

## LOST AND FOUND

Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Black River Falls

Personnel Policies and Procedures  
Adopted By ELC Church Council: 11-08-2005  
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## INTRODUCTION

This personnel policy and procedure handbook applies to all Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC), Black River Falls, WI employees. This is not a contract. The policies described herein are not conditions of employment and the language is not intended to create a contract of employment between ELC and its employees. All employees of ELC are employed on an at-will basis.

It is important that employees read, understand, and become familiar with the handbook and comply with the standards that have been established. If an employee has any questions or needs additional information, please talk with the Senior Pastor. If the Senior Pastor is unable to help, then they will put you in contact with the chairperson of the ELC personnel committee for help.

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

## STAFF CATEGORIES

**Full Time** – Those employees who normally work forty (40) hours or more, per week shall be classified as full time employees. Overtime will be paid at the rate of 1½ times the hourly rate for overtime hours worked. A normal workweek is considered to be 40 to 50 hours.

**Part Time** – Those employees who normally work less than thirty-five (35) hours per week shall be classified as part-time employees. No overtime will be paid part-time employees.

**Full time salaried employees** – those working 40 to 50 hours per week, are entitled to be enrolled in a pension and major medical program. These benefits are understood to be in addition to the normal salary. Additional information may be obtained from the Senior Pastor.

The staff of ELC shall consist of the following:

### 1. Pastoral Staff Pastors

#### Pastors

### 2. Program Staff

Youth Director

Sunday School Superintendent

Choir Director

Organists

### 3. Support Staff

Office Manager

Secretaries

Custodians

Asst. Treasurer

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

ELC is committed to equal employment opportunity for all qualified persons, without regard to race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, medical condition, sexual orientation, or age, to the extent required by law. This applies to all employment practices, including hiring, promotions, training, disciplinary action, termination, and benefits.

ELC expects all employees to show respect and sensitivity toward all other employees, and to demonstrate a commitment to ELC's equal opportunity objectives. If an employee observes, or experiences a violation of this policy, they should report it immediately to the Senior Pastor or the Personnel Committee chairperson.

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

ELC is committed to full compliance with the Federal Immigration laws and will not knowingly hire or continue to employ anyone who does not have the legal right to work in the United States.

As an ongoing condition of employment, employees will be required to provide documentation verifying their identity and legal authority to work in the United States.

## SECTION II: COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The Church Council will strive to act in accordance with Synod Guidelines with regard to compensation and benefits for the pastoral staff and other staff as deemed applicable.

### OFFICE HOURS

The church office will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and from 1:00pm to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The office is closed on holidays.

### PAID TIME OFF

**VACATIONS** – Following the first year of employment, a full time employee is eligible and credited with two weeks (10 days) of paid vacation time. A part time employee will be given vacation on the basis of average hours worked per week. To avoid conflicts, vacation periods must be scheduled in advance. Following the fifth year of employment, the employee is eligible for three weeks of paid vacation time. Following the fifteenth year of employment, the employee is eligible for four weeks of paid vacation time. Not all vacation time need be taken at one time. Vacation time must be used within the year credited unless special permission is obtained to accumulate it. Unused earned vacation time will be paid upon termination of employment.

**Pastoral Staff:** Pastors are given four weeks of vacation time per year. Service for part of a calendar year will earn a pro-rate vacation benefit. Pastors who have been rostered fifteen or more years within the ELCA will receive a fifth week of vacation per year (see synod policy). Normally vacation time will be used during the year in which it is earned and is not carried over to succeeding years. The Senior Pastor may approve carry over of up to ten (10) days of unused vacation to the following year.

### HOLIDAYS

The ELC office will be closed for the following holidays. Full time employees will be eligible for full compensation for the holidays listed. Part time salaried employees will receive compensation prorated according to the average number of hours worked per week:

New Year's Day-Easter Monday-Memorial Day-Independence Day-Labor Day-Thanksgiving-Christmas

In the event a holiday occurs on a Saturday, the holiday will be observed on the Friday before, and if the holiday occurs on a Sunday, then it will be observed the following Monday.

### LEAVES OF ABSENCE

It shall be the policy of ELC to grant leaves of unpaid absence for specific purposes, which shall be to the benefit of the employees, and the church. Policies relating to Leave of Absence are as follows:

A. A leave of absence on written request may be granted to any employee after six (6) months continuous service for a period up to and including six (6) months: in certain cases a leave may be granted for a longer period of time upon recommendation of the personnel committee.

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B. A leave of absence may be granted for the following:

1. Illness – after expiration of paid sick leave.
2. Maternity – a maximum of six months.
3. Military leave.
4. Educational – to further professional growth and advancement.
5. Death in family.
6. Illness in family.

C. The church recognizes the civic responsibility of its employees to serve on juries. If you are summoned, you will be placed on jury duty leave and paid your full salary less jury duty pay received for the duration of the assignment. Employees called to serve on jury duty shall be paid for the time absent up to two (2) weeks and shall retain payment for jury duty during that time. Employees are expected to be at work when they are not required for jury duty. If you are called to jury duty, you should immediately report this to your supervisor and provide a copy of the summons.

D. No employee shall receive salary from the church while on leave of absence, other than death in the family and those provisions listed in jury duty.

An approved leave of absence implies that you will be restored to your former position provided the church circumstances have not changed so as to make it difficult for the church to do so. Employee benefits shall not be accrued during the leave of absence without pay. Accumulation of vacation will stop while on leave of absence.

#### SICK PAY

SICK LEAVE – Full time employees will be credited with ten (10) days sick leave at the beginning of each calendar year (January 1). Part-time employees will be credited with a proportionate number of days per 1 year prorated on the average number of hours worked per week. Sick leave is cumulative to thirty (30) days. Sick leave benefits shall cease upon termination of employment and compensation will not be due on unused sick leave. Employee will not receive sick leave compensation while receiving workman's compensation.

Sick leave for the Pastoral staff shall be allowed for two months at full pay (as recommended by the Synod guidelines) each calendar year. ELC shall provide sick leave for pastors with full salary, housing and benefits provided. In the event of disability due to illness or accident the congregation shall provide full salary, housing and benefits for the first two months or until the disability benefits of the ELCA pension plan come into effect. The congregation shall continue to provide housing for an additional six months at which time all financial responsibility on the part of ELC shall be terminated.

A pastor serving in less than a full time call shall have benefits provided on the basis of the percentage of a full call being served. The exception to this shall be continuing education, which shall be provided for all pastors in accordance with the recommended time and dollars to be found in the synod salary guidelines.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS – Full-time employees may take up to two hours with pay for medical appointments. Program and support staff must have prior approval from the Senior Pastor.

#### BEREAVEMENT PAY

At the time of death in an employee's immediate family (spouse, children, parents, grandparents, brother, sister), up to five paid consecutive days will be granted. The Senior Pastor will address individual circumstances. At the time of death of an employee's relative other than immediate family, requested time off will be granted at the Senior Pastor's discretion.

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#### INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the case of inclement weather, employees are expected to use good judgment in getting safely to and from work, and to inform the Senior Pastor if they can't get to work at any time. Personnel may be allowed to leave early, without pay, at the discretion of the Senior Pastor.

#### WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE

In accordance with the law of Wisconsin, the church provides coverage for medical expenses in the event of work-related injury or disease.

You are automatically covered under the Plan as soon as you are hired. To be eligible for Workman's Compensation the injury or disease must arise out of/or occur during the course of your employment.

All accidents to personnel, no matter how minor, must be reported immediately.

All employees must report any work-related injury or illness to the Senior Pastor, as soon as it happens, regardless of how minor it may be. It is also important to get proper first aid and/or medical attention immediately.

#### SOCIAL SECURITY

ELC will make contributions required for employees under the Social Security Act for eligible employees. In addition, pastors will be given a social security allowance to pay half of their Social Security obligation for their salary and housing allowance. No reimbursements shall be made in lieu of Social Security tax directly or indirectly to any employee.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

Employees of ELC are not covered by unemployment compensation insurance. Therefore, employees employed by ELC, upon termination of their employment and who are not immediately re-employed, are not eligible to collect unemployment insurance benefits.

#### PENSION PLAN AND MAJOR MEDICAL COVERAGE

ELC participates in the ELCA Pension and Benefit Plan for eligible (1/2 time or greater) pastoral staff. The plan provides for retirement, disability, survivor, and medical and dental benefits. For pastoral staff, the congregation pays a percentage of base salary and housing allowance as established by the ELCA for participation in that plan. The percentage varies based on age and minimum/maximum limits on medical and dental coverage. If an eligible pastor has duplicate coverage, ELC may apply such unused funds towards another benefit. Detailed information regarding benefits provided under the Pension Plan is contained in materials published and posted (web-site) by the ELCA Board of Pensions. Inquiries about this program should be directed to the ELCA Pension and Benefits Board.

Non-pastoral staff shall be reimbursed up to the budgeted amount (prorated for part time positions) to offset the benefit/insurance expenses of which they may incur. The amount to be disbursed will be sent directly to the company as determined by the employee and coordinated with the Senior Pastor.

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#### EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Pastoral staff are granted two (2) weeks per year (pro-rated for part time staff) and up to the budgeted amount to offset personal registration, travel, and lodging expenses. Continuing Education time and funds may be accumulated up to three (3) weeks and up to twice the budgeted amount. However, pastors are encouraged to use their full continuing education leave each year. Accumulated continuing education benefit is not paid at time of termination.

ELC will also grant the necessary time for pastors to attend synod conferences, assemblies, and staff retreats. The Church Council prior to that event shall approve requests for attendance at these programs. Brief reports to the Church Council are expected upon return from ELC-funded learning activities. These reports should be shared with other staff. Requests for payment of expenses related to educational programs and professional organizations must be scheduled in advance by the Senior Pastor.

ELC will provide up to the budgeted amount for continuing education expenses for the Program Staff (working half-time or more), which may accumulate up to twice the budgeted amount. ELC will also provide up to five (5) days (accumulating to ten days) to attend programs approved by the Senior Pastor. Monies and days granted are pro-rated for those working less than full time. This staff will be compensated up to eight hours per day. Requests for payment of expenses must be scheduled in advance by the Senior Pastor.

ELC will provide Support Staff (working half-time or more) up to the budgeted amount to pursue continuing education programs, which may accumulate up to twice the budgeted amount. In addition, ELC will provide three (3) days (accumulating up to six days) to attend programs approved by the Senior Pastor. Monies and days granted are pro-rated for those working less than full-time.

#### RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

Pastoral Staff accepting a call to ELC will have the lowest of three (3) guaranteed moving bids paid for by ELC to accommodate the relocation to Black River Falls of their personal belongings.

## AUTO REIMBURSEMENT

The Pastoral Staff will be reimbursed up to the budgeted amount for use of a personal automobile in their work. Reimbursement will be based on the current I.R.S. guidelines for work-related mileage.

Non-Pastoral Staff, designated by the Personnel Committee, will be reimbursed up to the budgeted amount, at these same I.R.S. guideline rates when use of personal automobile on church business is required. The Senior Pastor will approve all reimbursement.

## MINISTERIAL ALLOWANCE

Pastoral Staff will have a ministerial allowance up to the budgeted amount for books and other professional expenses. Amount unused in one year does not carry over to the following year.

## PAYDAY

ELC employees shall be paid on the 15th and last day of each month for the period just completed. When payday falls on a holiday or weekend, staff members shall be paid on the last workday preceding the holiday or weekend.

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ELC shall comply with all applicable revisions of the Fair Labor Standard Act (Wage-Hour Law) relating to hours worked. In instances where the employee agrees, time off in lieu of extra pay may be substituted if it is taken within the same week. No employee shall be required to work a period of more four (4) hours of continuous labor unless such a period is broken by a meal or rest period.

## WAGE & SALARY REVIEWS

Employees are generally reviewed at least once a year near the time the annual budget is being prepared, for consideration of a merit increase. A wage or salary review does not imply an automatic increase, only that you are eligible for consideration based on job performance. Wage or salary adjustments normally occur following the church Annual Budget meeting.

## PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

ELC employees are probably familiar with various payroll deductions that are required by law, such as federal income tax, state income tax, and social security. Any other deductions from an employee's paycheck must be authorized by the employee, in writing, and forwarded to the Senior Pastor.

ELC employee's paycheck stubs will itemize amounts that have been withheld. It is important that all employees review for accuracy and keep this information for tax purposes. If an employee has any questions about their deductions, please discuss these matters with the Senior Pastor.

## ELECTRONIC PAYMENT

Those employees working half time or more may elect to have their salary/wages electronically deposited into either their checking or savings account. If the employee chooses to use this option, it should be coordinated with the Senior Pastor.

## DEPENDENT CARE ASSISTANCE

ELC will provide employees the opportunity to exclude from the income the cost of dependent, care which is employment-related. ELC will deduct from earned income the amounts paid or incurred under this dependent care assistance plan on behalf of its employees. Employees may exclude payments for dependent care from their income subject to state and federal laws. This plan is open to all employees of ELC (see copy of policy on file).

## SECTION III: PERFORMANCE & DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION POLICY

At least once a year the Personnel Committee will hold a conference with employees to communicate staff ideas and experience.

**PURPOSE OF EVALUATIONS:** To assist the employees of ELC to be as effective as possible and to help the employee in his/her own growth and development. Evaluations are completed as follows:

All new employees complete an initial evaluation after the first 6 months, then annually.

To appeal an evaluation, an employee can speak with the Senior Pastor to discuss concerns. If this does not result in a satisfactory resolution, the employee can submit a written statement indicating concerns to the Personnel Committee and a meeting date with the committee will be arranged to hear the employee's concerns. The ELC Executive Committee would be the next level to hear concerns and then the full Council for situations that were unable to be resolved by the Personnel Committee. The Senior Pastor detailing involuntary termination reasons will write an explanatory memo.

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#### PROBATIONARY PERIOD

All new employees will have a probationary period of six (6) months, and may be released without specific cause if work is not satisfactory or employee is not satisfied with the position. Probationary employees are not eligible for fringe benefits during their probationary period of six (6) months.

#### TERMINATIONS

Terminations of any kind are processed in a manner that treats all employees fairly, in good faith, and consistent with existing laws. Although the nature of a termination may vary and may be voluntary, employees are provided the opportunity to discuss their particular situation with the Personnel Committee.

Dismissal – Employees shall be discharged for cause only by action of the Church Council.

Employees can be immediately discharged without notice for the following gross violations:

Disclosure of confidential information.

Under the influence of alcohol or drugs, other than those prescribed by a physician.

Dishonest or unethical conduct.

Stealing from the church or church property.

Willful destruction or mutilation of church property.

Deliberate refusal to follow church policy or procedure.

Deliberate refusal to carry out directions of pastors.

Deliberate abuse of sick leave.

Leaving job without permission.

Excessive absenteeism.

An unexplained absence of three (3) scheduled workdays.

Employees can be discharged from the church employment for other causes than the gross violations stated above; only after the employee is given written warning which has been acknowledged by the employee according to the following warning procedure;

First Offense – A verbal warning will be given by the Sr. Pastor with the incident documented in memo form with a copy placed in the employee's personal file and signed by employee and both pastors.

Second Offense – If within six (6) months of the first offence the Senior Pastor will issue a "written warning notice" which shall be signed by both pastors along with the employee with a copy given to the employee and the original placed in the employee's file.

Any further offenses may result in termination.

RESIGNATIONS – Employees other than pastors resigning from their position at the church shall give at least two (2) weeks written notice.

#### GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Any employee dissatisfied with any aspect of his job or any dispute relating to the interpretation of or adherence to the terms and provisions of the personnel policies shall be handled as follows:

Make every effort possible to settle the disagreement or problem with the Senior Pastor.

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If the grievance cannot be worked out, it shall be put in writing, shall specify in detail the alleged violation of these policies and shall be received by the Senior Pastor not later than ten (10) calendar days following the date of occurrence. Grievances relating to wages shall be timely if received by the Senior Pastor no later than thirty (30) calendar days following the date of receipt of the check by the employee; and shall:

Step 1 – Within seven (7) calendar days following receipt of the grievance by the Senior Pastor, a committee consisting of the Personnel Committee and employee shall meet and attempt to resolve the grievance. Time for said meeting may be extended by mutual agreement.

2. Step 2 – If the grievance is not resolved by step 1, either party may refer the matter to the whole council. This demand shall be in writing and must be received by the other party within ten (10) calendar days following the step 1 meeting.

#### SECTION IV: PERSONNEL PRACTICES TARDINESS & ABSENCE

It is important that employees work their assigned schedules as consistently as possible. If employees are unable to report to work for any reason, it is important that they contact the Senior Pastor. It is the responsibility of the employee to keep ELC informed on a daily basis during a short-term absence and to provide medical verification when asked to do so. A tardy or absence is considered "excused" only when the employee calls ahead of time and when the tardy or absence is for a compelling reason.

ELC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to determine what constitutes a compelling reason. A tardy or absence for a non-compelling reason, and failing to call in accordance to ELC's policy, will be considered "unexcused." Unexcused tardiness and absence is considered to be a serious matter. Employees who are tardy or absent excessively or show a consistent pattern of absence, whether "excused" or "unexcused" will be subject to disciplinary action, (i.e. counseling, loss of pay, up to and including possible termination). If an employee does not call in or report to work for three consecutive workdays, they may be considered to have voluntarily quit.

#### BREAK & MEAL PERIODS

Hourly employees who work at least four (4) hours in a workday will receive a 15 minute paid break period. Hourly employees who work more than five (5) hours in a workday will receive an unpaid meal period of at least 30 minutes, but not more than 60 minutes. However, employees who do not work more than six (6) hours in a workday may



voluntarily agree to waive their right to a meal period.

## PERSONNEL RECORDS

It is important that ELC always have current information about their employees. Employees should let the Senior Pastor know immediately if for some reason they need to change their address, phone number, or marital status, etc. If for some reason an employee needed to change their name or correct their Social Security number, they will be asked to provide original documentation authorizing the change and provide this information to the Senior Pastor.

Upon request, employees will be allowed to review and personnel records that have been used to determine their qualifications for employment, promotion, compensation, termination, or other disciplinary action. Employees should talk to the Senior Pastor for more information.

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## PROMOTION & TRANSFER

It is ELC's intent to give qualified employees preference over others when filling job openings within the church. However, because of the experience, skills, and educational requirements of many jobs, promotions from within ELC are not always possible. An employee's past performance, experience, attitude, qualifications, and potential are all important factors, which will be considered in making promotion and transfer decisions.

## HARASSMENT

### Policy on Sexual Harassment

Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of the law. It is illegal to inflict upon any person: Unwelcome sexual advances; sexually motivated physical contact; other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a person's employment; other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of creating a hostile or offensive working environment. It is illegal to inflict upon any person sexually motivated physical or verbal contact when:

Submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, whether explicitly; or implicitly, of obtaining employment or service; or

Submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment.

It is the policy of ELC to forbid any practices that constitute sexual harassment. Employees who have complaints must direct these complaints immediately to any member of the ELC Executive Committee, Personnel Committee, or Sr. Pastor. ELC will investigate complaints promptly and apply appropriate disciplinary sanctions, which may include reprimand, reassignment, demotion, or discharge.

If the complaint is against a pastor, or any other rostered personnel, employees should immediately report to the council chairperson or any other council member. The accused person should not be approached. If the complaint is against a pastor or other ELCA rostered person, the initial report must be made to the Bishop of the N.W. WI Synod, by the person to whom it was reported (see synod policy).

The N.W. WI Synod's policy entitled: "A Policy Statement Dealing With Allegations of Sexual Misconduct Against Members of the Clergy" will be considered to be a part of the ELC's Sexual Harassment Policy. A copy of this policy statement is on file at the ELC office and is available for review.

Further, All rostered persons are required to adhere to the Synod's guidelines in any counseling situation. A copy of these guidelines is on file at the ELC office and is available for review.

## ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

The use, sale, transfer, possession, or being "under the influence" of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances when on duty, on church property, or in church vehicles is prohibited. For the purpose of this policy, "under the influence" is

defined as being unable to perform work in a safe or productive manner, and/or being in a physical or mental condition which creates a risk to the safety and well being of the affected employee, other co-workers, the public, or church property.

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

#### PERSONAL APPEARANCE

An employee's appearance reflects not only on themselves as individuals, but on ELC as well. Professional and appropriate standards of appearance are expected.

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#### LOST AND FOUND

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

If an employee happens to find personal belongings that have been lost by another person, such belongings should be turned in to the church office.

#### ACCESS TO CHURCH PROPERTY

It is important that ELC have access at all times to church property, as well as other records, documents, and files. As a result, ELC reserves the right, within legal limits, to access employee offices, work stations, filing cabinets, desks, and any other church property at its discretion, with advance notice or consent. Pastoral counseling files will be kept confidential.

#### BUSINESS EXPENSE REPORTING

Employees will be reimbursed for all approved business-related expenses, upon submission of accurate and receipted expense reports to the Senior Pastor. Employees are requested to submit these reports in a timely manner to ensure proper accounting and prompt reimbursement.

#### PERSONAL USE OF CHURCH TELEPHONES

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

#### EMPLOYEE PARKING

ELC will not be responsible for theft or damage to any vehicles parked on or near church property. Also, ELC will not be responsible for personal property left in vehicles that is lost, damaged, stolen, or destroyed.

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