



# Richland Lutheran Church

## Employee Handbook

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# **RICHLAND LUTHERAN CHURCH**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*Richland Lutheran Church exists to help people  
build strong, effective Christian lives with the riches of God's grace.*

Welcome to Richland Lutheran Church! 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 the 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 and your belief in the church's Mission Statement.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This employee handbook applies to all Richland Lutheran Church (RLC) employees. This handbook provides guidelines and information about Richland Lutheran Church's personnel policies, procedures, benefits, and rules of conduct. It supersedes **all prior personnel procedures**. This is not a contract. You should construe no verbal or written statement by any representative of RLC as a contract, unless it is expressly described as such.

## **SECTION I: EMPLOYMENT**

The practices described herein are not conditions of employment and the language is not intended to create a contract of employment between RLC and its employees. All non-ordained/called employees who do not have a written employment contract with RLC for a specific, fixed term of employment are employed at the will of RLC for an indefinite period and

are subject to termination at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice. At the same time, such employees may terminate their employment at any time, for any reason.

It is important that you read, understand, and become familiar with the handbook and comply with the standards that have been established. In addition, there may be governmental rules and regulations that will apply to your position. If you have any questions or need additional information, please talk with your supervisor. If your supervisor is unable to help you, then you can contact the Church Administrator for help.

It is obviously not possible to anticipate every situation that may arise in the workplace or to provide information that answers every possible question. As a result, RLC reserves the right to modify, supplement, rescind, or revise any policy, benefit, or provision detailed in this handbook from time to time, with or without notice, as it deems necessary or appropriate.

## **STAFF CATEGORIES**

The employee categories at RLC are determined by the letter of call or job description and consist of the following:

**Ordained:** An ordained and called minister of the ELCA

**Commissioned:** A called staff worker commissioned by the ELCA

**Professional:** A hired staff worker who serves as a ministry leader for a part of the RLC mission

**Supporting Professional:** A hired staff worker who supports the other staff in accomplishing the leadership roles

## **STATUS DEFINITION**

Full-time – Greater than or equal to 25 hours per week on a continuous basis

Part-time – Less than 25 hours per week on a continuous basis

Interim – Hired to fill a job position vacancy until a regular employee is found

Temporary – Hired for a short period of time to perform a prescribed task on a continuous basis

## **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

RLC is committed to equal employment opportunity for all qualified persons, without regard to race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or age to the extent required by law. This applies to all employment practices, including recruitment, hiring, compensation, church benefits, transfers, promotions, demotions, training, disciplinary action, and termination. Functioning as a church, we can and do discriminate on the basis of religion.

We expect all employees to show respect and sensitivity toward all other employees and to demonstrate a commitment to RLC's equal opportunity objectives. If you observe, or experience a violation of this practice, you should report it immediately to your supervisor or the Church Administrator.

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

## **IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTROL ACT OF 1986**

RLC is committed to full compliance with the federal immigration laws and will not knowingly hire or continue to employ anyone who does not have the legal right to work in the United States. As an ongoing condition of employment, you will be required to provide documentation verifying your identity and legal authority to work in the United States.

## **SECTION II: COMPENSATION & BENEFITS**

### **BUSINESS HOURS**

RLC's office is open 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The office is closed on designated holidays. The usual working hours may range from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. "Core time" (that time during which all employees are expected to be at work) is from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Exceptions to the usual schedules may be made for legitimate business purposes with coordination with and approval by your supervisor.

### **VACATIONS**

**Ordained, Commissioned, and Professional Staff:** Staff members in this category receive 160 hours of vacation time per year. Full-time employees working less than 40 but more than 25 hours per week will receive the same benefits prorated for the number of hours they work. Service for part of a calendar year will earn a pro-rated vacation benefit.

**Supporting Professional Staff:** Staff members in this category receive 80 hours of vacation per year accumulated monthly during the first, second, and third years of employment. Beginning with the fourth year of employment, vacation is accrued monthly at a rate resulting in 120 hours per year. Beginning with the seventh year of employment, vacation is accrued monthly at a rate resulting in 160 hours of vacation time per year. Vacation is prorated for staff working 25-39 hours per week.

**Guidelines for Using Vacation Time:** All vacation requests must be approved in advance and in writing by your supervisor. Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate your request. Vacation may be taken in full weeks, single days, or half days (non-exempt employees only).

RLC encourages employees to use vacation time within a year of earning it. A maximum of five days unused vacation time may be carried into the following year. The employee will forfeit any days remaining in excess of these five days.

Occasionally, it is not possible for employees to meet this expectation due to workload demands, particularly during periods of staffing shortages. Your supervisor may authorize carryover of time beyond five days if needed. Employees are strongly urged to use approved carryover vacation hours within the next calendar year. Unused vacation will be paid in full at the time of resignation, termination, or retirement.

## **HOLIDAYS**

All full-time employees are eligible for paid holidays. There are ten paid holidays each year. They are as follows: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve Day, Christmas Day, and two personal holidays

To qualify for holiday pay, employees must work the last regularly scheduled workday preceding the holiday and the first regularly scheduled work day immediately following the holiday, unless they have prior approval by their supervisor. If an employee is required to work on any of the designated holidays, or the holiday falls on an employee's regularly scheduled day off, a replacement day may be taken at any time during the week prior to or after that holiday, subject to approval of the supervisor. If the holiday falls on a Saturday, Friday will become the holiday; if the holiday falls on a Sunday, Monday will become the holiday. The Lead Pastor may adjust the holiday schedule if needed.

## **OVERTIME**

The work of the congregation sometimes creates demands on employees to work overtime to meet their requirements. For this reason, when overtime work is necessary it will be mandatory.

RLC will attempt to notify you in advance of overtime work and to spread the overtime work among all qualified employees.

Nonexempt employees who work longer than 40 hours in any given work week will be paid at one and one-half (1 ½) times their straight time hourly rate for hours over 40. If you are not sure whether you are a nonexempt employee and eligible for overtime, consult your supervisor. RLC does not use a compensatory time system for any employees.

Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked during the week. Time off with pay for holidays, vacation days, sick days, and jury duty is not considered time worked for purposes of overtime pay. Your supervisor must authorize overtime in advance.

## **HOLIDAY PAY**

Nonexempt staff required to work on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and Easter will be compensated at an hourly rate 1 ½ times their normal wage.

## **LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

**Emergency Leave of Absence:** When all vacation and sick leave benefits have been exhausted, full-time employees may be granted a two-week or less emergency or hardship leave of absence with pay. Leave of absences without pay may also be granted. Each leave will be for a specific period of time. Because of the varied circumstances that may require a leave, each situation will be considered on an individual basis. The Executive Council will approve all leaves of absence upon the recommendation of the employee's supervisor.

**Jury Duty:** A staff member who is required to serve on a jury shall be entitled to full pay reduced by the amount received for jury service.

**Family Illness Leave:** In the event of an illness in the immediate family (spouse, child, parent, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, mother or father-in-law, legal guardian) requiring an

employee's presence, accrued sick leave may be utilized. If sick time or vacation time is not available, the staff member may request an emergency leave of absence. The length of leave time is based upon what is reasonably necessary to care for the family member's illness or injury. RLC may request verification of the illness or injury.

**Parental Leave:** Employees are allowed up to six weeks leave for the birth or adoption of a child, provided he or she has been employed at least six months as a regular employee. Sick leave and vacation time must be used first during this period of leave. The remainder of the six week leave period will be unpaid. The leave may not begin later than six weeks after the birth or adoption of the child.

**Military Leave:** Staff members will receive time off to participate in active military service, not to exceed two weeks during a calendar year. They will receive compensation in an amount that will make their military pay equal their regular pay, provided the staff member furnishes RLC with a certified copy of their order to active duty and pay statement from the military disbursing office. Time off in excess of the amount noted above will be without pay. In cases of military emergency situations, a staff member will be entitled to a minimum of ninety days leave, without pay, in compliance with federal laws regarding leave and reinstatement.

**Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA):** RLC is not subject to the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) since it does not employ fifty or more employees for at least twenty work weeks in the current or preceding calendar year.

**Employees may be financially responsible for their own health insurance premiums while on unpaid leave. Contact the Church Administrator to discuss your specific situation.**

## **SICK PAY**

All full-time employees qualify for sick leave benefits of five days per year with no limit on days accumulated. Sick leave is prorated for staff working 25-39 hours per week. On termination, sick leave payout will be one day's pay for five days accumulated.

Sick leave is defined as an absence from work on a workday as the result of personal illness, injury, and doctor appointments. Sick leave may be used to care for immediate family members in need of assistance for medical concerns. The minimum amount of sick leave for each occurrence is one-half day. RLC may require a doctor's release to return to work after an extended injury or illness.

Special provisions for extended periods of illness are detailed in the *Richland Lutheran Church Policy and Procedure Guide*. Please contact the Church Administrator for more detailed information.

## **DISABILITY**

Full-time ordained and/or called staff are covered by the disability plan provided through the ELCA and are subject to its rules and guidelines. The *Richland Lutheran Church Policy and Procedure Guide* includes provisions for extended periods of illness of all staff members. Please contact the Church Administrator for more detailed information.

## **FUNERALS/MEMORIALS**

**Compassionate Leave:** In the event of a death in the immediate family (spouse, son, daughter, parent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, or legal guardian) a staff member will be allowed leave with pay, not to exceed five working days.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the case of inclement weather, employees are expected to use good judgment in getting safely to and from work and to inform their supervisor if they cannot get to work at any time. This time will be considered to be without pay. Employees may be allowed to leave early, without pay, at the discretion of the Lead Pastor. It is the policy of Richland Lutheran Church to close the offices and cancel all activities on days when the Richland School District is closed due to

inclement weather. Employees may use vacation, personal days, or sick leave to cover any lost wages. However, RLC reserves the right to adjust employee schedules to accommodate work demands.

## **WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE**

All employees are automatically covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance at the time they are hired. The insurance is provided as required by Washington State law.

You must report any work-related injury or illness to the Church Administrator as soon as it happens, regardless of how minor it may be. It is also important to get proper first aid and/or medical attention immediately.

## **SOCIAL SECURITY**

Payments are made by and for all non-ordained paid workers subject to provisions of applicable federal laws. No reimbursements shall be made in lieu of Social Security tax directly or indirectly to any employee.

## **UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION**

Employees of RLC are not covered by unemployment compensation insurance. Therefore, employees employed by RLC, upon termination of their employment and who are not immediately re-employed, are not eligible to collect unemployment insurance benefits.

## **PENSION PLAN, MEDICAL COVERAGE, AND DENTAL COVERAGE**

All full-time church staff who are not called or commissioned shall be eligible for benefits as outlined in the following paragraphs. RLC will provide up to 29% of the staff member's salary for medical, dental, and retirement benefits.

**Retirement Plans:** All eligible ordained and commissioned staff shall be enrolled in the pension plan of the ELCA. RLC will contribute the equivalent of 10% of the employee's salary to the plan with no requirement for matching on the part of the employee. All other full-time staff shall be eligible to enroll in a 403(b) retirement plan established by RLC. For full-time church staff, RLC will provide up to the equivalent 10% of the staff member's salary -- a 5% base, plus an additional 1% employer contribution for each 1% contributed by the employee, as long as the 29% limit for retirement, dental, and health plans is maintained.

**Health Coverage:** All eligible ordained and commissioned staff shall be enrolled in the ELCA benefits program. RLC will pay the entire cost of coverage for the employee and family. All other full-time church staff will be provided with a group health insurance plan established by RLC that would include their families. RLC will pay all costs for insurance coverage of the church staff worker and family within the 29% limit for retirement, dental, and health programs.

**Dental Coverage:** All eligible ordained and commissioned staff shall be enrolled in the ELCA benefits program. RLC will pay the entire cost of coverage for the employee and family. All other full-time church staff will be provided with a group dental insurance plan established by RLC that will include their family within the 29% limit for retirement, dental, and health programs.

**Disability Coverage:** All eligible ordained and commissioned staff shall be enrolled in the ELCA disability benefits program. RLC will pay the entire cost of coverage for the employee. Disability insurance is currently not available to other RLC employees.

**Pension-Related Expenses:** In addition to the pension contribution and various benefit premiums, the ELCA Board of Pensions assesses an additional fee for the purpose of retiree support. The cost of this is covered entirely by RLC.

## **EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE**

RLC encourages its staff to engage in a program of continuing education and provides an allowance and leave to aid in achieving individual educational goals related to their assignments. RLC also grants the time necessary to attend events such as synod conferences, assemblies, and staff retreats.

The congregation shall provide ordained, commissioned and professional full-time staff an allowance of \$800 and two weeks of educational leave during each year of employment. Any unused educational assistance may accumulate to a maximum of three years allowance and leave.

Educational leave must be used for purposes consistent with its intent in compliance with IRS requirements. It should not be construed as additional vacation. Educational leave accumulation and use is tracked monthly on employee benefit reports. Any unused educational leave will be forfeited upon termination.

## **RELATED BUSINESS EXPENSES**

RLC will reimburse staff on an accountable basis for all approved and reasonable business-related expenses such as mileage allowance, books, and other professional expenses. Employees must submit accurate and receipted expense reports to the Church Administrator to obtain reimbursement. Employees are requested to submit these reports to their supervisor in a timely manner to ensure proper accounting and prompt reimbursement.

## **PAY PERIODS AND PAY DAYS**

Pay periods end every other Friday, and employees are paid the following Friday. If payday falls on a holiday, employees will be paid on the last working day before the pay date.

## **DIRECT DEPOSIT**

Richland Lutheran Church strongly encourages employees to take advantage of the option to have paychecks deposited electronically to a bank account. The forms needed to activate this action are available in the church office.

## **WORK WEEK**

The work week and pay period will start on Sunday at 12:01 a.m. and end on Saturday at midnight. The work week for RLC employees will normally be 40 hours (excluding the lunch period), Monday through Friday, within the period of Sunday through Saturday.

## **WAGE AND SALARY REVIEWS**

Employees are generally reviewed at least once a year, prior to final budget preparation, for consideration of a wage increase. New employees will be reviewed after 90 and before 180 days pass after hiring, and then will fall into the normal review rotation. A wage or salary review does not imply an automatic increase, only that you may be eligible for consideration based on job performance. Wage or salary adjustments normally occur following the approval of the budget at the church's annual meeting and approval of the Personnel Committee recommendations to the Executive Council.

## **PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

Employees who wish to setup a retirement annuity or other payroll deductions must authorize their desires in writing and forward the request to the Church Administrator. Paycheck stubs will itemize amounts that have been withheld (i.e. federal and state income tax, social security, and other deductions initiated by the employee). It is important to keep this information for tax purposes. Questions about payroll deductions may be directed to the church treasurer.

## **SECTION III: PERFORMANCE EVALUATION & DEVELOPMENT**

### **PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS**

**Purpose of Evaluations:** To assist the employees of RLC to be as effective as possible and to help the employee in his/her own growth and development.

Evaluations are completed as follows:

1. All new employees will have an initial evaluation after the first 90 days of employment, a second evaluation before 180 days of employment pass, and then at least yearly. The supervisor will give the evaluation, with discussions between the supervisor and the staff member. The supervisor or supervising board/committee may increase the frequency or the process of the evaluation as necessary.
2. To appeal an evaluation, an employee speaks first with the Lead Pastor to discuss concerns. If this does not result in a satisfactory resolution, the employee then submits a written statement describing concerns to the Director of the Board of Administration and Operations, who will set a date for a meeting with the Personnel Committee at which the employee's concerns will be heard. If the Personnel Committee is unable to resolve the issues raised by the employee, the Director of the Board of Administration and Operations will refer the matter to the Executive Council.

## **SECTION IV: PERSONNEL POLICIES**

### **TARDINESS AND ABSENCE**

It is important that employees work their assigned schedules as consistently as possible and contact their supervisor when unable to report to work for any reason. Employees are responsible for keeping RLC informed on a daily basis during an absence and to provide medical verification when asked to do so. A tardy or absence is considered “excused” only when the employee calls ahead of time and when the tardy or absence is for a compelling reason. RLC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to determine what constitutes a compelling reason. A tardy or absence for a non-compelling reason, and/or failing to call, in accordance with RLC’s procedure, will be considered “unexcused.” RLC considers “unexcused” tardiness and absence to be a serious problem. Employees who are tardy or absent excessively or show a consistent pattern of absence, whether “excused” or “unexcused”, will be subject to disciplinary action, (i.e. counseling, loss of pay, up to and including termination). Employees who do not call in or report to work for two consecutive workdays, you may be considered to have voluntarily quit.

### **TIME RECORDS**

Nonexempt employees are required to complete timesheets each day. All timesheets should be forwarded to the Church Administrator two days prior to payday each month. Employees may not work overtime unless it has been approved by the supervisor in advance.

### **BENEFIT REPORTS**

Exempt employees are required to complete monthly benefit reports. All benefit reports must be forwarded to the Church Administrator on the last working day of the month.

## **BREAK AND MEAL PERIODS**

Nonexempt employees who work at least four hours in a workday will be eligible for a 10 minute paid break period.

Nonexempt employees will take an unpaid meal break near the middle of the workday; the break will be sixty minutes. Part-time hourly employees scheduled to work more than five consecutive hours during any workday will likewise take an unpaid meal break of the same duration as full-time employees.

## **PERSONNEL RECORDS**

It is important that RLC always has current information about all employees. Changes of name, address, phone number, or marital status are examples of updated information that must be reported to the Church Administrator. Employees should also complete a revised W-4 form and provide a copy to the Church Administrator and Church Treasurer. Name changes or Social Security number corrections will require original documentation authorizing the change. Please provide this information to the Church Administrator.

Upon request, employees will be allowed to review any personnel records that have been used to determine qualifications for employment, promotion, compensation, termination or other disciplinary action. Supervisors may provide more information regarding personnel record access.

## **PERSONAL USE OF CHURCH ASSETS**

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules are very strict concerning the use of tax-exempt assets in nonprofit organizations. Use of church assets for financial benefit to members, officers, directors, or employees beyond reasonable salaries and expense reimbursements is a violation of IRS regulations and is not allowed. Personal use of church equipment, facilities, or services, advertising sales of personal items through the church bulletin or newsletter, publishing and

selling a book written while employed by RLC, or paying a lower than market rate price for goods or services offered by the church are examples of improper use of assets. Questions about whether or not an activity has the potential to jeopardize the church's 501(c)3 status may be directed to the Church Administrator.

## **HARASSMENT**

### **Employee Harassment**

RLC is committed to maintaining a work environment in which all individuals treat each other with dignity and respect and is free from all forms of intimidation, exploitation and harassment, including sexual harassment. RLC is prepared to take action to prevent and correct any violations of this policy. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

"Harassment," including "sexual harassment," means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, or age made by someone from or in the work setting under any of the following conditions:

- A. Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- B. Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of employment decisions affecting the individual;
- C. The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the individual's work performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment;
- D. The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities; or
- E. Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through RLC.

Unwelcome conduct of this type can include a wide range of verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual or otherwise harassing nature. Among the types of conduct which would violate this policy are the following:

- A. Unwanted sexual advances or propositions;
- B. Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors;
- C. Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances;
- D. Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, or other gestures which denigrate a person's race, color, national origin, gender, disability, or age;
- E. Written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, color, gender, national origin, age, or disability and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on RLC premises, or circulated in the workplace;
- F. Epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts that relate to race, color, gender, national origin, age, or disability, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes or invitations; and
- G. Physical conduct such as touching, assaulting, and/or impeding or blocking movements.

Employees who feel that they have been subjected to conduct of a harassing nature or who observed conduct of a harassing nature are encouraged to promptly report the matter to the Church Administrator, or the Lead Pastor if the complaint involves the Church Administrator. All complaints will be promptly investigated. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the parties involved in any complaint. However, RLC reserves the right to fully investigate every complaint and to notify appropriate government officials as the circumstances warrant.

It is against RLC's policy to discriminate or retaliate against any person who has filed a complaint concerning harassment or has testified, assisted, or participated in any investigation proceeding or hearing concerning harassment.

When the Church Administrator, or the Lead Pastor if the complaint involves the Church Administrator, receives a complaint, he or she will immediately direct an investigation. If the investigation confirms the allegations, prompt corrective actions will be taken, and the individual who suffered the harassing conduct will be informed of the corrective action taken. In addition, any employee found to be responsible for harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The severity of the disciplinary action will be based upon the circumstances of the infraction.

### **ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

The use, sale, transfer, possession, or being "under the influence" of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances when on duty, on church property, or in church vehicles is prohibited. "Under the influence" for the purpose of this policy, is defined as being unable to perform work in a safe or productive manner, and/or being in a physical or mental condition which creates a risk to the safety and well being of the affected employee, other co-workers, the public, or church property. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### **SAFETY**

At RLC, people are our most valuable asset. To insure the safety of all our people, we make every reasonable effort to provide a safe, healthy, and accident-free environment. All employees, as a condition of employment, must conform to the following basic rules:

1. Obey all safety rules. These may vary from job to job. Where required, wear eye protection or other protective equipment.
2. Follow all instructions pertaining to the use of tools and equipment.
3. Report any unsafe condition of equipment, vehicles, or property immediately to your supervisor.
4. Report any injury, however slight, to the Church Administrator immediately.
5. Smoking is not permitted on RLC property or in church vehicles.

## **RULES OF CONDUCT**

RLC has rules of conduct that apply to all employees. The following is a non-exclusive list of examples of serious offenses that would result in discipline, up to and including termination:

1. Possession of firearms or other weapons on church premises.
2. Possession of open containers of alcohol or being under the influence of alcohol while using church vehicles or property, while on church premises, or while on church business.
3. Possession of, or being under the influence of narcotics or any mind-altering substance during working hours, while using church vehicles or property, while on church premises, or on church business.
4. Failure to comply with safety regulations.
5. Fighting or other disorderly conduct during working hours on church premises.
6. Stealing or unauthorized use of church tools, equipment, property, or work time for personal use without prior approval.
7. Insubordination, including failure to comply with a supervisor's instructions and work assignments.
8. Dishonesty, including falsification of employment application or other church documents.
9. Use of any other employee's timesheet.
10. Loafing or sleeping on the job.
11. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness.
12. Commission of a crime, or other conduct which damages the image or reputation of RLC.
13. Harassment, including sexual harassment.
14. Use of profanity.
15. Breach of confidentiality.
16. Inappropriate clothing.
17. Misuse of church equipment.

This is a non-exclusive list of examples of offenses that could result in discipline up to and including discharge. This list is not intended to include all disciplinary offenses, but only to

serve as common examples. RLC reserves the right to take whatever disciplinary action is appropriate without warning.

## **PRIVACY POLICY**

RLC has established the following policy that governs all aspects of your employment whether on the premises of RLC or elsewhere while you are performing your duties. RLC reserves the right to amend these policies at any time without notice.

RLC property, offices, desks, machines and equipment are the church's property and not the employee's private workspace. Employees, church property and workspace are subject to search and monitoring at any time while on church property and during working hours. This specifically includes, but is not limited to, the person, offices, desks, lunch boxes, and/or briefcases. Anything employees bring to the workplace is subject to monitoring and search.

You should not bring anything dangerous, improper, or illegal to the workplace such as weapons, drugs, pornography or any other material that you do not want discovered or disclosed. You have no expectation of privacy in anything in the workplace.

## **MEMBERSHIP LIST USAGE**

Congregational membership lists shall not be released for commercial or any other non-ELCA purpose. Understanding that there are organizations that carry on work which Richland Lutheran endorses, requests for approval for use of RLC mailing lists by such organizations could be considered on an individual basis through action of the Executive Council.

## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION USAGE**

RLC has established the following policy that governs the use of electronic communication systems at the workplace, including computers, E-mail, the Internet and telephone communication systems. The definition of workplace includes all places work is performed for

RLC and will also apply to the employee's use of computers, E-mail, the Internet and telephone communication systems not owned or operated by RLC but used by the employees in the course of their employment with RLC. RLC reserves the right to amend these policies at any time without notice. An employee's use of the church's computers, E-mail, the Internet and telephone communication systems constitute the employee's agreement to abide by RLC electronic communication usage governing the church systems as detailed below. Employees who violate this policy are subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

**Business use.** All computers, E-mail, the Internet and telephone communication systems are to be used primarily for business purposes, meaning that use of such equipment and systems must be job-related. Limited, occasional or incidental use of these systems for personal purposes is acceptable, if done in a professional manner that does not interfere with business use.

**Business form.** Computer, E-mail, Internet and voice-mail messages reflect the RLC image. They should be composed in a professional manner that is similar to messages sent on the church letterhead. Employees should keep in mind that electronic files are subject to review by others. Therefore, it is expected that employee statements in electronic messages and files will reflect favorably on RLC and the employee. All employees must use the current and approved publication standard for e-mail messages.

**File management.** In order to keep the electronic communication and computer systems running efficiently, employees should delete unnecessary electronic messages stored in the system, as well as computer files that are no longer needed. Employees should also run a virus check on attachments sent through E-mail before opening such files.

**Church property.** In addition to the system hardware and software, all electronic files and electronic messages are the property of RLC, whether composed, received or sent by the employee. Church-owned software may not be used on personal computers, nor may software for which the church holds no license be installed on church computers. E-mail, Internet and voice-mail messages and other electronic files constitute business records belonging to RLC.

**Privacy and passwords.** Because all messages are the property of RLC, employees should not expect that messages are private. In addition, employees should be aware that deleted files may be retrieved and read by RLC. RLC reserves the right to retrieve, monitor, or review any messages in the church system, and to review all E-mail and Internet use. RLC may disclose or use such messages for any purpose without notice to the employee and without seeking permission of the employee. Passwords must be disclosed to your supervisor or Church Administrator upon request.

**Solicitation prohibited.** Employees may not use computer, E-mail, Internet or voice-mail systems to solicit for personal charitable or commercial ventures. Employees may not use the communication systems to promote political or other causes.

**Proprietary information restrictions.** Receiving/downloading or sending/uploading of proprietary information is prohibited without prior authorization. Such information includes copyrighted materials, trade secrets, proprietary financial information, or similar materials.

**Anti-harassment policies applicable.** RLC policies prohibiting sexual or other harassment are applicable to computer, E-mail, Internet and voice-mail systems. Images or messages that contain pornographic images or foul, inappropriate, or offensive language, or those containing racial or ethnic slurs, or sexual innuendo, are prohibited. Accessing, or attempting to access, any Internet web site that contains sexual content, pornography, offensive content or nudity would violate this policy.

**Confidentiality.** Employees are expected to respect the confidentiality of messages sent to others. Employees may not access or review computer, E-mail, Internet and voice-mail messages that are not distributed to them. Additionally, employees are expected to respect the confidentiality of RLC members. Employees may only share personal information about members when necessary for the conduct and function of ministry. Church membership lists may only be used for church-related business.

**Internet postings.** Employees must receive permission from their supervisor before posting messages linking the employee to RLC to electronic bulletin boards, list-servers or similar public posting forums on the Internet. All posted content must comply with other standards of conduct expected from an employee of RLC. When posted, such messages must contain a disclaimer at the end of the message that states: “The opinions expressed in this message are mine only and do not reflect the opinion or position of my employer.”

**Notification and reporting.** Employees who observe violation of these electronic communication policies shall notify their immediate supervisor or shall report the violation to the Lead Pastor or Church Administrator.

**Changes.** RLC reserves the right to modify or change the policies, procedures, and priorities as set forth above to comply with applicable law, to meet changing circumstances or for any reason.

## **PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

Appearance reflects not only on an individual, but on RLC as well. RLC expects employees to take pride in their appearance. Professional and appropriate standards of appearance are expected.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Employees should not bring large sums of money, jewelry, or other valuables to work. The church will not be responsible for personal property that is lost, damaged, stolen, or destroyed. Employees who find personal belongings that have been lost by another person may turn the items in to the Church office.

## **PERSONAL USE OF CHURCH TELEPHONES**

From time to time it may be necessary for employees to make and receive personal calls on church phones. However, these calls should be limited to no more than 5 minutes in length, and

should be made, whenever possible, during scheduled break and meal periods. Employees are expected to use good judgment and common sense when it comes to personal phone calls. Any personal long distance calls made must be reimbursed to RLC.

### **USE OF PERSONAL CELL PHONES AT WORK**

RLC is aware that employees sometimes utilize their personal or company-supplied cellular phones for business purposes. At the same time, cell phones are a distraction in the workplace. To ensure the effectiveness of meetings, employees are asked to leave cell phones at their desk. Or, on the unusual occasion of an emergency or anticipated emergency that requires immediate attention, the cell phone may be carried to the meeting on vibrate mode.

### **EMPLOYEE PARKING**

RLC will not be responsible for theft or damage to any vehicles parked on or near church property. Also, RLC will not be responsible for personal property left in vehicles that is lost, damaged, stolen, or destroyed.

**EMPLOYEE STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

**Complete this form and return it to the Church Administrator.**

This is to acknowledge I have received a copy of RLC’s employee handbook. I understand it provides guidelines and summary information about RLC’s personnel policies, procedures, benefits, and rules of conduct. I also understand that it is my responsibility to read, understand, become familiar with, and comply with the standards that have been established. I further understand that RLC reserves the right to modify, supplement, rescind, or revise any provision, benefit, or policy from time to time, with or without notice, as it deems necessary or appropriate.

I acknowledge that this is not a contract of employment. My employment with RLC is at-will. I also acknowledge that both RLC and I have the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time.

I further acknowledge that this employment relationship may not be modified by any oral or implied agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Employee's Name (Please Print)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Employee's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**