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|  <p><b>ARCHDIOCESE</b><br/>OF<br/><b>SAINT PAUL &amp;<br/>MINNEAPOLIS</b></p> | <b>Effective Date:</b> 4/14/2026   | <b>Number:</b> 203 |
|  | <b>Subject:</b> Employee Handbook  |                    |
|  | <b>Scope:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Archdiocese <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parishes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Schools |                    |
|  | <b>Reference:</b> Employee Handbook Template for Parishes and Parish or Regional Schools   |                    |
| <b>Archbishop Signature:</b>   |  |                    |

## Purpose

To establish the employment policies for [Employees](#) of [Parishes](#) and [Parish or Regional Schools](#).

## Introduction

The dignity of work and respect for those who labor is deeply embedded in Catholic tradition, theology, canon law, and the Magisterial teaching of our bishops and popes. Scripture, for example, reflects on the fundamental rights of workers to just conditions, fair wages, and a period of rest (Deut. 5:13-15; Deut. 24:14-15; Sir 34:20-22; Jer. 22:13; Matt 20:1-16), while also calling upon workers to share the fruits of their labor, practice integrity in their work, and not seek riches or an abundance of possessions (Deut. 14:28-29; Luke 3:10-14; Luke 12:13-21).

The 1983 Code of Canon Law provides fundamental principles that also inform the rights and duties of those who work for the Church. These include:

- 1) True equality and dignity among all Christian faithful in which they cooperate in building up the Body of Christ in their own way (canon 208).
- 2) Right of all the faithful to make known their opinion on matters pertaining to the good of the Church, according to the knowledge, competence, and position they hold (canon 212 §3).
- 3) Right to protection from illegitimate harm to a person's good reputation (canon 220).
- 4) Right to protect one's own privacy (canon 220).
- 5) Right to due process by defending oneself and protecting one's rights in a legitimate forum (canon 221 §1).
- 6) Obligation to take into account the common good and the rights and duties of others in the exercise of personal rights (canon 223 §1), and the obligation of Church authority to direct the exercise of personal rights in view of the common good (canon 223 §2).
- 7) Obligation and right of laity to acquire education and formation appropriate to their role in exercising the apostolate (canon 229 §1).

- 8) Obligation to fulfill service to the Church properly, conscientiously, eagerly, and diligently (canon 231 §1).
- 9) Right to decent remuneration, social support, and health benefits (for eligible [Employees](#)) (canon 231 §2).

## Policy

- I. Terms and conditions of employment, including offer letters, job descriptions, and staff handbooks (if applicable) must be observed in addition to the requirements of this policy.
- II. All [Parishes](#) and [Parish or Regional Schools](#) must implement an Employee Handbook that applies to its [Employees](#). Once implemented, the Employee Handbook supersedes all previous employment policies (e.g. *JIE*).
- III. Sections of the Employee Handbook that are required are marked with an “R”. Sections marked with an “O” are optional and may be eliminated or modified. Sections marked “M” are required; however, only the underlined portions may be modified. All “R’s,” “O’s,” and “M’s” must be deleted from the version of the handbook that is provided to [Parish Employees](#). Evaluation by an attorney, who works in employment law and is knowledgeable of Archdiocese employment procedures, is required to review changes.
- IV. Any future revisions of an Employee Handbook do not require Archdiocesan approval.
- V. When the [Parish](#) or [Parish or Regional School](#) implements the Employee Handbook, all previous employment policies are superseded (e.g. *JIE*) and no longer apply to that [Parish](#) or [Parish or Regional School](#). No [Parish](#) or [Parish or Regional School](#) may adopt any policy that contradicts the Employee Handbook.
- VI. [Pastors](#), [canonical Administrators](#), and [Employees](#) with management responsibilities are to act in a manner that bears witness to the teachings and laws of the Catholic Church.
- VII. When a principle of Catholic teaching or canon law is in question in an employment situation, the [Archbishop](#) or his designee will provide a definitive interpretation of the principle at issue.
- VIII. The following requirements ensure that [Parishes](#) and [Parish or Regional Schools](#) comply with all state and federal laws regarding the dismissal of an [Employee](#):
  - 1) [Parochial Administrators](#) and persons appointed to administer [Parishes](#) in accord with canon 517 §2 of the 1983 Code of canon Law may not dismiss any [Employee](#) without the *nihil obstat* to do so from the [Archbishop](#) or his delegate.
  - 2) [Pastors](#) and [canonical Administrators](#) who are in the first year of their appointment may not dismiss any [Employee](#) without the *nihil obstat* to do so from the [Archbishop](#) or his delegate.

- 3) Prior to dismissing an [Employee](#), a [Pastor](#), [canonical Administrator](#), [Parochial Administrator](#), or a person appointed to administrator a [Parish](#) must seek and duly consider the counsel of an attorney who works in the area of employment law and is familiar with the provisions of the Employee Handbook. Insurance coverage for claims of wrongful dismissal is contingent upon first seeking and considering such advice.
- 4) Granting of the *nihil obstat* in sections 9 (a) and (b) will be contingent on the demonstration of an appropriate process of addressing the issues motivating the termination of the [Employee](#) in accordance with the standards set forth in the Employee Handbook.

IX. Failure to abide by this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment or, if applicable, canonical penalties for abuse of ecclesiastical office or harm caused to another through negligent exercise of ecclesiastical power (canon 1389).