

HIRING PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

SALARIED, HOURLY, OCCASIONAL AND VOLUNTEER STAFF

1. Once a position is open, the pastor and head of staff will convene the hiring committee consisting of members of applicable ministry teams and personnel committee and other members of the congregation as determined to be necessary for the position.
2. The hiring committee will set a timeline for critical activities to occur, ending with an expected start date.
3. Create or update the written position description describing the qualifications for the position including type of position, a summary of work included, typical assignments, requisite knowledge, skills, abilities, and maximum compensation. Send to session for approval.
4. Advertising will include the following statements:
 - a. *First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Falls, Iowa, is a welcoming community of faith that celebrates diversity and inclusion in our employment, workplace and membership practices. We welcome applications from all qualified individuals on an equal opportunity basis as defined in the Equal Opportunity and Accommodation policy of the Session (available on request).*
 - b. *PC(USA) and First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Falls Iowa, both hold strong policies opposing sexual harassment and abuse of children and adults. Therefore, references and records will be checked once a conditional offer has been made.*
5. Create succinct, churchwide and a general advertisement document for the position. Consider multiple approaches and wording to get the attention of specific audiences.
 - a. Suggested outlets for advertising include:
 - Members of First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Falls, announcement in worship, newsletter, bulletin board, handouts and web page– request their assistance in seeking applicants.
 - Churchwide: presbytery newsletter, and PC-USA
 - General: UNI Office of Career Services, Threehouse, Hawkeye Community College, Wartburg, University of Dubuque, local newspapers (depending on cost)
 - On-line applications and services – Use free services. Currently include
 - For specific details for how to sign up or contacts for each of the above see Personnel Committee Manual.

6. Receive and review job applications to identify candidates that meet the qualifications and skills for the position. NO member of the hiring committee may do ANY cursory check of any applicant's job qualifications until a conditional job offer has been made.
7. Interview possible candidates.
 - a. All information obtained during the interview process is confidential including names of people being interviewed.
 - b. All interview questions shall be related to the ability of the applicant to successfully meet the requirements of the position.
 - c. Once a final applicant has been selected by the hiring committee with approval of the Pastor and Head of Staff, and a conditional offer is made, the hiring committee will complete a pre-screening by:
 - Contacting previous employer(s) to verify employment information and a minimum of three personal references.
 - Completing a criminal background check; including the Iowa Sex Offender Registry
 1. Other possible sources of background information may include publicly available social media.
 - Follow up interview, with the applicant regarding sexual misconduct including abuse, child abuse and sexual abuse by force and sexual harassment. (See resources).
 1. A written record of the conversations or correspondence with references will be kept in the employee's file.
 2. Records for volunteers will be kept in the volunteer file maintained by the Pastor and Head of Staff, or, if related to children's programming, the Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry.
 3. Applicants will be informed of negative comments against them, including sexual misconduct, and given opportunity to submit additional references or provide evidence to correct or respond to harmful information obtained by a reference.
8. Upon satisfactory completion of the references and background check, the final offer is made in writing and agreed upon by both the candidate and the committee.
9. A hire date is agreed upon. A written offer with expectations of the job duties and responsibilities will be made and agreed upon by applicant and Head of Staff.

NEW HIRE PROCEDURES

Volunteers must sign forms for contact with children as noted in Child Abuse Policy and Sexual Misconduct Policy. Other employment forms are not required. They do receive a job description.

Once hired the new employee will meet with the minister of administration to complete the required employment forms.

The following forms are required:

1. Photographic identification, such as a driver's license; government ID.
2. Complete a W-4 Form or other as deemed appropriate.
3. Proof of authorization to work in the U.S., thereby complying with federal I-9 requirements. Page one **must be completed on the first day of hire and documentation provided within three days of hire and kept in the employee's file.**
 - (a) Every employee, regardless of the employee's nationality or immigration status, must show proof of their authorization to work in the U.S., thereby complying with federal I-9 requirements. There are no exceptions for religious employers, no matter how small the congregation. Churches must complete, and keep on file, the I-9 form and supporting documentation for every member of staff. Employers who do not comply with I-9 requirements are subject to sanctions.

References and other items solicited by the Session or Personnel Committee shall be kept for six (6) months only from the date of employment (or completed background check) at which time they are to be destroyed. Similar information submitted by the applicant for the purpose of securing employment remains the property of the applicant to be returned as above.

All new staff are required to participate in new staff orientation which includes:

1. Review of the job roles, responsibilities and key leaders or committees for the ministry related to job responsibilities.
2. Tour of the facilities, introductions to other staff and location of key resources to carry out the job.
3. Review of the personnel policies with the link to access those policies.
4. Overview of the *Session Policy and Operations* manual that specifies and guides the work and mission of the church. This manual includes forms and processes required to carry out the church mission. A link will be provided to the staff to access the manual.

- 5. Education, and a link to the current copy, of the *FPC-CF Sexual Misconduct Policy & Procedures* and the church *Child Abuse* policy. Following education, the new staff person will sign the covenant indicating they have read and are willing to abide by this policy.

Resources: Available electronically Session Policies and Operations Manual

Hiring Resource #1 Employment Application First Presbyterian Church Cedar Falls Iowa

Hiring Resource #2 Permission to Contact References and Further Verify Information submitted on Employment Application Form.

Hiring Resource #3 Confidential Employment Reference Record of Screening

Hiring Resource #4 Employee Acknowledgement of receipt of the Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures.

Hiring Resource #5 Suggested Employment Questions to ask of Potential Employees regarding Sexual Misconduct (child and adult).

Suggested interview questions that are consistent with equal opportunity policy. (under development 2021-22)

*****Resource

Legal Resource Guidelines for Background Checks. Source: LEGAL RESOURCE MANUAL PCUSA– PERSONNEL AND EMPLOYMENT MATTERS Section 6 - Page 9 of 18.

A few guidelines to follow in conducting these types of background checks are: (a) Keep the investigation work-related; (b) obtain written authorization from the potential employee; (c) disclose negative information to the potential employee before adverse action is taken; (d) give the potential employee an opportunity to dispute the accuracy of the information; (e) do not ask references legally impermissible question (see examples above in section C(1)(a)); and, (f) consult with a local attorney to create a consistent process for conducting background checks. Employers should create a simple release form for reference checks. Sample language: "I hereby authorize any investigator of [Name of Church Employer] bearing this release to verify and obtain any information from schools, residential management agents, former and current employers, religious bodies, criminal justice agencies and individuals relating to my activities. This information may include, but it is not limited to, academic, residential, achievement, performance, attendance, personal history, disciplinary, criminal conviction records, and any judicial or ecclesiastical proceedings involving me as a defendant. I hereby direct and authorize you to release such information upon request to the bearer. I hereby release [Name of Church Employer], and any individual or group, including record custodians, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me on account of compliance or any attempts to comply, with this authorization.