

Staff Handbook

Welcome to the staff of Central Free Methodist Church! We are excited to have you join the work that God is doing in our midst, and look forward to the ways your service will stretch us and help us to expand His Kingdom. It is a privilege to use our gifts and abilities to serve our loving Lord, and we know God will be honored through all the ways you will minister among us.

It is our prayer that you will feel a sense of *communitas* here that is such an integral part of an effective ministry team. As God unites the hearts of each person together in an uncommon way, we are energized to work together to serve in building and equipping the entire body of Christ. We are committed to working together to share the redeeming message of Jesus Christ and to develop fully devoted followers of Him. While it is challenging and requires extraordinary effort, the eternal impact of your service in ministry will surpass anything the world has to offer.

As a staff member of Central FMC, you are provided this booklet to help you understand the benefits and guidelines we have developed. It is an ongoing work in progress, so from time to time you will be given additional training and information pieces to insert in this guide. While it does contain materials related to policies, procedures, and benefits, it is not a contract, and the items you find within may change from time to time. Keep this handy and refer to it often. It’s meant to clarify what we do and how we do it so you can function fully and freely in the ministry in which you serve.

You are a vital part of our ministry and we know you will enjoy serving the Lord Jesus Christ as you give Him the best you have to offer. It will stretch you in ways you may never have thought possible, but it will also find you rewarded in ways that cannot be measured with dollars and cents. We have the promise of His unfailing love! We have His strength! We operate in His grace!

May that grace and God’s peace be yours as you join us in doing the Lord’s work.

**Contents**

[Central’s Mission and Vision 3](#_TOC_250033)

[Pastoral Staff 4](#_TOC_250032)

[Pastoral Staff Compensation Plan 4](#_TOC_250031)

[Pastoral Staff Family and Medical Leave 5](#_TOC_250030)

[Ministry Support Staff 6](#_TOC_250029)

[Personal Data Changes 7](#_TOC_250028)

[Work Schedules and Time Keeping 8](#_TOC_250027)

[Sabbath Keeping and Sabbatical Leave 8](#_TOC_250026)

[Tardiness and Absences 8](#_TOC_250025)

[Personal Appearance and Conduct 9](#_TOC_250024)

[Confidentiality 9](#_TOC_250023)

[Performance Reviews 9](#_TOC_250022)

[Benefits 10](#_TOC_250021)

Vacation Policy 10

[Holidays and Holiday Pay 11](#_TOC_250020)

[Bad Weather Policy 11](#_TOC_250019)

[Personal Days 11](#_TOC_250018)

[Bereavement Leave 12](#_TOC_250017)

[Jury Duty 12](#_TOC_250016)

[Continuing Education and Professional Training 12](#_TOC_250015)

[Role of the Pastor’s Cabinet 12](#_TOC_250014)

[Hiring Policies and Procedures 13](#_TOC_250013)

[Hiring Guidelines 13](#_TOC_250012)

[Interim Personnel 13](#_TOC_250011)

[Termination Policies and Procedures 14](#_TOC_250010)

[Resignation 14](#_TOC_250009)

[Termination 14](#_TOC_250008)

[Due Process for Termination for Issues other than Moral Failure 15](#_TOC_250007)

[General Policies 16](#_TOC_250006)

Staff Meetings 16

[Expense Reimbursement 16](#_TOC_250005)

[Financial Policies 16](#_TOC_250004)

[Technical Communications Policy 16](#_TOC_250003)

[Publishing 17](#_TOC_250002)

[Smoking Policy 17](#_TOC_250001)

[Receipt of Documents 18](#_TOC_250000)

Acknowledgment 18

Appendix 1 (Ministry Oversight) Tab 1

Appendix 2 (Leadership Development) Tab 2

Appendix 3 (Central FMC Policies, i.e., Facility, Vehicle, Wedding) Tab 3

# Central’s Mission and Vision

The mission at Central is very simple.

Love God. Love everyone. Follow Jesus.

It is our hope that you will know this mission, not simply so you can repeat it but so that it can infuse all you do with purpose and meaning. We are not a secular organization… we serve the living God. We are not an exclusive club… we serve everyone whom the Lord brings our way, be they Christian or not, sober or not, English-­‐speaking or not, heterosexual or not. And we are not a generic religious group… we boldly proclaim Christ crucified and risen again, and we do that primarily through the way we follow the Lord Jesus.

Our vision for ministry is simple, too. It looks sort of like this:

♀  ♀ ♀…

Everybody is on a journey in life. Some have yet to surrender to the truths of Christ and begin to follow His way. They are pre-­‐Christians. Others have chosen to accept Jesus and His teachings, but they still stand and watch and absorb, they aren’t quite ready or able to fully follow. Still others are adventuring out in service to the Lord by serving the world. They give God the glory in all they do. And yet their growth has not ended. They continue to seek His wisdom and prayerfully deepen their relationship with God through various disciplines of the faith.

Where are you in your journey? Better still, are you further along in your walk with God than you were a week ago? Rather than focus on how far we may have yet to go, we try to focus on how far God has brought us. It is a life-­‐long pursuit of His holiness. Continue to grow closer to Christ every day, and continue to help others grow closer every day.

No matter how close or how far… we want to grow closer. That is what we were made for.

# Pastoral Staff

Lead Pastor: This woman or man is appointed by the East Michigan Conference to serve the Lansing Central congregation and the greater Lansing community as primary visionary, communicator, and ministry leader. She or he should be an ordained Elder in the Free Methodist Church and is a salaried member of the staff, per the compensation plan below.

Associate Pastor: This woman or man is appointed by the East Michigan Conference upon request of the Lead Pastor and recommendation by the Pastor’s Cabinet and Board of Administration (BOA). She or he is responsible for and gives leadership to numerous ministry areas that compliment the work of the lead pastor. The Associate Pastor interacts closely with the Lead Pastor for supervision and implementation of the ministries of the church. She or he should be an ordained Elder in the Free Methodist Church or working towards ordination and is a salaried member of the staff, per the compensation plan below.

Assistant Pastor: This woman or man is appointed by the East Michigan Conference upon request of the Lead Pastor and recommendation by the Pastor’s Cabinet and BOA. She or he is responsible for and gives leadership to specific ministry areas, such as worship, children’s ministry, youth ministry, multi-­‐ethnic ministry, etc. The Assistant Pastor(s) interact closely with the Lead Pastor for supervision and implementation of their particular ministry in the church.

She or he should be an ordained Elder in the Free Methodist Church or working towards ordination. An Assistant Pastor is either a full-­‐time, salaried member of the staff, per the compensation plan below or serves part time at a stated wage, with no further benefits.

Conference Ministerial Candidate: This woman or man is appointed by the East Michigan Conference upon request of the Lead Pastor and recommendation by the Pastor’s Cabinet and BOA. She or he gives oversight to or assists in a particular ministry within the congregation. If in charge of a specific ministry, she or he is under the supervision of one of the church pastors. She or he is not entrusted with the title “pastor” unless specifically appointed as an Assistant Pastor. The Conference Ministerial Candidate serves either as a volunteer or at a stated wage, with no further benefits.

# Pastoral Staff Compensation Plan

Full-­‐time compensation for the Lansing Central FMC will be based upon the following plan. This only reflects the salary portion of compensation, not additional health insurance. An increase in level occurs for:

* Every 5 years of appointed service
* Ordination
* Masters degree (in complementary field)
* Doctoral degree (in complementary field)
* Exemplary work deserving a pay increase, as determined by the Cabinet and BOA
* Additional pay increases may be given due to cost of living fluctuations.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Lead | 55,000 | 57,000 | 59,000 | 61,000 | 63,000 | 65,000 |
| Associate | 35,000 | 37,000 | 39,000 | 41,000 | 43,000 | 45,000 |
| Assistant | 27,500 | 30,000 | 32,500 | 35,000 | 37,500 | 40,000 |

The full-­‐time lead pastor and full-­‐time associate pastor will also receive health insurance through the East Michigan Conference covering her/him-­‐self and, when applicable, their spouse, as well as half the additional rate for their children. Full-­‐time assistant pastors will receive health insurance coverage only for themselves, also through the Conference.

# Pastoral Staff Family and Medical Leave

1. Eligibility for Leave: All pastors of the East Michigan Conference appointed to Lansing Central Free Methodist Church may be eligible for family and medical leave every 12 months. All leaves require the approval of the Lead Pastor and Board of Administration.
2. Ministry substitutes/supplies during the pastor’s time of illness shall be given appropriate honorarium where necessary.
3. This recommendation applies to pastors who are considered full-­‐time employees. Exception or modifications shall be determined by the local Board of Administration in consultation with the Pastor’s Cabinet.
4. Reasons for Leave: Appointed pastors may be eligible for leave for the following:
   1. Because of the birth of a pastor’s child in order to care for that child;
   2. Because of the placement of a child in a pastor’s home for adoption;
   3. Because a pastor needs to care for their spouse, son, daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition; or
   4. Because of their own serious health condition that makes them unable to perform their job.
5. Length of Leave:
   1. Appointed pastors may be eligible for up to 6 weeks paid of family and medical leave during a 12 month period. The 12 month period is measured from the first day of each Annual Conference year. Conditions of additional leave shall be determined by the Lead Pastor and the Board of Administration, in consultation with the Pastor’s Cabinet.
   2. A pastor’s eligibility for leave after the birth or placement of a child expires at the end of the 12 month period beginning after the date of birth or placement.
   3. In some cases, pastors may take intermittent leave or may work a reduced number of hours instead of taking 6 consecutive weeks of leave. Unless intermittent leave or working a reduced number of hours is medically necessary, the Lansing Central Free

Methodist Church and the pastor will work together to agree on an acceptable arrangement, subject to the approval of the health care provider.

* 1. When both spouses are appointed pastors, and both are eligible for family and medical leave, they are entitled to a combined total of 6 weeks paid of leave, not 6 weeks each.

1. Advance Notice and Medical Certification:

When leave is foreseeable, pastors must give the Lansing Central Free Methodist Church at least 30 days notice. Pastors must provide the church with sufficient information to determine whether leave should be granted. When pastors cannot give 30 days notice, they should give notice as soon as possible. Generally, this means pastors should notify the church within one or two business days after they learn they need leave.

When leave is due to a health condition the Lansing Central Free Methodist Church may require medical certification from a health care provider before approving leave.

While a pastor is on leave, the pastor must periodically report to the Lansing Central Free Methodist Church his or her status and intention to return to work. During this time the church may require periodic recertification by a health care provider.

1. Payment During Leave:

An appointed pastor’s compensation will be maintained for the first six weeks of leave and the pastor may use accrued paid time as an additional part of that leave.

# Ministry Support Staff

Administrative Assistant: This person is the “first touch” in the Church Office. Among other things, she or he is responsible for maintaining the church calendar, for answering the phone, and for greeting persons when they enter the office, checking with the appropriate pastor as to whether or not they are available for an appointment. She or he also produces the weekly bulletin and the monthly newsletter, and is responsible for accumulating information for both communication tools as needed. She or he does not need to be ordained or in the ordination track and serves as a salaried employee of the church, with no further benefits.

Business Manager: This person is responsible for entering all financial data, preparing monthly statements, submitting payroll, negotiating costs and charges for various church necessities (i.e., insurance rates, phone providers, etc.), and initiating payment of bills. She or he works closely with the finance committee and church treasurer to ensure fiscal responsibility and transparency in all our actions. She or he does not need to be ordained or in the ordination track and serves either as a volunteer or at an hourly wage, with no further benefits.

Facilities Manager: This person is responsible for making sure that all facilities and vehicles are maintained regularly and functioning properly. She or he works closely with the church

custodian(s) and the Properties Committee in giving care to the buildings and grounds, and with the Finance Manager regarding proper licenses, permits, and insurance. She or he does not need to be ordained or in the ordination track and serves as a salaried employee of the church, with no further benefits.

Clerical Staff: This person supports the pastoral staff and other leadership in the church through various administrative skills, such as answering the phone, making copies, entering data records, etc. She or he does not need to be ordained or in the ordination track and serves either as a volunteer or at an hourly wage, with no further benefits.

Ministry Leadership Staff: This person gives oversight to or assists in a particular ministry within the congregation. If in charge of a specific ministry, she or he is under the supervision of one of the church pastors. She or he does not need to be ordained or in the ordination track and serves either as a volunteer or at a stated wage, with no further benefits.

Intern: This person works in a specific area of ministry for a specific area of time, underneath the supervision of either ministry leadership staff or one of the pastors. She or he does not need to be ordained or in the ordination track and serves with an agreed upon contract, developed in advance of the internship. This may or may not include financial compensation.

Custodian: This person is responsible for making sure that all facilities are cleaned regularly, per the job description. She or he works closely with the Facilities Manager and the Properties Committee in giving care to the buildings and grounds. She or he does not need to be ordained or in the ordination track and serves as a salaried employee of the church, with no further benefits.

Sexton: A Sexton is historically a lay person that lives at or near a church and provides the Christian virtue of hospitality to those in need. She or he works closely with the church custodian(s), the Facilities Manager, and the Properties Committee in giving care to the buildings and grounds. She or he does not need to be ordained or in the ordination track and serves either as a volunteer or at a stated wage, with no further benefits.

# Personal Data Changes

In order to ensure that all employee information is current, it is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify the Central FMC Office of any changes in personal data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, individuals to be contact in case of emergency, educational accomplishments, and other such status reports should be accurate and current to date. If any personal data changes, please submit it to the Church Office as soon as possible.

# Work Schedules and Time Keeping

Church Office hours are Monday through Thursday, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. This applies to all Ministry Support Staff (Administrative Assistant, Facilities Manager, Clerical Staff, Ministry Leadership Staff, and Interns). Part of being on an effective team is recognizing our own giftedness and responsibilities. It is therefore expected that everyone will be able to self-­‐ motivate, self-­‐manage, and fulfill their ministry obligations in reasonable time.

So, for example, nobody will check to see if someone is taking too long for lunch. It is assumed that everyone serving at Central is putting the needs of the congregation and community ahead of their own, and that includes the management of time.

Overtime is not available for persons who are compensated hourly. Moreover, attendance at church committee and/or board meetings in which compensated staff persons participate is not considered paid time.

Time sheets for employees who are compensated hourly must be turned in to the Finance Manager.

# Sabbath Keeping and Sabbatical Leave

All staff and particularly all pastoral staff are expected to maintain a time of Sabbath rest from the demands of their ministry. In addition to times of refreshing taken at each individuals’ discretion, one day a month will be set aside for Sabbath. This day should not be taken on an already established day off, and does not count as a vacation day.

All full-­‐time pastoral staff are eligible for a paid Sabbatical leave (1 month to 3 months) after seven years of full-­‐time service to Central. Staff must apply for such a period of study and reflection, describing the research intended and the length of leave needed. Sabbatical leave applications are considered by the Lead Pastor and approved by the BOA upon recommendation from the Pastor’s Cabinet.

# Tardiness and Absences

To maintain a productive work environment, support staff are expected to be reliable and punctual in reporting for scheduled work. In instances when you cannot avoid being late or are unable to serve as scheduled, notify the Church Office or Lead Pastor as soon as possible. Make sure and notify the church of scheduled absences well in advance.

All pastoral staff should inform the Administrative Assistant or, when the Administrative Assistant is unavailable, Clerical Staff of their schedule and location during office hours.

# Personal Appearance and Conduct

It is important that you maintain proper personal hygiene and dress appropriate to your position. Your appearance and conduct reflect not only on you and your position but confirm our commitment to excellence as representatives of the Church and of our Savior. Some basic dress guidelines are as follows:

Shirts or blouses should not reveal cleavage. Pants, shorts, and skirts are expected to be secured around the waist, not “sagging”. Shorts and skirts must reach at least to mid-­‐thigh (half-­‐way to the knee). All tops must have shoulder straps. Shoes or sandals are to be worn at all times.

Regarding behavioral expectation, the membership covenant and chapter three of the *Book of Discipline* of the Free Methodist Church USA will serve as our guide.

# Confidentiality

Working in a church office can expose one to many items that are quite confidential in nature. Though every measure is taken to protect the privacy of each pastor and office, on occasion persons may hear or be aware of conversations and ongoing ministry concerns. It is expected that you will observe sensitivity to the discretionary nature of our ministry, and protect the dignity and integrity of every individual served by our office. Care must be taken when volunteers are recruited, and should be approved by the Church Staff, so as to protect the security of issues processed within the Church Office. For further consideration, paragraphs 7160-­‐7190 in the Free Methodist *Book of Discipline* speak directly to the issue of confidentiality.

# Performance Reviews

All staff persons, Pastoral and Support, are to be given constant feedback by their immediate ministry supervisor, be it a Ministry Leader or one of the Pastoral Staff. The Lead Pastor will be reviewed by the Pastor’s Cabinet, with input from the Associate and Assistant Pastor(s) and Ministry Support Staff. These reviews will include performance of duties, general cooperation, attendance, and personal appearance and conduct. The review will follow a prescribed format and will involve an assessment of strengths, an identification of areas of focus for improvement, and an overview of the previously agreed upon duties, expectations, and responsibilities of the particular ministry position.

You will have the opportunity to discuss your performance evaluation with your ministry supervisor. This is a good time to ask questions and clarify important points for the purpose of greater ministry effectiveness and team cohesion. You may also discuss at this time spiritual concerns and dimensions of spiritual well-­‐being.

**Vacation Policy**

# Benefits

Ministry Support staff will earn vacation beginning the first day of the month in which that person was hired, whether part-­‐time or full-­‐time. Vacation is calculated from the anniversary month, not on a calendar year, and is based on length of continuous service with Central Free Methodist Church as follows:

Initial employment (after 90 days) 1 week vacation

1-­‐3 years 2 weeks vacation

4-­‐14 years 3 weeks vacation

15 + years 4 weeks vacation

Paid vacation time can be used in minimum increments of one-­‐half day. Vacation time requests are to be submitted to the Church Office at least two weeks in advance for review and approval. Avoiding requests for vacation time during scheduled major church functions or holiday services is appreciated. Additional unpaid leave may be given with approval of your direct ministry supervisor. Vacation time will be paid at the employee’s base pay rate at the time of the vacation.

Using vacation time is encouraged to provide for times of refreshing and renewal. Unused vacation time cannot be carried over at the end of the work year or, in the case of Pastoral Staff, the Conference year.

Pastoral Staff earns vacation time as outlined in Conference guidelines for appointed persons. In relation to the years of full-­‐time appointed pastoral service, whether to Central Free Methodist or another congregation, the pastor will receive paid vacation as follows:

1-­‐14 years 3 weeks vacation

15 + years 4 weeks vacation

Vacation time for Pastoral Staff includes 1 Sunday for every week of vacation. One week of vacation means six week days, regardless of whether or not the Church Office is open. Pastoral Staff at Central FMC understand that at any time, any day, they may be asked to serve our Lord by serving His people. However, it is understood that pastors are people, too, and need time to decompress and rest. Therefore there will be times when it is not possible to answer every phone call, text, or e-­‐mail as it comes in. It is expected that every attempt will be made to respond to these communications in as timely a manner as possible. When on vacation, the pastor does not have to respond to any communication if she or he does not wish. Therefore, any day on which the pastor intends to not be responsible for receiving or returning messages is considered vacation time.

All Pastoral Staff are encouraged to take time for continuing education and training, conferences, and seminars. This is subject to approval by the Lead Pastor and/or Pastor’s Cabinet. It, along with Conference or Denominational events and activities which require the Pastor’s attendance, will not be counted against vacation time.

## Holidays and Holiday Pay

Normal holidays observed by all staff, Pastoral and Ministry Support, include:

* Good Friday
* Memorial Day
* Independence Day
* Labor Day
* Thanksgiving Day and the day following
* Christmas Day through New Year’s Day

If a recognized holiday falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or your regular day off, the holiday time will be given on the preceding Friday or following Monday/Tuesday. Holiday pay (for those compensated at an hourly rate) will be calculated based on the employee’s straight-­‐time pay rate as of the date of the holiday, times the number of hours the employee normally would have worked on that day.

Part and parcel of the Christian tradition is the observance of feast days, of holy days, and as such there are several holidays that the church recognizes and celebrates. All Pastoral Staff are expected to be present for all corporate worship services, including special Easter services, Thanksgiving Eve, and Christmas Eve celebrations.

## Bad Weather Policy

In the event severe weather necessitates a shutdown of ministries, you will be notified by phone either by your ministry supervisor or by the church phone messaging service. If you are uncertain as to whether or not the Central Office or ministries are closed for the day, please call before you come. When the church is closed due to severe weather, all employees scheduled to work that day will be paid their normal wages.

## Personal Days

Seven paid personal days (illness, injuries, health care, family illness or other personal needs) can be granted for all full-­‐time hourly or salaried staff each Conference year. Additional unpaid personal leave can be granted with the Lead Pastor’s and/or Pastor’s Cabinet’s approval. Part-­‐ time staff do not receive personal days, but may request unpaid personal leave time. Personal days are not cumulative from year to year, and are not counted against your vacation time.

## Bereavement Leave

In consideration of the need for love and support experienced at the time of the loss of a loved one, we feel it is important that all members of our staff have the freedom to tend to family needs. Employees are entitled up to two weeks off with normal pay in the event of the death of a child or spouse. In addition, you will be entitled up to three consecutive days off with normal pay in the event of the death of other immediate and extended family members.

Additional time may be granted, with or without pay, with the approval of the Lead Pastor and/or Pastor’s Cabinet.

## Jury Duty

While at Central FMC you may be called upon for jury duty. If this happens, notify your ministry supervisor promptly. While on jury duty all staff will receive regular pay in addition to the stipend allowance provided by the court.

## Continuing Education and Professional Training

We recognize that developing skills and expanding knowledge is vital to the success of our mission at Central FMC. All staff persons, Pastoral and Ministry Support, are encouraged to take advantage of training and equipping opportunities throughout the year. Funds may be available to assist with registration and travel expenses for such events, with prior approval given by the Lead Pastor and/or Pastor’s Cabinet.

# Role of the Pastor’s Cabinet

In support of the Central FMC staff, the role of the Pastor’s Cabinet is to assist the Lead Pastor in making ministry more effective through concerted prayer, counsel, and guidance with regards to ministry planning and strategizing. They supplement the Board of Administration as the primary accountability structure for the pastoral team.

In addition, the Pastor’s Cabinet serves as a personnel committee under the authority of the Board of Administration and is accountable to the BOA. The Pastor’s Cabinet sets and administers personnel policy, with key responsibilities as follows:

* Offer counsel on staff employment, including
  + Review of all positions with job descriptions and proposed salary/wage
  + Participate in the screening process for any new pastoral team members
  + Provide assistance as needed, and at the discretion of the Lead Pastor, for hiring Ministry Support Staff
* Propose the annual personnel budget which includes a detailed list of all positions with the proposed salary budget, all benefit expenses, and proposed raises to be evaluated annually by both the Pastor’s Cabinet and the Lead Pastor. Recommendations on staff compensation are made to the Finance Committee.
* Be informed of serious disciplinary actions, including written warnings or suspensions, and/or areas of unresolved disputes. Assist in resolution of conflict through prayer and counsel, after steps are taken to resolve conflict following the guidelines of Matthew 18, which include
  + Take issue to the appropriate party and confer one-­‐on-­‐one in love with one another
  + If unable to settle the issue, take concern to the Lead Pastor for resolution
  + As a final step, the issue is brought to the Pastor’s Cabinet for staff to clergy issues, to the Pastor’s Cabinet and Conference Superintendent for clergy to clergy issues

The Pastor’s Cabinet acts with greatest care and accountability in the confidentiality and integrity of personnel issues. Any paid staff member who serves on the Pastor’s Cabinet may be excluded from discussions of personnel issues including budget recommendations which pertain to persons currently employed by Central FMC.

# Hiring Policies and Procedures

Central FMC operates in compliance with State and Federal Employment Laws, including Equal Opportunity, Medical and Family Leave, Worker’s Compensation, Federal Immigration Laws, Sexual Discrimination/Harassment, Employment of Minors, and Disability Accommodation. The provisions of these laws are available as posted in the Work Room of the Church Office.

## Hiring Guidelines

Considerations for all staff additions or replacements other than the position of Lead Pastor are ultimately made by the authority of the Lead Pastor and with the counsel and prayer involvement of the Pastor’s Cabinet.

A concise job description in writing for the position to be filled will be reviewed by the Pastor’s Cabinet. The remuneration package must be authorized by the Pastor’s Cabinet and Lead Pastor, in conjunction with the Finance Committee and the Board of Administration.

All candidate searches will follow appropriate procedures to ensure confidentiality and impartiality as required by law and Biblical integrity. Effort will be made to hire the person best suited for the position, whose gifts and talents match the position requirements, and whose heart and character supports the vision and values of Central FMC. The commendation of the final candidate will be made with serious prayer and with the consensus of the interview team.

## Interim Personnel

To ensure that the best possible candidate is found for an open position, it may be wise to use interim personnel to meet immediate needs. Interim personnel should be clearly informed of

the expectations, end date of interim period, and the process to follow to be considered for the final position.

# Termination Policies and Procedures

The employment relationship between you and Central FMC can be discontinued by either you or Central FMC at anytime. The relationship can be ended whenever necessary under the constraints of Biblical due process and responsibility, and in accordance with applicable State or Federal law.

## Resignation

If you choose to leave the employment of Central FMC, we would appreciate a four week notice, to give us time to successfully handle the transition of your ministry responsibilities. A resignation notice should be in writing and submitted to the Lead Pastor. Full-­‐time employees will be paid for earned but unused vacation days on a pro-­‐rated basis, based on the number of months worked in the current year. Unused personal days are not paid.

In the event of the appointment of a new Lead Pastor, all full-­‐time Pastoral Staff are to tender a letter of resignation to the new Lead Pastor, in compliance with Conference directive and policy. The new Lead Pastor will have up to one year to consider whether or not to accept the resignation.

## Termination

If Central FMC should terminate your employment, the decision may be reviewed with your ministry supervisor, Lead Pastor, and/or the Pastor’s Cabinet. Any misrepresentation, falsifications, or material omission in any area of information or data supplied at time of application may result in termination of employment. For moral failure, or any major breach of policy or expectations as determined by the Pastor’s Cabinet, termination can be immediate.

For other effectiveness issues, due process will be followed, including documentation indicative of every effort made to bridge effectiveness gaps. Disciplinary action may include the loss of pay for a specified number of hours only if prior notice is given and clearly explained.

At termination a staff member is to desist immediately from access to the computer network, church accounts, and properties including credit cards and memberships. Keys should be returned to the Facilities Manager on the day of termination. Any repayment of outstanding debts to Central FMC, or return of Central FMC owned property is required on or before the last day of work. Central FMC may withhold from the employee’s final paycheck the cost of any items not returned or debts unpaid.

An exit interview can be requested with or by the Pastor’s Cabinet at the time of employment termination. The exit interview will afford you an opportunity to give feedback on your employment experience at Central FMC.

## Due Process for Termination for Issues other than Moral Failure

In the event that the above efforts to resolve issues are unsuccessful, the following three-­‐step process according to the principles in Matthew 18:15-­‐17 will be utilized.

Step 1: The Lead Pastor will make the initial intervention with the staff member. The staff member will be given a written enumeration of the issues. Together they will set an appropriate review period of no more than thirty days. This period may be shortened if the problem escalates or new problems develop. The Conference Superintendent will be notified in writing when and if the staff member is an appointed person.

Step 2: After that review period has expired, the Lead Pastor and three members of the Pastor’s Cabinet will meet with the staff member to review progress. The staff member will be encouraged to present a written response to the issues. If insufficient progress has been made, the Cabinet representatives will alert the staff member that their position is in jeopardy.

Together they will establish another review period of no more than thirty days. This review period may be shortened if the problem escalates or new problems develop. The Conference Superintendent will again be notified if the staff member is an appointed person. The entire Pastor’s Cabinet will be apprised of the situation and given copies of relevant written materials.

Step 3: After that review period has expired, the Lead Pastor and the Pastor’s Cabinet will meet with the staff member to review progress of the staff member in question. The staff member will be encouraged to present a written response to the issues. If insufficient progress has been made, the Lead Pastor and Pastor’s Cabinet will then set in motion the process of termination. If the staff person in appointed by the Conference, the first step is to notify the Conference Superintendent. The Cabinet will then call back the staff member in question to ask for a resignation or to give termination notice, and to indicate the contents of a severance package, if any. The Cabinet will then notify relevant ministry teams.

The Cabinet will then send a letter to the active members of Central FMC and other affected parties announcing the transition. If the staff member is a ministry intern or a member of the Ministry Support Staff, the letter may be directed to the Board of Administration in lieu of the broader congregation. The Cabinet will use discretion on holding a Society Meeting, on scheduling farewells, and on provisions regarding continued attendance at Central FMC.

Chapter 7 of the Free Methodist *Book of Discipline* highlights further biblical approaches to church order and maintaining a healthy biblical community.

**Staff Meetings**

# General Policies

Staff Meetings are designed to promote clear communication and community among staff members at Central FMC. As such, all full-­‐time staff are required to attend except as they have permission from the Lead Pastor. Part-­‐time staff and volunteer staff are not required to attend, but may do so if they so choose. Due to the nature of the information provided, Staff Meetings are for Central staff members only. All staff members are responsible for obtaining the information provided in Staff Meetings.

## Expense Reimbursement

Expense reimbursements to be paid to an employee may include expenses for ministry related events, transportation, business use of a personal vehicle, office, and other customary business expenses. Adequate documentation is required for reimbursements, including receipts, amount of expense, purpose and explanation of purchase order. Reimbursement for fuel may be provided, but Central FMC does not reimburse mileage. That may be claimed on your personal IRS return. Requests for expense reimbursements should have the approval of your ministry supervisor and be submitted within thirty days of their incurrence.

Pastoral Staff members who are provided Central FMC charge cards are responsible for turning in all receipts and filling out the monthly credit card statements with appropriate explanations when given the monthly statement by a representative of the Finance Committee. Completed statements should be turned back into the Finance Committee within two weeks of receipt.

## Financial Policies

Individual ministries within Central FMC may not raise funds on their own or endorse the fundraising efforts of other groups without the approval of the Lead Pastor. This policy is designed to maintain financial accountability and protect the integrity of Central FMC. The Board of Administration and Finance Committee seek to meet the reasonable financial needs of all ministries, and makes budget decisions after prayerful consideration of all these needs.

Staff members should not encourage designated giving or the purchase of certain items for a given ministry area unless approved by the Lead Pastor. While we are grateful for all financial assistance, designated giving can undermine the duly appointed leadership of the Church and the concept of a unified budget.

## Technical Communications Policy

Central FMC computer users must abide by the Federal Copyright Law and/or license agreements regarding the use of computer software. Any staff member not in compliance with copyright laws or office policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

Cell phones, cell phone data and usage plans, and cell phone service contracts are not reimbursed by Central FMC. A staff member may use their professional expense fund to cover such expenses, should they so choose, and provided adequate documentation and receipts are produced.

Personal long distance calls should be charged to your home phone or cell phone, or to a personal calling card. Personal mail that is not ministry related should be sent to your home address. Personal use of the fax and copy machines should be kept to a minimum.

At no point is the church internet connection to be used to access material inconsistent with Biblical principles and Christian values. The church network password should not be given out to non staff members without permission from the Lead Pastor. Any staff member found to be in violation of either of these stipulations may be subject to disciplinary action.

## Publishing

In the course of your service at Central FMC, you may produce materials that your or Central FMC would like to publish for use by other churches and organizations. On all works completed within a staff member’s scope of employment, Central FMC will retain a right of first refusal for publishing a work, and rights to grant permission for further publishing purposes.

## Smoking Policy

No smoking by staff, volunteers, or guests will be allowed in any of our facilities or vehicles, including property owned by Central FMC.

# Receipt of Documents

The staff member acknowledges receipt of the Central FMC Staff Handbook on the date shown below. The staff member understands that this Handbook is current as of the time given and supersedes any previous policies. New situations may develop that may require changes, additions, or elimination of the policies, procedures, or benefit plans contained in this Handbook. The staff member will be notified of these changes and understands that she/he is responsible for all amendments. In addition, Central FMC reserves the right to amend or terminate any of the benefit programs, or to require or increase employee contributions toward any benefits at its discretion.

# Acknowledgement

The staff member acknowledges that this form is not an employment contract, and does not create an employee relationship. The staff member acknowledges that her/his employment with Central FMC is “at will” and may be terminated by Central FMC or the employee at any time and for reasons as outlined within the guidelines herein.

Acknowledged

Signature of staff member

Printed name

Date

Please make a copy of this page to keep in your Staff Handbook and give the original copy to the Lead Pastor.

Revised 08/19/2014