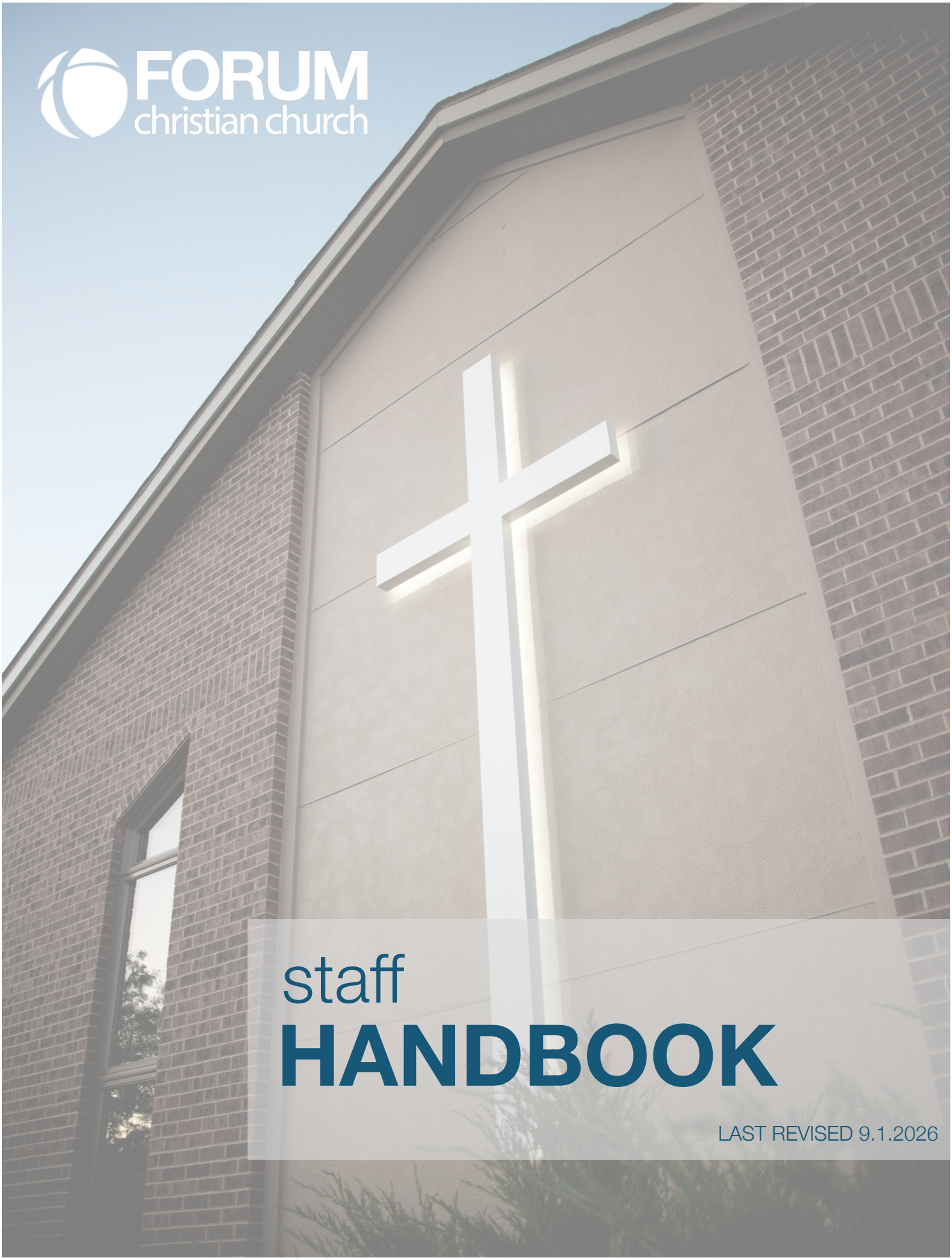

FORUM christian church

staff HANDBOOK

LAST REVISED 9.1.2026

Receipt of Handbook

These guidelines are intended as a standard for policies, benefits, and general information which should assist you during your employment. These guidelines shall not be construed as a contract. FCC reserves the right to make changes in content or application as it deems appropriate, and these changes may be implemented even if they have not been communicated, reprinted, or substituted in this handbook.

I acknowledge receipt of the Forum Christian Church Employee Handbook. I have read the statement above and have read the policies in these guidelines. I hereby agree to accept and abide by these policies.

Please sign and date this form and return it to the Lead Minister.

_____
Staff Member Name (Please Print)

_____
Staff Member (Signature)

_____
Date

Lead Minister Signature

Date Handbook Received

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Purpose of the Handbook

These guidelines are intended as a standard for policies, benefits, and general information which should assist you during your employment. These guidelines shall not be construed as a contract. FCC reserves the right to make changes in content or application as it deems appropriate, and these changes may be implemented even if they have not been communicated, reprinted, or substituted in this handbook.

Mission and Values

Mission Statement

The mission of Forum Christian Church is to intentionally connect people to Jesus.

Core Values

Go big by leading small. - *We believe big change happens in small steps.*
Overly generous. - *We are the first to give more than what is required.*
Stronger together. - *We are created to thrive in community.*
Pursue those far from God. - *We remove every barrier we can to help people move closer to God.*
Empower others. - *We help others become who God created them to be.*
Love and live like Jesus. - *We elevate Jesus in what we say and do.*

Statement of Faith

The Mission of Forum Christian Church

Our mission is to intentionally connect people to Jesus.

Our Beliefs

- There is one God, eternally existing in three co-equal persons.
- Out of love for His children, God sent his son Jesus Christ to die for our sins and physically rise from the dead.
- The Bible is the inspired word of God and is the final authority for life, doctrine, and the polity of the church.

- Salvation is a free gift of God. The death of Christ on the cross is the only sufficient payment for our sins. All have sinned, but all can be saved. This salvation is available for any who put their trust in Christ as Savior.
- Those trusting Christ should repent of sin, confess their faith, and be baptized by immersion.
- The church is the body of Christ on earth, empowered by the Holy Spirit to continue the mission of reaching the lost, equipping believers, and helping them both become fully devoted followers of Christ.
- Christ will one day return and reign forever. When we die, we will either be eternally separated from God by sin or eternally united with God through faith in Jesus.

Employee Relations

Compliance with Biblical Standards

Christianity is central to the purpose and mission of Forum Christian Church. For this reason, all Forum Christian Church affairs are conducted in full accordance with the Bible, Forum Christian Church's Mission, its Statement of Faith as contained in the Forum Christian Church bylaws, as well as related policies reflecting the Forum Christian Church's religious nature. Likewise, it is Forum Christian Church's policy to employ only committed disciples of Jesus Christ. Consequently, each employee is expected to review and affirm his or her agreement with such standards as a condition for continued employment with Forum Christian Church, both in terms of doctrinal belief and practical application. For example, all employees are expected to reflect Christian values in their interaction with persons we serve, fellow employees, and others. In addition, employees are required to refrain from behavior that reflects negatively on the Forum Christian Church's Christian standards. Violation of these requirements shall constitute cause for discipline up to and including employment termination.

Active Membership

It is essential for Staff Members to model the kind of life we are inviting others to live. For this reason, all Staff Members must be active and involved members of FCC and continue as members throughout the duration of employment. Interns are exempt from this requirement as often their "home" Church supports them.

Employment-At-Will Agreement

Employment is with the mutual consent of the employee and the Church. Consequently, both the employee and the Church have the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. This employment-at-will agreement constitutes the entire agreement between you and the Church on the subject of termination and it supersedes all prior agreements. Although other Church policies and procedures may change from time to time, this employment-at-will agreement will remain in effect throughout your employment with the Church unless it is specifically modified by an express written agreement signed by the employee and the Chairman of Elders and Lead Minister of the Church. This employment-at-will agreement may not be modified by any oral or implied agreement.

Equal Employment Opportunity

FCC is committed to equal employment opportunity for all qualified persons, as is consistent with the Bible and the will of God. This applies to all employment practices, including recruitment, hiring, compensation, benefits, training, disciplinary action, and termination.

Conflict of Interest

As a ministry initiated and sustained by God, FCC has a mandate to conduct all of its affairs decently and above reproach both in the sight of God and man. That accountability includes a commitment to operate with the highest level of integrity and to avoid conflicts of interest.

This policy is not intended to discourage tangible expressions of love or appreciation by the membership to the Ministerial Staff or impede relationships between members and Ministers. However, Staff, Ministers, Elders, and Ministry Leaders have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that avoids even the appearance of impropriety. In that spirit, the letter and the spirit of this policy must be embraced, applied, and monitored by all affected parties, i.e., Church employees, Church volunteers, Elders, Ministry Leaders, etc.

A non-profit tax-exempt ministry (FCC) depends on the preservation of charitable contributions from its members and the public at large. Our tax-exempt status is important to our continued financial stability. The IRS provides a tax deduction for donations in support of the tax-exempt entity. Thus, the pursuant regulatory entities (IRS, State, etc.) view the operations of FCC as being in the public trust . . . a trust that is subject to scrutiny by and accountability to the aforementioned entities, our members and the public.

1.Fiduciary Duty. There exists a fiduciary duty on the part of FCC, its Elders, officers, and employees that implicitly and explicitly requires loyalty and submission to leadership.

Correspondingly, the Elders, officers, and employees shall execute their duties in a manner consistent with sound and ethical principles of financial management.

2.Persons Concerned. This Conflict of Interest is directed to Elders, officers, and all employees of FCC, who can influence the actions of, or commit FCC or its board and all family members thereof. (Family Member is defined for these purposes as all persons related by blood or marriage.) For example, this would include all those who make purchasing decisions and all other persons who might be described as "management personnel."

3.Conflicts of Interest. A conflict of interest exists when an Elder, officer, employee, or a Family Member of these, engages in any transaction or matter in which any of these may directly or indirectly profit financially or materially. Possible conflicts of interest with any of these individuals are (but not limited to):

a) Those who are vendors or related to vendors with FCC;
b) Those who serve on committees and can influence the committees' outcome and profit from the outcome; and
c) Those individuals who accept material gifts (material gifts are defined as anything valued over $25) from vendors or possible vendors and can then use that vendor at FCC.

4.Disclosure. In the event of any conflict of interest, as stated in item three (3), full disclosure of all material facts about such transaction should be made to the board of Elders before engaging in the transaction. Disclosure may be made verbally to the board of Elders, but it should also be entered into the minutes of the next meeting.

5.Influence. When any possible situation in which a conflict of interest, or potential conflict of interest exists becomes a matter of Board action, such Elder, or volunteer Committee Member, shall not vote or speak or use personal influence on the matter, and shall not be counted in the quorum for a physical meeting at which board action is to be taken on the interest. The minutes of such actions taken on such matters shall clearly reflect these requirements have been met.

6.Board of Action. In the event a conflict of interest (or possible conflict of interest) has been brought before the board, and the board, through its wisdom, contemplates the transaction thoroughly and determines said transaction is just, fair, reasonable, and in the best interest of the Church, it may authorize the transaction. The decisions of the Board on these matters will rest in their sole discretion, and their first concern must be the welfare of FCC and the advancement of its purpose.

Note A: Every Member organization shall avoid conflicts of interest. Transactions with related parties may be undertaken only if all of the following are observed:

- a material transaction is fully disclosed in the audited financial statements of the organization;
- the related party is excluded from the discussion and approval of such transaction;
- a competitive bid or comparable valuation exists; and
- the organization's board has acted upon and demonstrated that the transaction is in the best interest of the Member organization.

Staff Member Harassment

Our workplace benefits from having a diverse group of Staff Members. You will work with other Staff Members who are different from you based on culture, gender, national origin, race and other differences. Diversity is a strength to the workplace.

FCC strongly opposes any form of harassment by any Staff Member. This includes harassing behavior based on national origin, culture, race, gender, color or other differences. Harassment may include sexual harassment including requests for sexual favors, obscene or profane language and any unwanted action of a sexual nature by Staff Members, co-workers or visitors. Harassment may also include disparaging comments about another person's appearance, manner of dress, accent, or any behavior that is abusive or offensive to another person and creates a hostile work environment. Comments made in a joking manner may easily be viewed to have hostile intent. Please report all cases of harassment to your Department Leader for investigation. Please recognize that an accusation of harassment is very serious. Any Staff Member who knowingly files a false claim of harassment against another person will face termination.

Employment, Recruitment, and Transfer

Recruitment and Selection Practices

Our recruitment, selection, training, and promotion practices are focused on job-related qualifications. We recruit prospective Staff Members from among the membership of Forum Christian Church or those immersed Christians who have been regularly attending if they are willing to join the Church within a specific time (usually 30 days) following employment. FCC may also seek applicants from outside the congregation when deemed appropriate and necessary (specialized skills, etc.) with the understanding that the recruit is an immersed believer who holds to the beliefs and teachings of FCC and is willing to join the Church.

Selection is determined not just based on performance and/or professional credentials, but also on the following criteria:

1. A love for the Lord and evidence of a growing spiritual walk.

2. A commitment to the body of believers at FCC and its leaders.

3. Gifts, abilities, passions, or credentials that qualify for an area of ministry.

Posting Positions

Whenever possible, all positions will be posted so that Staff members and the Church are aware of openings and can express interest in applying for same. Staff members will be made aware in Staff Meeting and most positions will be posted Church-wide on the Forum Website. Church membership at FCC does not guarantee an interview.

Minimum Age

Applicants are not considered for employment unless they have either reached their sixteenth birthday or have a valid work permit.

Reference Inquiries

All information submitted by an applicant pertaining to employment must be factual. Business and/or personal references will be checked prior to employment. If it is found that an applicant has misrepresented or omitted any information on an application, she/he will not be considered for employment. If, after employment has begun, it is discovered that any facts were omitted or misrepresented in the application, the Staff Member may be terminated. In addition to personal and business references, criminal records and credit history will be obtained on an as-needed basis for certain positions. All Department Leader and above positions will have both criminal and credit checks performed. Additionally, any Staff Member with access to funds or handling money will have credit and criminal checks conducted in addition to standard reference checking. Staff Members who are involved in youth or children activities sponsored by the Church will also have criminal checks completed.

Prior to hire, Ministry Staff input is solicited as to strengths and developmental needs of Church Members who apply for positions in the Church, as well as the applicant's gifts, spiritual maturity, and compatibility with those now presently employed.

Employment of Relatives

Although Forum Christian Church does not encourage the employment of relatives of those currently on staff, each applicant will be considered for employment based upon his or her individual qualifications. This policy exists to prevent conflicts that might occur related to accusations of favoritism, differences of philosophy, and necessity of discipline (including, but not limited to termination).

Outside Employment

Outside employment by a Staff Member is permitted only upon prior approval by the Lead Minister. Two weeks' notice must be given to the Lead Minister prior to the application of outside employment for consideration. A Staff Member must inform the Lead Minister prior to the application or start of any outside employment. Outside employment must not divide or appear to divide loyalty, reduce her/his ability to perform assigned duties in the Church, or reflect poorly on the Church's Christian witness. If any of the aforementioned areas are suspected by the Lead Minister he has the right to request the termination of the employee's outside employment position. Outside employment must be discontinued if it has an adverse effect on a Staff Member's work performance, is a conflict of interest, or negatively impacts the person's witness.

Social Events

When a Staff Member hosts a social event for other Staff Members, during non-scheduled work hours, attendance is not mandatory and no additional compensation is made. When the Church hosts a social event for Staff Members, attendance may be mandatory, but again no additional compensation is made. Such events are part of our efforts to provide opportunities for Staff Members and their families to enjoy a time of social interaction.

Employment Basics

Staff Member Classifications

Each employment position is classified as:

1. Full-time or part-time - Positions that regularly require 32 or more hours per week are full-time. Others are classified as part-time.
2. Salaried or hourly
3. Minister or non-minister (support staff)
4. Intern (applies or does not apply)

Minister - Full-time

- Hired to fill regular, authorized ministry, expected to work 40+ hours per week
- Salaried position
- Employed for an indefinite period of time
- Works consistently from one week to the next on a mutually agreed-upon schedule
- Eligible for health, disability, retirement, and life insurance benefits
- Eligible to claim housing allowance
- Considered to have dual tax status per IRS guidelines
- Eligible for Renewal Days and Sabbatical Leave

Minister - Part-time

- Hired to fill regular, authorized ministry, expected to work less than 32 hours per week as determined by their Department Leader
- May be salaried or hourly position
- Employed for an indefinite period of time
- Works consistently from one week to the next on a mutually agreed-upon schedule
- Eligible for retirement benefits
- Eligible to claim housing allowance
- Considered to have dual tax status per IRS guidelines
- Eligible for Renewal Days

Non-minister - Full-time
Support Staff - Full-time

- Hired to fill regular, authorized position, expected to work 32+ hours per week as determined by their Department Leader
- May be salaried or hourly position
- Employed for an indefinite period of time
- Works consistently from one week to the next on a mutually agreed-upon schedule
- Eligible for health, disability, retirement, and life insurance benefits
- Eligible for Renewal Days (1 per cycle)

Non-minister - Part-time
Support Staff - Part-time

- Hired to fill regular, authorized position, expected to work less than 32 hours per week as determined by Department Leader
- Hourly position
- Employed for an indefinite period of time
- Works consistently from one week to the next on a mutually agreed-upon schedule
- Eligible for retirement benefits

Intern

- Hired to fill temporary position for training purposes

- Employed for a specific period of time
- Works consistently from one week to the next on a mutually agreed-upon schedule
- Not eligible for benefits

Hours of Work

FCC office operates on a work schedule of 40 hours per week, Monday through Friday. Normal Church office hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Lunch periods are considered unpaid time off.

- Ministers are expected to work various shifts and times according to what is needed to accomplish ministry. Weekly schedules, including time spent in the office, should be maintained by the minister and approved by the Lead Minister. Notification should be made when changes to the schedule occur.

- Full-time Non-minister/Support Staff are required to work a set schedule of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, with an hour unpaid lunch period. Exceptions to this schedule must be pre-approved by the Lead Minister and the Executive Director must be notified for scheduling purposes.

- Part-time Non-minister/Support Staff work an agreed-upon number of hours and complete a time sheet to account for these hours. As much as possible, they should work a set weekly schedule.

- All Staff Members may be asked to work evenings or weekends on an as-needed basis to accomplish required programs. Time off during office hours can be taken to make up for this extra time but must be approved by the Department Leader. All Staff Members are held accountable to another Staff Member.

Personnel Records

The Financial Department is responsible for maintaining personnel records. A Staff Member's personnel record contains all information pertinent to his/her employment. The information in the personnel record is considered personal and confidential, and the Church takes precautions to ensure that each Staff Member's right to privacy is protected. Copies of these records may not be produced except as may be required by legal process or personnel's request. If a Staff Member wishes to see his/her personnel record, he/she should ask the Financial Administrator.

Right to Privacy

Any information about the membership or personal status, personal affairs, etc. of a Staff Member or a Church Member shall be confidential.

A Staff Member's right to privacy in interactions with other departments within FCC or with companies or government organizations is continually protected. FCC limits the release of Staff Member information to a few basic facts and will not release additional information without the prior written consent of the Staff Member. All such requests should be referred to the Lead Minister.

Changing Personal Information

Staff Members are responsible for informing the Financial Department of any changes in personal status such as:

- Name change - needed for mailing, payroll tax deductions
- Address - needed for mailing, payroll tax deductions
- Beneficiary change - needed for insurance
- Errors - needed for salary information, deductions, rate of pay
- Other changes in marital status, number of children - needed for benefits purposes

FCC is not responsible for any loss of benefits due to a Staff Member's failure to report such changes. Staff Members should review their paycheck stubs carefully to ensure that deductions are correct.

Communication & Staff Member Participation

Communications

Open communication between management and Staff Members is a prerequisite for the effective operations of the Church. Recognizing this fact, FCC leadership strives to keep Staff Members informed of activities and encourages them to voice their opinions and concerns. Meetings, Microsoft Teams, e-mail, etc. are used to inform Staff Members of items of general interest as well as specific items relevant to their jobs.

Open-Door Policy

FCC has an open-door policy for Church Members, guests, and Staff Members. Our commitment to our values is to encourage you to go to any member of our leadership team

to resolve a problem or concern about your job. You have the commitment from every member of the leadership team at FCC that our Open Door Policy may be used without apprehension. We hope you will be able to get your questions answered by your immediate Department Leader. If you feel uncomfortable approaching your Department Leader, the Lead Minister is available to help you.

Staff Meetings

The staff of Forum meets every week as a group for prayer, encouragement, and information. These meetings are an excellent time to exchange ideas and to have questions answered. These meetings are mandatory unless an absence is approved by the individual's Department Leader.

In addition, Department Leaders meet regularly with individual staff members and with their department as a whole. These meetings provide opportunities to check in on tasks, plan for future projects, and review ministry health based on specific health gauges.

Problem Resolution Procedure

We encourage you to communicate with your Department Leader about questions or concerns you have related to your job or the Church. We are committed to assisting you in resolving your concerns. If you have difficulty in resolving a concern with your immediate Department Leader or coworker, or if you reach an impasse over a job-related issue, you may meet with the Lead Minister or use the following guidelines to seek further resolve. **MATTHEW 18:15-20**. It is our hope that as we work together, we can communicate honestly with each other and maintain a mutual respect that will allow all of us to be examples of integrity to those we lead and serve.

Compensation & Salary Administration

Payroll Procedures

Staff Members are paid on the 15th and last working day of the month. Pay periods are bimonthly. If payday falls on a weekend or holiday, you will be paid on the closest working day. Employees may be required to log and submit their hours electronically.

Payroll Deductions

- No deductions are made from Ministerial Staff paychecks unless requested.

- Non-ministers and Support Staff have the required FICA/MCARE deductions taken from their paycheck plus Federal and State income taxes as determined by their W-4 unless requested otherwise.

All requests for changes in deductions must be made in writing to the Financial Department.

Comp Time

Forum Christian Church recognizes that, due to the nature and expectations of ministry, there will be times when work goes beyond the typical weekly schedule. During seasons of camps and certain conferences when overnight work is required, a minister may be eligible to take Comp Time. The amount and timing of Comp Time will be determined by the individual's Department Leader and must be pre-approved before being taken. Upon approval, Comp Time must be taken within 3 weeks of the date in which the overage occurred. After the 3 weeks, the time will expire. The Staff Member should also record Time Away through the form on the Staff Dashboard.

Housing Allowance

Ministerial Staff is allowed to deduct a housing allowance on their W-2's each year. Forms are available from the Financial Department. To qualify for this housing allowance, requests must be given to the Executive Director by October 31st to be approved by the Elders for the upcoming calendar year.

Accepting Gifts and Gratuities

Staff Members should not accept gifts in excess of $25 in the form of money, items, presents, trips, etc. from members or others who are vendors or potential vendors in an area where the Staff Member has direct influence in which that vendor is selected. Otherwise, Staff Members are free to accept gifts and gratuities from members of the congregation and others who are grateful for the ministry service provided to them.

Benefits & Amenities

Vacation

Paid vacation is a benefit received by Ministers and Non-ministers/Support Staff. Paid vacation is earned annually for all Staff Members. Any unused vacation days are lost and do not carry over to the next calendar year.

Advancements to the next category/tier of vacation time happen on January 1 of the year when a staff member is due to reach the required years of service. For example, if a Full-time Ministerial staff member is due to reach 4 years of completed service on June 15, 2023, then on Jan 1, 2023, they will be granted 3 weeks of vacation for use in 2023.

New Staff Members are eligible to begin taking vacation time after completion of 3 months of service. The balance of vacation between their date of hire and the next January 1 must be worked out with the Lead Minister.

After the first year of service, vacation is earned as follows:

Full-time Ministerial Staff

1 to 3 Years of Completed Service

Two weeks if taken as weekly increments.
Ten days if taken in daily increments.
Vacation should not include two subsequent Sundays
A maximum of three Sundays may be taken as vacation annually

4 to 9 Years of Completed Service

Three weeks if taken as weekly increments.
Fifteen days if taken in daily increments.
Vacation should not include two subsequent Sundays
A maximum of three Sundays may be taken as vacation annually

10 Years and beyond of Completed Service

Four weeks if taken as weekly increments.
Twenty days if taken in daily increments.
Vacation should not include two subsequent Sundays
A maximum of three Sundays may be taken as vacation annually

Full-time Non-ministerial/Support Staff

1 to 3 Years of Completed Service

10 Days (Two Weeks/80 hours)

4 to 10 Years of Completed Service

15 Days (Three Weeks/120 hours)

Over 10 Years of Completed Service

20 Days (Four Weeks/160 hours)

Part-time Ministerial Staff
Part-time Non-ministerial/Support Staff

After completion of three months of service

Part-time Staff earn the average equivalent of one week's salary per year. (To determine the average hours worked for one week, total actual hours worked during the four weeks prior to vacation and then divide that total by four to get the average hours worked per week.)

After five years of service

Part-time Staff earn the average equivalent of two week's salary per year.

FCC believes that quality of work is enhanced by annually providing Staff Members adequate time for rest and relaxation away from daily routine. All Staff Members eligible for paid vacation are strongly encouraged and expected to take their vacation; if not taken, earned but not used vacation time will be lost.

From time to time, FCC hosts special events. It is requested that you do not schedule vacation days off during FCC-hosted major events.

Vacation must be scheduled as far in advance as possible, approved by your Department Leader, and then reported to the Lead Minister, as applicable. Staff Members should indicate planned time off as soon as possible on the Staff Planning Calendar on the Staff Dashboard. This is followed up by completing the Time Away form in the Staff Dashboard 24-48 hours before the absence.

The number of Staff Members on vacation at any specific time must still allow for quality service to our members and guests. If there is a decision regarding which Staff Member is given preference, seniority in the scheduling of Staff Members as well as the date of the request is taken into consideration.

Any unused vacation time is not considered for payment/reimbursement upon separation.

Personal Days

Forum's Staff Members are given Personal Days to meet personal and individual needs that may arise during the year. Examples may include personal or family appointments, attending to an unexpected family need or emergency, or taking time to handle an important personal matter that cannot reasonably be scheduled outside of work hours.

Full-time employees may take two (2) Personal Days per calendar year. Part-time employees may take one (1) Personal Day per calendar year. Personal Days may not be taken in units of less than one-half (½) day.

Personal Days must be approved and submitted in advance to the Department Leader, except in cases of emergency. The Staff Member should also complete the Time Away Form on the Staff Dashboard.

Personal Days may not be taken during the first six (6) months of employment. Personal Days may not be accrued or carried over into the next calendar year. Employees are not paid for unused Personal days at the end of the calendar year or upon termination.

Renewal Days

Forum's Staff Members are encouraged to use Renewal Days as an opportunity for spiritual refreshment and intentional time with God. A Renewal Day is an eight-hour period set aside for activities such as Bible study, reading, prayer, fasting, spiritual reflection, or planning and preparation.

Ministers are expected to take one (1) Renewal Day every two months, with a minimum of eight (8) weeks between Renewal Days. Non-ministry staff may take one (1) Renewal Day per cycle.

The date for a Renewal Day should be selected, approved by the Department Leader, and placed on the Staff Dashboard Planning Calendar within the first week of the month in which the Renewal Day will be taken. 24-48 hours before the Renewal Day, the Staff Member should also complete the Time Away Form on the Staff Dashboard.

Renewal Days may not be accrued or carried over into the next calendar year. Employees are not paid for unused Renewal Days at the end of the calendar year or upon termination.

Holidays

The Church office is officially closed on the following days:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Presidents' Day	Thanksgiving Day
Monday after Easter	Friday after Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve
Independence Day	Christmas Day

Other days to close the office or early dismissal days are up to the discretion of the Lead Minister. No holiday pay is earned for these days.

On the occasion that a holiday falls on the weekend, the office will be closed the following Monday.

For ministers, if the office holiday falls on your normal weekly day off, then another day that week may be taken as your day off.

Sick Pay

Regular full-time Staff Members are eligible for sick pay. Sick pay accrues at the rate of twelve (12) days per year.

Part-time Staff Members are also eligible for sick pay. Sick pay accrues at a rate of one (1) hour for every thirty (30) hours worked.

For example, if the part-time Staff Member is expected to average 20 hours/week (according to their Job Description and Compensation Agreement), we calculate 20 hours × 52 weeks (1,040 hours). Then divide by 30 hours (34.7 hours). Finally, divide by 8 since the workday is 8 hours (4.3 days). We will round up to the next half day, and the Staff Member will have 4.5 days of sick time for the year.

Sick pay is intended to provide paid time off when a Staff Member is unable to work due to illness or injury. Sick pay is not provided for disabilities resulting from intentionally self-inflicted injury.

Staff Members may also use sick time to provide necessary short-term care (three days or less per occurrence) for dependents who are ill. Dependents are defined as a current spouse, child, stepchild living in the Staff Member's household, or parent or stepparent for whom the Staff Member is the primary source of support.

Sick time may be taken in full-day or half-day increments.

When taking sick time, the Staff Member should notify the Department Leader and submit the absence in the Scheduling Channel on Teams. The Staff Member should also complete the Time Away Form on the Staff Dashboard.

FCC may grant additional time off as an unpaid leave of absence when a Staff Member has used all available sick time. Requests for additional paid sick days must be submitted in writing to the Lead Minister for approval. Approval of additional paid sick time is at the sole discretion of FCC. FCC reserves the right to require appropriate documentation from a physician to verify an illness or disability. In all cases, the circumstances surrounding an absence may be considered when determining eligibility for sick pay and the duration of sick pay benefits.

Sick pay may accrue up to a maximum of sixty (60) days. Sick pay does not accrue during a leave of absence.

Upon termination of employment for any reason, accrued sick time is not paid out because sick pay is not a termination benefit.

Maternity Leave

Forum provides six weeks of paid maternity leave to Staff Members after one year of employment. Notification must be made to the Staff Member's Department Leader no less than six months before the expected due date or adoption.

Paternity Leave

Forum provides up to two weeks of paid paternity leave for eligible staff members. The leave must be taken within six months of the birth or adoption and must be approved in advance by the staff member's Department Leader. Vacation and/or sick time may not be added to the time granted for paternity leave.

Bereavement Pay

Paid bereavement time of up to three days is allowable upon the death of a member of a regular full-time Staff Member's immediate family. Bereavement pay is granted only for an absence on scheduled workdays. Additional days of absence without pay, or vacation days with pay, may be granted for an extended period of bereavement. Immediate family is restricted to a Staff Member's parent or legal guardian, brother, sister, spouse, children, stepchildren, grandparent, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law or any relative living in the same household with the Staff Member.

Funeral Pay

In addition to bereavement pay, the Church feels strongly that it is important for Staff Members to be able to minister to all friends, neighbors, acquaintances, and others they know in this time of great need, even if these persons are not in their immediate family. Paid time off of up to four hours will be granted to any Staff Member to attend any funeral for ministry and support to friends and family.

Jury Duty Pay

When you have completed ninety days of continuous full-time or part-time service, you will have income protection while serving on jury duty. To be eligible for jury duty pay you must notify your Department Leader as soon as possible. The Church pays your regular weekly base pay, provided you have reported to work as required when not serving on the jury. You must work those hours you are not required to serve as a juror. On the days when you are released from jury duty early, call your Department Leader to verify if you are needed.

Insurance

FCC offers to regular full-time Staff Members the following insurance coverage:

*Life Insurance

Please see the Financial Administrator for details regarding this policy. Coverage offered is reviewed annually and is at the sole discretion of FCC. Coverage may be changed at any time at the sole discretion of FCC.

Savings/Retirement Plan

FCC sponsors a qualified retirement savings plan with options for pre-tax accounts or post-tax Roths. Staff Members may save up to the IRS limit of their gross pay through the plan. The Elders have established a matching fund up to 3% of an employee's yearly taxable income. Effective January 1, 2021, Staff Members are eligible for the matching church contribution at the date of hire.

Social Security

All ordained, commissioned, and licensed ministers are eligible to opt out of Social Security withholdings by filing Form 4029. A staff member who chooses to opt out of Social Security loses governmental provisions for retirement, disability, dependents, and survivor benefits. Forum will not provide these provisions in the event of sudden disability, partial disability, or death. Should a staff member become disabled in any capacity that prevents them from executing their primary ministerial functions, the leadership team will determine, at that time, the appropriate measures to be taken to ensure proper stewardship standards for both the Church and staff member. This includes full compensation until a formal evaluation can be completed and a decision made (maximum 6 months).

For employees who are 4363 exempt, Forum Christian Church will provide an "equivalent Social Security benefit" to help them consider long-term financial health. It should be understood payments are not retroactive.

Those who choose to opt out of Social Security benefits are eligible to use up to 7.65% of their taxable income for Forum-paid supplemental benefits. Those supplemental benefits must be for an equivalent social security benefit (i.e. disability insurance, life insurance, or retirement investments).

Expense Accounts

As part of the benefits package provided by FCC, each full-time minister and some non-ministry staff members may be permitted an Expense Account in an amount of $1,000. This account is intended to cover expenses related to the staff position which the Church does not want the staff member to have to cover out-of-pocket. Some examples may include:

- Mileage reimbursement or car rental expense for ministry purposes
- Small gift/Bible for a member you're discipling/mentoring
- Flowers for a sick or grieving member
- Lunch or coffee with a ministry volunteer (more about meal expenses below)

Expense Account funds may be used for meals (including coffee/snacks) when:

- There is a substantial ministry purpose
- The participants in the meal/coffee/snack are actively engaged in ministry purposes during the meal (or immediately before or after)
- If the participants consist of only staff members, ministry funds should not be used. Exception: occasional team events, planning meetings, or goal celebrations may be appropriate.
- The meal is connected to out-of-town travel connected to your ministry.
- Coffee/lunch with a member or volunteer for a specific ministry purpose

Overall, the purpose and amount of expense should demonstrate good judgment. The terms of specific Expense Account usage are at the sole discretion of the Lead Minister and Financial Administrator.

Sabbatical

FCC provides 40 (consecutive) days of paid Sabbatical to full-time **Ministerial** Staff upon completion of every seven years of uninterrupted full-time ministerial service to FCC. This time off is in addition to regularly accrued vacation time. The full policy is included at the end of this handbook.

Professionalism & Employee Conduct

Attendance

Absence from scheduled work, whether "excused" or "unexcused," can lessen the Church's effectiveness. Absences cause undue hardship on co-workers. Even excused absences create problems if they become too frequent.

Consistent, prompt arrival for work is necessary to ensure proper operation of FCC. We have a tremendous number of programs and activities going on each day. Our members and guests depend on us to be here to ensure they are able to enjoy maximum benefit from the time they spend with us.

All Staff Members are expected to make every effort to arrive and be prepared to start work by their assigned work time. Tardiness should be communicated with the Department Leader and other staff via Microsoft Teams or a group email. Time off of a half day or more should be discussed with the Department Leader and then recorded on the Time Away Form on teh Staff Dashboard.

Absenteeism

A Staff Member who is absent excessively may be subject to discipline up to and including discharge. A Staff Member who is absent three consecutive workdays without proper notification will be considered to have voluntarily resigned. Your Department Leader may request a Staff Member to provide a statement from a physician.

Work from Home

The normal expectation for Staff Members at Forum Christian Church is to work onsite during regular business hours unless approval for work at home has been granted by your Department Leader.

Code of Conduct

Staff Members of FCC are in very visible positions representing the Church and our faith. As a result, all Staff Members are expected to conduct themselves with the utmost integrity at all times both in the workplace and in public settings in the community. General guidelines follow which explain the expected level of integrity:

- Staff Members of the opposite sex should not travel together alone in a car or on out of town trips.
- Staff Members should at all times avoid gossip.
- Staff Members should abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages.
- Staff Members should refrain from smoking.
- Staff Members should follow the specific dress code in public settings and business meetings as defined by the Lead Minister.

Personal Appearance

Staff Members are expected to be neat and well-groomed and to dress appropriately at all times. Please use good judgment in your grooming habits. Your appearance should reflect your professional status as an employee of FCC. We cannot allow employees to wear clothes designed for recreation activities unless that work is part of the Staff Member's assignment. We ask that you use Godly wisdom in how you represent Christ and the Church in your appearance.

Statement of Confidentiality

In the course of doing your job, you may have access to verbal information, records, and reports which are considered sensitive or confidential. Examples of sensitive and confidential matters are (but not limited to):

Member Information
Individual Salary/Wage Rates
Personal Employee Data
Private Information Shared by a Member
Financial Information
Private Gifts, Bequeaths
Legal Matters
Prayer Requests

Important: Information on members of the Church is never released to anyone outside the Church. This includes addresses and phone numbers.

We must guard the information under our care or stewardship to preserve our trust relationship. Because improper disclosure of this confidential data may cause harm to FCC, a Staff Member, member, or guest, privacy of this information must be maintained.

FCC has the highest regard for the integrity of each employee and member. Please make the most conscious Christian decision about the information you have available to you.

Ministry-Related Trips

Ideally, Staff Members will indicate planned time off (vacations, conferences, ministry trips, etc) on the Staff Dashboard Planning Calendar at least three months in advance. This is followed up by submitting the Time Away form on the Staff Dashboard 24-48 hours before the absence. This schedule needs to be pre-approved by the Department Leader to ensure adequate staffing in the Church and office and to ensure that each Staff Member is given equal opportunities.

Seminars & Conferences

Staff Members may be given the opportunity to attend a seminar or conference related to their area of ministry. Any paid time away from work for attendance at a conference or seminar must be approved by the Department Leader and Lead Minister.

Staff members wanting to attend a conference should complete a GRACE sheet indicating what they intend to gain from the conference and how conference attendance would be beneficial to the ministry. The GRACE sheet should be reviewed with the Department Leader before conference registration is completed. The number of conferences any one staff member attends may be limited at the discretion of the Department Leader and Lead Minister.

Costs for approved conferences and seminars will be charged to the individual staff member's conference/continuing education budget account. This will include all trip-related costs (mileage reimbursements, lodging, etc.) along with registration fees.

Tuition

Ministers may have the opportunity to enroll in a degree program at an approved Bible college. Tuition payment, along with any paid time away from work for class attendance, must be approved by the Lead Minister and Chairman of the Elders.

Mission Trips

It is the policy of FCC to provide the opportunity for all Staff Members to receive paid time off to minister with and to others on a mission trip. All mission trips must be approved in advance by the Missions Ministry. Frequency of approved mission trips is dependent upon Missions Ministry preference and number of other ministry-related trips scheduled for the year. Staff Members are responsible for raising their own support/funding for travel and living expenses. Funds should not be included in the weekend Church offering.

Camp, Speaking Engagements, Retreats, Adventure Trips

Again, opportunities are provided for Staff Members for these events but they must be approved in advance by the Lead Minister and be limited by the number of requests given for the year. Participation in such events should not reduce the normal work schedule and/or take away from the amount of time Staff Members spend at Church.

Valuing Volunteers

The Volunteer Program plays an essential role in Church operations as well as effective educational programming. Volunteers are essential to everyday operations and the Church is blessed with a loyal group of adult and youth volunteers.

For this reason, FCC is committed to maintaining an active Volunteer Program at FCC. Volunteers add an excellent dimension and are extremely important to the ministry. Each Staff Member should make every effort to maintain a welcoming and professional working relationship with our volunteers.

The basic elements of an effective Volunteer Program include identification, matching with spiritual gifts, training and orientation, accountability, meaningful and enjoyable duties to perform, rewards, and recognition. Each department must carefully consider these elements as they incorporate and assimilate volunteers.

Member and Guest Respect and Courtesy

FCC is fully committed to friendly, compassionate, and helpful service to its Church Members and many visitors. At all times, Staff Members must remember to treat members and guests with friendliness, honesty, respect, and dignity. Often, those who come to FCC are hurting and lonely. Staff Members can model the love of Jesus through their patience, compassion, and caring. First impressions of friendliness and courtesy are of utmost importance in achieving this customer-friendly attitude.

Spiritual Growth and Accountability

All Staff Members of FCC are strongly expected to attend at least one of the weekend Gatherings to be plugged into the spiritual direction and teaching of the Church.

Outside Board Involvement

As a Staff Member of FCC, we must ensure that involvement in outside activities related to other Church or community organizations is in line with our mission and goals. As a result, participation in any outside boards as a board member, committee chairperson, etc., should have the prior approval of the Lead Minister to ensure that the purposes for your service are complimentary with other activities of the Church and also not duplicative of any other programs or efforts.

Wage Attachments

We expect you to be a financially responsible member of our community. Failure to meet your financial obligations reflects poorly on you and on FCC. In all cases, we will honor judgments from our court system. If you are in great financial jeopardy, please ask the Elders to guide you to the appropriate resource. Repeated wage attachments for different indebtedness may be grounds for disciplinary action.

Copyright

Before copying another's work in any way, procedures must be followed. Some companies/individuals/businesses charge a fee to reproduce their materials. Some require a certain credit line. Finally, some do not allow reproduction at all. Before copying anyone else's work, please check out the copyright restrictions.

Use of AI

The following guidelines have been established to utilize the benefits of technological advancement while managing risks and ensuring consistency with our doctrines and values.

1. The use of AI is to aid, not replace, generative content, especially teaching and preaching content.
2. AI and language modeling software is not a substitute for source material and must not be used for citation, reference, or primary literature.
3. AI use for graphics and video content is permissible with department leader approval.

Consistent Messages and Communications

As our Church grows, it becomes more difficult, and yet more important, to ensure that all items distributed in the name of Forum Christian Church or one of our ministries are theologically sound and are produced with excellence. To avoid having a volunteer or Staff Member give a false impression of the Church's doctrinal stance on a matter, and to ensure that public statements are aligned with the mission and theology of the Church, all relevant materials are to be passed through the Lead Minister for review. The following are examples:

- Any brochure, pamphlet, etc. containing theological subject matter or even a large amount of text.
- Anything that will be distributed to a large audience.
- Policy manuals and guidebooks.
- Website information.
- Verbal or written statements to the press or other external media.

Officiating at Weddings and Funerals

Frequently Ministers are asked by members and non-members to conduct weddings and funerals for members and non-members. Any compensation received by the minister from a family or organization for a wedding or funeral remains the property of the individual conducting the service. Participation in weddings should not reduce the normal work schedule and/or take away from the amount of time Staff Members spend at Church.

Work for Hire

This policy concerns all works created at FCC during the course of employment using Church equipment, Church supplies, Church Staff Members, etc. Included but not limited to this policy are sermons, musical lyrics/compositions/compilations/arrangements, educational programs/lesson plans and other literary, musical, sound recording, computer programs, motion picture/audiovisual works, as well as compilations and derivatives thereof. General guidelines follow, but this is a complex subject that should be discussed with the Lead Minister. Written agreements will be entered into with Staff Members and other professionals regarding this matter.

- All works created during the course of employment are the sole property of FCC, as the work has been created as part of the duties and responsibilities of the Staff Member.
- Some works can be specifically excluded from coverage under this policy in writing by FCC.
- While FCC owns the rights to the material, a royalty plan should be put in place whereby proceeds from the works can be shared with the Staff Member.

The above is intended as an overall summary only and should be discussed with the Lead Minister.

Rules & General Information

Church-Owned Vehicles

FCC vehicles may only be used for Church business. Vehicles may not be used for personal errands or personal transportation unless given authorization. While using a Church-owned vehicle, those in the front seat must always wear a seat belt and you must never operate the vehicle under the influence of any intoxicant. Our vehicles are smoke-free. Anyone driving a church vehicle is not allowed to use a cell phone while operating the vehicle. This includes texting, talking, and performing any other function on a cell phone.

The following guidelines are listed for anyone wanting to drive a vehicle owned by FCC for purposes of transportation to and from a Church-sponsored and/or approved event. The vehicle may also be used to pick up someone to attend an approved event. Occasionally a van may be used to transport an item that may be too large for a passenger vehicle, that is owned or leased by FCC, that will be used for approved purposes. To make the use of Church vans cost-effective, a minimum of five people must be traveling together. All requests for use must be made by reservation in the Church office. See Executive Director for point of contact.

All drivers must be between the ages of 25 and 70 and have submitted a copy of their driver's license to the Church office before driving any FCC vehicle. Forum staff members may drive at the age of 21. The Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company provides insurance coverage for our vehicles. They reserve the right to check the driving record of all individuals submitting a request to drive a Church vehicle and reserve the right to prohibit an individual from driving a Church-owned vehicle.

All drivers of the FCC coach bus must have a CDL with passenger and air brake endorsements, a medical card, and a completed and clean driving record. A copy of their driver's license and medical card must be submitted to the Church office.

Maintenance of Equipment

All Staff Members are responsible for ensuring that FCC equipment is handled with care and kept in good working order and in its proper place. If a Staff Member should notice that equipment is missing, damaged or defective, she/he should immediately call it to the attention of the Executive Director.

Technology, Devices, and Network Use

Forum provides Staff Members with technology and access to systems needed to carry out the work and ministries of the Church. This includes a church-issued laptop, access to the Church's secure Wi-Fi network, and a church-paid cell phone plan for Staff Members who are provided with one. Staff Members are responsible for purchasing and maintaining their own cell phone devices.

Church-issued equipment, systems, software, accounts, and network access are to be used responsibly and primarily for Church business and ministry purposes. Staff Members are expected to take reasonable care of Church-issued equipment and use technology in a manner that protects the security, integrity, and reputation of Forum.

Staff Members are provided with passwords and other security measures to protect Church information, files, accounts, and network access. Passwords and other security credentials

must be kept confidential and should not be shared with others except as authorized by the Church.

Staff Members should not use Church technology, systems, or network access for purposes that are illegal, inappropriate, or that could compromise the security of Church information or systems. Any Staff Member who becomes aware of unauthorized access, misuse, loss of equipment, a security concern, or other inappropriate use of Church technology should notify their Department Leader as soon as possible.

Church-issued laptops, Church accounts, Church files, and information stored on or accessed through Church systems remain the property of FCC. Staff Members should have no expectation of personal privacy when using Church-owned equipment, Church accounts, or Church systems. The Church may access or review information on its equipment and systems when reasonably necessary for security, operational, legal, or ministry purposes.

Upon separation from employment, Staff Members must return all Church-issued equipment and provide any necessary passwords or access information for Church accounts and systems to the Lead Minister or designated Church leadership. Staff Members must not retain, copy, or remove Church files or confidential information after employment ends.

Additional Resources

As part of the compensation for ministry staff, there are additional resources that FCC can and will provide. These can include but are not to the exclusion of, books (whether digital or hard copy), software, computer hardware, and other printed materials. These resources are purchased by FCC, and with the authorization of the Lead Minister, can be kept by the ministry staff employee.

Software and Copyright Laws

With staff members regularly using computers, cloud-based applications, and other digital tools, all users must comply with applicable copyright laws and software licensing agreements. Software, applications, and digital services may be licensed to a specific user, device, account, or organization and may have restrictions on installation, copying, sharing, or distribution. Any software or licenses provided to a staff member may not be duplicated, shared, or installed on unauthorized devices unless expressly permitted by the applicable license agreement and authorized by the organization.

E-mail

E-mail (interoffice and Internet) is only for work-related purposes. All information transmitted by, received from, or stored in the e-mail system is the property of the Church and there should be no assumption of privacy in use of the e-mail system. Staff Members may not send or disseminate e-mail or attachments that are vulgar, harassing, intimidating, offensive, defamatory, or discriminatory towards or about anyone. The access of Internet sites deemed inappropriate for the witness of an employee of FCC will be grounds for disciplinary action. Any communication that can be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based on their race, color, national origin, faith, gender, age, disability, or other is strictly prohibited.

Social Media Policy

Social media is a powerful tool to engage our neighbors and the people we are trying to connect to Jesus. However, due to the widespread reach of social media and the fact that anything posted is available online in perpetuity, all staff members must remain mindful that when they create a social media post they are representing themselves, Jesus, and His church. As a staff member, it is impossible to separate yourself from the connection you have with FCC regardless of any disclaimers you provide in your post. Considering and practicing James 1:19-20, "be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God", may be wise. If a staff member has questionable social media posts that violate a Biblical principle or a value of Forum Christian Church, they will be asked to remove the content and/or post a retraction of the original post.

As a helpful guide, please be abundantly cautious about posting anything related to the following subjects (not an exhaustive list):

- Abortion
- Gender issues
- Homosexuality
- Politics
- Racism
- Sexual promiscuity
- Slander of others

If you have questions about what is acceptable, please contact your Department Leader to discuss.

Press Communication

There may be times when news or social media representatives will approach Forum or its Staff Members about interviews, photography, or other requests. Please refer them to the

Lead Minister. If approached unannounced for an interview, be friendly and respectful as you connect them with the Lead Minister. Under all circumstances, be sure to convey that we value our relationships with the press as you show genuine care and urgency in your interaction.

Cell Phone Plan

Staff Members may be added to the Forum cell phone plan at no cost to the Staff Member. Staff Members are responsible for purchasing and maintaining their own cell phone device. A Staff Member may also add their spouse to the Forum cell phone plan. A monthly charge will apply for the spouse's line and will be deducted from the Staff Member's paycheck each pay period. The spouse is responsible for purchasing and maintaining their own cell phone device.

Other family members are not eligible to be added to the Forum cell phone plan.

Removal of Church Property

Removing Church property/equipment from the property is prohibited unless permission is given by the Lead Minister or Executive Director.

Waste

Wasted time, materials, and supplies increase FCC's operating cost which, in turn, means we cannot accomplish the Church's mission as effectively. Therefore, Staff Members should treat FCC property as carefully as they would their own.

Personal Visitors, Calls and Mail

Personal telephone calls and visitors during working hours should be limited to emergencies. Staff Members should not send personal correspondence in Church envelopes and should not use Church postage.

Lost and Found

Money or valuables found by a Staff Member should be turned in to the Church office. If a lost article is not claimed within 30 days, it is processed for disposal to a charitable organization.

Children at Work

Staff Members are expected to use good professional judgment and discretion when they bring their children to the workplace. The children should not interfere with the work commitments and responsibilities of the Staff Member nor should they disturb the working environment of others in the office. If children need to be with the employee parent or guardian in the event of an emergency, talk it over with your Department Leader to seek a solution in the best interest of the Church and the child. Children should be supervised by the parent or guardian at all times while in the workplace.

Weapons

All Staff Members are prohibited from carrying, displaying or using any firearms or weapons of any kind on the premises of any FCC facility.

Gambling

Church property is to be kept free of any gambling activities. It is not appropriate.

Smoking

Our Church is a smoke-free environment.

Alcohol and Substance Abuse

No Staff Member may bring alcoholic beverages or any illegal substance onto the Church property or report for work under the influence of any intoxicant. Staff Members who are found manufacturing, using, distributing, possessing, or selling an illegal substance or intoxicant will be immediately disciplined, up to and including discharge. Staff Members who recognize the presence of a personal problem from alcohol and/or substance abuse and who wish to seek help may contact their Department Leader or any Elder. We will refer you to a counseling service.

As a concerned employer in a Christian community, we must have a drug-free workplace. We will vigorously enforce policies that keep our workplace drug-free. Should there be probable cause to believe a Staff Member is under the influence of an intoxicant, a drug/alcohol screen may be required.

In all cases, we must maintain the highest standards of behavior. Please recognize we are role models and continuously influence those we serve. We have a great and lasting concern for those in our Church community and want them to have the highest possible example.

Sexual Misconduct

All allegations of sexual misconduct must be taken seriously. All allegations should be reported to the respective Department Leader as immediately as possible. All staff members are responsible to address suspicious behavior or any behavior that may be contrary to church policy and to document and report such occurrences to the proper authorities.

Cleanliness

Staff Members are expected to practice good stewardship by helping keep Forum's facilities clean, orderly, and well-maintained. Desks and work areas should be kept clean and organized, and food and beverages should not be allowed to accumulate in work areas.

Food stored in refrigerators should be properly covered and labeled. Staff Members are responsible for cleaning up after themselves in workrooms, kitchens, and other shared spaces, including disposing of trash.

When leaving an area, Staff Members should turn off lights and equipment and, when appropriate, ensure that the building is locked and secure.

Financial Matters

Budgeting Process

Each ministry team leader who is responsible for an operating budget line item must submit in writing to the Executive Director their yearly budget for the following year's budget. The ministry budget will then be reviewed by the Treasurer and Executive Director. If any corrections or changes are required, it must be resubmitted within 24 hours of original receipt. The recommended budget will then be submitted to the Elders for final approval at

the November Elders meeting. Upon final Elder approval, there is no allowance for alterations or changes to be made to the budget without Elder approval. Upon final Elder budget approval, each ministry team leader is free to execute their budget expenditures in alignment with the approved spending parameters (month, cost, flow through monies).

Any additional (unbudgeted) expenditures greater than $500, must be approved before purchase. Monthly budgetary review is conducted by the Financial Administrator, Treasurer, and the Executive Director. If there are any discrepancies with the month's spending procedures, further review and inquiry may be made by the finance team.

Purchasing

Each minister and administrative staff member will be issued a Central Bank of Boone County MasterCard to be used exclusively for the purchase of budgeted ministry expenses. The receipt(s) from purchases must be immediately submitted to the Financial Administrator. Each purchase receipt(s) must include the signature of the staff member, indication of whose credit card was used, and the budgetary category (i.e. middle school: event, children: Sunday morning, etc.) of the expense. Staff members should not use their FCC-issued MasterCard to make personal purchases.

If a staff member is not able to make a purchase for ministry needs using the aforementioned church-issued credit card, a purchase may be made using personal means, and a full reimbursement may be submitted to the Financial Administrator. After a purchase review by the Financial Administrator, a check will be made payable in the amount submitted and distributed to the staff member.

As a recognized not-for-profit organization FCC is tax-exempt from local, state, and federal taxes. When making a purchase you must utilize our tax-exempt status. This requires that each staff member possess a tax-exempt letter to present when making a purchase. Tax-exempt letters are available from the Financial Administrator.

Mileage Reimbursement

Miles traveled by Staff Members for approved ministry purposes using the Staff Member's personal vehicle may be eligible for reimbursement. The reimbursement rate is based on IRS guidelines and is subject to change. Because the IRS guideline accounts for fuel costs, the Church does not cover the fuel purchase for travel when mileage is being reimbursed. Staff Members are not reimbursed for mileage for the following:

- Travel to/from educational classes
- Travel related to serving on an outside board unless the board is directly related to your ministry

- Travel for weddings, funerals, or other events where Staff Members are being paid for their services

Mileage reimbursements related to approved ministry conferences will be charged to the individual minister's conference budget account.

Distribution and Solicitation

Commercial solicitation by Staff Members in the workplace without approval of leadership is against FCC policy, as is all non-commercial solicitation in work areas during working hours. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Lead Minister.

Outsiders are prohibited from soliciting funds or political support, selling tickets, chances or merchandise and distributing or placing literature on the facility's premises without approval from the Lead Minister.

Designated Giving

From time to time individuals attending the Church may offer financial assistance for a specific ministry or purpose. Although we are grateful for their contribution, designated giving can undermine the duly appointed leadership of the Church and the concept of a unified budget. Therefore, no Staff Member should encourage designated giving or the purchase of certain items for a given ministry area. Exceptions may be made if it becomes clear that the money was not solicited in any way by a Staff Member, is above and beyond the normal giving of the individual, and flows out of what the individual considers to be a leading by the Holy Spirit.

Fundraising Policy

Individual ministries within FCC may not raise funds on their own or endorse the fundraising efforts of other groups without the approval of the Elders and notification to the Financial Department. This policy is designed to maintain financial accountability and to protect the integrity of FCC. The only exception is approved "service for pay" (i.e., hiring of youth for jobs).

Health & Safety

First Aid

Staff Members can find minor first aid equipment in these locations:

- Church office workroom
- Starting Point desk
- Coffee Bar kitchen
- KidsZone
- Family Life Center kitchen

Visitors to the Building

Our facility is open to the public. Visitors are our responsibility. When you have a scheduled visitor, please have your visitor report to the Receptionist Area of the Church office. The receptionist will notify you that a visitor has arrived. You are requested to:

- Meet your visitor promptly
- Stay with your visitor throughout the visit
- Make certain your visitor is not left to find her/his way out of the building

Loss of Church Property

Please be aware that not all who enter our doors are members. The public has access to the building. Some may not share our culture and values. We all share the responsibility for protecting and preserving Staff Member and Church property. It is important that you protect your personal property and take particular care not to leave valuables unattended or in a highly visible area. Take care to protect our equipment, such as laptops, iPads, etc. The Church is unable to accept responsibility for the loss of your personal property. Articles found by Staff Members should be brought to the Church office.

Safety Policy

Safety is everyone's responsibility every day. A safe working environment must be fostered by continuous control efforts, teamwork, and innovation. Experience has proven that the success of the most complete safety programs is dependent upon the attitudes and working habits of each Staff Member.

While FCC has the primary responsibility for establishing safety policies and procedures, it is the responsibility of all Staff Members to work in a safe manner. This requires the cooperation and commitment of everyone.

Threats and Violence

We must always maintain a work environment free from intimidation, threats or violent acts. Staff Members who feel they have been subjected to such threats are to report the incident immediately to their Department Leader. Staff Members are empowered to contact the proper law enforcement authorities if they believe a threat to their safety or someone else's exists. FCC reserves the right to conduct searches and inspections of Staff Members' personal effects, equipment, cabinets, file drawers, closets, etc. Any illegal and/or unauthorized articles discovered may be retained by FCC and may be turned over to a law enforcement representative.

Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy

Our actions in this area must be above reproach, especially where children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults are concerned. The following guidelines will be strictly followed:

Two Adult Rule (preferred) - At least two screened adults must be present at every function and in each classroom, vehicle, or the enclosed area during all activities involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

Rule of Three (worst case scenario) - At least three individuals (at least one must be a screened adult and the remaining two no younger than 5 years of age) must be present at every function and in each classroom, vehicle, or the enclosed area during all activities involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

All employees and volunteers complete an authorization to obtain a criminal background check.

Criminal background checks are required for all employees.

Staff Members of the opposite sex should not travel together alone in a car or on out of town trips.

Building Emergencies

In the event of a building emergency, please follow evacuation procedures. Should you be hosting any visitor(s), you are responsible for making certain your visitor(s) is safely evacuated from the building. In case of severe weather, follow proper procedures accordingly.

Inclement Weather Work Policy

In the event of inclement weather (snowstorm, ice storm, etc.) or the threat of the same during normal working hours, please refer to the Inclement Weather Policy on the Staff Dashboard for details. If the Church office is open, Staff Members are requested to make every reasonable attempt to come to work even if not on time. Of course, your personal safety and the safety of your family are of paramount concern during these times and each Staff Member will need to make her/his own decision on this issue. The status of scheduled Church services or programs will be communicated as detailed in the Inclement Weather Policy.

Keys

Keys for entry into FCC facilities are distributed by the Executive Director. Keys used for secured areas will be issued on an as-needed basis. Staff Members are required to return issued keys with a job change or when employment has been terminated. Unauthorized duplication of FCC keys is considered a breach of security.

Coaching, Counseling, & Discipline

Counseling

Because the emotional and mental health of Staff Members is crucial to their well-being, the health of their family, and their job performance, counseling is available for Staff Members dealing with crisis or other issues of mental health. Any Staff Member may contact the counselor on staff for confidential consultations. If further assistance is needed that the on-staff counselor cannot provide, the counselor may refer the Staff Member to a qualified individual. If the Staff Member needs financial assistance to cover the cost of the outside counselor, they should speak confidentially with the Lead Minister. FCC will cover the cost of sessions with a counselor or spiritual director up to $500 total per year for all paid Staff Members.

Employee Separation

Resignations

The employment relationship between you and FCC may be discontinued at any time. Staff Members wishing to resign in good standing and be eligible for rehire and other considerations shall submit at least 30 days advance notice to their Department Leader and/or Lead Minister. The last day actually worked by the Staff Member will be her/his date of termination. The final paycheck will be direct deposited following the regularly scheduled day of payroll preparation. Upon leaving the employment of the Church, all material (books, teaching material, computers, etc.) purchased by the Church for your personal or ministry use should be returned to the Church unless other arrangements have been made with your Department Leader. Keys, credit cards, employee handbooks, etc. should also be returned to the Church on or before your last day of employment.

Unused sick time, vacation time, comp time, holiday, or renewal days are not considered for reimbursement upon separation.

Termination

FCC will consider you to have voluntarily terminated your employment if you do any of the following:

1. Resign
2. Fail to return from an approved leave of absence on the date specified
3. Fail to report to work or call in for three (3) or more consecutive work days
4. Immoral conduct of a nature that does irreparable damage to the employee's reputation and qualifications for Christian leadership and church employment (at the discretion of the Elders and Lead Minister)
5. Contribute to disharmony in the church by gossiping, revealing sensitive information, or consistently creating relational strife with church members
6. Blatant disrespect for the Biblical authority of church leaders

You may be terminated for poor performance, misconduct, excessive absences, tardiness, discrimination, harassment, or other violations of FCC policies. However, your employment is at-will, both you and FCC have the right to terminate your employment for any or no reason.

In the event of an employee resignation, he/she should present a written notice of resignation 30 days in advance. Wages earned will be paid under the normal payment procedures. A ministerial employee will be given 60 days advance notice of termination of employment. A support staff member who has his/her employment terminated will receive 30 days advance

notice. Payment for wages earned will be paid under the normal payment arrangements. Any unused sick time, vacation time, comp time, holiday, or renewal days are not considered for reimbursement upon separation.

Full Sabbatical Policy

Forum Christian Church Sabbatical Policy
Effective 2.15.2022

Overall strategy/purpose

The Sabbatical is intended to provide our full-time ministers with an extended time away from routine duties. This time is not to be construed as vacation but instead, a time of resting, renewing, refreshing, reflecting, re-prioritizing, and refocusing. It is a time to be ministered to; a time to step back from the responsibilities of the job; a time to focus on spiritual growth, family, relationships, direction/vision, and self. It is a time to prepare for the next phase of ministry and seek God's wisdom and counsel. Encouraging our ministers to take this Sabbatical opportunity can help sustain the quality, multiply the impact, and ensure the longevity of our pastoral staff.

Eligibility

Full-time ministerial staff after seven uninterrupted years of service and every seven consecutive years thereafter, with approval by the Lead Minister

Duration

The Sabbatical term is five weeks which should be taken concurrently. Unused Sabbatical time is not compensational should circumstances prohibit the Sabbatical or should a pastor leave the full-time ministry of Forum Christian Church.

Timing

The Sabbatical Proposal must be submitted to the Lead Minister at least four months prior to the anticipated start date.

The Sabbatical term may be taken within 12 months of the date when the minister reaches their qualifying work anniversary. If it becomes necessary to postpone a Sabbatical and take it outside of these parameters, the exception must be approved by the Lead Minister.

The minister should work with his/her direct supervisor regarding the specific scheduling of the time away. Should scheduling conflicts arise that cannot be resolved, the matter will be referred to eldership and their decision will be final.

Wages & Benefits

During the Sabbatical leave the pastor remains a full-time employee without break in service, and all wages and benefits will continue to be in force, accrued, and paid appropriately.

Vacation

Sabbatical leave is not to be considered vacation and vacation time may not be taken in conjunction with the approved leave. Vacation time, in its fullest, may be taken at other times of the year.

Sabbatical Content Requirements

Allocation of time during Sabbatical leave:

- Retooling (education, projects, and/or training) – 60%
- Reflection & refocus (evaluation, visioning, and summary relative to ministry) – 20%
- Rest and recreation (quality time with family) – 20%

Proposal & Approval Process

To be granted final approval, the eligible minister must submit a written Sabbatical Proposal to the Lead Minister at least four months prior to the requested leave time. The Proposal should include the following:

- Purpose of the leave/GRACE/Focus of study during the leave
- Requested dates for the leave
- Sufficient detail to assure leadership that the time away meets the balance of time allocation listed above
- Proposed itinerary/ schedule for the five weeks away
- Specifically include details of planned structured learning:
    - names/locations of conferences,
    - classes scheduled,
    - book reading list,
    - Podcast listening list
- Anticipated budget and use of Sabbatical stipend

- Explanation of coverage and assignment of regular duties during the minister's time away including names and contact information of volunteers and others assuming duties in the minister's absence
- Statement of commitment to remain in a ministerial position at Forum Christian Church for at least one year post-sabbatical. If the one-year commitment is not fulfilled, the minister who took the Sabbatical will reimburse the Church the monetary equivalent of the time taken for Sabbatical leave.

Expenses/Stipend

Subject to budget approval and approval of the Sabbatical Plan, $2,000 will be available for use towards Sabbatical leave. If a pastor is nearing eligibility for Sabbatical leave, they must inform the Lead Minister prior to the completion of the annual budget for the Sabbatical year, so that a Sabbatical Leave line item can be included in the Annual Budget.

These funds may be utilized by the pastor taking the Sabbatical to cover travel or other Sabbatical-related expenses (room & board, study materials, tuition or conference fees). These funds are to be reimbursed for expenses and are not an addition to salary.

The pastor taking leave may also choose to utilize funds from his regular, annual, conference/ continuing education budget for Sabbatical activities.

Reporting AAR/follow up

A written After Action Review must be submitted within 30 days of the minister's return from Sabbatical. The AAR should include:

- Brief summary of the time away
- Brief summary of how things went in the pastor's ministry during his/her absence
- New goals/vision for the pastor's specific ministry as a result of the sabbatical
- Recommendations regarding the overall ministry of the church as a result of the sabbatical
- What went well, what was a highlight of the leave
- What would the pastor do differently the next time a sabbatical opportunity arises
- Prayer requests related to post-Sabbatical re-engagement or post-Sabbatical goals/ vision

Closing

It is the desire and responsibility of the elders to encourage, care for, and develop the pastoral staff of Forum Christian Church. Sabbaticals are a way we honor God and the pastors He has appointed to serve us. It is the desire of the elders, that Sabbatical leave will allow for a deeper intimacy between the minister on Sabbatical leave and God, in order that the pastor might maximize his/her ministerial effectiveness and enhance the joy of his/her calling to full-time service.

We recognize and look forward to the proven benefits of a sabbatical policy, including:

- A grateful pastor who returns to God's calling with renewed vigor, insight, appreciation, humility, and understanding
- Likely an even more grateful pastor's spouse
- A pastor better prepared for service in and to our local church
- A witness to our community of the love and trust Forum has for their pastors
- The opportunity for the church to draw on other resources, perhaps formerly untapped, when the pastor is on leave