

Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island

Personnel Policies
&
Benefits Summary

*Approved, Diocesan Council, 9/19/01
Revised 5/15/02 and 2/19/03*

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

This handbook has been prepared to acquaint you with the personnel policies of the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island. It will also provide you with an understanding of our mutual expectations so that we may work together effectively.

This handbook replaces all earlier handbooks and supersedes all memoranda and prior oral descriptions of the policies at the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island. Because we cannot explain every policy in this handbook, some details have been omitted to keep it reasonably brief.

Employment by the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island is “at will”: either you or the Diocese may terminate your employment at any time, with or without cause or notice. Therefore, this handbook does not constitute an employment contract or guarantee and should not be viewed as a total statement of our policies. Instead, it is a general guide to some important employment considerations. You should consult your supervisor or the Canon to the Ordinary if you have any questions about matters, covered or not covered, in this handbook.

Of course, changes in conditions may require us to supplement, modify, or eliminate policies described in the handbook to meet the needs of our employees or to respond to organizational shifts. While we try to give notice of such changes, either by an announcement or memorandum, this may not always be practical. It may also be necessary to deviate from customary practices in certain unanticipated circumstances. We thus reserve the right to make such changes at any time and without prior notice.

Our working relationship is based on mutual commitment, satisfaction and understanding. Please read this handbook carefully and keep it for reference.

EMPLOYMENT VALUES AND GUIDELINES

The Diocese affirms the intent of the several resolutions passed by recent Conventions of the Episcopal Church concerning employment practices for both clergy and laity in the Church and has sought to implement them in these policies.

Much of the spirit of these resolutions is summed up by the following guidelines from the Colloquium of Episcopal Professional and Vocational Associations which were approved by the 73rd General Convention at Denver in July, 2000. Employees of the Diocese are expected to manifest behavior that is accordance with these principles.

PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES

If the Episcopal Church is to fulfill its mission to the world to proclaim and to teach gospel values of personal dignity and justice in our common life, we must practice those same values in our everyday Church working relationships. Workplace issues such as wages, pro forma resignations, and regular evaluations should not be addressed apart from the principles of our Baptismal Covenant.

People who work in the Church—including bishops, kitchen aides, presbyters, headmasters, sextons, deacons, secretaries, musicians, youth workers, teachers, administrators, and others—each, according to assigned responsibilities and personal talents, serve the Church's mission.

Therefore, in our various church workplaces—parishes, schools, seminaries, camps, institutions, diocesan and national church administration, and so on—we need to promote the right ordering of relationships by fostering the principles of personal dignity, justice, accountability, and participation. By such principles we seek to promote both the dignity of individuals and the corporate responsibilities of church institutions.

Using such principles, it is imperative that we develop church workplace procedures and policies that honor the rights of individuals while serving faithfully the over-arching common good entrusted to us as the church, that is, the mission of Jesus Christ to the World.

1. Employment policies and practices in the Episcopal Church—recruitment, selection, training, policy development, salary, benefits, due process, termination, and retirement—must manifest respect for the dignity of every person, in accord with the Baptismal Covenant.
2. Respect for the mission, ideals, and structures of the organization is expected of all who work within the Church.
3. Respect for the rights and responsibilities of each worker is essential to church workplaces.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate in recruiting, hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, benefits, job training, classification, and all other employment practices or other aspects of employment, on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, mental or physical disability, or age.

It is also our policy to protect employees and applicants from any coercion, retaliation, or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in any investigation pursuant to the equal opportunity laws.

The Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with disabilities who can perform the essential job functions, unless doing so would cause undue hardship to the Diocese or unless the individual poses a direct threat to the health and safety of himself/herself or others.

If you require an accommodation for a disability, you should notify your supervisor of your need. All requests for accommodations are reviewed by the Canon to the Ordinary.

DIOCESAN POLICIES

Sexual Misconduct or Harassment

In the Diocese of Rhode Island, sexual misconduct in any form is unacceptable behavior for any cleric, member, volunteer or employee. The Diocese reaffirms the principle that employees as well as members have the right to be free from sexual misconduct including sexual harassment. Any behavior determined to be sexual misconduct will result in appropriate disciplinary action which may include for employees termination of employment, and for clerics deposition.

Allegations of misconduct may be reported to the Bishop or to individuals designated by the Bishop as Report Persons.

The complete diocesan policies on sexual misconduct will be given to employees at the mandatory training on Prevention of Adult Misconduct (see "Training and Performance Standards," page 7 below.)

Employee Participation in Diocesan Life

The governance of the Diocese rests with the annual Convention of the diocese, and with the representative Diocesan Council which meets monthly between conventions. In the interest of order and clarity of boundaries within the diocese the Council has made several policies with respect to employment by the diocese.

Policy statement of December 16, 1998

It is the policy and the practice of the Diocesan Office (since at least 1997) that no member of the family (spouse or children) of diocesan priests/deacons or of diocesan employees will be hired for any full-time paid position.

It is the policy of this diocese that no member of the family of any diocesan priest/deacon or of any diocesan employee will be eligible to serve, either in an elected or appointed position, either on the Standing Committee or Diocesan Council.

Policy statement of April 21, 1999

No member of a commission, board or committee of the diocese shall participate in the consideration of any issue which may affect the compensation of such member.

YOUR EMPLOYMENT AND COMPENSATION

WORK HOURS

The standard office schedule is Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Maintenance personnel hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Resource Center maintains a flexible schedule.

Other hours may be assigned as agreed between an employee and supervisor. Lunch break is one hour. Two fifteen-minute coffee breaks may be taken: one mid-morning and one mid-afternoon.

EMPLOYEE DESIGNATIONS

Exempt

Employees who are in positions which are not subject to the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act that require payment for overtime work (i.e. those hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week). Those jobs by function are executive, administrative, and professional.

Non-Exempt

Employees whose positions are subject to the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act that require reporting of hours and payment of overtime for hours worked in excess of 40 per week.

Full-Time

Employees (exempt or non-exempt) who are scheduled to work 35 hours per week. Full-time employees are entitled to all benefits for which they are eligible.

Part-Time

Employees who are scheduled to work less than 35 hours per week.

Benefit-Eligible

Part-Time

Part time employees who work a minimum of 1000 hours per year and are eligible for certain benefits as specified in the Benefits Summary.

Temporary

Employees hired with the understanding that their employment will be terminated on a specific date or at the completion of a specific assignment. Whether full- or part-time, they are not eligible for any benefits.

SALARY ADMINISTRATION

Employees are paid on a bi-weekly basis. Direct deposit of paychecks is available.

Exempt employees are paid on a salary basis. They are never eligible for overtime pay.

Non-exempt employees are paid on an hourly basis and must submit weekly time cards signed by their supervisor. They may work overtime only at the request and approval of the supervisor.

The Diocese deducts State and Federal payroll taxes as required by law. Other elective deductions are made with the employee's consent.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Our benefits package is explained in the Benefits Summary. We review our benefits periodically and make changes as appropriate. Any changes are communicated to employees in writing.

As the central administrative body for Episcopal churches and organizations in the state of Rhode Island, the Diocese administers several benefit plans to cover clergy and lay employees of churches beyond the Bishop's office at Diocesan House.

Rates for these plans are developed by combining the diocesan claims experience, demographics and the health carriers overall community rating based on the size of the group.

Eligible members must be legitimate full- or part-time employee of some diocesan entity.

For this reason also it is necessary to limit extension of coverage beyond the period that an individual is associated with the diocese.

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

With the prior approval of your supervisor, the Diocese may reimburse you for any reasonable and necessary job-related expenses (i.e., travel, meals, etc.). You must submit appropriate documentation with a Mileage & Expense Form to the Assistant Treasurer.

EMPLOYEE RECORDS

The Diocese maintains a file for each employee that contains application information, position description, performance evaluations, benefits and payroll administrative records, and other information relevant to employment with the Diocese. All medical records are kept in a separate file. The files are maintained by the Assistant Treasurer under the supervision of the Canon to the Ordinary and/or the Bishop's designee. Access to personnel files is limited to those persons with a "need to know". Employees may schedule an appointment to review their personnel file and access will be allowed in accordance with state law.

Please notify the Assistant Treasurer if you change any of the following:

- Tax Withholding
- Name, address, or telephone number
- Marital status or number of dependents
- Beneficiary for your employee benefits
- Emergency contact information

This information helps us maintain up to date and accurate records. It can also affect your insurance coverage and other benefits.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

The Diocese requests a two-week advance notice of resignation, either verbally or in writing.

Important information about final pay disbursement, benefit termination or conversion, and other matters will be discussed at an exit interview. Any Diocesan property must be returned at termination of employment.

TRAINING AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

ORIENTATION PERIOD

The first three months of employment with the Diocese are an orientation period. Orientation is a time to introduce you to our organization, our employment values and your co-workers.

During your orientation (or as soon as they are offered) you must attend training in Prevention of Adult Misconduct in Pastoral Relationships and in Racism Awareness. The Diocese periodically offers these programs at no cost to you. Time taken to attend is considered regular work time.

Orientation gives you an opportunity to learn about and adjust to your job. It is also a time for your supervisor to evaluate your performance.

PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

As an employee of the Diocese, you are expected to manifest behavior that is in accordance with our Principles and Recommended Guidelines (p.2). Your performance must reflect adherence to our values as well as meet the requirements for the position.

Generally, performance review discussions are held annually. Your supervisor will ordinarily conduct the review. You may request that your supervisor's manager also attend the review if you wish.

It must be understood that performance reviews do not create any specific legal rights and are not intended to modify the "at will" nature of employment at the Diocese. Either you or the Diocese may terminate your employment at any time, with or without cause or notice.

WORKPLACE CONDUCT

The Diocese is committed to maintaining a drug- and alcohol-free workplace. The possession, use, or being under the influence of alcohol on premises is prohibited except as permitted at specified diocesan social functions.

It is the policy of the Diocese to recognize alcohol and drug abuse as treatable diseases and no employee's job security will be threatened by seeking assistance for a substance abuse problem. However, employees found to be in possession of, using, or under the influence of drugs or intoxicating substances while at work are subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

For the health and safety of employees and visitors, no smoking is permitted in Diocesan House and Annex.

E-MAIL & INTERNET ACCESS

The Diocese's Electronic Mail System (e-mail) and Internet connection is designed to facilitate diocesan communications and business. Some incidental use of e-mail and Internet access for personal use is permitted, but is a privilege which may be limited or revoked. Employees are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of computing and network etiquette. All data and electronic messages are the property of the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island, which reserves the right to examine any communications, computing, or memory storage system at any time.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

ATTENDANCE

Because your job is important to the daily operation of the Diocese, regular attendance and punctuality are essential. The Diocese recognizes that certain absences due to illness, medical appointments or other personal business may be unavoidable.

If you are going to be late or absent from work you must notify your supervisor promptly. Any absence for a reason other than accident or illness requires prior approval from your supervisor.

The Assistant Treasurer is responsible for the administration of vacation records and records of an employee's absence from work

SICK DAYS

Five (5) paid sick days are allowed each calendar year and may be accumulated from year to year to a total of fifteen (15) days. Sick leave may be used for illnesses or any legitimate medical need, and are not usable as vacation nor redeemable for cash.

The Diocese reserves the right to require written verification from your physician in the case of any sick leave in excess of four consecutive working days.

MEDICAL OR FAMILY LEAVE

A full-time employee who has completed six months of service is eligible for up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave during a twelve-month period for any of the following reasons:

- the birth and care of the newborn child of the employee;
- placement with the employee of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care.
- to care for an immediate family member (spouse, domestic partner, child, or parent) with a serious health condition; **or**
- to take medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition.

An employee is required to provide 30-days advance notice when the leave is anticipated.

An employee must provide medical certification to support a leave for a serious health condition.

Upon return from a leave, an employee will be re-instated to his/her position.

As a non-profit employer of less than fifty employees, the Diocese is not legally subject to the provisions of the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA). In administration of this policy, however, its actions may be guided by the provisions and regulations of the Act.

FUNERAL LEAVE

Funeral leave for the death of a close relative or domestic partner is granted to a maximum of three days. Time during office hours to attend the funeral of a friend, relative, or associate may be granted.

JURY LEAVE

An employee who is called to jury or witness duty will be granted a leave of absence for the time required. The employee's supervisor must be notified of potential jury leave immediately.

An employee shall receive the difference between his/her regular daily pay and the remuneration received for jury or witness duty during the same period. A court voucher must be submitted to the Assistant Treasurer. However, the employee must report to work whenever available for two or more hours during the regular workday.

MILITARY SERVICE LEAVE

Employees active in reserve units will be granted a leave of absence and have their job rights protected consistent with current legal requirements. If you require a leave of absence please contact the Assistant Treasurer.

Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island

BENEFITS SUMMARY

(Revised September 2003)

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this summary is to provide general information about the Diocesan benefits package. The Diocese reserves the right to modify, revoke or suspend any or all of the benefits outlined in this summary.

It is not intended to take the place of more detailed Benefit Plan Documents and Summary Plan Descriptions (SPD'S). Should there be a discrepancy between the outline and the legal document, the legal document shall prevail. You should read your SPD's carefully and direct any questions about your benefits to the Assistant Treasurer.

The Diocese reviews its benefits program periodically and changes are made where appropriate. Any changes are communicated to employees in writing.

As the central administrative body for Episcopal churches and organizations in the state of Rhode Island, the Diocese administers several benefit plans to cover clergy and lay employees of churches beyond the Bishop's office at Diocesan House. Rates for these plans are developed by combining the diocesan claims experience, demographics and the health carriers overall community rating based on the size of the group. Eligible members must be full- or benefit-eligible part-time employees of some diocesan entity. For these reasons it is necessary to limit extension of coverage beyond the period that an individual is associated with the diocese.

VACATION

Full-time and benefit-eligible part time employees are entitled to vacation depending upon years of employment. Years are reckoned from January 1 following the date of employment; vacation time prior to that date will be granted proportionally.

1st through 3rd years	10 days per year
4th and 5th years	15 days per year
After 5th year	20 days per year

Vacation days must be taken before January 1st of the next year. Five (5) days of unused vacation may be carried over and used in the first six (6) months of the following year or are forfeited. However, if the employee was unable to take vacation during the year because of department workload, additional days may be carried over with the supervisor's approval.

Vacation time shall be paid at the employee's current basic weekly rate. Pay in lieu of vacation is not allowed. To receive vacation pay in advance, an employee must submit a request to the Assistant Treasurer at least two weeks prior to the start of vacation.

An employee shall have the option of using vacation time for an unpaid absence due to illness or personal leave. Holidays or days on which the office is closed that fall within the employee's vacation are not counted as vacation days.

Possible vacation days must be scheduled early in each year with the approval of the supervisor. Seniority will prevail in the event of a schedule conflict.

HOLIDAYS

Full-time and benefit-eligible part time employees are entitled to paid holidays. The 14 holidays that we observe are:

January: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day
February: Presidents' Day
Good Friday
Easter Monday
May: Memorial Day
July: Independence Day
August: Victory Day
September: Labor Day
October: Columbus Day
November: Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday
December: Christmas Day

PERSONAL DAYS

Full-time and benefit-eligible part time employees are entitled to two paid personal days each calendar year. They must be scheduled with the approval of the supervisor. Unused days may not be carried over. An employee does not have to disclose the reason for requesting a personal day.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

Full-time and benefit-eligible part time employees may elect medical insurance coverage beginning the first day of the month following the date of hire. The current carrier is Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Rhode Island. An employee may elect either individual or family coverage. Full-time employees who do not elect to accept this benefit must demonstrate health coverage from another source.

For full-time employees the Diocese pays 90% of the premium cost and the employee pays the remaining 10% by payroll deduction.

For benefit-eligible part-time employees premium is shared according to this schedule:

27-34 hours per week	Diocese – 70%, Employee 30%
20-26 hours per week	Diocese – 50%, Employee 50%

Upon termination of employment, diocesan employees and parish employees who are covered by our medical insurance may elect to continue their coverage for up to eighteen (18) months. However, they must pay the total cost of the premium.

DENTAL INSURANCE

Full-time and benefit-eligible part time employees may elect dental insurance coverage beginning the first day of the month following the date of hire. The current carrier is Delta Dental.

An employee may elect either individual or one of several levels of family coverage. The Diocese pays 100% of the cost of individual coverage. The employee pays the additional premium for family coverage by payroll deduction.

Upon termination of employment, diocesan employees and parish employees who are covered by our dental insurance may elect to continue their coverage for up to eighteen (18) months. However, they must pay the total cost of the premium.

LONG TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE

Employees working thirty (30) hours per week or more receive long term disability insurance fully paid by the Diocese. A monthly benefit equal to 60% of basic monthly earnings may be paid after 180 days of total disability and applying for, and meeting, the requirements for benefits under the plan. Coverage is provided by Reliance Standard Life Insurance Company and is effective on the first day of the month following the date of hire.

LIFE INSURANCE

Employees working thirty (30) hours per week or more receive life insurance coverage provided by Church Life Insurance Corporation. The amount of the policy is \$50,000. The Diocese pays the entire cost of this coverage, which begins on the first day of the month following the date of hire.

Employees may continue coverage and pay the premium for a reduced policy amount after retirement.

PENSION PLAN

The Diocese offers a 403(b) defined contribution pension plan through the Church Pension Group to all employees who work 1000 hours or more per year. Eligible employees may participate on the first day of the month following twelve (12) months of employment. Employees are fully vested from the start of their participation in the plan.

The Diocese contributes 5% of the employee's annual salary and will match up to 4% of the employee's own contributions. The employee may contribute a percentage or dollar amount of salary by payroll deduction (subject to Internal Revenue Rules). Pension funds are invested in equity or fixed income funds according to the employee's own designation.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

The Diocese affirms the need for employees to upgrade their work skills. Therefore, all full-time employees may use up to two days (16 hours) of continuing education time per year at a course, seminar, conference, or other opportunity approved by the supervisor.