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| **Section 1. Introduction** |

**Purpose**

The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize employees with policies, rules, and best practices of Nehemiah Christian Center. This handbook is written as a general guide and not as a detailed explanation of every policy and procedure. Compliance with the handbook is required for all Nehemiah Christian Center employees.

Nehemiah Christian Center reserves the right to change the content of this handbook subject to the review of the CEO (Senior Pastor or his designee) and/or senior leadership in consultation with Human Resources. You will receive notice of any changes to the policy and are responsible for complying with any changes made to the policy. If you have questions about the information contained herein, please contact the appropriate senior staff member or human resources liaison.

**Employment Forms**

All new employees are required to complete (at minimum) the following forms as conditions of employment:

*At-Will Employment Agreement and Acknowledgement of Receipt of Employee Handbook*

*Employment Eligibility Form I-9*

On the day of hire, each new employee is legally obligated to complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and submit documents to verify identity and employment eligibility within the next three (3) business days. The same policy applies to re-hired employees whose I-9's are over three (3) years old or otherwise invalid.

 *Non-Disclosure Agreement*

This Handbook expressly prohibits the unauthorized disclosure of confidential information, via any means of communication, including, but not limited to, face-to-face, over the phone and via the Internet, for employee's own benefit or the benefit of any third party.

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| **Section 2. Terms and Definitions** |

Nehemiah Christian Center typically employs less than 20 employees regular and temporary employees on an "at-will" basis. This section defines the terms of "at-will" employment, as well as the different types of employees we hire.

 *"At-Will" Employment* The job of an "at-will" employee is not guaranteed. It may be ended, at any time and with or without notice, by the employee or, for a lawful reason, by Nehemiah Christian Center. Nehemiah Christian Center also reserves the right to alter an "at-will" employee's benefits, pay rate, and assignments as it sees fit. The "at-will" terms of employment may only be changed with the approval of the CEO or CFO, and must be signed off by the CEO or his designee.

*Types of Worker*s

This section distinguishes between the different types of workers Nehemiah Christian Center currently employs or may employ. Employee status is established at the time of hire and may only be altered via a written statement signed by the CEO or his designee.

* *Exempt vs Non-Exempt-* Most employees are non-exempt, meaning they are entitled by law to at least minimum wage and premium pay for overtime. Exempt employees are not subject to these laws. Exempt status is defined by standards set by state law and the Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA). This class of employee is usually an executive, an administrator, or a highly paid specialist such as a programmer.
* *Regular vs. Temporary-* Regular employees work a regular schedule, either on a full-time or part-time basis. To be considered full-time, an employee must work at least 32 hours per week. A temporary employee is a person hired for a short period to assist with a project or remedy a staff shortage. A temporary employee is also employed on an "at-will" basis (defined above).
* *Independent Contractors & Consultants* -Independent contractors and consultants are not Nehemiah Christian Center employees, but rather self-employed professionals hired for specific projects.
* *Probationary period*- This required 3 month period is an extension of the selection process, and provides the time for the effective adjustment of new employees and allows employees to become familiar with their job responsibilities. The probationary period also allows for the separation of those whose performance and/or conduct does not meet acceptable standards, or the decision by the employee that the position is not a good fit, resulting in voluntary resignation.

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| **Section 3 Position Duties/Compensation** |

**Position Description**

As part of your initial orientation, you will be provided with a copy of the written job description for your individual position. The church maintains certain expectations and standards applicable to your job position. Your supervisor should review these with you. It is expected that staff members will perform additional duties and assume additional responsibilities as needed by their supervisor for the efficient operation of the church.

In order to adjust to changes in our ministry, it may become necessary to modify your job description, add to or remove certain duties and responsibilities. When and if it becomes necessary to do so, your supervisor/leader, in consultation Human Resources, will inform you of the necessary changes.

**Tardiness and Absence**

It is important that employees work their assigned schedules as consistently as possible. If you are unable to report to work for any reason, you must notify your supervisor prior to your scheduled work time. It is your responsibility to keep the church informed on a daily basis during a short-term absence and to provide medical verification when asked to do so.

Excessive absenteeism may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees who do not call in or report to work may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

**Personnel Records**

At reasonable times and on reasonable notice, you will be allowed to review any personnel records that have been used to determine your qualifications for employment, promotion, compensation, termination, or other disciplinary action. Please talk to your supervisor for more information.

**Performance Evaluations, Promotions and Transfers**

Performance evaluations may be conducted periodically to provide both you and your supervisor with the opportunity to discuss your job tasks, identify and provide correction in areas of improvement, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss methods for improving your performance. However, please understand that a positive performance evaluation does not guarantee an increase in salary, a promotion, or even continued employment. Compensation increases and the terms and conditions of employment are determined by and at the discretion of the leadership of Nehemiah Christian Center.

**Compensation Schedule**

Employees are paid based on their role and the time frame determined by the Board of Trustees, not longer than a one month period.

**Compensation**

 Compensation is based upon employee role, skill and experience. The CEO (or designee) in consultation with Human Resources conducts regular evaluations of all employees and determines changes in pay (promotions, retention pay, any applicable bonuses/gifts)as it sees fit. Employees who to have questions or concerns regarding compensation shall first engage the appropriate senior staff member to discuss.

**Overtime**

A non-exempt employee may work overtime on the terms defined by North Carolina law pending prior authorization by appropriate the senior staff member.

**Deductions & Garnishment**

* Federal and state law requires that the following be deducted from every paycheck:
* Social Security
* Income tax (federal and state)
* Medicare
* State Disability Insurance & Family Temporary Disability Insurance
* Other deductions required by law or requested by the employee

A Wage and Tax Statement (W-2) recording the previous year's wages and deductions will be provided at the beginning of each calendar year. If at any time you wish to adjust your income tax withholding, please fill out the designated form and submit it to your supervisor

Wage Garnishment- To the extent that Nehemiah Christian Center receives legal papers that compel us to do so, we may garnish an employee's paycheck - that is, submit a portion of said paycheck in payment of an outstanding debt of the Employee. We must, by law, abide by this either until ordered otherwise by the court or until the debt is repaid in full through withheld payments or otherwise.

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|  Section 4. **Equal Opportunity**  |

Nehemiah Christian Center provides equal employment opportunities to all applicants, without regard to unlawful considerations of or discrimination against race, religion, creed, color, nationality, sex, age, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition or characteristics, marital status, or any other classification prohibited by applicable local, state or federal laws. This policy is applicable to hiring, termination and promotion; compensation; schedules and job assignments; discipline; training; working conditions, and all other aspects of employment with Nehemiah Christian Center.

As an employee, you are expected to honor this policy and to take an active role in keeping harassment and discrimination out of the workplace.

 **Accommodation for Disabled Employees** We are happy to work with otherwise qualified disabled employees in order to accommodate limitations, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It is up to the employee to approach his or her leader/manager with this request, and to provide medical proof of his or her needs upon the Company's request.

 We are also happy to accommodate employees diagnosed with life-threatening illnesses. Such employees are welcome to maintain a normal work schedule if they so desire, provided that we receive medical papers proving their working cannot harm themselves or others and their work remains at acceptable standards.

**Employment of Minors** Our policy on employment of minors adheres to all FLSA standards, including the following: · Minimum employment age (14 for non-agricultural work) · Maximum weekly hours for employees under 16 · Minimum hazardous job employment age (18) · Minimum wage standards for students, apprentices, disabled employees, and employees under the age of 20.

**Nepotism** The employment of relatives can prove problematic, particularly in situations where relatives share a department or a hierarchical relationship. Nehemiah Christian Center will not hire relatives to work in any potentially disruptive situation. An employee must inform us if he or she becomes a coworker's relative. If at any time we perceive the situation to be detrimental, we may have to reassign or ask for one relative's resignation in order to remedy the situation.

 **Politics** Nehemiah Christian Center is respectful of all employees' political views. We ask that if you choose to participate in a political action, you act independently and not as an agent of Nehemiah Christian Center.

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| **Section 5. Confidentiality** |

Employee information is considered to be private and only accessed on a need-to-know basis. Your healthcare information is completely confidential unless you choose to share it. In some cases, employees and management may receive guidelines ensuring adherence to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Personnel files and payroll records are confidential and may only be accessed for legitimate reasons. If you wish to view your files, you must set up an appointment in advance with a member of the Senior Staff or with Human Resources. You may only make photocopies of documents bearing your signature, and written authorization is needed to remove a file from Church premises. You may not alter your files, although you may add comments to items of dispute. Certain information, such as dates of employment and rehiring eligibility, are available by request only. We will not release information regarding your compensation without your written permission.

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| **Section 6. Leave** |

**Leaves of Absence**

All leaves must be approved by management. For planned leaves, employees must submit requests at least 14 days in advance. Emergency leaves must be requested as soon as possible. Accepting/performing another job or applying for unemployment benefits during leave will be considered voluntary resignation. We consider all requests in terms of effect on Nehemiah Christian Center and reserve the right to approve or deny requests at will, except when otherwise directed by law. Any request for a leave of absence due to disability will be subject to an interactive review. A medical leave request must be supported in a timely manner by a certification from the employee's healthcare provider. Extension of leave must be requested and approved before the current leave ends. No employee is guaranteed reinstatement upon returning from leave, unless the law states otherwise. However, Nehemiah Christian Center will try to reinstate each returning employee in his or her old position, or one that is comparable.

Below are the three main types of leave that Nehemiah Christian Center offers employees. Some, but not all, are governed by law.

**Work-Related Sickness & Injury** Employees eligible for Worker's Compensation rendered unable to work because of a work related injury or illness will receive an unpaid leave for the period required. For eligible employees, the first 12 weeks will be treated concurrently as a family and medical leave under FMLA.

**Maternity** An employee disabled on account of pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition may request an unpaid leave of absence of up to four months. Time off may be requested for prenatal care, severe morning sickness, doctor-ordered bed rest and recovery from childbirth.

**Election Days** Provided an employee's schedule does not allow time for voting outside of work, and that he/she is a registered voter, he/she may take up to two hours, with pay, at the beginning or end of a workday, to vote in local, state or national elections.

**Meals & Breaks**

Unless defined otherwise by North Carolina state law, non-exempt employees are entitled to a paid 10-minute break for every four hours of work, as well as a 30-minute meal break for any shift lasting longer than five hours.

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| **Section 7.Electronic Communication/Social Media/Confidentiality**  |

Nehemiah Christian Center employees are required to use various forms of electronic communications in their work for the Company including, but not limited to: computers, email, telephones, voicemail, instant message, text message, Internet, cell phones and smart phones. All communications transmitted by the above-mentioned electronic means remain the sole property of the Company and are to be used for Company business only and not for personal use. Employees who misuse electronic communications and engage in any form of criminal behavior, or behavior that is detrimental to Nehemiah Christian Center’s interests including but not limited to: defamation, copyright or trademark infringement, misappropriation of trade secrets, discrimination, harassment, or related actions, will be subject to discipline, including immediate termination, and may be referred to the appropriate authorities when necessary.

Nehemiah Christian Center reserves the right to access and review electronic files, messages, internet use, blogs, "tweets", instant messages, text messages, email, voice mail, and other digital archives, and to monitor the use of electronic communications as necessary to ensure that no misuse or violation of Company policy or any law occurs.

**Social Media Policy** Nehemiah Christian Center recognizes the importance and relevance of social media and its benefits, with the expectation that the following guidelines: When referring to Nehemiah Christian Center in any way, employees must always conduct themselves in a professional manner and must respect the views and opinions of others. Behavior and content that may be deemed disrespectful, dishonest, offensive, harassing or damaging to Nehemiah's interests or reputation are not allowed and will not be tolerated. Employees must not disclose private or confidential information about Nehemiah Christian Center employees, members, or affiliates on social networks.

**Confidentiality**

No prior or current employee may disclose or give access to confidential Nehemiah Christian Center information, in any way or at any time, unless otherwise authorized by the CEO or senior leadership.

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|  **Section 8.Harrassment & Discrimination**  |

**Harassment & Discrimination**

Nehemiah Christian Center will not tolerate discrimination or harassment on any legally protected basis, including that of physical characteristics, mental characteristics, race, religious or political views, nationality, disability, medical condition, sex, sexual preference, or gender identification. Harassment and discriminatory behavior among employees or contractors will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**Sexual Harassment**

Applicable state and federal law defines sexual harassment as unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes gender harassment and harassment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or other medical conditions. It also includes sexual harassment of an employee of the same gender as the harasser. The following is a partial list of offensive behavior:

1. Unwanted sexual advances.

2. Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors.

3. Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, displaying of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons, or posters.

4. Threatening retaliation after a negative response to sexual advances.

5. Verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, sexually explicit jokes, or comments.

6. Verbal sexual advances or propositions.

7. Physical conduct such as touching, assault, impeding or blocking movements.

8. Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentary about an individual’s body, sexually degrading words to describe an individual, or suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations.

9. Using nicknames or terms of endearment with a racial or sexual orientation.

10. Managers and supervisors are prohibited from providing favorable treatment to employees with whom they are involved with in a consensual relationship.

It is unlawful to sexually harass anyone. Sexual harassment on the job is unlawful whether it involves a coworker, a supervisor, or harassment by persons doing business with or for the church.

Nehemiah Christian Center will take all reasonable steps to prevent harassment from occurring and will take immediate and appropriate action when unlawful harassment has occurred.

If you have been harassed or if you believe that another staff member has been harassed, you have a duty to promptly report the incident or incidents.. Your complaint should be as detailed as possible, including names of individuals involved, the names of any witnesses, direct quotations when language is relevant, and any documentary evidence (notes, pictures, etc.)

Applicable law also prohibits retaliation against any employee by another employee or by the church for using this complaint procedure. Additionally, the church will not knowingly permit any retaliation against any employee who complains of prohibited harassment or who participates in an investigation.

 Individuals who are not comfortable reporting may choose to report anonymously via the Nehemiah Christian Center intranet. Upon reporting, an investigation will be conducted with appropriate corrective action to follow.

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| **Section 9. Drugs & Alcohol** |

Nehemiah Christian Center strictly forbids employees to do the following while at work:

* Drinking or operating under the influence of alcohol and selling, purchasing, using or being under the influence of illegal drugs in the course of work. An "illegal drug" is any drug that has not been obtained by legal means. This includes prescription drugs being used for non-prescribed purposes.
* Possession of any non-prescribed controlled substance, including alcohol and legal but illegally obtained prescription drugs.
* Reporting for work intoxicated. We reserve the right to test employees for substance abuse. Illegal drugs, illegal drug metabolites, or excessive alcohol in your system will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Nehemiah Christian Center cares about the overall health and well-being of its employees. Any employee who feels that he/she is developing a substance abuse problem is urged to seek help. While we will be supportive of rehabilitative efforts, that this will not excuse a substance-related offense.

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| **Section 10. Disciplinary Action and Appeals** |

**Disciplinary Action**

Nehemiah Christian Center takes disciplinary matters very seriously. While our goal is employee success, leadership will impose discipline/corrective action instances of unacceptable personal conduct and/or unsatisfactory job performance. These may include:

* Excessive tardiness/absenteeism
* Continued performance deficiencies
* Insubordination
* Abuse, perfunctory, or unauthorized use or unauthorized possession of Church property
* Unauthorized use or disclosure of Church information
* Possession and/or use of illegal drugs, weapons or explosives
* Bullying
* Harassment/Discrimination
* Violation of Nehemiah Christian Center’s policies and procedures

**Types of Disciplinary Actions**

Disciplinary (corrective) actions include:

* Documented Counseling
* Written Warning
* Suspension
* Demotion
* Termination

Where an employee is found to have

**Performance Improvement Plan**

In instances of continued unsatisfactory job performance an employee may be placed on a performance improvement plan (PIP). The goal of the performance improvement plan is to identify and outline challenges with performance and document steps toward meeting expectations of the position (including the role of both the employee and leadership). The plan will include check ins as part of the process to ensure the employee is making the requisite progress over the course of the plan. Successful completion of the plan and continued employment is the goal. Failure to successfully complete the PIP may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Appeal Process**

In order to maintain a fair process and to ensure continuity in the application of policy, the following matters are eligible for appeal:

* Suspension
* Demotion
* Termination

While leadership is open to discussions around any disciplinary actions, documented counselings and written warnings are not eligible for appeal. Likewise, issues around performance management (ratings) are also ineligible for appeal. In those instances, the employee is encouraged to have discussion with leadership, and as necessary, with Human Resources for performance dispute resolution.

**Step 1-Appeal to Next Level Leadership or to HR**

In order to appeal the aforementioned action, the employee must submit the Step 1 Appeal Form within 5 calendar days of receipt of the corrective action/disciplinary decision. Forms submitted after the 5 calendar days will be ineligible for consideration. In the case where the 5th calendar day falls on a weekend or a holiday, the time extended through close of business of the following calendar day.

Upon receipt and review of the document, the [recipient of the form] will conduct a review/fact finding meeting with the employee and that employee’s leader/manager to understand and attempt to resolve the matter. The next level leader will give a decision to the employee within 5 business days of the meeting. If that leader overturns or amends to a place of resolution the decision, the matter is considered closed. If the leader affirms the initial decision, the employee may appeal to the next level of leadership within 5 business days of receipt of the decision (Step 2 Appeal Form)

**Step 2 -Panel Review**

In the event that the employee wishes to move to step 2 and submits the step 2 form in a timely manner, the matter will be reviewed by an appeal panel, consisting of 3 members of leadership who do not have direct supervision of or any other relationship (familial, etc) to the employee. Appeal panel members will be selected and trained by Human Resources and will serve a 2 year term. Panel members will be disqualified from serving on a case if they are in any way involved or have a potential bias in the case. During the review, the employee and supervisor will have an opportunity to present their respective viewpoints. Following the review with the employee and the supervisor, the panel will continue to meet and decide the outcome of the matter by majority vote. The employee and supervisor will be made aware of the decision by Human Resources.

**Step 3-CEO Review**

In the event that the original decision is upheld at the Panel level, the employee may appeal to the CEO (Senior Pastor) within 5 business days of receipt of the Step 2 decision . In this case, the Senior Pastor will review documentation from steps 1 and 2 as well any prepared statement from the employee and the leader/supervisor. The senior pastor will review all relevant information and issue a final decision to the employee and the leader/supervisor.

**At-Will Employment Agreement & Acknowledgement of Receipt of Handbook**

Employee:

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Nehemiah Christian Center Employee Handbook, which contains vital information on Nehemiah’s policies, procedures, and benefits. I understand that this Handbook's policies are intended only as guidelines, not as a contract of employment. I understand that my employment is on "at-will" terms and therefore subject to termination, with or without notice or obvious reason, by myself or Nehemiah Christian Center. Changes to my "at-will" status may only take the form of a written agreement signed by an authorized member of Nehemiah Christian Center as well as myself. This agreement supersedes all prior/contemporaneous inconsistent agreements. I understand that Nehemiah Christian Center may change its policies, procedures and benefits at any time at its sole discretion, as well as interpret or vary them however it deems appropriate. I have read (or will read) and agree to abide by all policies and procedures contained therein.

By: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
Employee

By:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Nehemiah Christian Center Representative