

**Report I.001
Personnel Committee
General Assembly Mission Council
September 23-25, 2009**

I. FOR ACTION

The Personnel Committee recommends that the General Assembly Mission Council:

- 1. APPROVE moving into closed session in order to receive a summary report on the third-year performance of the GAMC Executive Director, Ms. Linda Valentine.**

Background

Following the process outlined in *General Assembly Mission Council Manual of Operations*, Appendix 10, Section IV. Third Year Performance Review, All Terms, #8, "A summary of the review shall be presented to the General Assembly Council in closed session at the first meeting of the fourth year of the term."

- 2. APPROVE the revisions to Employee Handbook, as amended, to be effective October 1, 2009, and instruct the Human Resources Department to conduct appropriate trainings for employees regarding these revisions (*Refer to Item I.102 for full Handbook*).**

Amendment (new wording in italics and underlined, deletions with a strike-through):

613. Blogging and Social Networking

Employees who use the Employer's computers and computer systems to create and author weblogs, also known as blogs ("blogs"), should do so for business purposes only, which include productivity, communication with members regarding the mission work of the denomination, and mission development communication with members regarding the mission work of the denomination, and mission development. Blogs and social networking sites accessed on or from the Employer's premises, using Employer computer equipment or Employer-paid methods, or used in a way that identifies the employee with the Employer, are restricted in the ways listed below. Employees using Employer's computers and computer systems for weblogs and social networking shall not:

- Communicate on behalf of any organization that has no denominational, professional or business affiliation with the Employer.
- Communicate sexually inappropriate statements or information, harass other individuals or include statements in blogs that are vulgar, harassing, disruptive, intimidating, offensive, defamatory, discriminatory toward anyone, or that are inconsistent with the professional image of the Employer.
- Reveal confidential or proprietary information of the Employer, its business, members of the denomination, persons or entities who do mission work with or for the Employer and/or the denomination, and persons or entities who do business with the Employer. Engage in illegal, fraudulent or malicious conduct such as violate copyright law, trade, securities, patent, discrimination or any other laws.
- Offer to buy or sell goods, operate a business not associated with the Employer or use blogs for personal financial gain.
- Reveal personal information of employees, and individuals outside of the organization.
- Use profanity.
- ~~Express political views, use profanity or Make derogatory comments toward the Employer~~ or express personal views inconsistent with the official political views of the Employer ~~the provisions of section 605 of the Employee Handbook.~~

Employees cannot expect that their blog transmissions or social networking access will be private. If an employee uses Employer-owned hardware, software, equipment, and systems to create a blog or to access a social networking site, the Employer has the right to monitor the employee's blogs. By using the Employer's hardware, software, equipment, and systems, employees consent to such monitoring.

Employees shall sign a confidentiality agreement that states they will not disclose organizational confidential information. Background:

The Employee Handbook ("Handbook") had its last comprehensive revision in September 2007. Since then the Human Resources Department, Legal Services Office, and outside consultants have reviewed the Handbook to determine needed revisions such as updates for changes in employment-related laws as well as other issues, such as experiences in applying policies in various circumstances. Input was sought from the Executive Leadership Team and the Ministries Leadership Team. The Handbook was revised utilizing this input as well as other resources. After GAMC approval, the revisions to the Employee Handbook will be effective October 1, 2009.

The **attached chart** contains a list of the major revisions in the Employee Handbook. This is not a comprehensive list of all revisions. Some policies were not significantly revised, but were rewritten for clarification and ease of application. Order of appearance in the Handbook may have changed to improve the flow or logical connection or location of information.

The Executive Leadership Team of the staff of the General Assembly Mission Council ("GAMC") is authorized to make revisions to the Employee Handbook from time-to-time. Said revisions are effective when made and will be reported by the Director of Human Resources to the next meeting of the GAMC's Personnel Committee. If the Personnel Committee disagrees with a change and deems revision necessary, it may take a recommended revision to the GAMC Executive Committee or the GAMC for approval.

II. FOR INFORMATION

The Personnel Committee approved the following recommendation:

That 2-3 members of the Personnel Committee and appropriate staff, meet with 2-3 members of each of the Advocacy and Advisory committees for conversation to hear and discuss the committee's concerns with issues presented in their comments to the Employee Handbook, with the goal for the meeting to occur before the year's end.

SUBSTANTIVE GAMC EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK CHANGES

POLICY	CHANGE	RATIONALE
Staff Acknowledgement Form.	Separate Document. Renamed “Acknowledgement of Receipt of Employee Handbook;” added some disclaimer language.	Should be a separate document from the Handbook; disclaimer language confirms the Handbook is not a contract of employment.
103. Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action.	Revised “disability” to “protected disability status,” added categories “citizenship status,” “genetic information” and military and veteran status as protected categories.	Includes protected categories omitted in last Handbook revision; Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act becomes effective in 2009, genetic information will be protected.
201. Job Postings.	Consolidated former Section 211 into this policy. Eliminated requirement that jobs be posted internally before external recruitment begins; added requirement that employee perform at satisfactory level before they can apply for another position; deleted statement that postings to be posted in One Door.	Consolidation was logical, internal transfer process includes issue of job posting; revising policy to update for practices and to improve efficiency of process.
213. Compensation Administration.	Former Section 215. Revised language from “consistent” to “fair;” deleted “pay increase for promotion will be 5% or the minimum salary of the new grade, whichever is higher.”	Goal is to be fair as opposed to consistent; allows flexibility on promotion pay considerations.
214. Staff Introductory Period.	Eliminated.	In at-will employment relationship there is no need for a “probationary” period.
218. Employment Separations.	Former Section 220. Deleted requirement that terminations require approval of DED and ED, replaced with concurrence of Director of HR and approval of supervisor’s supervisor (must be at least director or higher); revised RIF language and added language to emphasize focus on dignity of staff impacted by RIFs.	To revise process so that supervisors who have primary contact with employee make decisions on termination; Executive Director remains objective in case of an appeal.
302. Parental Leave.	Added “Birth Parent’s Leave” title.	To distinguish from other types of parental leave.

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POLICY	CHANGE	RATIONALE
306. Sick Leave.	Deleted reference to introductory period; deleted statement that no more than 8 hours can be charged to a work day; added requirement that employee use vacation before moving to unpaid status.	Change in 8 hour practice done because statement was inaccurate; to require employees to use all paid leave before moving to unpaid status so they do not save paid leave.
316. Shared Sick Leave Bank.	Eliminated.	Employees are not donating sick leave to bank. No budget to give employees more sick leave time. Difficult to track and manage.
317. Family and Medical Leave Act.	Former Section 601. Consolidated into Benefits and Leaves and renumbered, revised, and updated, including rolling 12-month period.	The Dept. of Labor issued new regulations which became effective 1/16/09, changes in some rules and procedures; addition of military leaves of absence.
321. Involuntary Furlough.	New policy.	GAMC approved furlough for 5/09; furlough may be approved in future years.
323. Shared Grants.	New policy.	Employee hardship benefit, long-time practice institutionalized as a policy in an effort to ensure consistent administration.
405. Non-Exempt Employee Travel.	New policy, approved by ELT on 4/17/08.	Uniform policy needed.
601. Employee Conduct and Work Rules.	Former Sections 701 & 715. Added new work rules to the list of potential violations and consolidated 715. Progressive Discipline into revised policy.	Updated/expanded list of work rules; Section 715 not really progressive discipline, allowed discipline on case-by-case basis; revised policy is the same and permits progressive discipline.
606. Participation in Public Demonstrations at GA, GAMC or Related Committees.	New policy approved by GAC Executive Committee on 6/4/08.	
607. Roles of Staff in Resourcing Meetings.	New policy approved by GAC Executive Committee on 6/4/08.	
612. Use of Portable Digital Music Players.	New policy.	To keep up with technology changes; large judgment in recent file-sharing case.

SUBSTANTIVE GAMC EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK CHANGES

POLICY	CHANGE	RATIONALE
613. Blogging and Social Networking.	New policy.	To keep up with technology changes.
615. Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.	Former Section 712; updates protected categories per change in Section 103; reorganized and subtitled.	To update policy and to make it easier to read and reference.
618. Appeal Procedure.	Former Section 716; re-titled; removed “complaint;” eliminated deadlines; added language for DED level appeals.	In practice deadlines were not being met due to travel schedules and for other reasons; clarification - not complaint process, it is an appeal process.
619. Return of Property.	Former Section 717; added language regarding release of computers and removal of PCUSA data and licensed materials.	Supervisors are giving away laptops without IT involvement to remove confidential information and software licensed to PCUSA.
715. Progressive Discipline.	Eliminated and consolidated into Section 601. Employee Conduct, Work Rules, and Performance.	Former policy not truly progressive discipline, it allowed determination on a case-by-case basis and immediate termination permitted for certain offenses. New policy allows progressive discipline, if warranted, as well as case-by-case practice of former policy and consolidates work rules with discipline policy.