

Unitarian Society of New Haven



USNH Employee Handbook

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I. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES

A. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This Employee Handbook has been prepared to help employees and members understand some of the policies, benefits, work rules, and guidelines of the Unitarian Society of New Haven (USNH). Employees should familiarize themselves with the Handbook, as it contains information relevant to the conditions of employment. Nothing in this Handbook or in any other written or unwritten policies and practices of USNH creates an express or implied contract, promise, or representation between USNH and any employee. USNH members and committees should be familiar with the Handbook and use it, as appropriate, to guide policies and actions.

Generally, these policies will be applied consistently. However, USNH reserves the right to deviate from normal policy in certain situations. Since every employment situation cannot be anticipated, this Handbook provides only a general overview.

From time to time, changes in the Handbook may become necessary. Therefore, USNH reserves the right to amend, supplement, or rescind any provisions of this Handbook as necessary. If amended, employees will be notified of the revision and asked to sign a new declaration signifying an understanding of the revised conditions.

The Handbook applies to all staff, whether full-time or part-time, exempt or nonexempt, except where otherwise stated. This Handbook does not apply to ordained ministers. However, basic information and guidelines are relevant to all USNH employees.

This Handbook supersedes all previous employment policies, whether written or oral, expressed or implied. However, in those cases where specific employment agreements contracted prior to the adoption of this Handbook are different from policies stated herein, the previously agreed-upon terms may be included upon approval of the Board of Trustees. If any provisions of this Handbook are found to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions will remain in full force and effect.

All employees are employed by USNH on an employment “at-will” basis. Employment “at-will” means that an employee or USNH may terminate the employment relationship at any time for any reason, with or without cause or notice. The employment-at-will policy may be changed with respect to an employee only if USNH enters into a formal written agreement with the employee that expressly changes the at-will employment relationship and that is duly executed by an authorized officer of USNH and approved by the Board of Trustees.

This Handbook provides information concerning USNH benefits. Please note that USNH’s benefit plans are defined in legal documents such as insurance contracts and Plan Documents. This means that if a question arises about the nature and extent of plan benefits or if there is conflicting language, the formal language of the Plan Documents supersedes this Handbook. Plan documents are available for inspection. Also, the policies set forth in this Handbook are intended to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws.

To the extent applicable laws require greater employee benefits, those laws will be followed. If any of the policies in this Handbook conflict with federal, state, or local laws, USNH will follow those laws, not the Handbook.

Employees should read, understand, and comply with the provisions of the Handbook. Questions or comments about this Handbook should be addressed to the Minister, the Management Team, or the Chair of the Personnel Committee. Comments and suggestions are encouraged.

B. USNH MISSION

We are a diverse multigenerational faith community that inspires lives of compassion and generosity, nurtures spiritual growth, cultivates transformative connections, and creates a more just world.

In accordance with our mission statement and USNH Governance policy, USNH strives to provide an atmosphere in the workplace that is open and supportive and gives employees opportunities for success. Unitarian Universalists have a long and proud history of supporting working people and their struggle for human rights and dignity. This sense of history and our commitment to equity in the world also apply to our workplace. USNH will do its best to work with and support each employee's skills and listen to each employee's concerns.

C. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

USNH affirms its commitment to equal employment opportunity for all individuals. Decisions about recruiting, hiring, training, promotions, compensation, benefits, and all decisions affecting the terms and conditions of employment must be made in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and without regard to race, ethnicity, color, religion, ancestry, gender, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, gender identity, military or veteran status, or any other classification protected by law. Any discrimination in the workplace based upon any protected classification is illegal and against policy.

Employees who have questions about discrimination in the workplace, or who believe this policy has been violated, should report their concerns immediately to their supervisor, the Minister, the Chair of the Personnel Committee, the Management Team, or the President or Vice President of the Board of Trustees.

Retaliation against individuals who make a claim of discrimination or who participate in the investigation of such a claim is prohibited by this policy and will not be tolerated.

D. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Connecticut Fair Employment Practices Law specifically prohibit sexual harassment.

Together, federal and state law prohibit harassment based on an individual's race, ethnicity, color, religion, pregnancy, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ancestry, past or present history of mental disorder, mental retardation, learning disability or physical disability, including but not limited to blindness.

Sexual harassment, a form of prohibited contact, means any unwelcome sexual advance, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;

- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual;
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment, depending on the specific conduct, may include, but is not limited to:

- verbal conduct such as suggestive or offensive comments, lewd remarks, and sexual propositions;
- non-verbal conduct such as derogatory or pornographic displays, cartoons or drawings, sexual gestures, or leers or stares;
- physical conduct such as touching, kissing, patting, brushing up against someone, or assault.

Any employee who believes they have been sexually harassed by another employee, a supervisor, or any other person encountered in the course of employment should report that conduct immediately to their supervisor, the Minister, or the Chair of the Personnel Committee. If the report or complaint involves any of the above or if the appropriate individual is unavailable, the individual receiving the report or complaint should immediately report it to the President or Vice President of the Board of Trustees.

Every complaint or report of sexual harassment will be promptly investigated by the Personnel Committee. Although investigations will be conducted with sensitivity to confidentiality issues, investigative information will be communicated as appropriate to those with a need to know. If the investigation indicates that a violation of this policy may have occurred, timely and appropriate action will be taken.

Retaliation or reprisal against employees who report sexual harassment is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Any violation of this policy will be treated as a serious matter and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Individuals found to have engaged in sexual harassment will receive appropriate disciplinary and corrective action, up to and including termination.

This Sexual Harassment policy applies to sexual harassment by members of the same gender as well as opposite genders.

E. HARASSMENT

The Unitarian Society of New Haven prohibits conduct that demonstrates hostility or an aversion toward an individual because of race, color, ethnicity, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any other classification protected by law, and that:

- has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment;
- has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance;
- otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Some examples of conduct that may constitute harassment, depending on the circumstances, include but are not limited to the following:

- epithets or slurs
- threatening or intimidating acts
- written or graphic material, or
- written, verbal, or physical acts that purport to be jokes or pranks

Any employee who believes they have been harassed by another employee, a supervisor, an agent of USNH, or any other person whom the employee encounters in the course of employment should report that conduct immediately to their supervisor or the Minister. If the report or complaint involves the Minister, or if the minister is unavailable, the individual receiving the report or complaint should immediately report it to the Chair of the Personnel Committee, or the President or Vice President of the Board of Trustees.

Every complaint or report of harassment will be promptly investigated by the Personnel Committee. If the investigation indicates that an act of harassment has occurred, timely and appropriate action will be taken. Retaliation or reprisal against employees who report harassment claims is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Any violation of this policy will be treated as a serious matter and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employees.

F. RESOLUTION OF EMPLOYEE COMPLAINTS

Effective communication is essential for productive working relationships. To that end, employees are encouraged to discuss any concerns about work or suggestions for improving operations in the following manner:

The employee should present any complaint or grievance to their supervisor, and they should discuss the problem, applicable rules or policies, and possible resolution.

If a discussion with the supervisor does not resolve the matter to the employee's satisfaction, the employee should submit the complaint or grievance in writing to the Minister, in their capacity as Chief of Staff at USNH. Then, if the issue is not resolved, the Minister may request consultation with the Management Team, the Personnel Committee, and/or the President of the Board of Trustees. The minister shall then recommend a resolution of the problem to the supervisor and the employee.

If the Minister's recommendation does not resolve the matter to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may then seek a review by the Board of Trustees, by contacting the President or Vice President of the Board of Trustees. The resolution recommended by the Trustees will be binding upon the congregation and employees.

In the event that the employee complaint or grievance is related to the Minister/Chief of Staff as their direct supervisor, and has been unable to be resolved by that supervisor, the employee should submit the complaint or grievance in writing to the Personnel Committee for review and recommendation. If that recommendation does not resolve the matter the employee may seek a review by the Board of Trustees, as described in the above paragraph.

G. INTERNET POLICY

The Unitarian Society of New Haven may provide internet access (including e-mail) to some of its staff members to assist and facilitate business communications and work-related research. These services are for legitimate business use only in the course of assigned duties. All materials, information, and software created, transmitted, downloaded, or stored on the USNH computer system are the property of USNH and may be accessed only by authorized personnel.

Inappropriate internet use includes, but is not limited to:

- transmitting obscene, harassing, offensive, or unprofessional messages;
- accessing, displaying, downloading, or distributing any offensive or inappropriate messages including those containing racial slurs, sexual connotations, or offensive comments about race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other classification protected by law;
- transmitting any of USNH's confidential or proprietary information, including member/friend data or other materials covered by its confidentiality policy; except where appropriate, necessary, and authorized as part of regular business activities and with great care to preserve confidentiality," and/or
- downloading, dissemination, or printing of copyrighted materials (including articles and software) in violation of copyright laws.

Although we recognize that certain communications between staff and members of the congregation are confidential, USNH reserves the right to monitor employee use of the e-mail system and/or the internet at any time, in order to maintain the security of the system or the appropriate use of resources. This is true even though employees may be given individual passwords to use their USNH-assigned computers. The passwords are designed to provide system security from unauthorized users, not to provide privacy to the individual system user. Therefore, employees should not expect privacy with respect to the use of USNH's electronic systems or with respect to the material and information stored on USNH's electronic systems. All messages on the e-mail system may be accessed, reviewed, and traced to their authors even after they are "deleted."

Given the confidentiality required for ministerial concerns, any review of communications by ordained ministers will take place using procedures to be developed for that specific instance or concern.

Any software or other material downloaded into USNH's computers may be used only in ways consistent with the licenses and copyrights of the vendors, authors, or owners of the material. Prior written authorization from the Congregational Administrator is required before introducing any software into USNH's computer system.

Only authorized staff members may communicate on the Internet on behalf of USNH. In the course of such communications, employees may not express opinions or personal views that could be misconstrued as being those of USNH.

H. MEDIA INQUIRIES

All requests for information about USNH from newspapers, television, and radio media which is not publicly available should be directed to the Minister or the Congregational Administrator

who will respond to the inquiry or direct it to the appropriate individual. An appropriate response to a media inquiry would be, “I’m not the best person to answer that question. May I contact the appropriate person and have that individual get back to you?”

I. CONFIDENTIALITY

Employees may have access to confidential information about USNH including but not limited to information about members, friends, or other staff members. Such information must remain confidential and may not, at any time during or after the separation of employment, be released, removed from USNH’s premises, copied, transmitted, or in any other way used for any purpose by employees except as necessary during employment for performing their job duties.

Employees must take appropriate steps to preserve the confidentiality of such information and not leave it where a non-employee could see it or have easy unauthorized access to such information, except as necessary during their employment for the performance of their job duties.

All requests for information on employee dates, duration of employment, and position titles received from organizations or individuals should be directed to the Congregational Administrator. All other information regarding past or present employees should be directed to the Minister or Management Team.

J. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Employees are expected to avoid any activities that could result in an actual or apparent conflict of interest. For purposes of this policy, a conflict of interest is defined as any situation where an employee or an employee’s immediate family may attain personal gain or which may serve as a detriment to USNH, either monetarily or to its public image, because of the use of information or personal contact which is not generally available except through employment with USNH.

Employees shall not engage in any business or transaction, and shall not have a financial or other personal interest which is incompatible with their employment duties or which would impair their judgment or actions in the performance of their duties for USNH. Employees who have questions about whether an activity violates this policy should discuss the matter with the Minister or Chair of the Personnel Committee.

K. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees shall not engage in any collateral employment or business activity that is incompatible or in conflict with their duties, functions, or responsibilities as an employee. Activities that may constitute a conflict include the use of USNH’s time, facilities, equipment, or supplies, or the use of the title, prestige, or influence of the congregation for private gain or advantage.

L. EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES AND MEMBERS

Other members of an employee’s family may be considered for employment by USNH; however, relatives may not supervise one another. “Relative” means a spouse, domestic partner, parent, sibling, child, grandparent, or grandchild, including in-laws and step-relations.

As a general policy, employment with USNH is not open to members of the congregation except in rare and unusual circumstances.

M. PERSONNEL FILES

USNH will maintain Personnel Files for each employee. Contained within a Personnel File will be the following information: contact information, emergency numbers, terms of employment, wage and benefit information, job description, personnel reviews, signed form acknowledging receipt of the USNH Employee Handbook, pertinent correspondence, and other materials as appropriate and relevant. Personnel Files will be confidential and maintained in a secure location. All employees may have access to their own files upon request and may add information felt to be relevant to their Personnel Review and/or employment upon authorized approval. Employees must keep up-to-date all information provided to USNH at the time of employment. This information is essential for many purposes, including benefit administration, mailing information to the employee's home, and contacting friends or family in case of emergency. The Congregational Administrator should be promptly notified of any changes in:

- address and telephone number
- marital status (including legal separation)
- legal change in employee's name
- proof of car insurance if employee is receiving mileage reimbursement
- dependents
- changes in beneficiaries
- person to notify in case of emergency, and
- relevant changes in licensing or education.

N. INITIAL REVIEW PERIOD

New employees and employees who are transferred to another position are required to complete an initial review period of ninety days, which may be shortened or lengthened at the discretion of the Minister in consultation with the Personnel Committee. Satisfactory completion of the initial review period does not alter the employment-at-will relationship. Employees must continue to perform satisfactorily at all times during and after the initial review period is completed. There is no guarantee that any job position will continue indefinitely. Any position may be eliminated at any time at the discretion of USNH.

O. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Employees are expected to perform satisfactorily those duties assigned to them.

In general, employees will receive a written evaluation once each year that will be maintained in the employee's Personnel File. Performance evaluations give employees information that will allow them to improve their opportunities for success in performing their assignments. Factors considered in assessing performance include but are not limited to quality and quantity of work, dependability, attendance and punctuality, effective interpersonal relationships with the congregation and other staff, and personal conduct. USNH members who are familiar with the work of the employee will be asked to submit comments on their performance. As part of the performance review, each employee will be required to complete a self-evaluation. A signed copy of the performance review will be maintained in the employee's Personnel File.

In the case of a less-than-satisfactory rating from a supervisor, employees will be subject to disciplinary actions, including probationary periods or dismissal. The terms of the disciplinary

actions, including length of any probationary period, requirements to reach a satisfactory rating, and consequences if those requirements are not met will be provided to employees in writing. The employees will provide a written acknowledgment of receipt of the terms, which will be maintained in the employee's Personnel File.

II. WAGE AND HOUR ADMINISTRATION

A. EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATIONS

For purposes of determining the applicability of various policies, practices, and benefits, employees are classified by the nature of the position to which they are assigned and by their regular work schedule. USNH reserves the right to determine who is considered a full-time or part-time employee. Generally, a full-time equivalent (FTE) is a forty-hour workweek, year-round.

Employees who are subject to state or federal minimum wage and overtime laws are referred to as "non-exempt" employees. Those in administrative, management, or supervisory positions who are not subject to such regulation are referred to as "exempt" employees. Federal rules require that any employee earning less than the annual amount set by the Fair Labor Standards Act is characterized as non-exempt, no matter their work responsibilities or full/part-time schedule.

If an employee believes that USNH has not complied with wage and hour laws, they should immediately report this potential violation to their supervisor, the Minister, or the Management Team. Employees may file such reports without fear of retaliation. If it is determined that an improper deduction or other violation has occurred, USNH will reimburse the employee in full and correct any further misapplication(s) of this policy. USNH is committed to full compliance with employees' rights under all applicable laws and regulations.

B. HOURS OF WORK

Normal, full-time work consists of a scheduled 40-hour workweek for 52 weeks per year, with the work schedule determined by the employee's supervisor. Individual work schedules may change from time to time. Attendance at meetings at the request of the employee's supervisor will be considered as "time worked." Employees may be expected to attend staff retreats, committee meetings, or off-site events depending on their responsibilities and terms of employment.

If severe weather conditions hinder safe travel, USNH encourages supervisors to exercise flexibility and sensitivity to requests by their staff. If weather conditions are hazardous, supervisors may consider granting permission to staff to leave work early, remain at home, or, if operationally feasible, work from home that day. Staff members who choose to arrive late, leave early, or stay at home should consult a supervisor to see if they can work from home or use paid time off. All staff members facing weather challenges are expected to have regular communication with their supervisors throughout the event.

If USNH declares closure of the facilities due to snow or other unexpected event that make access to the building impossible, employees will work from home if their responsibilities allow. Non-exempt employees will be paid for their hours regularly scheduled for that period. Salaries for exempt employees will not be reduced.

C. TIMEKEEPING AND OVERTIME

All hourly employees must submit a written and signed record of their time worked. Time worked must reflect the time worked by the employee.

The following procedures must be observed by non-exempt employees:

- Employees are responsible for recording their hours of work. They are expected to record only their own hours of work. Any employee recording another employee's time record will be subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
- Employees are expected to follow their work schedules unless the employee has received prior authorization from their supervisor.
- USNH does not pay for meal periods.
- Hourly employees must record their start time after attending to personal business and their time out at the end of the day before attending to personal business.
- Non-exempt employees who are paid an annual salary must report any workweek with over 40 hours of work.
- Employee supervisors must review and, if accurate, co-sign the timecard verifying the accuracy of the timecard at the end of the time period. Any scheduled hours not worked or time worked in excess of the regular schedule must be noted.
- Where required by applicable law, overtime will be paid to non-exempt employees at the rate of one and one-half times the regular rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of forty hours in any one workweek. Holidays, vacation, inclement weather closures, and sick leave are not counted for purposes of overtime compensation. Employees may not work overtime without advance authorization from their supervisor.

The following procedures apply to exempt employees:

All non-ministerial exempt employees are required to report any time off for accurate payroll and record keeping. Exempt employees will receive compensatory time for hours worked above 40 hours and outside of regularly scheduled work hours. Compensatory time must be taken within a month of accrual.

D. PAY RAISES AND COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENTS (COLA)

Pay is based upon such factors as individual performance, job responsibilities, and the financial status of USNH. It is USNH policy to strive to provide an annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) to all employees with a satisfactory job performance, dependent upon the financial health of the organization. Notwithstanding the foregoing policy, USNH reserves the right in all circumstances to determine whether to provide a COLA; as such there is no guarantee that a COLA will be provided to employees. If USNH decides to provide a COLA, the COLA amount will be recommended annually by the Management Team, in consultation with the Finance and Personnel Committees and the Minister, and approved by the Board and Congregation through the adoption of the annual operating budget.

Other pay adjustments (e.g., adjustments consistent with a change in job responsibilities) are considered as appropriate. Any adjustments will normally take effect at the beginning of the fiscal year, i.e., on July 1.

E. PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Deductions made from employees' wages are reflected on the payroll report. Federal law requires deductions from pay for income tax, Social Security, and Medicare. The state of Connecticut requires deductions pursuant to the Connecticut Paid Leave Act. Other deductions may include state and/or local taxes or wage garnishments. Additional deductions are optional and are made only if the employee has authorized the deduction.

Employees are responsible for promptly notifying the Congregational Administrator of any changes to or errors in their pay or deductions. Necessary adjustments will be made and reflected in a subsequent paycheck.

III. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The benefits outlined in this Handbook represent significant additional compensation to eligible employees. Outlined below is a summary of the types of employee benefits currently available through USNH. This summary is not intended to and does not create an express or implied contract, promise, or representation between USNH and the employee. These benefits are subject to change or elimination at any time at the discretion of USNH. Exceptions to this policy, including USNH contributions for temporary coverage such as COBRA, may be made at the discretion of the Management Team. USNH reserves the sole and exclusive right to determine which classes of employees are eligible for coverage under the benefit plans.

USNH defines a family member as spouse, domestic partner, parent, sibling, child, grandparent, or grandchild, including in-laws and step-relations.

In the event of any discrepancy between the benefits outlined below and the Plan Documents, the Plan Documents will govern. Any questions about employee benefits should be directed to the Congregational Administrator.

An employee must sign a waiver for each benefit that is declined.

The employee will be informed in writing of any changes affecting benefits. A statement acknowledging the revision should be signed and dated by the employee and placed in their personnel file.

A. GROUP INSURANCE PROGRAMS

USNH W-2 employees scheduled to work at least 750 hours per year are eligible to enroll in UUA insurance programs. Please note that eligibility for USNH contributions toward the cost of benefit premiums is limited, as shown in the USNH Table of Benefits, Section III.C.

The UUA may offer additional insurance options and services to employees meeting eligibility requirements. Employees are encouraged to visit the Insurance Plans section of the UUA website for more information. Information regarding the plans may also be obtained from the Congregational Administrator or the Chair of the Personnel Committee.

1. Health Insurance

USNH provides a premium contribution for employees who are regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week for 52 weeks per year: 80% of the premium for the employee plus 50% of the premium for dependents. Family benefits cover spouses, dependents, and domestic partners if USNH's insurance carrier provides such coverage.

The premium contribution provided by USNH for employees and family members is prorated by hours scheduled to work compared to a 40-hour workweek for 52 weeks per year.

2. Long-Term Disability, Life, and Dental Insurance

USNH provides long-term disability insurance at no cost to employees who are regularly scheduled to work at least 750 hours per year.

USNH provides life insurance in the amount of twice annual salary (salary plus housing allowance for ordained clergy), to a maximum of \$200,000, for all staff who are regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week for 52 weeks per year.

USNH will contribute 50% of the premium for dental insurance for ordained ministers, Directors of Religious Education, and Coordinators of Congregational Life who are regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week for 52 weeks per year. Employees may purchase dental insurance for their dependents. Enrollment in the UUA Dental Insurance also provides vision coverage through EyeMed. Please see the UUA website for details.

Employees enrolled in long-term disability, life, and/or dental insurance also have access to an Employee Assistance Plan (EAP), providing assistance with health, family, legal, and financial issues. Please see the UUA website for details.

3. Workers' Compensation Insurance

USNH carries workers' compensation insurance for all employees, which pays for certain medical expenses and provides partial income protection in the event of illness or injury arising out of or occurring during the performance of work.

All on-the-job injuries or illnesses, regardless of severity, should be reported immediately to the employee's immediate supervisor or to the Congregational Administrator.

Employees may be required to provide a physician's statement in order to receive workers' compensation benefits or to return to work.

4. CT Paid Leave Program

USNH employees are eligible for the CT Paid Leave Program under certain conditions.

5. Unemployment Benefits

USNH does not provide unemployment insurance. Religious organizations are legally exempt.

B. RETIREMENT PLAN

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) maintains a defined-contribution-qualified retirement plan to assist employees in accumulating tax-deferred savings for retirement. Under the plan, all W-2 employees (age 18 and up) have the option of participating in the UUA Retirement Plan by authorizing employee contributions via salary deferral at any time, even if

they do not meet the requirements that would qualify them to receive the Employer's Contribution to the UUA retirement plan. For eligible employees, USNH contributes 10% of the employee's wages.

Employees are eligible for USNH contributions to the UUA retirement plan after one year of employment that entails at least 1,000 hours of work with a UUA-affiliated organization. USNH will maintain coverage and provide contributions for any new employee who was previously enrolled in the UUA retirement plan. Other eligibility requirements may exist and must be met by the employee. New laws allow withdrawal options, loan terms, and increases in the required minimum distribution on retirement, and also allow no-penalty hardship withdrawals for birth/adoption, domestic abuse, and qualified disaster. Starting in 2026 employees will have the option of making contributions to a Roth account.

Plan Documents setting forth the provisions and requirements of the UUA Retirement Plan will be provided to all participants. Each employee should review this material carefully and discuss any questions they may have with the Congregational Administrator and/or the Chair of the Personnel Committee.

The Handbook continues with the Table of Benefits on the following page.

TABLE OF USNH W-2 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Benefit	Eligible Employees	USNH Contribution
UUA Retirement Plan		
Individual Contribution to Retirement	All W-2 Employees age 18 and over	N/A
USNH Contribution to Retirement	All employees after one calendar year of 1,000 scheduled hours with USNH or other UUA-affiliated organization	10% of wages
UUA Insurance Plans*		
Long-Term Disability	Employees scheduled to work 750+ hours per year	100% of premium
Health	Employees scheduled to work 30+ hours/week, 52 weeks/year	80% of premium for employee; 50% of premium for dependents, prorated by regularly scheduled hours**
Dental	Ordained Ministers, Directors of Religious Education, & Coordinators of Congregational Life scheduled to work 30+ hours/week, 52 weeks/year	50% of premium for employee, prorated by regularly scheduled hours**
Life	Employees scheduled to work 30+ hours/week, 52 weeks/year	100% of premium for policy in the amount of twice annual salary, to a maximum of \$200,000**
Other Benefits		
Worker's Compensation	All employees	100% of premium
Unemployment Compensation	Not provided. Religious organizations are exempt from this requirement.	

* Note that employees scheduled to work 750 hours per year may enroll in all UUA insurance plans, even if they are not eligible for USNH premium contributions. Coverage for dependents may be purchased for dental and life insurance.

** USNH contribution prorated relative to 40 hours/week, 52 weeks/year

C. VACATION

USNH grants paid vacation to full-time employees and part-time employees who work at least 20 hours per week/52 weeks per year, based on their length of service with USNH. Vacation time for eligible employees who work less than full-time is pro-rated according to the regularly scheduled number of hours per week. For example, the term "vacation day" is defined as six hours for an employee who is regularly scheduled to work 30 hours per week, and 4 hours for an employee who is regularly scheduled for 20 hours per week. The number of vacation days for which an employee is eligible is as follows:

<u>Length of Service</u>	<u>Amount of Vacation per year</u>
0 - end of 4 th year	15 days
5 years and more	20 days

Vacation hours will accrue incrementally on a monthly basis, but the first vacation day cannot be taken until the completion of the ninety-day review period. Vacation time must be requested in advance and can only be taken with the approval of the employee's supervisor. In the event of conflicting vacation requests, vacation generally will be granted in accordance with the length of service and consistent with workload requirements. A maximum of 15 vacation days may be carried over to the next fiscal year.

See Section IV.C. for treatment of accrued leave on Separation from Employment.

D. SICK LEAVE

USNH grants paid sick leave to employees who are regularly scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week/52 weeks per year. Eligible employees accrue one day of paid sick leave for every month worked, up to a maximum of twelve days per calendar year. Sick leave for employees who work less than full-time is pro-rated according to the regularly scheduled number of hours per week. A maximum of 12 accrued but unused sick days may be carried over to the subsequent year.

Sick leave is to be used in the event an employee is unable to work due to the employee's own illness, injury, or other medical condition, or used as leave to attend to the medical needs of a family member or dependent individual. Sick leave may be used for routine dental or medical appointments.

Employees must notify their supervisor before their starting time if they are ill and unable to come to work. Employees may be required to provide a physician's statement regarding their medical condition, including why the employee was not able to work.

In the event of an emergency, an employee may request from their supervisor the use of a sick day prior to the actual accrual of sick leave. Use of multiple sick days prior to actual accrual is not encouraged, and requests for multiple accrued days must be approved by the Minister.

See Section IV.C. for treatment of accrued sick leave on separation from employment.

E. HOLIDAYS

Employees who are regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week for 52 weeks per year are eligible for the following paid holidays:

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Day
President's Day
Memorial Day
Juneteenth National Independence Day
Fourth of July
Labor Day
Indigenous Peoples' Day
Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day

If an observed holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday generally will be observed as the holiday. If an observed holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday generally will be observed as the holiday. If employees are required to work on an observed holiday, they will be granted another day off. Generally, in order to be paid for the holiday, the employee must work the scheduled workday before and after each holiday, unless prior authorization is granted.

Additionally, USNH will be closed between Christmas Day and New Year's Day, except for any scheduled worship services.

F. PERSONAL DAYS

Employees scheduled to work 30 hrs/week for 52 weeks/year are eligible for three (3) paid personal days a year, granted annually on July 1. Any unused personal days expire on June 30 of the following year. In the first fiscal year of employment, personal days are pro-rated if the date of hire is in November or later. Employees hired between November and February receive two (2) personal days for that fiscal year. Employees hired between March and May receive one (1) personal day for that fiscal year. Employees hired in June do not receive personal days until the subsequent fiscal year. Unused personal days may not be carried over to the subsequent year. See Section IV.C. for treatment of accrued leave on Separation from Employment.

G. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

The policies in this section describe various types of paid and unpaid leaves of absence provided by USNH. Leaves must be requested in advance in writing to the employee's supervisor and require the approval of the employee's immediate supervisor. The exact nature of the leave and its anticipated length must be included in the written request. Employees are expected to return to work upon the expiration of the leave as granted. If prevented from returning as expected, the employee must immediately notify their supervisor.

USNH employees are eligible for compensation under the CT Paid Leave program for up to 12 weeks a year. The Connecticut Paid Leave program provides Connecticut's workforce meeting income requirements with income replacement benefits for qualifying life events, including pregnancy and seeking treatment for serious health conditions for themselves or their families. To qualify, employees must meet state requirements and first use USNH paid leave where applicable, while retaining two weeks of USNH paid leave.

1. Medical leave without pay

Unpaid medical leave may be granted in instances where an employee's medical condition requires an absence from work for more time than the amount of available sick leave or other leave. Sufficient evidence of such a medical condition is required. Such evidence may include written documentation of a valid medical condition from the employee's treating physician. Documentation will be provided to the employee's supervisor. To preserve privacy, the document is to be kept in a separate "health file."

A written request for medical leave without pay must be submitted to the employee's supervisor and, if approved by the supervisor, the Board of Trustees must also approve the request.

In general, the maximum unpaid medical leave time that may be granted is three months or until a physician releases the employee to return to work, whichever is shorter. USNH also reserves the right to request a second opinion from a physician chosen by USNH for any medical leave of absence.

During an unpaid medical leave, the employee will not accrue vacation or sick leave. At the discretion of the Board of Trustees, USNH may continue to contribute toward the premium of the employee's health benefits for a period not to exceed three (3) months.

2. Personal leave without pay

Employees who have been employed for at least one year may request unpaid personal leave. A written request must be submitted to the employee's supervisor. Personal leave without pay requires the approval of the employee's supervisor and the Board of Trustees. Vacation and sick leave do not accrue during this period.

3. Military leave without pay

Employees who are members of the uniformed services of the United States (including the National Guard or other reserve unit) will be granted unpaid leaves of absence in accordance with state or federal law to perform military duties on a voluntary or involuntary basis. Requests for military leave of absence must be made in writing and should include verification of the duty call from military authority, the date the leave is to commence, and the expected date of return.

Employees may choose to use any accumulated vacation time for all or part of the period of military service. Leaves of absence in excess of any available vacation time and personal leave will be without pay. Eligible employees will be reinstated to the same job upon returning from an authorized military leave of absence, in accordance with applicable law.

Vacation and sick leave do not accrue during this period.

4. Funeral or bereavement leave with pay

Full-time employees may be eligible for a leave of absence for up to three days with pay for the death of a family member, defined as spouse, domestic partner, parent, sibling, child, grandparent, or grandchild, including in-laws and step-relations.

5. Jury duty leave with pay

Employees called for jury duty will be paid, by USNH, their regular pay for up to five working days. Employees should appear for work promptly upon being excused from

jury duty on any given day. Official forms provided by the court must be submitted to USNH.

6. Parental leave

Full-time employees who become birth or adoptive parents are eligible for a leave of absence of up to three months, or longer as required by law, with the first two weeks as paid leave. The leave must begin within six months of the birth or adoption. Vacation and sick leave do not accrue during this period.

H. VEHICLE USAGE AND REIMBURSEMENT

Employees using their own cars for approved USNH-related business may be paid mileage at the current rate per mile as established by the Internal Revenue Service. Trips must be authorized by the employee's supervisor. Commuting to and from USNH on routine workdays is not eligible for reimbursement. Mileage will be reimbursed monthly upon submission of documentation to a supervisor or the appropriate committee.

Employees using their own cars for approved USNH-related business must have a current and valid driver's license and proof of insurance. Updated copies of auto insurance and a driver's license must be retained in the employee's Personnel File. Employees may not take unauthorized passengers on such trips.

All tickets for parking and traffic violations are the responsibility of the employee.

USNH encourages the safe use of cell phones by employees and requires safe use for those who use them for USNH business-related reasons. Employees must adhere to all federal, state, or local rules and regulations regarding the use of cell phones while driving. Accordingly, employees must not use cell phones if such conduct is prohibited by law, regulation, or other ordinance. Employees should not use hand-held cell phones while driving on USNH business. Should an employee need to make a business call while driving, the employee should locate a lawfully designated area to park and make the call.

IV. OTHER USNH POLICIES

A. ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Each employee is expected to be prompt and regular in their attendance at work. Personal appointments should be scheduled before or after work hours, if possible. All scheduled absences must be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor. Employees who are unable to report to work at their scheduled time must call their supervisor as soon as possible to report the absence and the expected time of return to work. Employees must call in each day they are absent, unless otherwise authorized by their supervisor.

Any employee who fails to report to work without notice for three or more consecutive days will be considered to have voluntarily terminated employment, effective immediately.

B. WORK AND DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES

Certain guidelines must be observed by all employees to protect the integrity of the congregation. Violations may result in disciplinary measures including verbal warnings, written warnings, or termination.

Engaging in any of the following examples of unacceptable conduct may result in disciplinary actions, including separation from employment. These examples are intended only as a guide and are not all-inclusive:

- failure to perform work in a manner acceptable to USNH
- arrest and conviction for criminal offenses
- theft or dishonesty
- falsifying records or information
- misuse or unauthorized manipulation of any computer or electronic data processing equipment or system
- sexual harassment or harassment, or discrimination as described in this Handbook
- unauthorized possession of weapons
- disclosure of confidential information
- absenteeism or tardiness
- leaving work without permission
- failure to report absences as required
- taking USNH property without paying for it or without written permission
- use, possession or sale, or being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances (other than those used for bona fide medical purposes) while working
- smoking in unauthorized areas
- failure to report on-the-job injuries
- working another job during regularly scheduled USNH work hours
- failure to accurately complete or permit another person to complete the employee's timecard
- discourteous treatment of others
- reckless, careless, or unauthorized use of USNH property, equipment, or materials
- improper or profane language
- violation of any other USNH policy

C. SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

Employees who resign are requested to give at least two weeks' written notice. Any employee who is absent for three consecutive days without notifying their supervisor, or who fails to report to work on or before the expiration of a leave, will be considered to have voluntarily terminated employment, consistent with applicable law.

Employees will not be paid for accrued sick leave or personal days on separation from employment.

Employees who resign with at least two weeks' notice will receive payment for up to fifteen accrued vacation days. Employees who resign but do not give two weeks' notice will forfeit any accrued vacation days.

Employees who are involuntarily terminated *for disciplinary reasons* will receive payment for up to fifteen days of accrued vacation. They will not be paid for accrued sick leave or personal days on separation from employment.

Employees who are involuntarily terminated *for other than disciplinary reasons* will receive two weeks' pay and payment for up to fifteen days of accrued vacation. They will not be paid for accrued sick leave or personal days on separation from employment.

The schedule for payment of accrued time will be determined by the Finance Committee to ensure accountability to both the employee and USNH budgetary and fiscal constraints.

D. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION REGARDING FORMER EMPLOYEES

Requests for information regarding former employees should be referred to the office administrator. Responses to requests for references concerning former employees will confirm the dates of employment and not provide other information, unless required or permitted by law. If an inquiry is made as to whether a former employee is eligible for re-hire, the response will be that USNH does not have a formal process for re-hiring and therefore cannot indicate whether any former employee is eligible for re-hire.

E. SAFETY, SECURITY, AND ACCIDENTS

The safety of employees, as well as congregants and visitors, is of paramount concern. All employees are expected to abide by accepted safety standards at all times. Employees should know the location of fire extinguishers and the first aid kit. Any unsafe condition, equipment, or practice observed by an employee should be reported immediately to the employee's supervisor or Congregational Administrator.

Employees should develop habits that ensure security as a matter of course. For example:

- Employees should know the location of all alarms and fire extinguishers and familiarize themselves with the proper procedure for using them, should the need arise.
- When leaving USNH premises make sure that all entrances are properly locked and secured.
- Employees should not permit any outsider to enter USNH's premises unless the employee knows the person has a valid reason for entering the premises. Employees should immediately notify their supervisor upon observing an unauthorized individual on USNH's premises.

All on-the-job accidents or injuries, no matter how minor, should be reported immediately to a supervisor, the Minister, and/or the Personnel Committee.

In the event of a fire or other emergency, the fire department and/or police should be called immediately, and all persons should leave the premises.

F. PERSONAL PROPERTY

USNH cannot be responsible for damage to or loss of personal property, including loss or damage to vehicles or other property in or on USNH property. Employees should report any lost items to the Congregational Administrator so that the item can be returned if it is found.

G. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

USNH is committed to maintaining a safe working environment and promoting a drug-free community. The use of controlled substances is inconsistent with the behavior expected of employees. Therefore, other than the moderate use of alcohol in USNH-sponsored events as described below, the possession, use, consumption, purchase, distribution, dispensation, manufacture, sale, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or controlled substances during work hours, on USNH property, while conducting USNH business, while representing USNH in any way whatsoever, or while on duty, is strictly prohibited, except when such use is pursuant to a doctor's orders and the doctor has advised the employee that the substance does not adversely affect the employee's ability to safely perform their duties. Such conduct is also prohibited during non-working time to the extent that, in the sole opinion of USNH, it impairs an employee's ability to perform on the job or threatens the reputation or integrity of USNH.

USNH recognizes that alcohol may be served at both USNH-sponsored and USNH-related functions. Employees are expected to be responsible and use proper judgment in the consumption of alcohol at USNH-sponsored events and those events at which they are acting as USNH representatives. Employees should not consume alcohol while staffing rentals of USNH space.

Any employee may be requested to undergo an alcohol/drug test where there exists reasonable suspicion or reasonable cause to believe the employee is under the influence of drugs or alcohol which adversely affects or could adversely affect such employee's job performance, or where the testing is conducted pursuant to a program sponsored or authorized by USNH in which the employee voluntarily participates.

Employees should not report to work while under the influence of alcohol. If USNH determines that an employee is under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while at work, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

H. WORKPLACE THREATS AND VIOLENCE

Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against persons by anyone on USNH property will not be tolerated.

Anyone who verbally or physically threatens another, exhibits threatening behavior or engages in violent acts on USNH property may be removed and will remain off USNH property pending the outcome of an investigation by USNH, or a law enforcement agency, as USNH, in its sole discretion deems appropriate. If USNH determines that a violation of this policy has occurred, it may take appropriate disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension and/or termination of employment, and/or legal action as appropriate.

All employees shall inform their supervisor, the Minister, the Chair of the Personnel Committee (or other appropriate committees), or the President or Vice President of the Board of Trustees of any behavior which they have witnessed or experienced, that they regard as threatening or violent, when that behavior is job-related or is connected to employment.

I. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Employees should maintain a professional attitude and appearance that is appropriate to their position and the congregation. All staff have the right to be treated courteously and professionally by other staff and by USNH congregants.

J. INSPECTION RIGHTS

USNH has on its premises storage facilities such as desks, file cabinets, closets, and storage areas for the use of employees; however, USNH can make no assurances that they will always be secure.

The storage of any unauthorized alcohol, illegal drugs, or drug-related paraphernalia is prohibited on USNH premises. Therefore, USNH reserves the right to open and inspect any desk, file cabinet, storage closet, or storage area at any time and without prior notice or consent. Employees may not use personal locks on USNH-owned desks, cabinets, closets, or storage areas.

K. EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION

Federal law requires that prospective employees must show proof of eligibility to work in the United States in the position for which they are applying. When applicable, employees must usually provide an original document or documents to the employee's supervisor that establishes identity and employment eligibility from the date employment begins.

V. APPENDICES

A. USNH EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the USNH Employee Handbook, including the Table of USNH W-2 Employee Benefits. I understand that it is my responsibility to read the Handbook and the Table of USNH W-2 Employee Benefits and to comply with the policies, practices, and rules of USNH.

I understand and agree that my employment is at-will and for an unspecified period of time, and that either USNH or I may terminate the employment relationship, at any time, with or without reason and with or without notice. I specifically understand and agree that this statement of policy contains all of the terms relating to termination of employment and that no representations or warranties may be made contrary to the foregoing, either express or implied. I understand that this statement of policy is not subject to change.

I understand that this Handbook supersedes all previous policies, written or oral, expressed or implied. I also understand that this Handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document, and USNH reserves the discretion to add, change, or rescind any policy, practice, or rule at any time with or without notice, except as required by law.

I understand that my signature below indicates that I have read and understood the above statements and have received a copy of the USNH Employee Handbook.

Employee Name (Print)

Employee Signature

Date

A signed copy of this acknowledgment form is to be placed in the employee's personnel file.

B. REVISION HISTORY

Rev.	By	Date	Changes Made
-		05/17/2007	Originally adopted
-		05/12/2012	First undocumented revision
-	Jean Rosenthal	09/15/2018	Second undocumented revision
A.	Jean Rosenthal and Jeremy Hill	05/05/2020	Initial release as SOP-0016 on behalf of the Management Team
B.	Jean Rosenthal and Jeremy Hill	11/03/2020	Discontinued Employee Benefit: IRS Section 125 of Federal Tax Code
C.	Jean Rosenthal	02/14/2023	Information about eligibility for the employee retirement account and new state disability benefit Section III A. and B
D	Jean Rosenthal and Becky Friedkin	02/03/2025	Added holidays; clarified non-exempt status; hours, retirement policy, and insurance coverage, deleted reference to those hired before Jan 2012; other language clarifications.