

1. Title: Informal and Formal Complaint/Grievance Procedures

2. Purpose:

This OPS provides FPCC's policy and procedures for an employee to inform the Church's management of her/his complaint/grievance, and for addressing same with the goal of obtaining reconciliation among all affected parties.

3. Policy:

3.1 The FPCC shall promote good working relationships with its staff, affirming the importance of each individual and his or her contribution to the ministry of FPCC. These working relationships are characterized by mutual respect of employee and supervisor, providing prompt answers to questions, minimizing misunderstandings, and seeking resolution of differences as quickly as possible.

3.2 Supervisors are expected to maintain open communication with employees under their supervision, to give prompt consideration to their suggestions, and to provide active assistance in dealing with their concerns or complaints.

3.3 The supervisor is normally the person through whom an employee raises concerns. If an employee is unable to resolve the matter with his/her immediate supervisor, that employee may seek redress through the Chair of the Administration Ministry. This is the "Informal Procedure" and is the process by which an employee may seek review of any concern or problem including a suspension, reduction in pay, or discharge with which he or she does not agree. The "Informal Procedure" should normally be the first means for addressing a complaint.

3.4 Should there be a failure to reach reconciliation via 3.3 above, the employee may pursue the "Formal Procedure" Grievance process which is provided in Part 7.2 below.

3.4 Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 3.3 above, however, in any case where an employee's complaint involves allegations of unlawful, unethical, or improper conduct by another member of the staff, such as sexual or other unlawful harassment, the employee may, and is encouraged and expected to, bypass the normal order of progression where the person who is engaging in the misconduct, or who has failed to act to stop the misconduct, is a step in that progression.

3.5 It is understood that the employee may arrange to have an advocate with him/her at all steps in the Formal Process, at no expense to FPCC.

3.6 A written record of all decisions arrived at in all meetings shall be filed in the

Church Records.

3.7 Letters of decision from the Session shall contain provision for the employee to indicate his/her acceptance or rejection of the decision.

4. Definitions:

Grievance - A grievance in the employment context refers to a specific, formal notice of employee dissatisfaction expressed through an identified procedure. Grievance procedures typically define within how many days after the incident or situation complained of a grievance must be filed, in what form it must be filed, with whom it is filed, and define rights such as the right to a hearing, representation at such hearing, the right to a timely response, and rights to an appeal.

Material fact - A material fact is a fact that would be important to a reasonable person in deciding whether to engage or not to engage in a particular transaction; an important fact as distinguished from some unimportant or trivial detail.

5. References:

Guidelines for Session Personnel Committees - *A statement of the functions and accountability to the sessions of a committee or task force*, PC(USA), Churchwide Personnel Services, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville KY 40202-1396

6. Applicability:

This OPS applies to the processing of employees' complaints. It is the only process authorized by FPCC for any and all "recognized" employee complaints, problems, and issues including complaints about unsatisfactory performance, review of a suspension, reduction in pay, or discharge with which he or she does not agree.

7. Procedures:

7.1 Informal Procedure

7.1.1 When an employee has a concern or problem, the employee shall first discuss the matter with her/his immediate supervisor. Both parties, the employee and supervisor, shall share in the responsibility to reach a common understanding of the matter and a reconciliation that is acceptable to each party. This process should be initiated within thirty (30) calendar days of an incident or last occurrence.

7.1.2 If not satisfied with the supervisor's proposed remedy, the employee within ten (10) calendar days from the date of receiving the supervisor's proposed remedy will approach the Chair of the Administration Ministry (or the Acting Chair if there has been temporary delegation of duties) who will seek to resolve the issue in consultation with all parties involved. Ordinarily a decision should be reached within ten days.

7.1.3 If the Chair of the Administration Ministry is unsuccessful in reaching reconciliation among all parties, the Chair of Administration Ministry shall summarize in writing (as a memorandum for the record) the "material" facts of the matter and advise the employee of the Formal Procedure process. A copy of the memorandum shall be provided to the employee and a copy filed in the Church's Record's under Grievances.

7.2 Formal (Grievance) Procedure

7.2.1 If the Informal Procedure to resolve a concern or problem has failed, this formal process may be initiated by her/his submitting a written statement to the Moderator of the Session within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the memorandum (7.1.3).

7.2.2 The Session shall conduct an investigation by reviewing the matter with all the concerned parties.

7.2.3 The Session shall make a final written finding and decision on the matter and a letter of decision from the Session shall contain provision for the employee to indicate his/her acceptance or rejection of the decision. The decision of the Session is final.

7.2.4 Copies of the annotated letter and all other same grievance-related documents shall be filed together in the Church's Records under Grievances.

8. Review Schedule:

The Administration Ministry Chairman shall review this OPS on the anniversary of the effective date and make any needed revisions for the Session's approval.

9. Approval:

Session approved this OPS on the above effective date.