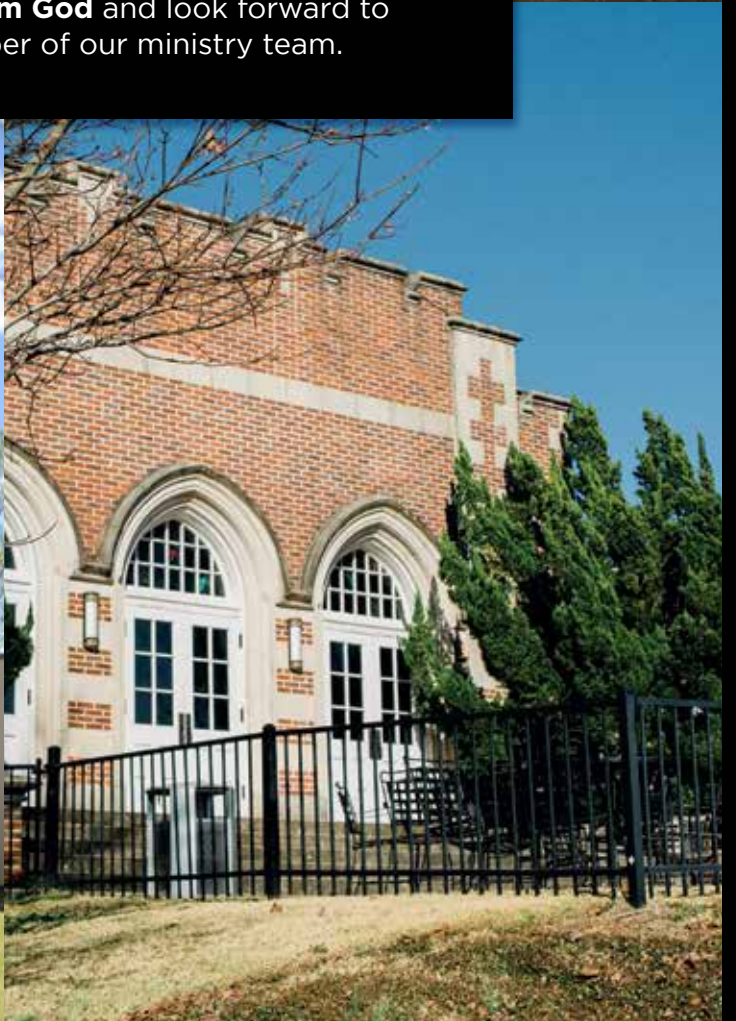




# STAFF HANDBOOK

We consider you to be **a gift from God** and look forward to working with you as a member of our ministry team.





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to Word of Life Church ———	91
<i>(Word of Life Church Christian Fellowship, Inc.)</i>	
History —————	91
Our Mission —————	91
Our Vision —————	91
Core Values —————	92
Statement of Faith —————	92
Staff Non-Negotiables —————	93
Handbook Purpose —————	94

## **EMPLOYMENT**

Equal Employment —————	95
Background Checks —————	95
At-Will Notice —————	95
Anniversary Date and Seniority —————	95
Immigration Law Compliance —————	96
Employee Designations —————	96
Employee Status —————	96
Employment Classifications —————	96
Employee Categories —————	97
Personnel Records —————	97
Employee References —————	98
Job Transfers —————	98
Employment of Relatives —————	98

## **CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR**

General Conduct Guidelines —————	98
Dispute Resolution —————	99
Personal Boundaries —————	100
Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment —	101
Corrective Action —————	103

## **COMPENSATION**

Pay Periods —————	104
Timekeeping —————	104
Employees and Volunteer Activities —	104
Overtime —————	105



Payroll Deductions	105
Pay Adjustments, Promotions and Demotions	105
Performance Reviews	106
Work Assignments	106
Expense Reimbursement	106
Advances and Loans	107

## **BENEFITS**

Health and Welfare Benefits	107
Continuation of Benefits	107
Group Life Insurance	108
Retirement	108
Holidays	108
Week Between Christmas & New Year's	108
Vacation	108
Paid Time Off	109
Healing Days	110
Emergency Paid Medical Leave	110
Family and Medical Leave Act	110
Military Leave	113
Jury Service Leave	113
Witness Leave	113
Crime Victim Leave	113
Sabbatical Leave	114
Ministry Engagements	114
Bereavement Leave	114

## **HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY**

Non-Smoking	
Drugs and Alcohol	114
Reasonable Accommodations	115
Injury and Accident Response and Reporting	116
Workers' Compensation	116
Workplace Violence and Security	116
Driving Safety	117
Inclement Weather and Outages	118

<b>WORKPLACE GUIDELINES</b>	119
-----------------------------	-----

Hours of Work	
Off-the-Clock Work	119
Lactation Accommodation	119
Flex Time	119
Attendance and Tardiness	120
Personal Appearance and Hygiene	120
Confidentiality	121
Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)	121
Conflict of Interest	121
Outside Activities	122
Reporting Irregularities	122
Inspections and Searches	122
Hardware and Software Use	122
Social Media	123
Personal Property	124
Parking	124

## **EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION**

Resignation	125
Termination	125
State Unemployment	125
Personal Possessions and Return of Word of Life Church Property	125

## **STAFF HANDBOOK**

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>	126
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## **OUR MISSION**

Reach the Lost  
Disciple the Found  
Empower the Called

## **OUR VISION**

Prototype Church  
Lighthouse of the South  
Worldwide Outreach Center

## **WELCOME TO WORD OF LIFE CHURCH**

(WORD OF LIFE CHURCH CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP, INC.)

We consider you to be a gift from God and look forward to working with you as a member of our ministry team. We appreciate you and the gifts and talents you bring to this ministry and are committed to helping you achieve your highest level of service for the Lord in this ministry.

As an employee of Word of Life Church, you represent this ministry in both your work life and private life. As a result, you are expected to always be sensitive to how others may see you biblically, spiritually, and ethically. We encourage you to strive toward living a life that is an example to others of your relationship with God, your belief in Word of Life Church's Mission, Vision, Values, and Statement of Faith.

### **HISTORY**

In 1980, Word of Life was founded by Pastors Ronnie and Paige Sims after attending Rhema Bible Training Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. After several location changes, we built and moved into an expansive 42,000-square-foot building on Highway 18 West in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1991.

In the late nineties, the right place to fulfill the vision of reaching the nations was found. With the Lord's help and direction, a 65-acre tract of prime real estate located on Highway 25 in Flowood, Mississippi, was provided. In April 2001, just at the beginning of construction, Pastor Ronnie Sims unexpectedly went home to be with the Lord. The new land and parking lot stood vacant for ten years on Lakeland Drive, but the vision continued.

Now the vision is being carried out by his son, Pastor Joel Sims, and his wife, Peppi. Our central campus, Word of Life Lakeland, opened on April 17, 2011, in Flowood, Mississippi. Part of our mission includes strategically spreading throughout the Jackson Metro area. Today, Word of Life is one church with multiple campuses and our Online campus.



## **CORE VALUES**

### **GO:**

The Great Commission is Our Heartbeat

### **GROW:**

Make God a Priority

### **CONNECT:**

We are Better Together

### **PARTNER:**

Changing the World Through Giving

### **SERVE:**

To be Jesus' Hands and Feet

## **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

Although Word of Life Church's culture is modern, our theology is traditional. We believe every weekend is a rescue mission to reach people who are far from God. It's essential to start by explaining what we believe because it is the foundation of everything we do.

### **The Bible**

The Bible is God's Word to all people. Human authors wrote it under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. Because God inspired it, the Bible is truth without any mixture of error and is completely relevant to our daily lives.

### **Trinity**

God has existed in a relationship with Himself for all eternity. He exists as one God in three persons: God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Although each member of the Trinity serves different functions, they each possess equal power and authority.

### **The Father**

God is great: He is all-powerful, ever-present, unchanging, completely trustworthy of our trust, and above all, holy. It is in Him that we live, move, and exist. God is good. He is our Father. He is loving, compassionate, and faithful to His people and His promises.

### **The Son**

Jesus Christ is simultaneously completely human and completely God. He is the only plan for bringing people who are far from God back into a right relationship with God. He lived a perfect life so that He could be a substitution for us in satisfying God's demands for perfection. He defeated death in His resurrection so that we can have life.

### **The Holy Spirit: Being Filled**

The Holy Spirit's presence assures us of our relationship with Christ. He guides believers into all truth and exalts Christ. He convicts people of their sin, God's righteousness, and the coming judgment. He comforts us, gives us spiritual gifts, and makes us more like Christ. We believe in being filled with the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. Every believer can be filled with the Holy Spirit by simply asking.



### **Eternity: Somewhere Forever**

Man was created to exist forever. He will exist either eternally separated from God by sin or in union with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is Heaven. Heaven and Hell are places of eternal existence.

### **Divine Healing: God's Plan For Your Body**

Healing is a privilege for every believer. God wants us to live healthy and whole lives for Him and help others more effectively.

### **Man**

Man is made in the image of God and is the supreme object of His creation. Man was created to have fellowship with God but became separated in that relationship through sinful disobedience. As a result, man cannot attain a right relationship through his own effort. Every human personality is uniquely created, possesses dignity, and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

### **Marriage and Sexual Relations**

God instituted marriage between male and female as the foundation of the family, the basic structure of human society. (Genesis 2:24). God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged other than the context of marriage between a man and a woman. (Genesis 19:5, 26:8-11; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1, 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 4: 1-8; Hebrews 13:4).

### **Salvation: God's Only Way**

The blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the cross, provides the only way to salvation through the forgiveness of sin. Salvation

occurs when people place their faith in the earth and resurrection of Christ as sufficient payment for their sin. Salvation is a gift from God, and it cannot be earned through our own efforts.

### **The Church: God's Design For Community**

The Church is a local community of baptized believers unified through faith in Christ. It is committed to the teachings of Christ and obeying all of His commands, and it seeks to bring the Gospel to the world. The Church works together in love and unity, intent on the ultimate purpose of glorifying Christ.

### **Baptism: God Empowers Us**

Baptism is a symbolic act of professing one's salvation publicly. God commands it, but our salvation does not rely upon it. We practice full-immersion baptism, symbolizing the process of death and resurrection that Jesus went through for us.

### **Prayer**

Prayer is our ability to communicate with God. Through Jesus' salvation, we no longer need an intercessor to go between God and us. We can address Him directly.

## **STAFF NON-NEGOTIABLES**

### **A Strong Relationship with God.**

#### **A Life Given to:**

- Prayer
- Worship
- Study and application of the Word of God



### **Have a Professional and Spiritual Growth Plan**

- Be accountable for seeking ways and opportunities to grow spiritually, personally, and professionally.
- Raise leaders and make disciples.

### **Strong Ethical Standard & Conviction**

- Honor and respect your leaders, coworkers, and church with your words and actions. (1Peter Chapter 2)
- Honesty and speaking the truth in love. Ephesians 4:15
- No strife by following Matthew 18:15-17

### **Commitment to Word of Life Church Mission, Vision, Values, and Beliefs**

- Your job responsibilities result from the support needed for Word of Life Church to fulfill God's plan for the mission, vision, and values assigned to it.
- Your commitment to these is vital and expected as an employee of this organization.

## **HANDBOOK PURPOSE**

This staff handbook is presented as a matter of information and has been prepared to share Word of Life Church's philosophy, employment practices, policies, and the benefits provided to our valued staff, as well as the conduct expected from them. While this handbook is not intended to be a book of rules and regulations or a contract, it does include some important guidelines which our employees should know. Except for the at-will employment provisions, the handbook can be amended at any time. This staff handbook will not answer every question an employee may

have, nor would Word of Life Church want to use a handbook to limit normal question and answer exchanges among us. It is in our conversations that we can better know and understand each other, express our values, and work together in a harmonious relationship.

We hope this guide will help employees feel comfortable with us. Word of Life Church depends on its employees to pursue our mission; their success is our success. Please don't hesitate to ask questions. We believe employees will enjoy their work and their fellow employees and will find Word of Life Church a good place to work.

No one other than the Senior Pastor, Executive Lead Team, or the Human Resource Director may alter or modify any of the policies in this staff handbook. No statement or promise by a supervisor, manager, or designee is to be interpreted as a change in policy, nor will it constitute an agreement with an employee.

Should any provision in this staff handbook be found to be unenforceable and invalid, such a finding does not invalidate the entire staff handbook, but only the subject provision. Nothing in this handbook is intended to infringe upon employee rights under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) or be incompatible with the NLRA.

We ask that employees read this guide carefully, become familiar with Word of Life Church and our policies, and refer to it whenever questions arise.



# EMPLOYMENT

## Equal Employment

It is the policy of Word of Life Church to provide equal employment opportunities to all qualified individuals and to administer all aspects and conditions of employment without regard to the following:

- Race
- Color
- Age
- Sex
- National origin
- Pregnancy
- Physical or mental disability
- Military or veteran status
- Child or spousal support withholding
- Citizenship and/or immigration status
- Genetic information, including family medical history
- Any other protected class, in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws

Word of Life Church is a religious 501c3, and as such, reserves the right under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to make employment decisions of all types on the basis of religion and our Statement of Faith. Word of Life Church will exercise a preference for employees who subscribe to Word of Life Church's Statement of Faith and Staff Lifestyle Agreement. Word of Life Church takes allegations of discrimination, intimidation, harassment, and retaliation very seriously and will promptly conduct an investigation when warranted.

Equal employment opportunity includes,

but is not limited to, employment, training, promotion, demotion, transfer, leaves of absence, and termination.

## Background Checks

Word of Life Church may conduct a background check on any employee with their signed consent. The background check may consist of prior employment verification, reference checks, education confirmation, criminal background, credit history, or other information, as permitted by law. Third-party services may be hired to perform these checks. All offers of employment and continued employment are contingent upon a satisfactory background check. Refusal to consent to a background check may result in discipline, up to or including termination..

## At-Will Notice

The employment relationship between Word of Life Church and its employees is at-will. This means that employees are not hired for any specified period of time and their employment may be terminated at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice, by either Word of Life Church or the employee. Word of Life Church policy requires that all employees are at-will; any implied, oral, or written agreements or promises to the contrary are void and unenforceable, unless approved by an officer with the power to create an employment contract. There is no implied employment contract created by this handbook or any other Word of Life Church document or written or verbal statement or policy.

## Anniversary Date and Seniority

The employee's date of hire is their official employment anniversary date. Seniority is





the length of continuous service starting on that date. Should an employee leave Word of Life Church and then be rehired, previously accrued seniority will be lost, and seniority will begin to accrue again on the date of rehire.

### **Immigration Law Compliance**

All employees are required to complete Section 1 of Form I-9 on their first day of employment, and produce, within three business days, acceptable proof of their identity and eligibility to work in the United States. Failure to produce the proper identifying documents within three days will result in termination.

### **Employee Designations**

Word of Life Church has established employee statuses, classifications, and categories for compensation and benefits purposes. An employee's supervisor will inform the employee of their status, classification, category, and responsibilities at the time of hire, re-hire, promotion, or at any time a change in status occurs. These designations do not alter the employee's at-will status.

## **EMPLOYEE STATUS**

### **Regular Full-Time Employee**

An employee who is scheduled to work no less than 100% of the scheduled work hours in a workweek on a fixed work schedule (not less than 30 hours). The employee may be Exempt or Non-exempt and is generally eligible for all employee benefits offered by Word of Life Church.

### **Regular Part-Time Employee**

An employee with standard work hours of

less than 30 hours in a workweek and may be eligible for some benefits.

### **Temporary Employee**

An employee who is scheduled to work on a specific need of Word of Life Church. The employee will not receive any benefits unless specifically authorized in advance and in writing by the Campus Pastor.

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*\*i.e. Regular Full Time Employee, Regular Part Time Employee, Temporary Employee*

## **EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATIONS**

Word of Life Church has established the following employee classifications for compensation and to comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

### **Exempt**

Employees whose positions meet specific tests established by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and applicable state law and who are Exempt from overtime pay requirements. The basic premise of Exempt status is that the Exempt employee is to work the hours required to meet their work responsibilities. Any exempt employee can ask for their position to be reevaluated if they believe they should be classified as non-exempt/hourly and entitled to earn overtime.

### **Non-Exempt**

Employees whose positions do not meet FLSA and state exemption tests and who



are paid a multiple of their regular rate of pay for overtime hours worked. Unless notified otherwise in writing by Chief Operations Officer or Human Resources, all employees of Word of Life Church are Non-exempt.

All positions at Word of Life Church play an integral part in fulfilling our mission statement. Each employee will belong to one of the following employment categories:

## **EMPLOYEE CATEGORIES**

### **Executive Staff**

Employees selected by the Senior Pastor responsible for making decisions that impact Word of Life Church globally. Their roles consist mostly of directing and coaching.

### **Pastoral Staff**

These roles consist mostly of directing, coaching, and pastoring.

### **Campus Pastors**

Pastors ordained by Word of Life Church who make decisions that impact the operation of their assigned campus, paid staff, Serve Teams, and members.

### **Associate Pastors**

Pastors ordained by Word of Life Church who are assigned to pastor-specific ministries.

### **Campus Worship Pastors**

Pastors who oversee the entire worship and music departments at their assigned campus.

### **Directors & Managers**

Employees hired with the primary responsibility of overseeing a certain ministry or department, including finding, equipping, and supporting leaders for the work of ministry. In addition to the ministry duties set forth above, their roles consist mostly of directing, coaching, and leading.

### **Department Heads and Support Services**

Employees hired with the primary responsibility of supporting the ministry through the fulfillment of administrative, technical, clerical, secretarial, or facility care duties. In addition to the ministry duties set forth above, their roles are mostly task-oriented, but they may also be involved in recruiting Serve Teams or leading teams. Coordinators and Support Service may be hourly or salaried employees depending on the nature of their position.

### **Personnel Records**

Word of Life Church maintains various employment files while an individual remains an employee of Word of Life Church. Such files may include employee personnel files, attendance files, I-9 files, and files for medical purposes. Employees are required to update any personal information changes in our HR software. Word of Life Church will take reasonable precautions to protect employee files and employees' personally identifiable information in its records.

Employee files are restricted based on who reasonably needs access to all or parts of the files.



Employees may review their own personnel file by making a written request to their manager or Human Resources. The written request will become a part of the employee's personnel file. Review of files must take place in the presence of the employee's manager or Human Resources.

### **Employee References**

All employee reference check requests should be forwarded to Human Resources; only authorized members of management or Human Resources may provide this information. When Word of Life Church is contacted for a reference check or employment verification, generally only positions held and dates of employment will be confirmed.

### **Job Transfers**

Word of Life Church aspires to promote qualified internal candidates to fill open positions whenever possible and practical. When job openings occur, current employees are encouraged to apply.

Management reserves the right to place an employee in whatever job it deems useful or necessary. All job transfers, reassignments, promotions, or lateral transfers are at the discretion of Word of Life Church.

### **Employment of Relatives**

Word of Life Church does not have a general prohibition against hiring relatives. However, an employee will generally not be hired, transferred, or promoted into a position where they will be managed, directly or indirectly, by a family member or romantic partner. Other factors may also be considered when hiring a relative or romantic partner of a current employee,

placing them in a particular position, or creating reporting relationships. Word of Life Church may transfer an employee or otherwise change their employment status at any time for any reason, including to avoid the appearance of favoritism or other conflict of interest.

## **CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR**

### **General Conduct Guidelines**

Employees are expected to exercise common sense and courtesy at all times, for the benefit of church members and Serve Teams, co-workers, and Word of Life Church as a whole. Professionalism is expected, as is respect for the safety and security of people and property. Failure to meet these expectations may be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination. The following are examples of unacceptable conduct, but this is not an exhaustive list.

- Failure to follow the policies outlined in this handbook.
- Negligent, careless, or inconsiderate treatment of church members and Serve Teams or their information.
- Theft, misappropriation, or unauthorized possession or use of any property that does not belong to the employee.
- Unauthorized removal of Word of Life Church property from the premises.
- Sharing confidential information with anyone who does not have an official need to know.



- Accessing, without authorization, confidential information pertaining to church members and Serve Teams or employees.
- Falsifying or changing any Word of Life Church, church member or Serve Team member, or employee document or record without authorization.
- Willfully, negligently, or carelessly damaging, defacing, or mishandling property of Word of Life Church, a church member or Serve Team member, or an employee.
- Taking or giving bribes of any nature.
- Entering Word of Life Church premises without authorization.
- Violating security, safety, or fire prevention regulations, or tampering with safety equipment.
- Unauthorized use of a personal vehicle for Word of Life Church business.
- Conduct that is illegal under federal, state, or local law.
- Creating a disturbance on Word of Life Church premises.
- Use of abusive language.
- Any rude, discourteous, or unbusinesslike behavior, on or off Word of Life Church premises, which is not protected by Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act and that adversely affects Word of Life Church services, operations, property, reputation, or goodwill in the community, or interferes with work.
- Insubordination or refusing to follow instructions from a supervisor or manager;

refusal or unwillingness to accept a job assignment or to perform job requirements.

- Leaving work without notifying your manager or Campus Pastor during regular working hours.
- Sleeping during regular working hours.
- Use or possession of illegal drugs on Word of Life Church premises at any time.
- Use of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours, or working under the influence of intoxicants.
- Unauthorized possession of a weapon on Word of Life Church premises.
- Illegal gambling.
- Soliciting, collecting money, vending, and posting or distributing bills or pamphlets during working hours in work areas. Such activity by employees during non-working time, including meal and rest periods, is not restricted so long as such activity does not interfere with the regular operation of business, is orderly, lawful, in good taste, conducted in an orderly manner, and does not create a safety hazard or a mess. Non-employees are prohibited from all forms of solicitation on Word of Life Church property at all times.

## **DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

Word of Life Church believes in working in a culture of honor and spiritual health. This is evident in the way we treat each other, care for one another, and handle conflict with each other. Honor values people ahead of projects. Conversations and actions should be handled with grace.





Cultivating trust between co-workers and others requires dealing directly with the person, avoiding gossiping, and not making assumptions about the other person's intentions.

Following the Matthew 18 principle is key.

*Matthew 18:15-17 (NIV)*

*If your brother and sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.*

Word of Life Church also believes in healthy, positive conflict. Word of Life Church sees conflict as an opportunity to glorify God by trusting, obeying and imitating Him. It provides an opportunity to serve other people by helping to bear their burdens or by confronting them in love, and it gives us an opportunity to grow to be like Christ by confessing sin and turning from attitudes that promote conflict.

God commands us in Matthew 18:15 to first go and talk privately, in grace and love, to those with whom we are in conflict. This can be accomplished by following these four steps as a guide:

- 1.** Pray for humility and wisdom
- 2.** Plan your words
- 3.** Choose the right time and place to talk
- 4.** Talk directly to the person rather than discussing with other staff

If an employee has done all they can to share their concern and the matter is still unresolved, they should ask one or two other people, who can maintain confidentiality, to meet with them and the person they have approached to help everyone resolve their differences. (Matt. 18:16-17)

A Dispute Resolution Policy is not a substitute for a Harassment Policy, nor is the use of a Dispute Resolution Policy an appropriate response to a report of harassment.

## **PERSONAL BOUNDARIES**

As important as it is for Word of Life Church to set healthy boundaries at work between members of the opposite sex, employees are reminded that being above reproach is expected in all settings and situations, both work and personal. We are obligated to **“abstain from all appearance of evil”** (1 Thessalonians 5: 22 KJV). We realize this may be inconvenient at times; however, we feel our testimony and our witness for the Lord are worth any inconvenience. Our goal is to protect ourselves from personal temptation, from inadvertently finding ourselves in compromising situations, and from giving anyone a reason to be suspicious of our behavior.

These guidelines are to be used when interacting with the opposite sex, whether they are married or unmarried, and whether they are staff, church members, Serve Teams, or community members.



## Meetings

If a one-on-one meeting is required, make arrangements to meet on-site at Word of Life Church, in an area visible to others.

- A male or female may not be alone together in an office or other room with the door closed.
- If a door needs to be closed for confidentiality, the meeting must take place in an office or room with uncovered windows that are visible to others in the building.
- If a meeting must be arranged off-site:
- Let your direct supervisor know the meeting is taking place, including the time and place.
- Tell your spouse, if married.
- Meet in a public space where other people are present.

## Communication

Employees are expected to exercise caution with conversations of a personal nature between an employee and anyone of the opposite sex who is not their spouse.

- Whenever possible, conversations should be mainly ministry-related and conducted via work email.
- One-on-one conversations (in person, on the phone, by text, or other direct messaging) should be brief and focused.
- Should the conversation need to be lengthy or include personal topics, include a 3rd party, such as your spouse or supervisor.

## Travel

A male and a female are not to ride alone together in a car. When short, distance work-related travel is required, travel in groups. When males and females are traveling overnight for Word of Life Church purposes:

- A minimum of three employees will travel together.
- At all times, actively avoid any situation that would cause two employees of the opposite sex to be alone.
- Employees of the opposite sex must book separate rooms for lodging, without adjoining rooms.
- A member of the Executive Team must approve the travel.
- Inform your spouse, if married.

## SEXUAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT

Word of Life Church is committed to providing a work environment free of harassment in any form, including inappropriate and disrespectful behavior, intimidation, and other unwelcome conduct directed at an individual because of their inclusion in a protected class. Applicable federal and state law defines harassment as unwelcome behavior based on someone's inclusion in a protected class. Sometimes language or actions that were not expected to be offensive or unwelcome actually are, so employees should err on the side of being more sensitive to the feelings of their co-workers rather than less.



The following are examples of harassment; behaviors not in this list may also be considered harassment:

- Unwanted sexual advances;
- Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors;
- Retaliation or threats of retaliation for refusing advances or requests for favors;
- Leering, making sexual gestures or jokes, or commenting on an employee's body;
- Displaying sexually suggestive content;
- Displaying or sharing derogatory posters, photographs, or drawings;
- Making derogatory epithets, or slurs;
- Ongoing teasing about an employee's sex;
- Physical conduct such as touching, assault, or impeding or blocking movements.

Sexual harassment on the job is unlawful whether it involves coworker harassment, harassment by a manager, or harassment by persons doing business with or for Word of Life Church, such as church members, community members, Serve Teams, or vendors.

### **Retaliation**

Any form of retaliation against someone who has expressed concern about any form of harassment, refused to partake in harassing behavior, made a harassment complaint, or cooperated in a harassment investigation, is strictly prohibited. A complaint made in good faith will under no circumstances be grounds for disciplinary action. Individuals who make complaints that they know to be false may

be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **Enforcement**

All managers and supervisors are responsible for:

- Implementing Word of Life Church's harassment policy;
- Ensuring that all employees they supervise have knowledge of and understand Word of Life Church policy;
- Reporting any complaints of misconduct to the designated Word of Life Church representative, the Campus Pastor, so they may be investigated and resolved internally;
- Taking and/or assisting in prompt and appropriate corrective action when necessary to ensure compliance with the policy;
- Conducting themselves in a manner consistent with the policy.

### **Addressing Issues Informally**

Employees who witness offensive behavior in the workplace - whether directed at them or another employee - are encouraged, though not required, to immediately address it with the employee whose behavior they found offensive. An employee who is informed that their behavior is or was offensive should stop immediately and refrain from that behavior in the future, regardless of whether they agree that the behavior could have been offensive.

### **Harassment Complaint Procedure**

Employees are encouraged to use the Harassment Complaint Form to report



behavior that they feel is harassing, whether or not that behavior is directed at them. The Complaint Procedure provides for immediate, thorough, and objective investigation of claims of harassment. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against those who are determined to have engaged in harassing behavior.

### **Abusive Conduct**

Abusive conduct means malicious conduct in the workplace that a reasonable person would find hostile or offensive. Abusive conduct may include repeated infliction of verbal abuse, such as the use of derogatory remarks, insults, and epithets, verbal or physical conduct that a reasonable person would find threatening, intimidating, or humiliating, or the sabotage or undermining of a person's work performance. A single act will generally not constitute abusive conduct, unless especially severe.

Word of Life Church considers abusive conduct in the workplace unacceptable and will not tolerate it under any circumstances. Employees should report abusive conduct to a Campus Pastor or Human Resources. Campus Pastors are responsible for ensuring that employees are not subjected to abusive conduct. All reports will be treated seriously and investigated when appropriate. Employees who are found to have engaged in abusive conduct will be subject to discipline, up to and potentially including termination.

Retaliation against an employee who reports abusive conduct or verifies that it took place is strictly prohibited.

### **Complaint Procedure**

Word of Life Church has established a procedure for a fair review of complaints related to any workplace controversy, conflict, or harassment. Employees may take their complaint directly to the person or department supervisor. If the complaint is related to their supervisor or Campus Pastor or if the employee feels the supervisor or Campus Pastor would not provide an impartial resolution to the problem, then they may take the issue to the Campus Pastor, Human Resources, or a member of the Executive Lead Team.

## **CORRECTIVE ACTION**

A high level of job performance and professionalism is expected from each employee. In the event that an employee's job performance does not meet the standards established for the position, they violate Word of Life Church policies or procedures, or their behavior is otherwise unacceptable, corrective action may ensue. Corrective action may include, but is not limited to: coaching, oral or written warnings, performance improvement plans, paid or unpaid suspension, demotion, and termination. The type and order of actions taken will be at management's sole discretion and Word of Life Church is not required to take any disciplinary action before making an adverse employment decision, including termination.





# COMPENSATION

## Pay Periods

The standard seven-day payroll workweek for Word of Life Church will begin at 12:00 a.m. Sunday. The designated pay period for all employees is bi-weekly.

Paydays are every other Thursday. Except as otherwise provided, if any date of paycheck distribution falls on a weekend or holiday, employees will be paid on the preceding scheduled workday.

## Timekeeping

All non-exempt employees are required to use the timekeeping system to record their actual hours worked. For the purpose of this policy, all forms of timekeeping will be referred to as clocking in or out.

Non-exempt employees generally should clock in no sooner than five minutes before and clock out no later than five minutes after their scheduled work hours.

Non-exempt employees are also required to clock in and out for their lunch periods.

Lunch periods are unpaid time when employees are relieved of all duties. Waiver of the lunch period requires prior approval of the employee's manager and will not be approved if the waiver of the lunch period would result in overtime work.

Accurate timekeeping is a federal and state wage and hour requirement, and employees are required to comply. Failing to enter time into the timekeeping system in an accurate and timely manner is unacceptable job performance. Employees are to clock in and out on their phones, computers, or other devices. Should an employee miss an entry into the timekeeping system, they must submit a

request for time correction for their manager's approval as soon possible for correction, but no later than the end of each week for the week in question.

Non-exempt employees are not permitted to work unscheduled times without prior authorization from their manager.

This includes clocking in early, clocking out late, or working through scheduled break or lunch periods.

## Employees and Volunteer Activities

Time spent in service to Word of Life Church as a job expectation is time worked as an employee, and is therefore paid time. Time that is Serve Team membered at Word of Life Church is time given freely as a gift from an individual, and not paid time. An employee may serve as a Serve Team member at Word of Life Church only if all of the following conditions are met:

- Volunteer work or service must be solely at the employee's initiative, not at the request or suggestion of the employer.
- The employee must be performing a task or service outside of their regular job functions performed for Word of Life Church.
- Volunteer work or service must be performed outside the employee's normal or regular work hours.
- The employee must be performing a religious, charitable, or other community service without contemplation of payment.



## **Overtime**

Word of Life Church complies with all applicable federal and state laws with regard to payment of overtime work. Non-exempt employees are paid overtime at the rate of one and one-half times the regular rate of pay for all hours worked over 40 in a workweek.

Employees are required to work overtime when assigned. Any overtime worked must be authorized by a supervisor or manager, in advance. Working unauthorized overtime or the refusal or unavailability to work overtime is not acceptable work performance, and is subject to discipline, including but not limited to termination.

## **Payroll Deductions**

Word of Life Church complies with the salary basis requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and does not make improper deductions from the salaries of exempt employees. There are, however, certain circumstances where deductions from the salaries of exempt employees are permissible. Such circumstances include:

- When an exempt employee is absent from work for one or more full days for personal reasons other than sickness or disability
- When an exempt employee is absent for one or more full days due to sickness or disability if the deduction is made in accordance with a bona fide sick leave plan that provides compensation for salary lost due to illness (any paid leave benefit Word of Life offers for use during illness)

- To offset amounts received as witness or jury fees, or for military pay.
- For disciplinary suspensions of one or more full days imposed in good faith for serious workplace policy violations
- For penalties imposed in good faith for serious safety infractions
- When an employee is on unpaid leave under the Family Medical Leave Act
- During an employee's first and last week of employment, if they work less than a full week

If an employee believes that an improper deduction has been made, they should immediately report this to their manager or the person responsible for payroll processing. Reports will be promptly investigated, and if it is determined that an improper deduction has occurred, the employee will be promptly reimbursed.

## **Pay Adjustments, Promotions and Demotions**

All pay increases are based upon merit, economic factors, and the sustainability of Word of Life Church. There may not be an automatic annual cost of living or salary adjustment. Employee pay also may be adjusted downward. Salary decreases may take place when there is job restructuring, job duty changes, job transfers, or adverse economic conditions. Demotion is a reduction in responsibility, usually accompanied by a



reduction in salary. If demotion occurs, employees will maintain their seniority with Word of Life Church.

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### **Performance Reviews**

Employees will generally receive a review of their job performance semi-annually. This review will be written. Such evaluation may not occur at exactly the same time each year.

If the employee receives a review sheet or other written document, they will be required to sign it. An employee's signature does not necessarily indicate that the employee agrees with all the comments, but that they have been given the opportunity to examine the evaluation and discuss it with their manager. The completed and signed review form will be placed in the employee's personnel file and the employee will receive a copy of their signed performance review.

In addition to performance reviews, informal coaching sessions may be conducted from time to time.

### **Work Assignments**

On occasion, employees may be required to perform duties that are not part of their job description or usual tasks. This may happen because a co-worker is absent, a position is temporarily vacant, Word of Life Church or a department is particularly busy, or for other reasons. Employees are expected to perform these additional duties in a timely fashion and to the best of their ability. Should questions about the process or procedure arise, employees should speak with their manager. Unless informed otherwise, employees will be paid at their regular rate of pay.

### **Expense Reimbursement**

Word of Life Church covers the cost of necessary ministry expenses, either through direct purchase or by reimbursement, according to any applicable state or federal laws. Some examples of covered expenses include purchasing items, tools, and services needed to perform work; and traveling for ministry. Employees should refer to the policy provided by the Finance Department when spending money in a ministry-related capacity.

Employees who are issued ministry credit cards are required to use them for ministry purchases whenever possible and follow the Ministry Expense and Reimbursement Policy, which will be provided upon issuance of the credit card. Failure to follow the financial guidelines regarding credit card could result in and cancelling the employee credit card and disciplinary action privileges.



Expenses needing reimbursement require pre-approval from the employee's direct supervisor, submission of receipts, and a completed reimbursement request form. Contact Financial Director to receive the current Ministry Expense and Reimbursement Policy and reimbursement forms.

### **Advances and Loans**

Word of Life Church does not give advances or loans to employees.

## **BENEFITS**

### **Health and Welfare Benefits**

Word of Life Church complies with all applicable federal and state laws with regard to benefits administration. All regular employees scheduled and generally working at least 30 hours a week are entitled to health insurance and other Word of Life Church-sponsored health benefits, when in effect. WOLC currently provides access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for employees and their family members needing brief outpatient counseling with licensed professional counselors. Word of Life Church reserves the right to change or terminate health plans or other benefits at any time.

New qualifying employees will be eligible for coverage on the first of the month following hire. New employees may elect not to be covered, with the permission of Word of Life Church, provided the percentage of employees not covered is within the benefit plan specifications.

### **Continuation of Benefits**

Under the federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), or a state mini-COBRA law, employees may be allowed to continue their health insurance benefits, at their own expense, for a set number of months after experiencing a qualifying event. Length of coverage may be dependent upon the qualifying event.

To qualify for continuation of health benefits, the covered individual must experience a qualifying event that would otherwise cause them to lose group health coverage. The following are qualifying events:

#### **For Employees**

- Voluntary or involuntary termination of employment for reasons other than gross misconduct
- Reduction in numbers of hours worked

#### **For Spouses**

- Loss of coverage by the employee because of one of the qualifying events listed above
- Covered employee becomes eligible for Medicare
- Divorce or legal separation of the covered employee
- Death of the covered employee

#### **For Dependent Children**

- Loss of coverage because of any of the qualifying events listed for spouses
- Loss of status as a dependent child under the plan rules

See Human Resources for additional information.





## **Group Life Insurance**

Life insurance is provided upon vendor approval for all full-time staff. Employee contributions to the plans are paid by payroll deduction, which must be authorized in writing. Detailed information about the plans will be made available at time of enrollment.

## **Retirement**

Upon completion of one year of continuous employment, full time staff are eligible to contribute to Word of Life Church's retirement plan through payroll deduction. Word of Life Church will make matching contributions of up to 10% of an eligible employee's compensation deferred.

## **Holidays**

Regular full-time employees are entitled to the following paid holidays observed by Word of Life Church:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Monday after Easter
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Wednesday before Thanksgiving
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day
- The last Sunday of the year (Sabbath Sunday)

Part-time employees will receive holiday pay based on their scheduled hours, if the holiday falls on their normally scheduled day.

Other days or parts of days may be designated as holidays with or without pay. No holiday pay will be paid to an employee who is on an unpaid status, on any leave, or absent due to workers' compensation. All employees are off on Fridays. If a paid holiday falls on a Friday, Saturday, or Sunday it is recognized on either the Thursday before or the following Monday.

## **Week Between Christmas & New Year's**

Word of Life Church's offices will be closed the week between Christmas and New Year's Day. Employees may take this time off only if their job allows it or if urgent work needs are completed. Some employees' responsibilities may require them to work during this time or to be called in during this time. Although this is paid time for all regular staff, this is not considered vacation time; unused hours are not accrued and do not roll over.

## **Vacation**

Vacations provide a break beneficial to both Word of Life Church and the employee. Therefore, employees are encouraged to take vacations annually. All regular employees are eligible for paid vacation, according to the following schedule, based on continuous employment:

Full-time employees will receive a lump sum of vacation annually on January 1st, according to the following schedule:



<b>Employment Time</b>	<b>Annual Accrual</b>
Years 0 - 5	80 hours
Years 6 - 10	96 hours
Years 11 - 20	136 hours
21+ Years	176 hours

Vacation time begins to accrue immediately upon hire. Vacation black-out dates include Sunday-Tuesday before Thanksgiving, the Sunday after Thanksgiving and the week before and after Christmas break.

Unused vacation does not carry over from year to year. Unused vacation will be paid out upon employment separation.

Vacation requests need to be submitted for management approval through the timekeeping system with sufficient notice.

### **Paid Time Off**

Word of Life Church offers paid time off (PTO) to regular full-time employees. PTO may be used for any purpose, including but not limited to vacation, personal matters, and recovery from injury or illness. Vacation requests need to be submitted for management approval through the timekeeping system with sufficient notice. Eligible employees include:

Employees will receive a lump sum of PTO annually on January 1st, according to the following schedule:

<b>Employment Time</b>	<b>Annual Accrual</b>
Years 0 - 5	24 hours
Years 6 - 10	32 hours
Years 11 - 20	40 hours
21+ Years	56 hours

PTO begins to accrue immediately upon hire. PTO black-out dates include Sunday-Tuesday before



Thanksgiving, the Sunday after Thanksgiving, and the week before and after Christmas break.

Employees will not be paid wages in lieu of unused PTO. Unused PTO does not carry over from year to year. Unused PTO will be forfeited upon employment separation, unless payout is required by state law.

### **Healing Days**

All full-time employees are eligible for paid healing days. Healing days are a sick leave benefit and may be used for illnesses, doctor or dental appointments. Employees may use Paid Medical Leave time before using all other benefit time, to include healing days.

Full-time employees will accrue up to 5 days annually. Healing days may be taken in 1-hour increments. In the case of certain absences in excess of three consecutive work days, Word of Life Church may request a note from the employee's doctor.

*\*Unused healing days will be carried over each year up to the maximum accrual bank of 480 hours. Unused healing days will be forfeited upon employment separation.*

### **Emergency Paid Medical Leave**

Full-time employees are eligible for emergency paid medical leave every other year, up to a maximum of twenty days (four work weeks), with the following guidelines:

- Leave runs concurrently with FMLA, when applicable
- Leave is used for an employee's own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform their job as stipulated by the employee's healthcare provider.
- Leave does not apply to care for a sick family member. (Employees

eligible for FMLA to care for family members may use healing days, vacation, and personal days.)

- Leave is not a supplement to regular healing days.
- Should an employee need additional time beyond the 20 workdays, accrued healing days, vacation, and personal days may be used. When the employee exhausts all paid benefit time, the remainder of the leave will be unpaid, and no benefit time is accrued during this unpaid leave.

## **FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT**

### **Leave Entitlements**

Under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), an eligible employee can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period. To be eligible, an employee must meet the following three criteria:

- Have worked for Word of Life Church for at least 12 months;
- Have at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12 months before taking leave; and
- Work at a location where Word of Life Church has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the employee's worksite.

Eligible employees can take leave for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To bond with a child (leave must be taken within one year of the child's birth or placement);



- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition;
- For the employee's own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform their job;
- For qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee's spouse, child, or parent.

An eligible employee who is a covered service member's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin may also take up to 26 weeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the service member with a serious injury or illness.

Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to the same job or one nearly identical to it with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

### **Using Leave**

An employee does not need to use leave in one block. When it is medically necessary or Word of Life Church otherwise approves, employees may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule. Employees on FMLA leave may be required to report periodically to Word of Life Church regarding their status and intent to return to work. An employee who fails to return to work at the expiration of the leave without an approved extension will be considered to have resigned.

Employees must inform Word of Life Church if the need for leave is for a

reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified.

Employees may choose, or Word of Life Church may require, use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. If an employee substitutes accrued paid leave for FMLA leave, they must comply with Word of Life Church's normal paid leave policies.

Employees must give 30 days' advance notice of the need for FMLA leave. If it is not possible to give 30 days' notice, an employee must notify their manager as soon as possible.

*\*i.e. Leave Entitlements, Using Leave, Documentation, Benefits*



## **Documentation**

Word of Life Church may require a certification from a health care provider, and periodic recertification, supporting the need for leave. If certification is requested, employees will have 15 days to provide it. If we determine that the certification is incomplete, we will provide a written notice indicating what additional information is required.

Employees do not have to share a medical diagnosis but must provide enough information so that Word of Life Church can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection. Sufficient information could include a doctor's note informing Word of Life Church that the employee is or will be unable to perform their job functions, that a family member cannot perform daily activities, or that hospitalization or continuing medical treatment is necessary.

If we become aware that an employee's need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, we will notify the employee if they are eligible for FMLA leave and, if eligible, provide a notice of rights and responsibilities under the FMLA. If the employee is not eligible, we will provide a reason for ineligibility. Word of Life Church will notify employees if leave will be designated as FMLA leave, and if so, how much leave will be designated as FMLA leave.

## **Benefits**

While employees are on FMLA leave, health insurance coverage will continue as if the employees were not on leave. Employees are responsible for their portion of the medical insurance premium cost, if any.

Failure to pay the employee portion of the health insurance premiums in advance (or on the schedule established by the payroll department) may result in the termination of coverage. If eligible, the employee will receive notification of continuation of benefits.

Word of Life Church reserves the right to seek reimbursement from the employee for the medical insurance premiums paid by Word of Life Church while the employee was on FMLA leave if the employee fails to return from FMLA. Word of Life Church will not seek reimbursement if the failure to return is due to continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition of the employee or the employee's family member that would otherwise qualify for FMLA leave, or other circumstances beyond the employee's control.

Word of Life Church will not interfere with an employee's FMLA rights or retaliate against them for using or trying to use FMLA leave, opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA, or being involved in any proceeding under or related to the FMLA.

Employees who believe they have not received the benefits to which they are entitled under FMLA are strongly encouraged to speak to another member of management or Human Resources for clarification or resolution. Failing that, an employee is able to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, or may bring a private action. FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or





collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

### **Military Leave**

Employees on a military leave of absence are entitled to be restored to their previously held position or similar position, if available, without loss of any rights, privileges or benefits provided they meet the requirements specified in the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). USERRA generally applies to employees who are in the:

- Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard (both active and reserve components)
- Army and Air National Guard
- Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service
- Federal Emergency Management Agency reserves
- Any other category designated by the President in time of war or emergency

In certain circumstances, a letter from the employee's commanding officer may be requested to establish the dates of duty.

### **Jury Service Leave**

Employees will be allowed time off to attend jury duty. Word of Life Church may request that the employee ask to be excused from service, or request postponement, if their absence from work would create a serious hardship to Word of

Life Church.

Employees must submit a copy of the original summons to their manager or Campus Pastor as soon as it is received. For periods of service longer than two days, Word of Life Church may require proof that the employee attended jury service. Employees should report for work on any day, or partial day, not actually spent attending jury duty.

Employees may keep any fees received for jury duty. Jury duty leave is paid for up to 2 weeks, after which employees will be allowed to use any available paid time off. Exempt employees will be paid in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

### **Witness Leave**

Employees who need to attend court as a witness, to appear with a minor, or because they are the victim in a criminal case, will be granted leave in order to appear in court. Word of Life Church may require proof of the need for leave. This leave is unpaid, though employees will be allowed to use accrued paid time off, if any is available. Exempt employees will be paid in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

### **Crime Victim Leave**

An employee who is the victim of a crime and misses work in order to participate in the reasonable preparation of criminal proceedings or in response to a subpoena will be granted leave without pay for such time as it is necessary to comply with the request. Word of Life Church may request proof of the need for leave.



## **Sabbatical Leave**

Word of Life Church's lead pastors and staff should model God's design for Sabbath rest to provide sharpening and renewal of spiritual health/strength by offering tenured employees sabbaticals. The 1-month (20 paid days) leave intends to further the church's ministry objectives, enhance the employee's ministry, and provide physical, spiritual, and relational renewal and refreshment.

### **Guidelines**

- Full-time employees in good standing, whether ordained clergy or un-ordained, are eligible for a sabbatical after completing their first five years of full-time employment at Word of Life Church and every 5th year after that.
- Employees applying for the leave must present a detailed sabbatical plan three months in.
- The 30-day sabbatical (four weeks) of paid time off, and the employee cannot add vacation or personal days to extend the leave.
- When an employee goes on a paid missions trip, it will be considered a sabbatical.
- All financial requests must be reviewed by the Campus Pastor and approved by the Chief Operations Officer.
- Upon returning, the employee will make a written or oral report to their Campus Pastor recapping the sabbatical.

- Employees should consult with their Campus Pastor for more details about the Sabbatical leave or request a copy of the full Sabbatical Leave policy and application process.

## **Ministry Engagements**

Pastoral staff may take up to three weeks including Sundays (not consecutive) to serve as a guest Pastor, a leader or participant in training conferences, classes, conventions, etc. The Senior Pastor must approve consecutive Sundays.

## **Bereavement Leave**

A regular employee of Word of Life Church may request a leave of absence with pay for a maximum of ten days for immediate family (spouse, child, step-child, or anyone living within the same household) and five days for non-nuclear family (parent, sibling, grandchild, parent-in-law, grandparent, all corresponding step-relatives). Additionally, bereavement leave is provided for two days for grandparent-in-law or sibling-in-law and one day for aunt, uncle, niece/nephew, and first cousin. Proof of the need for leave may be required.

## **HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY**

### **Non-Smoking**

Smoking, vaping, and use of tobacco products are not permitted in any Word of Life Church buildings, grounds, work sites, or vehicles.

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

Word of Life Church is dedicated to



providing employees with a workplace that is free of drugs and alcohol. While on Word of Life Church premises, whether during work time or non-work time, employees are prohibited from being under the influence of drugs or alcohol. There are limited exceptions for the use of prescription drugs (not including marijuana), as long as they do not create safety issues or impair an employee's ability to do their job.

Employees are strictly prohibited from possessing illegal drugs, cannabis, or excessive quantities of prescription or over-the-counter drugs while on Word of Life Church premises, performing Word of Life Church-related duties, or operating any Word of Life Church equipment. Any drugs confiscated that are suspected of being illegal will be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Employees taking medication should consult a medical professional to determine whether the drug may affect their personal safety or ability to perform their job and should advise their manager of any resulting job limitations. Once notified, Word of Life Church will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the limitation.

Word of Life Church reserves the right to test any employee for the use of illegal drugs, marijuana, or alcohol, in accordance with applicable law. Employees in safety-sensitive positions may be subject to regular or random drug testing. Drug or alcohol tests may also be conducted after an accident in which drugs or alcohol could reasonably be involved, or when behavior or impairment on the job creates reasonable suspicion of

use. Under those circumstances, the employee may be driven to a certified lab for testing at Word of Life Church's expense. Refusal to be tested for drugs or alcohol will be treated the same as a positive test result.

Violation of this policy may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

To the extent that any federal, state, or local law or regulation limits or prohibits the application of any provision of this policy, then that particular provision will be ineffective in that jurisdiction only, while the remainder of the policy remains in effect.

### **Reasonable Accommodations**

If Word of Life Church is made aware of an employee's disability and resulting need for accommodation, Human Resources or the employee's manager will engage with them in the interactive process. This process will determine what, if any, accommodations are necessary and reasonable in order to assist the employee in doing the essential functions of their job. Whether an accommodation is reasonable will be determined based on a number of factors, including whether it will effectively assist the employee in doing the essential functions of their job, the cost, and the effect on business operations. In most cases, employees will be required to provide documentation from an appropriate healthcare provider. Human Resources will provide employees with the necessary form.

All employees are required to comply with safety standards. Employees who



pose a direct threat to the health or safety of themselves or others in the workplace may be temporarily moved into another position or placed on leave until it is determined if a reasonable accommodation will effectively mitigate the risk.

### **Injury and Accident Response and Reporting**

If an employee is injured or witnesses an injury at work, they must report it immediately to the nearest available manager. Employees should render any assistance requested by that manager. When any accident, injury, or illness occurs while an employee is at work, regardless of the nature or severity, the employee must complete an injury reporting form and return it to Human Resources as soon as possible. Reporting should not be allowed to delay necessary medical attention. Once the accident is reported, follow-up will be handled by Human Resources or Campus Pastor, including a determination as to whether the injured employee may return to work.

Questions asked by law enforcement or fire officials making an investigative report should be answered giving only factual information and avoiding speculation. Liability for personal injury or property damage should never be admitted in answering an investigatory question asked by law enforcement or fire officials.

In addition to compliance with safety measures imposed by federal Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) and state law, Word of Life Church has an independent interest in making its facilities a safe and healthy place to work. Word of Life Church recognizes that employees may be in a position to notice dangerous

conditions and practices and therefore encourages employees to report such conditions, as well as non-functioning or hazardous equipment, to a manager immediately. Appropriate remedial measures will be taken when possible and appropriate. Employees will not be retaliated or discriminated against for reporting of accidents, injuries, or illnesses, filing of safety-related complaints, or requesting to see injury and illness logs.

### **Workers' Compensation**

Word of Life Church carries insurance that covers work-related injuries and illnesses. The workers' compensation insurance carrier governs the benefits provided. These benefits will not be limited, expanded, or modified by any statements of Word of Life Church personnel or Word of Life Church documents. In the case of any discrepancy, the insurance carrier's documents will control.

### **Workplace Violence and Security**

Word of Life Church expects all employees to conduct themselves in a non-threatening, non-abusive manner at all times. No direct, conditional, or veiled threat of harm to any employee, church member or Serve Team member, business partner, or Word of Life Church property will be acceptable. Acts of violence or intimidation of others will not be tolerated. Any employee who commits, or threatens to commit, a violent act against any person while on Word of Life Church premises, will be subject to discipline, up to immediate termination.

Employees share the responsibility of identifying and alleviating threatening or



violent behaviors. Any employee who is subjected to or threatened with violence, or who is aware of another individual who has been subjected to or threatened with violence, should immediately report this information to a Campus Pastor. Threats will be investigated and appropriate remedial or disciplinary action will be taken.

### **Driving Safety**

Employees who drive on Word of Life Church business are expected to drive safely and responsibly and to use common sense and courtesy. Employees are also subject to the following rules and conditions:

- A valid driver's license must be maintained as a condition of continued employment for positions that require driving. Word of Life Church may request to see an employee's license at any time.
- Employees who drive their own vehicles for work must maintain the minimum amount of insurance required by state law as a condition of continued employment. Word of Life Church may request proof of insurance at any time.
- Employees must wear seat belts at all times, whether they are the driver or a passenger.
- With the exception of a phone being used only for navigation purposes, employees are required to turn off cell phones or put them on silent before starting their car. Employees are permitted and encouraged to communicate to coworkers and community members the reason why calls may not be returned immediately.
- Employees who are using a device for

navigation purposes should complete all set up before starting the vehicle.

- Use of electronic devices for purposes other than navigation is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, making or receiving phone calls, sending or receiving text messages or e-mails, browsing the internet, reading books, and downloading information from the web. If an employee needs to engage in any of these activities while driving, they must pull over to a safe location and stop the vehicle prior to using any device.
- Employees should not engage in other distracting activities such as eating, shaving, or putting on makeup, even in stopped or slow-moving traffic.
- The use of alcohol, drugs, or other substances that in any way impair driving ability is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, over-the-counter cold or allergy medications and sleep aids that have a residual effect.
- Employees must follow all driving laws and safety rules, such as adherence to posted speed limits and directional signs, use of turn signals, and avoidance of confrontational or offensive behavior while driving.
- Employees must not allow anyone to ride in any part of the vehicle not specifically intended for passenger use or any seat that does not have a working seat belt.
- Employees must promptly report any accidents to local law enforcement as well as Word of Life Church.





- Employees must promptly report any moving or parking violations received while driving on Word of Life Church business or in Word of Life Church vehicles.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER AND OUTAGES**

This policy establishes guidelines for Word of Life Church operations during periods of extreme weather and similar emergencies. Word of Life Church will remain open in all but the most extreme circumstances. Unless an emergency closing is announced, all employees are expected to report to work. However, Word of Life Church does not advise employees to take unwarranted risks when traveling to work in the event of inclement weather or other emergencies. Each employee should exercise their best judgment with regard to road conditions and other safety concerns.

### **Designation of Emergency Closing**

Only by the authorization of designated managers will Word of Life Church cease operations due to emergency circumstances. If severe weather conditions develop during working hours, it is at the discretion of Management to release employees. Employees will generally be expected to remain at work until the appointed closing time.

### **Procedures during Closings**

If weather or traveling conditions delay or prevent an employee's reporting to work, their immediate supervisor should be notified as soon as possible. If possible, such notification should be made by a telephone conversation directly with the

supervisor. If direct contact is not possible, leaving a detailed voicemail message or message with another employee is acceptable.

An employee who is unable to report to work may use any accrued time off or take the day off without pay.

### **Pay and Leave Practices**

When a partial or full-day closing is authorized by management, the following pay and paid leave practices apply:

- The remainder of the employee's scheduled work day will be paid.
- Exempt employees will be expected to continue work from home if their job duties allow. Word of Life Church will pay the exempt employee's regular salary regardless, as outlined in the Payroll Deductions Policy.

### **Other Work Options**

Supervisors may approve requests for employees to temporarily work from home, if doing so allows completion of work assignments.

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*i.e. Designation of Emergency Closing, - other work options*



# WORKPLACE GUIDELINES

## Hours of Work

Employees are expected to be at their work area and ready to work at their scheduled time. Employees will be given their work hours upon hire and at the time of any change in position. If the normal work hours are changed or if Word of Life Church changes its operating hours, employees will be given notice.

## Off-the-Clock Work

Non-exempt employees must accurately record all time worked, regardless of when and where the work is performed. Off-the-clock work (doing work that is not reported in the timekeeping system) is prohibited. No member of management may request, require, or authorize non-exempt employees to perform work without compensation. Any possible violations should be reported promptly to a member of management.

## Lactation Accommodation

Word of Life Church provides a supportive environment to enable breastfeeding employees to express breast milk during work hours for up to one year following the birth of a child. Accommodations under this policy include a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from co-workers and the public which may be used by an employee to express breast milk. Discrimination and harassment of breastfeeding mothers in any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

# FLEX TIME

Word of Life Church is a family church that is sensitive to work-life balance. Employees are expected to be good stewards of their work schedule each week and are expected to balance their Flex Time with the business/ministry needs of the church and their job requirements. With flex time, full time employees are still expected to work the hours required in the workweek.

## Flex Time Benefits

Employees are able to take extended lunch breaks and are given the option to make up their time. You are required to clock in and out for this extended lunch period.

Employees needing to attend family functions (ex. Child's school play, graduation, etc.) and may attend the function by clocking out for the event. You are eligible to make the time up later in the day/week without having to use another form of paid benefit time (i.e., vacation or personal time)

Employees may use Flex Time for extended time needed doctor's appointments with the option to make up their time.

## What Flex Time is Not

- It is not for gaining a vacation day at the end of each week.
- It is not for getting 40 hours in the first half of the week and taking the rest of the week off
- It is not to be used for vacation purposes



## **Regular Weekly Services**

### **SERVICE TIMES CANNOT BE FLEXED.**

Sunday Services, Revival Nights, and any church event requiring employees to report at a specific time are not flex time.

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*\*i.e. Flex Time, What Flex Time is Not, Regular Weekly Services*

## **ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS**

Employees are expected to be at work and ready to go when their scheduled shift begins or resumes. If an employee is unable to be at work on time, or at all, they must notify their manager no later than 30 minutes before the start of their scheduled work day. If an employee's manager is unavailable, the employee should contact another member of management. If an employee is physically unable to contact Word of Life Church, they should ask another person to make contact on their behalf. Leaving a message with a co-worker or answering service is not considered proper notification. Excessive tardiness or absences are unacceptable job performance.

When an employee calls in absent, they should provide their expected time or date of return. Word of Life Church reserves the right to require proof of the need for absence, if allowed by law. If an employee is absent for three consecutive days and has not provided proper notification, Word of Life Church will assume that the employee has voluntarily quit their position and will proceed with the termination process.

If an employee becomes ill during their scheduled work day and feels they may need to leave before the end of their shift, they should notify their manager immediately. If an employee is unable to perform their job at an acceptable level, they may be sent home until they are well enough to work.

## **Personal Appearance and Hygiene**

Although Word of Life Church's work environment is casual, employees are expected to present a professional image, both through behavior and appearance. Accordingly, employees must wear work-appropriate attire during the workday or any time they are representing Word of Life Church. Clothing should be clean and neat in appearance. Employees should consider their level of church member or Serve Team member and public contact and the types of meetings they are scheduled to attend in determining what attire is appropriate.

All employees are expected to maintain appropriate oral and bodily hygiene. Hair (including facial hair) should be clean and neat. Accessories should not interfere with an employee's work. The excessive use of perfume or cologne is unacceptable, as are odors that are disruptive or offensive to others or may exacerbate allergies.

Managers are responsible for enforcing dress and grooming standards for their department. Any employee whose appearance does not meet these standards may be counseled. If their appearance is unduly distracting or the clothing is unsafe, the employee may be



sent home to change into something more appropriate.

### **Confidentiality**

Employees may not disclose any confidential information to anyone outside Word of Life Church without the appropriate authorization. Confidential information may include internal reports, financials, church member lists, other internal business-related communications, as well as information regarding the development of systems, processes, products, design, and technology. Confidential information may only be disclosed or discussed with those who need the information. Conversation of a confidential nature should not be held within earshot of the public or church members or Serve Teams.

This policy is intended to alert employees to the need for discretion at all times and is not intended to inhibit normal business communications. In addition, nothing in this policy is intended to infringe upon employee rights under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act.

### **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)**

Word of Life Church is not a covered entity as defined by HIPAA. Word of Life Church does, however, maintain certain health information that is subject to HIPAA requirements. Thus, Word of Life Church will follow HIPAA privacy and security provisions with respect to that protected health information (PHI). HIPAA regulations will be followed in administrative activities undertaken by assigned personnel when they involve PHI in any of the following circumstances: health information privacy, health information security, and health

information electronic transmission. Word of Life Church will consider any breaches of privacy and confidentiality with respect to PHI to be serious, and disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the corrective action policy.

### **Conflict of Interest**

A conflict of interest arises when an employee is engaged in activity that could be detrimental to Word of Life Church. This includes when an employee improperly uses their position with Word of Life Church for personal gain or the gain of someone with whom they have a relationship. Improper use includes behavior that is illegal, as well as behavior that is unethical or questionable to a reasonable person. These are some examples of a conflict of interest:

- An employee requesting or requiring gifts or discounts in exchange for starting or continuing a business relationship with a client or vendor.
- An employee selecting a relative's business as a supplier when they have not produced the best proposal.
- An employee taking a second job and sharing confidential information with the employer.
- An employee taking a second job that interferes with their ability to do their work for Word of Life Church at their full potential, whether due to scheduling, exhaustion, or some other factor

Because how things appear, whether accurate or not, has a significant impact on Word of Life Church's reputation,



employees should also avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest. If questions arise as to whether a certain activity or behavior is a conflict of interest, employees should speak with their Campus Pastor or Human Resources.

### **Outside Activities**

Employees may engage in outside employment during non-working hours, provided doing so does not interfere with their job performance or constitute a conflict of interest. Prior to accepting outside employment, employees should notify their Campus Pastor in writing. The notice must include the name of the employer, the title and nature of the position, the number of working hours per week, and the time of scheduled work hours. If the position constitutes a conflict of interest or interferes with the employee's job at any time, the employee may be required to limit or end their outside employment.

### **Reporting Irregularities**

Employees should immediately report any actual or suspected theft, fraud, embezzlement, or misuse of Word of Life Church funds or property, as well as suspicious behavior. An employee who is aware of such activity but does not report it will be considered part of the problem and disciplined accordingly.

### **Inspections and Searches**

Any items brought to or taken off of Word of Life Church premises, whether property of the employee, Word of Life Church, or a third party, are subject to inspection or search unless prohibited by state law. Desks, lockers, workstations, work areas, computers, USB drives, files, e-mails, voice

mails, etc. are also subject to inspection or search, as are all other assets owned or controlled by Word of Life Church. Any inspection or search conducted by Word of Life Church may occur at any time, with or without notice. Failure to submit to a search will be grounds for discipline.

### **Hardware and Software Use**

The following guidelines have been established for using the Internet and email in an ethical and professional manner. For the purpose of this policy, Word of Life Church Internet includes productivity software, instant messaging applications, Word of Life Church cloud and networks, the intranet, and any other tool or program provided by or through Word of Life Church or its internet connection.

- Word of Life Church Internet and email may not be used for transmitting, retrieving or storing any communications of a defamatory, discriminatory, harassing, or obscene nature.
- Disparaging, abusive, profane, and offensive language are forbidden.
- Employees must respect all copyrights and may not copy, retrieve, modify, or forward copyrighted materials, except with permission or as a single copy for reference only. Almost every piece of content is or could be copyrighted (a notice of copyright is not required), so employees should proceed with caution when using or reproducing materials.





- Unless necessary for work, employees should avoid sending or receiving large files, watching videos, mass-forwarding emails, or engaging in other activities that either consume large amounts of bandwidth or create electronic clutter.
- Employees may not download any programs, applications, browser extensions, or any other files without prior approval or upon request of a manager.
- Each employee is responsible for the content of all text, audio, or images they place on or send over Word of Life Church's internet and email system. Employees may not send messages in which they are not identified as the sender.
- Email is not guaranteed to be private or confidential. Word of Life Church reserves the right to examine, monitor, and regulate email messages, directories, and files, as well as internet usage.
- Internal and external email messages are considered business records and may be subject to discovery in the event of litigation.

All Word of Life Church-issued hardware and software, as well as the email system and Internet connection, are Word of Life Church-owned. Therefore, all Word of Life Church policies are in effect at all times when they are in use. Access to the internet through Word of Life Church's network is a privilege of employment that may be limited or revoked at any time.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

### **The Guiding Rule**

Employees of Word of Life Church are always seen as representatives of Christ and the church and held to a higher standard of accountability than members or attendees. This applies on or off the job, including personal social media accounts. We expect all employees to be respectful, honest, accurate, and Christ-honoring in all forms of communication. Conduct that negatively affects an employee's job performance, the job performance or reputation of fellow employees or Word of Life Church's reputation may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Below are some guidelines for the use of social media. These guidelines are not intended to infringe on an employee's Section 7 rights and any adverse action taken in accordance with this policy will evaluate whether employees were engaged in protected concerted activity.

### **Avoiding Harassment**

Employees must not use statements, photographs, video, or audio that could reasonably be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening, or intimidating toward church members, employees, or other people or organizations affiliated with Word of Life Church. This includes, but is not limited to, posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, national origin, or any other status protected by state or federal law.



### **Avoiding Defamation**

Employees must not post anything they know or suspect to be false about Word of Life Church or anyone associated with it, including fellow employees and congregation or community members. Writing something that is untrue and ultimately harmful to any person or organization is defamation and can lead to significant financial liability for the person who makes the statement.

### **Confidentiality**

Employees must maintain the confidentiality of Word of Life Church confidential information, including but not limited to information regarding the development of systems, products, and technology. Private and confidential information includes, but is not limited to, church member lists, financial data, and private personal information about other employees, church members, or Serve Teams that they have not given the employee permission to share.

### **Representation**

Employees must not represent themselves as a spokesperson for Word of Life Church unless requested to do so by management. If Word of Life Church is a subject of the content being created—whether by an employee or third party—employees should be clear and open about the fact that they are employed with Word of Life Church but that their views do not necessarily represent those of Word of Life Church.

### **Accounts**

Employees must not use Word of Life Church email addresses to register for social media accounts unless doing so at

the request of management. Employees who manage social media accounts on behalf of Word of Life Church should ensure that at least one member of management has all the login information needed to access the account in their absence.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Word of Life Church is not liable for lost, misplaced, or stolen property. Employees should take all precautions necessary to safeguard their personal possessions. Employees should not have their personal mail sent to Word of Life Church, as it may be automatically opened, and should check with their manager before having larger items delivered to the workplace.

## **PARKING**

All parking is at an employee's own risk. Employees and visitors should lock their vehicles and take appropriate safeguards to protect their valuables, including removing them from the vehicle if appropriate under the circumstances. Employees are not to park in areas reserved for visitors during weekend services.

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*\*i.e. The Guiding Rule, Avoiding Harassment, Avoiding Defamation, Confidentiality, Representation, Accounts*



# EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION

## **Resignation**

Word of Life Church requests that employees provide at least two weeks' written notice of their intent to resign. This notice should be submitted to an employee's manager. An exit interview may be requested.

## **Termination**

All employment with Word of Life Church is "at-will." This means that either Word of Life Church or the employee can terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice, and for any reason allowed by law or for no reason at all. An employee's at-will status can only be changed by written contract, signed by both the employee and the Campus Pastor.

## **State Unemployment**

Because Word of Life Church does not participate in state unemployment, employees are not eligible for unemployment benefits.

## **Personal Possessions and Return of Word of Life Church Property**

All Word of Life Church property, such as computer equipment, keys, tools, parking passes, or Word of Life Church credit cards, must be returned immediately at the time of termination. Employees may be responsible for any lost or damaged items. When leaving, employees should ensure that they take all of their personal belongings with them.



# STAFF HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge receipt of Word of Life Church's Staff handbook and agree to follow the guidelines within it. I also acknowledge the following:

1. Receipt of this handbook does not create a contract of employment or in any way alter my at-will employment status; Word of Life Church or I can end the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice, and with or without cause.
2. I am not entitled to any particular sequence of disciplinary measures prior to termination.
3. With the exception of the at-will employment policy, this handbook may be modified at any time.
4. Violation of any policy in this handbook, or any policy included as an addendum, may be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.
5. This handbook does not include every process, policy, and expectation applicable to employees, or my position specifically; I may be counseled, disciplined, or terminated for poor behavior or performance even if the behavior or performance issue is not addressed in the handbook.
6. Should any provision in this handbook be in conflict with federal, state, or local law, that provision only will be considered ineffective, while the rest of the handbook remains effective.
7. If I have questions regarding any policy in this handbook, or other expectations related to my behavior or performance, it is my responsibility to speak with my manager or Human Resources.

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**Signature**

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**Printed Name**

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**Date**