the church management. Under no circumstances are contracted members of staff permitted to use the church's Technology Resources to access, download, or contribute to the following without advanced approval:

1. Gross, indecent, or sexually- oriented materials;
2. Sports sites;
3. Job-search sites,
4. Entertainment sites;
5. Gambling sites;
6. Games;
7. Illegal drug-oriented sites;
8. Personal pages of individuals; or
9. Politically oriented sites or sites devoted to influencing the course of legislation or public policy.

Under no circumstances will approval be given to websites of an illegal or inappropriate nature. Contracted members of staff who misuse electronic communications and/or engage in defamation, copyright or trademark infringement, misappropriation of trade secrets, discrimination, harassment, or related actions will be subject to discipline as deemed appropriate by the board.

All electronic information created by any contracted member of staff using any means of electronic communication is the property of the church and remains the property of the church. Personal passwords may be used for purposes of security, but the use of a personal password does not affect the church's ownership of the electronic information. All passwords must be given to the pastor or board upon request.

The church reserves the right to access and review electronic files, messages, mail, and other digital archives, and to monitor the use of electronic communications as necessary to ensure that no misuse or violation of the church policy or any law occurs.

Contracted members of staff are not permitted to access the electronic communications of the church staff or third parties unless directed to do so by the church.

No contracted member of staff may install or use anonymous e-mail transmission programs or encryption of e-mail communications in relation to church members or whilst on church business, except as specifically authorized by the church.

Contracted members of staff who use devices on which information may be received and/or stored, including but not limited to cell phones, cordless phones, PDAs, portable computers, fax machines, and voice mail communications are required to use these methods in strict compliance with the confidential communication policy established by the church. Except for such uses, these communication tools should not be used for communicating confidential or sensitive information.

Access to the Internet, Intranet, websites, and other types of the church - paid computer access are to be used for the church -related business only. Any information about the church, its affiliates or other types of information that will appear in the electronic media must be approved by the pastor or a Board member before the information is placed on an electronic information resource that is accessible to others.

Questions about access to electronic communications or issues relating to security should be addressed to the pastor or an identified Board member.