

LOCALLY-FUNDED EMPLOYEE WORKING POLICY



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST[®] CHURCH
Georgia-Cumberland Conference

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**LOCALLY-FUNDED POLICIES
GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE**

FOREWORD

DATE: December 6, 2023

TO: Georgia-Cumberland Conference Locally-Funded Employees

FROM: Administrative Committee and Human Resource Services

This edition of the **Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Locally-Funded Employee Working Policy** represents our ongoing efforts to make available policies which are applicable to the locally-funded employees of this organization.

It is the goal of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference to accord uniform and equitable treatment to each employee. To do so, a system of caring for the employee has been set in place in the form outlined in its working policies. The purpose is to delineate the principles that characterize the philosophy, teachings, and practices of the Conference relative to employment.

It is not the intent of these policies that they should be so rigid and inflexible that the hands of Administration are bound in meeting unusual circumstances. It is to be realized, however, that any deviation from policy is an exception and not a rule.

New policies and policy amendments or changes will be handled as revised policies. All benefits are subject to change at GCC's discretion at any time and without notice. The employee may have an updated edition by simply accessing the most recent version online.

The **Locally-Funded Employee Working Policy** is confidential and intended for the sole use of the locally-funded employees of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference. It is not for general distribution.

Georgia-Cumberland Conference Administrative Committee (ADCOM)

President
Vice President for Finance/Treasurer
Vice President for Administration/Secretariat
General Vice President
Vice President for Education
Vice President for Pastoral Ministries

Georgia-Cumberland Conference Locally-Funded Employee Working Policy Book Editors

Human Resource Services Director
Human Resource Services Assistant Director

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE POSITION STATEMENT

As voted by the North American Division, Georgia-Cumberland Conference (GCC) recommends local entities (including, but not limited to churches and schools) transition local employment positions to locally-funded conference employment. The Locally-funded Employee Working Policy is applicable to those employees whose entity has voted to transition such positions to GCC employment.

Please refer to the Locally-funded Employee web page for more information (www.gccsda.com).

GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE TERRITORY

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference is a part of the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Its territory consists of the state of Georgia, Cherokee County in North Carolina, and Eastern Tennessee to the eastern boundaries of Cannon, Clay, Coffee, Dekalb, Franklin, Jackson, and Smith counties. This territory is divided into six (6) geographical districts designed to provide a means of equitable representation at Conference Executive Committee Meetings and Conference Constituency Meetings.

MISSION PHILOSOPHY

Revised 8/19/15

As a team of caring Christian professionals that believes in the soon coming of Jesus, we are commissioned to lead in the fulfillment of the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference. As a part of the world Church, we are dedicated to share the Gospel in the setting of the Three Angels' Messages under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in this the end time. In the context of ministry, we believe in "growing disciples through shared leadership."

Recognizing our spiritual mission, we prize the character values of people including honesty and fairness, gender and cultural sensitivity and respect, kindness, and selfless service modeled by Jesus. We value creativity, the pursuit of excellence, open communication, recognition and appreciation for people's efforts that result in quality services and products to meet our members' felt needs.

Knowing our members, we make these commitments:

TO CHURCH MEMBERS: we invite them to hold us accountable as we provide a sense of belonging, a global vision with local action, effective nurture and outreach resources, support of family life, and open communication with Conference personnel.

TO LOCAL CHURCHES: we seek to appoint pastors that share a common vision, provide training for lay people in all areas of ministry, conduct open, two-way communication, and provide support and counsel.

TO SCHOOLS: we provide quality personnel for educational outcomes, financial and curricula support, and effective coordination of Conference educational objectives.

TO PASTORS: we affirm and value them, their spouses, and their families; we provide opportunities for spiritual renewal and continuing education in ministry, accurate church

profiles and appropriate placements when they move to new areas, and meaningful evaluation for personal growth.

TO TEACHERS: we affirm and value them, their spouses, and their families; we provide on-going teacher training, curriculum development skills, affirmation and meaningful evaluation for a growing ministry, a sense of security, and spiritual growth opportunities enabling them to lead young people to Jesus Christ.

TO OFFICE EMPLOYEES: we strive to create a strong team spirit in an atmosphere of respect, a pleasant work environment with fair salaries and benefits, professional development opportunities, and access to people and information.

TO LITERATURE EVANGELISTS: we seek to help them succeed in the ministry of literature evangelism by providing services and inventory in support and recognition of their value as frontline missionaries.

TO THE COMMUNITY: we seek to be aware of the needs of the various segments of the population, and to cooperate with other agencies in meeting specific needs including disaster relief and wellness education, and in this setting to share the infinite blessings of the Gospel.

TO THE CHURCH STRUCTURE AND CONFERENCE INSTITUTIONS: we offer statistical reports and financial support according to policy, and our collaboration in the global mission of the Church in fulfillment of the Great Commission in anticipation of Jesus' soon return.

CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference Executive Committee shall act as the representative of the constituency to conduct the affairs and business of the Conference between Quinquennial Constituency Meetings. It shall have the authority to act on all matters not specifically reserved by the Constitution and Bylaws for the Conference constituency meeting, or to permanent committees, boards, or commissions of the Conference.

The Executive Committee of the Conference shall be elected at its Regular Constituency Meeting and shall consist of not more than thirty (30) members, which number shall include the President, Vice President for Administration/Secretariat, and Vice President for Finance/Treasurer of the Conference. The remaining membership of the committee shall include two (2) lay members and one (1) Conference pastor from each of the six (6) geographical areas; one (1) Conference departmental director; one (1) Adventist Health System member; one (1) member of a self-supporting Adventist institution; one (1) Southern Adventist University member; one (1) Conference academy faculty member and one (1) Conference elementary school teacher; two (2) lay members and one (1) Conference pastor, selected at large. Only one (1) committee member at large shall be selected from a given geographical district. In addition, the Vice President for Education, the Vice President for Pastoral Ministries, and the General Vice President are ex-officio, and non-voting members, of the Executive Committee. No member of the Executive Committee (with the exception of the officers and the Southern Adventist University member) shall serve for more than two (2) consecutive committee terms.

Seven subcommittees serve the Conference Executive Committee. Although empowered to make binding decisions, their actions and decisions are subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. The subcommittees shall be as follows:

- 1 Adventist Book Center Subcommittee
- 2 Building and Finance Subcommittee

- 3 Cohutta Springs Subcommittee
- 4 Evangelism Subcommittee
- 5 Georgia-Cumberland Conference Association Board
- 6 Personnel Subcommittee
- 7 Board of Education

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE (ADCOM)

The operation and management of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference function under a committee system. The Conference Executive Committee has given the Administrative Committee authority to act on its behalf in many areas of management of the Conference. The Administrative Committee is composed of the three (3) Conference Executive Officers and the three (3) additional Officers/Vice Presidents, all elected by the constituency. The Executive Officers' and Officers/Vice Presidents' roles are defined as follows:

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The executive officers of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists are the President, Vice President for Administration/Secretariat, and Vice President for Finance/Treasurer.

President. The President is the chief executive officer of the Conference and shall act as chairman of constituency meetings and the Conference Executive Committee. He shall work in harmony with the actions and counsel of the Conference Executive Committee and perform such other duties as pertain to this office.

Inasmuch as the Conference President stands at the head of the ministry in the Conference and is the chief elder, or overseer of all the churches, the Conference President shall be an ordained minister.

Vice President for Administration/Secretariat. The Vice President for Administration/Secretariat shall work under the direction of the Conference Executive Committee and shall act as vice-chairman of the Conference Executive Committee. It shall be the duty of the Vice President for Administration/Secretariat to keep the minutes of the proceedings of the Conference Constituency meetings and of the Conference Executive Committee. He/She will furnish copies of these minutes to all members of the Conference Executive Committee, collect such data as may be desired by the President or the Executive Committee, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office. In the absence of the President, the Vice President for Administration/Secretariat is the next ranking officer. The Vice President for Administration/Secretariat is the manager of the Conference office.

Vice President for Finance/Treasurer. The Vice President for Finance/Treasurer shall work under the direction of the Conference Executive Committee. It shall be the duty of the Vice President for Finance/Treasurer to receive all funds of the Conference, to disburse them in harmony with the actions of the Conference Executive Committee, to remit all required funds to the Southern Union Conference, to the North American Division, and to the General Conference, in harmony with North American Division policy, and to render such financial statements at regular intervals as may be desired by the President of the Conference or by the Conference Executive Committee.

OFFICERS/VICE PRESIDENTS

Additional officers of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference include:

Vice President for Education. The Vice President for Education serves as the administrative officer for the Pre-K-12 educational system of the Conference, coordinates the Office of

Education staff, administers the annual education budget, and recruits and employs educational personnel on behalf of the Board of Education.

Vice President for Pastoral Ministries and Evangelism. The Vice President for Pastoral Ministries is responsible for the recruitment and placement of pastoral personnel, directs the conference evangelism program and administers the annual evangelism budget. He/She brings recommendations to the Administrative Committee and the Personnel Subcommittee of the Executive Committee and serves as chairman of the Evangelism Subcommittee.

General Vice President. The General Vice President's responsibilities include the oversight and coordination of the following areas: Church Ministries Department, Camp Meeting and Area Convocations, Cohutta Springs Adventist Center and additional duties as assigned by the President.

GENERAL POLICIES

HOURS AND WORK SCHEDULE

L1010

The hours and work schedule for a locally-funded employee will be determined by the governing board of the local entity within the provisions of state and federal labor regulations.

COMPUTER USE

L1030

The use of church- or school-owned/operated equipment or resources for anything of an illegal or harassing nature is expressly forbidden (*See Harassment Policy L2200*).

The use of church- or school-owned/operated equipment or resources for anything inconsistent with the goals, objectives and standards of the Conference is expressly forbidden.

If employees receive inappropriate computer or electronic mail messages, they should notify their supervisor. Copyrights of all software and information will be recognized and such copyrighted materials will be used only in accordance with applicable copyright laws.

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference reserves and exercises the right to monitor, intercept, and read the entire contents of any document, data, or electronic message stored or transmitted, including information that has been deleted, on any Conference-owned or operated system, for the purpose of maintaining the security and integrity of those systems, and to assure compliance with policies. Computer documents, data and electronic messages are not private, but are considered to be Conference records. **Employees do not have an expectation of privacy.**

ELECTRONIC MEDIA USAGE

L1040

New 8/29/18

Definition. Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), web lots (blogs), wikis (collaboratively edited websites), electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the internet, and social networks sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram). Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cell phones, and web-based applications.

When using electronic media, employees accept the obligation of maintaining ethical standards in their personal lives and in the workplace and are to be prepared to be held accountable for personal and professional conduct representing the values of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Employees are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media. They are to understand that although they are speaking on their own behalf, their personal online presence reflects the Georgia-Cumberland Conference and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This is true with or without the use of a personal disclaimer. If an employee's use of electronic media is deemed to interfere with their ability to effectively perform their job duties or violates conference policies or procedures, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees must exercise sound judgment and common sense when using electronic media. Communication should be expressed in an accurate, responsible manner. If using another party's content, permission from the author and credit to the author must be included. Copyrights, trademarks, publicity rights, or other rights without necessary permissions of the rightsholder(s) must not be used. Applicable local, state, and federal laws and professional rules of conduct apply.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND/OR COMMITMENT

L1060

Revised 8/19/15

Conflict of interest shall mean any circumstance under which an employee or volunteer by virtue of financial or other personal interest, present or potential, directly or indirectly, may be influenced or appear to be influenced by any motive or desire for personal advantage, tangible or intangible, other than the success and well-being of the denomination.

Because of the common objectives embraced by the various organizational units and institutions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, membership held concurrently on more than one denominational committee or board does not of itself constitute a conflict of interest provided that all the other requirements of the policy are met.

A conflict of commitment shall mean any situation which interferes with an employee's ability to carry out his duties effectively. Elected, appointed, or salaried employees on full-time assignment are compensated for full-time employment. Therefore, outside or dual employment or other activity, whether compensated or not, that in any way interferes with the performance of an employee's duties and responsibilities is a conflict of commitment.

A conflict of commitment also exists in situations where an employee functions contrary to the values and ethical conduct outlined in the Statement of Ethical Foundations, or when an employee functions contrary to established codes of ethical conduct for employees in particular professions (e.g. legal, investments).

All trustees, officers, executive committee/board members, employees, and volunteers of denominational organizations shall be subject to this policy.

A trustee, officer, executive committee/board member, employee, or volunteer has a duty to be free from the influence of any conflicting interest or commitment when serving the organization or representing it in negotiations or dealings with third parties. Both while on and off the job an employee is expected to protect the best interests of the Conference. The following list, though not exhaustive, describes circumstances and conditions that illustrate conflict of interest or commitment.

- 1 Engaging in outside business or employment that encroaches on the denominational organization's call for the full services of its employees, even though there may not be any other conflict.

- 2 Engaging in business or employment that is any way competitive or in conflict with any transaction, activity, policy, or objective of the organization.
- 3 Engaging in any business with or employment by an employer who is a supplier of goods or services to any denominational organization.
- 4 Making use of the fact of employment by the denominational organization to further outside business or employment, associating the denominational organization or its prestige with an outside business or employment, or using one's connection to the denomination to further personal or partisan political interests.
- 5 Purchasing or leasing any property with knowledge that the denominational organization has an active or potential interest therein.
- 6 Lending money to or borrowing money from any third party, excluding financial institutions, who is a supplier of goods or services, or lending to/borrowing from a trustor or anyone who is in any fiduciary relationship to the denominational organization or is otherwise regularly involved in business transactions with the denominational organization.
- 7 Accepting or offering of any gratuity, favor, benefit, or gift or of any commission or payment, monetary or non-monetary, of greater than nominal value, in connection with work for the denominational organization other than the compensation agreed upon between the denominational organization and/or the employer and the employee.
- 8 Making use of or disseminating, including by electronic means, any confidential information acquired through employment by the denominational organization for personal profit or advantage, directly or indirectly.
- 9 Using denominational personnel, property, equipment, supplies, or goodwill for other than approved activities, programs, and purposes.
- 10 Expending unreasonable time, during normal business hours, for personal affairs or for other organizations, to the detriment of work performance for the denomination.
- 11 Using one's connections within the organization to secure favors for one's family or relatives.

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS

MISSION

The Seventh-day Adventist Church mission is to proclaim to all peoples the everlasting gospel, in the context of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12, leading them to accept Jesus as their personal Savior, and nurturing them in preparation for His soon return. The pursuit of this mission is under the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, utilizing God-given talents and resources.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Employees are responsible first to God the Creator. Individual and collective action must reflect His character and exhibit His love.
- Employees are responsible to the communities in which they work and live and also to the world community. Employees accept the challenge to be exemplary individuals and corporate citizens. They support good works and charities and encourage civic improvements, a better quality of life, security, health, and education for all.
- Employees are responsible to our fellow church members. They accept

accountability for sound leadership decisions and appropriate stewardship.

- Employees are responsible to each other within the workforce. Every individual deserves to be treated with dignity and respect; to have his or her role and contribution valued and affirmed; to function in a safe working environment; to experience an atmosphere of challenge, open communication, and contentment.

SHARED VALUES

- The Bible as the primary reference for life's direction and qualities.
- *Excellence* in all that we do.
- *Ethical and moral conduct* at all times and in all relationships.
- *Creativity and innovation* in the completion of our mission.
- *Honesty, integrity, and courage* as the foundation of all our actions.
- The *trust* placed in us by colleagues and by the world Church membership.
- *People* as children of God and therefore brothers and sisters of one family.

ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS EMPLOYER AND CORPORATE CITIZEN

In pursuit of its mission, and while maintaining its responsibilities and adhering to its values, the Georgia- Cumberland Conference operates under the following ethical guidelines:

- **Equal Opportunity Employment.** Within the purview of laws permitting church membership as a condition of employment, and subject to denominational policies on positions requiring ministerial ordination, the Georgia-Cumberland Conference will follow procedures to ensure equal opportunity of employment, remuneration, and advancement on the basis of job qualifications and performance.
- **Equity, fairness and non-discrimination.** The Georgia-Cumberland Conference will treat all individuals and groups with loving justice. It will not practice or condone discrimination with regard to race, national origin, gender, age, marital status, veteran status, or disability that does not prohibit performance of essential job functions.
- **Compliance with laws of the land.** The Georgia-Cumberland Conference will carry on its activities in compliance with the laws of the land provided these are not in contradiction to God's expressed will.
- **Loyalty and fulfillment of contractual obligations.** The Georgia-Cumberland Conference will fulfill the commitments it has entered into through authorized channels. Where misunderstandings arise regarding such commitments, the Georgia-Cumberland Conference shall participate, with the parties concerned, in conflict resolution procedures within the organization before seeking the help of the wider community.
- **Atmosphere of safety and happiness.** The Georgia-Cumberland Conference is committed to providing a work environment that offers physical safety and security. It also strives to encourage and promote genuine happiness through the realization that every employee is valuable and every task, no matter how routine or unnoticed, is a service to God. The Georgia-Cumberland Conference will continue to integrate worship, work, and celebration in a manner that acknowledges wholeness in life and relationships.
- **Respect for human dignity and individuality.** The Georgia-Cumberland Conference affirms and respects the uniqueness of every employee. It recognizes that a person's value surpasses the worth of his or her contribution to the organization. It believes that communal harmony and corporate objectives are enhanced rather than compromised by the broad mosaic of personalities, talents, skills, and viewpoints dedicated to the honor of Jesus Christ. The Georgia-Cumberland Conference shall strive for communication that is timely, truthful, open, candid, and kind.

ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS EMPLOYEES

Employment in the Seventh-day Adventist Church implies commitment to the organization's mission and concurrence with its responsibilities and values. The employer-employee relationship grows within a reciprocity of mutual regard. Reasonable service as employees includes the following ethical responsibilities.

- **Life consistent with church message and mission.** While in the employ of the Georgia- Cumberland Conference, employees will live in a manner consistent with the beliefs and values of the Church and will uphold, in word and conduct, the teachings and principles held and advanced by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
- **Respect for Church-owned assets.** Employees will respect the property of the organization, including any intellectual property that is developed in the course of their employment. The property, facilities, and resources will be used solely for the benefit of the organization, unless otherwise permitted or when financial compensation for such use has been arranged.
- **Respect for colleagues.** Employees will respect and uplift their fellow employees and will refrain from intentionally placing another in a position of embarrassment, disrespect, or harassment. They will avoid all behavior that may be construed as sexually inappropriate. They will honor the privacy and guard the safety of others.
- **Efficiency and attention on the job.** The hours of employment shall be devoted to the work assignments entrusted to employees. They will not use the employer's time for personal business or the advancement of personal interest unrelated to the work assigned by supervisors. They will not deprive the employer by entering into other employment or activities which impair performance for the Georgia- Cumberland Conference while on the job. They will aspire to greater efficiency and the reduction of waste in time, effort, and resources.
- **Personal integrity in financial matters.** Employees will not engage in theft or embezzlement of any kind including the misuse of expense accounts, falsification of time reports, or the misapplication of resources for which they are responsible.
- **Avoiding inappropriate influence.** Employees acknowledge that the giving or receiving of business gifts can easily inject ulterior considerations in their work and employment relationships. Therefore the use of gifts, payments, or honoraria as incentives or rewards for a particular course of action is unacceptable. They will not offer gifts, favors, payments, or other forms of reward directly or indirectly in exchange for a specific gain or action.
- **Maintaining an ethical environment in the workplace.** Employees accept the obligation of maintaining ethical standards in their personal lives and in the workplace. It is their personal responsibility to report, through established confidential channels, any behavior that is inappropriate or which undermines the ethical environment of the Conference. They are to be prepared to be held accountable by our supervisors and peers for professional conduct representing the moral and ethical values of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

JURY DUTY

Revised 8/19/15

L1100

It is the position of the Conference that citizens should respond, if possible, when called to serve their community. Unless undue hardship can be proven, it is generally required that the person called to jury duty complies with this request.

A leave of absence for jury duty will be granted to any full-time, part-time 30+ or part-time 20+ employee who has been notified to serve. During this leave, wages and benefits will be continued. An employee on jury duty is expected to report to work any day they are excused from jury duty or if they are dismissed from jury duty before the end of the scheduled workday.

FAITHFUL RETURN OF TITHE

Tithing is a basic Biblical principal that speaks to a person's relationship with his/her Creator. This relationship is ordained of God for the benefit of His children. Systematic and regular tithing yields rich rewards. Among these is the bond that results between a person and the Creator. Another is experiencing the intrinsic satisfaction of giving one's self and one's means to the Lord. The Lord's promise of special blessings to those who are faithful in their tithe can be received in no other way.

Seventh-day Adventist denominational employees are to be models in every facet of their lives. Church members must see in Church employees a fidelity to basic principles which is unequivocal. Such commitment needs to be exercised in respect of all the standards of Christian living. Such employees will demonstrate an exemplary commitment to the Lord and the teachings of His Church.

EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT**

L2010

Revised 4/9/14

Definitions:

Employer shall refer to the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.*

Employee shall refer to any and all locally-funded employees of the Conference.

The employee recognizes that his/her position constitutes an employment-at-will relationship and the employee may terminate his/her position at any time for any reason. If an employee, for any reason, finds it necessary to discontinue employment, the employee shall submit in writing a notification of intention at least two (2) weeks prior to the planned date of departure. This notice should be presented to the immediate supervisor who, in turn, will present it to the local board.

The employer has the continued right to terminate employment of any employee at any time and for any reason. The employer will endeavor to provide reasonable notice of termination, but there may be situations where this will not be possible.

The provisions of the *Locally-Funded Employee Working Policy* do not constitute a contract of employment nor are they covenants. No representative of the employer has any authority to enter into any agreement with the employee for any specified period of time or to make any agreement contrary to the foregoing. The provisions of the *Locally-Funded Employee Working Policy* are guidelines only and may be changed or deleted by the employer.

* With delegated authority to the local entity board to include overseeing the hiring process including job postings, application processing, referencing, interviewing, and selecting; evaluations; supervision; authorizing timesheets; discipline/probation; and taking appropriate actions to conclude employment per policy guidelines. GCC Administrative Committee would have the final authority regarding a local board's decisions that are appealed by an employee or that conflict with GCC policies/protocols.

CLASSIFICATION TRANSITIONS

L2015

Revised 8/19/15

On occasion, an employee's status may change from hourly to salaried or salaried to hourly. The following adjustments will take place with these transitions:

HOURLY TO SALARIED

- 1 Accrued vacation hours may be paid to employee or converted to salaried time at employee's request.
- 2 Short-term sick hours will be paid out to employee.
- 3 Accrued long-term sick time will be withdrawn with no cash value to employee.

SALARIED TO HOURLY

- 1 Accrued vacation time may be paid out to employee or converted to hours at employee's request.

CONCILIATION PROCEDURES

L2020

Revised 8/19/15

PURPOSE

A strong working relationship, communication and understanding between employee and employer contributes to effective operation of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference by providing a system for prompt resolution of grievances that improves the efficiency and morale of the employee and enhances the ministry of the conference.

Emphasis should be placed on candid and open communication among those involved without the presence of legal counsel. These processes emphasize solution of problems at the level closest to their origin and are based upon the premise that each party is interested in fair and just solutions to grievances. Reconciliation of differences should be possible without recourse to civil litigation.

A "grievance" is defined as an employee's real or imagined feeling of personal injustice concerning his/her employment relationship.

PROCEDURES FOR RESOLUTION

Step 1. An employee with a grievance shall first present the issue in writing to the immediate supervisor or pastor/principal within 30 days of the action.

Step 2. If unsatisfied with the response, the employee may submit a written appeal to the local board. The response of the board to the employee shall be in writing.

Step 3. If the decision contained in the written response from the board in 'Step 2' does not resolve the issue, the employee may appeal the decision by requesting, in writing, that the matter be referred to the GCC Administrative Committee (ADCOM) at their next regularly scheduled meeting. The committee shall review pertinent documents and information relating to the grievance and determine whether to affirm, modify, or reverse the decision of the local board. The decision of this committee will be considered as final. The board shall communicate its decision in writing to the employee and the supervisor.

An employee may drop a grievance at any time by notifying the pastor/principal in writing.

No retaliation shall be taken against any participants in the conciliation procedures by reason of such participation.

EXEMPTIONS

The Conciliation and legal dispute procedures may not apply institutions that are deemed to be outside the jurisdiction of the Church or for which the Church agrees that it has no adequate process for orderly settlement. Examples of cases that are not covered by these procedures may include but are not limited to:

1. Disputes filed in State and Federal Courts.
2. Settlement of insurance or self-insurance claims.
3. Issuance of decrees affecting the boundaries and ownership of real property.
4. Marital differences.
5. Awarding of custody of minor children.
6. Deciding matters involving the administration of estates.
7. Individual disputes with any branch of civil government or law enforcement agencies.
8. Debt collection matters.
9. Specific theological questions.
10. Questions regarding Church discipline and the transfer or reinstatement of membership.*
11. Church elections.

*Covered by policies in the Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

L2030

Many times within the local organization, there are strictly confidential disclosures of a personal or organizational nature. The employee will protect himself/herself and the organization by not allowing the dissemination of such information to family, friends, or strangers unless authorized to do so by an appropriate administrator.

Due to the legal and safety risks involved, employees who breach confidentiality are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment.

DISCIPLINE AND TERMINATION PROCEDURES

L2050

Revised 8/19/15

Employees are expected to observe the Conference's policies and procedures including, but not limited to, the policies set out in this *Locally-Funded Employee Working Policy*. Although cause is not required for dismissal or other disciplinary actions, violation of the Conference's policies and procedures may result in: 1) disciplinary action at the discretion of the Conference or designated board, or 2) termination of employment.

The purpose of disciplinary procedures is to provide a systematic and equitable means of dealing with employee violations of conditions of employment or other unacceptable practices and to assist employees in achieving optimum performance. The procedures outlined herein are for guideline purposes only and may be changed or limited by the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.

In making a decision as to what action should be taken, the Conference or its designee will consider all of the circumstances involved and the employee's overall work record.

Conduct That May Result in Discipline and/or Termination. Causes for discipline and/or termination may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1 Violation of conditions of employment.
- 2 Non-compliance with any published policies and procedures.
- 3 Failure or refusal to comply with any reasonable job related request by a supervisor.

- 4 Causing employee unrest by airing complaints in lieu of following established complaint and grievance procedures. (*See Conciliation Procedures Policy 2020*)
- 5 Failure to practice the fundamental teachings and standards of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
- 6 Excessive tardiness and/or absenteeism, regardless of the reason.
- 7 Remarriage without Biblical grounds.
- 8 Misappropriation or misuse of organizational funds or other assets.
- 9 Unauthorized possession or use of property belonging to the organization or other individuals.
- 10 Inadequate effort to fulfill a job assignment or unsatisfactory performance.
- 11 Committing, aiding, advocating, pleading guilty to, or being convicted of, a felony.
- 12 Supporting or being involved with activities that are in conflict with the teachings and objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
- 13 Persistent disregard or violation of sound principles of Christian interpersonal relationships or inability to maintain cordial relations with fellow employees.
- 14 Refusal to accept a transfer or a justified reassignment.
- 15 Attitude detrimental to the objectives and philosophy of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.
- 16 Falsification of records, time reports, expense reports, or other records or reports, oral or written.
- 17 Misuse or disclosure of confidential information.
- 18 Violence in the workplace such as fighting, threatening, intimidating, attempting bodily harm or injury, or interfering with another individual while working on behalf of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference or while on Conference and/or Church property.
- 19 Violating safety rules or common safety practices.
- 20 Engaging in physical, verbal, sexual or visual harassment.
- 21 Non-compliance with dress policy.
- 22 Absence of two (2) consecutive days or three (3) non-consecutive days without notice ("no call - no show").
- 23 Gambling, including lotteries and games of chance.
- 24 Insubordination or refusal to follow instructions or perform assigned work.
- 25 Theft or dishonesty.
- 26 Soliciting gratuities or tips from any individual.
- 27 Vandalism.
- 28 Acts of immorality.
- 29 Disorderly conduct and profanity.
- 30 Gross negligence of duty.
- 31 Use of tobacco in any form and/or alcoholic beverages.
- 32 Illegal use of drugs.
- 33 Permitting or requiring non-exempt (hourly) employees to work without clocking in or otherwise recording all hours worked. This applies to supervisory employees and requires a written warning before termination.
- 34 Failure to retain right to work status.

Misuse of Church-Owned Funds. When a volunteer or an employee of a Seventh-day Adventist organization performs an act in violation of the laws of the country and of the financial trust or responsibility reposed to him/her, discipline shall be administered and all violations will be reported to appropriate law enforcement officials.

Procedures for Employee Discipline. Supervisors, in consultation with the governing board, may implement discipline in any of the following forms when policies, regulations, and guidelines in this *Locally-Funded Employee Working Policy* are ignored or violated.

- 1 *Verbal warning.* A verbal warning by the immediate supervisor or administrator directed to the employee. Successive verbal warnings shall be documented and placed in the employee's file.

- 2 *Written warning.* A written warning by means of a memo or letter by the immediate supervisor or administrator directed to the employee which outlines the problem area(s), describes corrective action to be taken within the prescribed time frame and further action which will occur if improvement is not noted within this time frame. A copy of this memo or letter shall be given to the employee and a copy shall be placed in the employee's file.
- 3 *Evaluation.* At the end of the time frame noted in the written warning, a session will be conducted between the supervisor and employee to discuss results since the notification of the initial warning. If desired improvement has not been made, the GCC Human Resource Services Office will be notified.
- 4 *Probation.* The local entity governing board in executive session shall take action, placing the employee on probation. Another session with the employee will be held in which the employee is advised of the probationary action. A letter will follow confirming the probationary status, and a copy will be placed in the employee's file.

An employee on probation may be terminated at any time for any reason and shall not be entitled to the protections concerning discipline, termination, and grievance procedures (see *At-Will Employment Policy L2010*).
- 5 *Discipline.* The governing board may choose an appropriate level of discipline, based on the severity of the offense, including, but not limited to, verbal warnings, written warnings stated above, administrative leaves with or without pay, or termination of employment.

Procedures for Terminating Employees.

- 1 *Opportunity to Resign.* If disciplinary or corrective measures have failed to remedy the situation and if termination seems to be necessary, the employee may be given the opportunity to resign on his/her own initiative.
- 2 *Serious Violations.* In case of serious violation of conditions of employment or a major infraction of policies and regulations, the action of the appropriate committee to terminate the employee's services is final. In such cases an employee may not be given an opportunity to resign. Prior notice and warnings need not be given and steps under "Opportunity to Resign" are not applicable. Dismissals may be for, but not necessarily limited to, the following acts:
 - a. Vandalism.
 - b. Act of immorality or indiscretion.
 - c. Disorderly conduct and profanity.
 - d. Gross neglect of duty.
 - e. Dishonesty.
 - f. Use of tobacco in any form and/or alcoholic beverages.
 - g. Illicit use of drugs.
- 3 *Dismissal.* Should an employee be dismissed, the governing board will give a minimum of two (2) weeks notice (except in the case of dismissal for gross misconduct). The Georgia-Cumberland Conference at its own discretion may conclude employment duties immediately and pay the dismissed employee in lieu of notice. The employee who is dismissed for gross misconduct will receive the full remuneration that he/she has earned up to the time of discharge.

These discipline procedures serve as general guidelines and are neither mandatory nor exhaustive. There are varying degrees of seriousness that pertain to performance and/or infractions of policies. There are certain instances where conduct and/or performance are of

such a serious nature that immediate termination, without prior warning or consultation, may be the justified course of action.

NOTICE OF RESIGNATION

L2070

Revised 8/19/15

All employees who intend to leave employment are requested to provide a minimum two- (2) week written notice of resignation to their supervisor.

Accrued and unused vacation shall be paid out to the employee at the conclusion of employment and/or used by the employee prior to the conclusion of employment.

See At-Will Employment Policy L2010 for additional information.

EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION AND BENEFIT ELIGIBILITY

L2080

Revised 12/10/2014

Locally-Funded employees fall into the following categories:

NON-EXEMPT (HOURLY) EMPLOYEES

Full-time. Individuals who are regularly scheduled to work at least thirty-eight (38) hours per week shall receive:

Benefits:	Hourly Rate
	Paid holidays and vacation/sick leave accrual
	Healthcare coverage
	Employer retirement contributions and service credit
	(Early Childhood Education Center [ECEC] employees not eligible)
	Life and Long-term Disability insurance coverage
	Reimbursement of authorized expenses
	Overtime pay for work in excess of forty (40) hours in one (1) work week
	No other benefits

(Note: At least 11.5 months or 1,950 hours are required for 1 year of service credit each calendar year.)

Part-time (30+). Individuals who are regularly scheduled to work at least thirty (30) and less than thirty-eight (38) hours per week shall receive:

Benefits:	Hourly Rate
	Paid holidays and vacation/sick leave accrual
	Healthcare coverage
	Employer retirement contributions and service credit
	(ECEC employees not eligible)
	Reimbursement of authorized expenses
	Overtime pay for work in excess of forty (40) hours in one (1) work week
	No other benefits

(Note: At least 1,000 hours are required for 50% of a year of service credit plus proportionate credit for hours between 1,001 and 1,950.)

Part-time (20+). Individuals who are regularly scheduled to work twenty (20) or more hours and less than thirty (30) hours per week shall receive:

Benefits: Hourly Rate
Paid holidays and vacation/sick leave accrual
Employer retirement contributions and service credit
(ECEC employees not eligible)
Reimbursement of authorized expenses
Overtime pay for work in excess of forty (40) hours in one (1) work week
No other benefits

(Note: At least 1,000 hours are required for 50% of a year of service credit plus proportionate credit for hours between 1,001 and 1,950.)

Part-time Excluding Benefits. Individuals who regularly work less than twenty (20) hours per week shall receive:

Benefits: Hourly Rate
Reimbursement of authorized expenses
Overtime pay for work in excess of forty (40) hours in one (1) work week
No service credit
No other benefits

Temporary/Occasional. Individuals who work 1) on a temporary basis of less than twenty (20) hours per week, 2) on a temporary assignment **not** to exceed four (4) months of more than twenty (20) hours per week, or 3) on an occasional basis shall receive:

Benefits: Hourly Rate
Reimbursement of authorized expenses
Overtime pay for work in excess of forty (40) hours in one (1) work week
No service credit
No other benefits

EXEMPT (SALARIED) EMPLOYEES

Full-time. Individuals who regularly work at least thirty-eight (38) hours per week shall receive:

Benefits: Salary
Paid holidays and vacation accrual
Healthcare coverage
Employer retirement contributions and service credit
(ECEC employees not eligible)
Life and Long-term Disability insurance coverage
Reimbursement of authorized expenses
No other benefits

Part-time (30+). Individuals who are regularly scheduled to work at least thirty (30) and less than thirty-eight (38) hours per week shall receive:

Benefits: Salary
Paid holidays (included in salary)
Healthcare coverage
Employer retirement contributions and service credit
(ECEC employees not eligible)
Reimbursement of authorized expenses
No other benefits

(Note: At least 1,000 hours are required for 50% of a year of service credit plus proportionate credit for hours between 1,001 and 1,950.)

Part-time (20+). Individuals who are regularly scheduled to work twenty (20) or more hours and less than thirty (30) hours per week shall receive:

Benefits:

- Salary
- Paid holidays (included in salary)
- Employer retirement contributions and service credit (EDEC employees not eligible)
- Reimbursement of authorized expenses
- No other benefits

(Note: At least 1,000 hours are required for 50% of a year of service credit plus proportionate credit for hours between 1,001 and 1,950.)

Part-time Excluding Benefits. Individuals who regularly work less than twenty (20) hours per week shall receive:

Benefits:

- Salary
- Reimbursement of authorized expenses
- No service credit
- No other benefits

Temporary/Occasional. Individuals who work 1) on a temporary basis of less than twenty (20) hours per week, 2) on a temporary assignment **not** to exceed four (4) months of more than twenty (20) hours per week, or 3) on an occasional basis shall receive:

Benefits:

- Salary
- Reimbursement of authorized expenses
- No service credit
- No other benefits

BENEFIT ELIGIBILITY FOR EMPLOYEES WITH MULTIPLE POSITIONS

L2085

Revised 12/10/2014

Classification. When an employee has concurrent multiple positions within the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, their employment classification will be determined based on the total weekly hours of the combined positions. A temporary/occasional position would not impact classification due to the short-term nature of the position (see #2080 for classification definitions).

Benefits. Benefit accrual for the combined positions is dependent on whether their primary position is considered exempt or non-exempt.

- **Non-exempt** (Full-time, Part-time (30+) or Part-time (20+) Employee) – All hours worked for the employer, (including a temporary/occasional position) would be eligible for benefit accrual.
- **Exempt** (Full-time, Part-time (30+), or Part-time (20+) Employee) – Full benefits are provided per employment classification. Hours worked for the employer in addition to the employee's primary position would not be eligible for benefit accrual. Employee may receive additional compensation for additional positions, but it is not required.

Application of Wage & Hour regulations is based on primary position type (DOL Wage and Hour Division, FLSA2005-14).

EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES

L2110

Revised 8/19/15

In the matter of employing relatives* of employees, the interests of the local entity are primary. The employment of relatives must not involve preferential treatment, and the inherent conflict of interest must be recognized. Furthermore:

- 1 An employee may not participate in any committee/board action to employ his/her relative.
- 2 An employee should not supervise, direct in any action, or attempt to influence any decision, involving his/her relative's compensation, performance evaluation, or discipline.

*Spouse, parents, siblings, children, grandparents, and first generation in-laws are considered to be relatives.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

L2120

Revised 10/18/17

The local entity reserves the right to hire only Seventh-day Adventist members in regular standing. Personnel selection is based on the following qualifications: character, membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in regular standing, competence, education, training, experience, ability, integrity, adaptability, and physical ability to perform job functions. Therefore, qualifications for employment in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference include:

- 1 *Church Membership.* Membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, unreserved commitment to its objectives, and a personal relationship with Christ.
- 2 *Church Teachings.* Careful adherence to Bible-based teachings and standards of the Church as outlined in the 28 Fundamental Beliefs as published by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
- 3 *Lifestyle.* Personal conduct demonstrated in a lifestyle that is expected of Seventh-day Adventists in attitudes, work performance, thoughtful attention to personal example and influence, and the avoidance of extremes.
- 4 *Sexual Standards.* Uphold Christian sexual standards as held by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in work, teaching, influence and example. The official statements of the Church regarding marriage, sexuality and alternative sexual practices can be accessed and read here: www.adventist.org/en/information/official-statements.
- 5 *Professional Standards.* Careful adherence to the highest professional and ethical standards in integrity and confidentiality.
- 6 *Loyalty.* Willing and consistent loyalty and cooperation.
- 7 *Stewardship.* Exemplify witness in faithful stewardship, as Biblically defined in tithe, time, and talents.
- 8 *Commitment.* Unreserved commitment and fidelity to Christian service and the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

- 9 *Personal Finances.* Management of personal finances that demonstrates the ability of the employee to live within their regular income and assure the payment of all just obligations on a timely basis.
- 10 *Conflicting Interests.* Avoidance of conflicting interests and enterprises. (See *Conflict of Interest Policy L1060*).
- 11 *Prescribed Procedures.* Compliance with prescribed procedures for resolving conflicts, disputes, complaints, and grievances.
- 12 *Locally-Funded Employee Working Policy.* Compliance with the regulations of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference as set forth in the *Locally-Funded Employee Working Policy* and the policies of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR SERVICE

L2130

The Seventh-day Adventist Church seeks to give all members in regular standing full and equal opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills needed in the building up of the Church, and all service and positions of leadership on all levels of Church activity will be open on the basis of qualifications without regard to race, color, gender, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, age, height, weight, marital status (single, married, or widowed), or prior military service.

EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS

L2140

It is a sacred responsibility to be stewards of the Lord's funds that have been contributed by God's faithful people. In expending these funds for travel and other purposes, employees should exercise equal or greater care and a greater sense of accountability than might be exhibited in the handling of personal funds.

HARASSMENT

L2200

Revised 8/19/15

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference values the dignity of all human beings as children of God and recognizes its responsibility to all employees to maintain a working environment free from harassment. It endeavors to achieve this environment through educating employees that harassment violates the law and will not be tolerated by the Conference. The Georgia-Cumberland Conference also endeavors to prevent harassment by publishing this policy, by developing appropriate sanctions for misconduct, and by informing all employees of their right to complain of harassment.

Employee Personal Conduct. Employees of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference are to exemplify the Christ like life and shall avoid all appearances of wrongdoing. They shall not engage in behavior that is harmful to themselves or others that casts a shadow on their dedication to the Christian way of life. Employees should respect and uplift one another. They should never be placed in a position of embarrassment, disrespect, or harassment because of their gender, race, color, national origin, age, religion, or disability. To do so would be a violation of God's law and the civil laws protecting human rights and governing workplace conduct.

Sexual Harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of harassment and involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- 1 Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; or
- 2 Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual; or
- 3 Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Improper Conduct. Improper conduct by the employer, co-worker and, in some instances, non-employees includes, but is not limited to:

- 1 Any subtle or other pressure or request for sexual favors or activity, including any suggestion that an applicant's or employee's giving in or rejecting sexual advances will have an effect on that person's employment or terms of employment;
- 2 Unwelcome sexual flirtation or propositions;
- 3 Unnecessary or inappropriate touching of a sexual or abusive nature (e.g., patting, pinching, hugging, repeated brushing against another person's body, etc.);
- 4 Threats, or demands for sexual favors;
- 5 Unwelcome or derogatory statements related to gender, race, color, national origin, age, religion, or disability (for example, kidding, teasing, degrading jokes, or offensive comments or tricks);
- 6 Demeaning or degrading comments about an individual's appearance;
- 7 Denying an employee the opportunity to participate in training or education on account of gender, race, color, national origin, age, or disability;
- 8 Limiting opportunities for promotion, transfer or advancement on account of gender, race, color, national origin, age, or disability; or
- 9 Requiring a protected employee to perform more difficult tasks or less desirable work assignments in order to force them to retire or resign from employment. A protected employee shall refer to individuals protected under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

Reporting Incidents. Employees who believe that they have been harassed should immediately take the following steps:

- 1 Make it clear that such behavior is offensive and should be stopped immediately; and
- 2 Report the incident to their immediate supervisor, the GCC Vice President for Administration/Secretariat, or the GCC Director of Human Resource Services. A written statement describing the incident and identifying potential witnesses should follow the initial report.

Third-Party Reports. Employees who are aware of incidents of potential workplace harassment toward others are to report such incidents to their immediate supervisor, the GCC Vice President for Administration/Secretariat, or the GCC Director of Human Resource Services.

Investigation. Complaints of harassment shall be promptly handled, investigated by the appropriate officer in coordination with the director of Human Resource Services and maintained in confidence to the extent possible.

Discipline. A violation of this Harassment Policy may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Prohibition of Retaliation. The Georgia-Cumberland Conference prohibits retaliation against employees complaining of harassment.

Follow up. The appropriate officer or director of Human Resource Services shall follow up with the reporting employee, regardless of what steps are taken. All efforts to prevent and correct harassment or discrimination shall be documented, including all disciplinary measures taken against the person responsible for the offending acts.

PHILOSOPHY OF REMUNERATION

L2210

Philosophy. Each employee has the privilege and responsibility to personally identify with and participate in the mission of the Church and its central objective – the salvation of humanity (2 Cor. 4:1-6). The work of the Church, inclusive of all denominational organizations, is born out of the Gospel Commission and calls for a life of dedication and selfless service based on the example of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:19, 20; John 15:16; 7T 215, 216; 1MR 85; CH 316).

Remuneration shall be guided by principles set forth in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy counsels of Ellen G. White, and informed by community practices.

- 1 Responsibility for, attitude toward, and unity of the work
- 2 Faithfulness and productivity required, employees are responsible for value of wages received
- 3 Wages should be reasonable, ample, fair, and just
- 4 Equality and unselfishness
- 5 Faith required when filling positions
- 6 Contentment with established wage scale and benefits for work classification

Objective. The objective of each remuneration plan is to provide employees with an adequate income, while endeavoring to provide a reasonable level of comfort. Because of the principles of equality and self-sacrifice, it is accepted that increased responsibility may require a greater level of sacrifice.

Principles of Remuneration Plan Development. Wide variations in national economies and employment environments make it impossible to establish a single remuneration plan that is equitable and appropriate everywhere. For this reason, the local entity is responsible for establishing a remuneration plan that is sensitive to the local environments within its territory.

Setting Wages. When setting individual wages, the following items should be taken into consideration with respect to each employee:

- 1 Preparation, education, and commitment.
- 2 Previous experience and achievement.
- 3 Years of service.

- 4 Responsibility and evaluations.
- 5 State and federal minimum wage requirements.

Remuneration Adjustments. From time to time remuneration adjustments may be necessary to either increase or decrease remuneration within this philosophy. Factors to be considered in making such adjustments shall include the financial resources available, cost of living changes, competitive wages, state and federal minimum wage requirements, and performance appraisals.

VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

L2280

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference recognizes that employees are entitled to work in a safe environment that is free from hazards. Absolutely no physical violence or any type of behavior that a reasonable person would construe as threatening violence, will be tolerated or condoned on Georgia-Cumberland Conference property or while conducting business on behalf of the Conference.

The following actions will not be tolerated:

- 1 Extreme verbal abuse or otherwise threatening or intimidating behavior.
- 2 The carrying of firearms or any type of weapons in the workplace.
- 3 The destruction of employer or coworker property.

All potential or actual incidents should be reported to the local board who may refer it to Conference Administration. All threats or incidents will be taken seriously.

BENEFIT POLICIES

ADMINISTRATIVE TIME/EXTENDED SICK LEAVE BANK – NON-EXEMPT (HOURLY) L3010 Revised 10/18/17

Employees Who Are Covered. This policy applies to non-exempt (hourly) full-time, part-time 20+, and part-time 30+ (see *Employment Classification & Benefit Policy #L2080*) employees of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.

Administrative Time/Extended Sick Leave Hours Accrued. Administrative Time/Extended Sick Leave is accrued based on 2.93 hours for a seventy-six- (76) hour (two- (2) week) pay period (.03855 hour per hour worked).

Division of Administrative Time/Extended Sick Leave. Sixty percent (60%) of the accrued leave time shall be available for short-term illnesses and medical/dental appointments for the employee or his/her child, spouse, grandchild, grandparent, parent, or any person identified as a dependent on the employee's most recent tax return; school activities with a child; or personal time off. The other forty percent (40%) shall be available for extended illnesses, disability, or incapacity of the employee. Childbirth is a qualifying incapacity.

Short-Term Illness. The first three (3) workdays of any illness, time off for medical/dental appointments or personal time shall be charged to Administrative Time.

Carry Over of Administrative Time. Administrative Time may be carried over from one year to the next up to a maximum of seventy-six (76) hours. Accrued Administrative Time in excess of seventy-six (76) hours may be transferred to the Extended Sick Leave bank.

Extended Sick Leave. Beginning with the fourth (4th) work day of absence for an illness, injury, or time off for short stay surgical procedures, full-time pay shall be continued and charged to the Extended Sick Leave bank until those accumulated hours have been exhausted.

- 1 To qualify for this benefit, the employee must be hospitalized or under the care of a physician and submit a physician's certificate stating the nature of the illness, disability, or incapacity. In cases where an employee is hospitalized, the above provision shall begin on the day of admittance to the hospital.
- 2 Employees are eligible to begin utilizing Extended Sick Leave hours from the first day of the pregnancy leave.

Exclusions. Extended Sick Leave does not apply to:

- 1 Any day during which an employee is entitled to cash benefit from temporary disability under workers' compensation.
- 2 Any period of confinement in a public or private institution as a result of an emotional or psychopathic illness arising from voluntary addiction to chemical dependencies, such as alcohol and drugs.
- 3 Any period when incarceration is the cause of absence from work.

Carry Over of Extended Sick Leave. Extended Sick Leave may be accrued up to a maximum of one thousand (1000) hours (26 weeks).

Not Convertible to Paid Leave. Extended sick leave shall not be convertible to paid leave or considered as credit payable at the termination of employment.

Transfer, Termination or Retirement. At the time of transfer to another denominational employer, termination or retirement, unused Administrative Time shall be paid to the employee. If transferring to another denominational employer, Extended Sick Leave may be reported to the new employer at the time of transfer. No payment is to be made to the employer or to the employee for Extended Sick Leave hours.

Part-time Work after Illness. An employee who returns to work on a part-time basis after an illness or disability shall do so with the permission of the attending physician involved and must submit a written recommendation from the physician regarding the estimated length of such part-time work. The actual time worked shall be paid at the regular rate. The balance shall be paid from the Extended Sick Leave bank as long as hours of accrued Extended Sick Leave are available. Any provision of Family and Medical Leave Act shall continue in accordance with Policy L3050 until the employee has been released by his or her physician to return to full-time employment.

Family and Medical Leave Act. In the event of conflict between the provisions of this Policy and those of the Family and Medical Leave Act, the latter shall control. See Policy L3050 for a complete discussion of such provisions.

EMPLOYEE LIFE INSURANCE

Revised 8/19/15

L3030

An employer-provided life insurance policy shall be provided for **full-time** denominational employees, their spouse, and dependent(s).

Benefit Provisions. The benefit shall be as follows:

Employee	\$100,000.00
Spouse	\$ 50,000.00 (Benefits reduced at age 70)
Dependent child	\$ 10,000.00
Stillborn	\$ 750.00

One Benefit Per Death. If the spouse or dependents are also serving as employees of the denomination, only one benefit per death will be paid.

Additional Benefits Financed by Employees.

- 1 *Life Insurance.* Employees on a voluntary basis may supplement their basic life insurance amounts by participating in an insured Supplemental Life Insurance Plan administered by Adventist Risk Management, Inc. for themselves, their spouses, and dependent children through payroll deductions.
- 2 *Eligibility.* Eligibility for participation in the Supplemental Life Insurance Plan may be determined by an underwriting evaluation of the employee's application form conducted by the insurance carrier.

Governing Policy. The provisions of the insurance carrier at the time a claim is submitted will prevail over the provisions as outlined in this section.

SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCES

L3040

Revised 8/19/15

The following supplemental coverages are available on a voluntary basis. They are offered through a third party vendor and the underwriter determines eligibility. Premiums are processed as a payroll deduction.

- Accidental Death & Dismemberment
- AFLAC (personal catastrophic coverage, cancer, short-term disability, etc.)
- Long-term Care
- Supplemental Life Insurance

Further information can be obtained from the office of Associate Treasurer/Payroll or Human Resource Services.

MATERNITY LEAVE

L3045

New 8/19/15

Eligibility. Full-time employees may be eligible for twelve (12) weeks of leave for the birth or care of a newborn child under the FMLA provisions (*see Family and Medical Leave Act Policy 3050*). The beginning date and duration of the maternity leave shall be in harmony with the advice of the attending physician.

Remuneration.

Non-exempt. The employee may use their vacation, short-term sick and extended sick leave banks during this time.

Exempt. The employee may use their vacation bank during this time.

Post Leave Employment. An employee returning from maternity leave under the FMLA will be entitled to reinstatement in her previous job or a job of equivalent pay, benefits, and other

employment terms and conditions. Upon returning to work, it will be necessary to provide a doctor's medical release.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

L3050

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act outlines the conditions under which employees of a United States employer may request time off, with or without pay, for a limited period with job and accrued benefit protection.

Definition. The Family and Medical Leave Act is an approved absence available to eligible employees for up to twelve (12) weeks within a twelve- (12) month period under particular circumstances that are critical to the life of a family. Leave may be taken for the following reasons:

- 1 Birth of an employee's child.
- 2 Placement of a child with an employee for adoption or foster care.
- 3 Need for an employee to care for a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition.
- 4 When an employee is unable to perform the functions of his/her position because of a serious health condition.
- 5 Military Caregiver Leave & Qualifying Exigency Leave.

Scope. The provisions of this policy apply to all family and medical leave of absences approved for eligible employees for the reasons described above.

Paid and Unpaid Leave. Family and medical leaves shall be unpaid. However, if eligible employees have accrued paid leave benefits under employment benefit plans or policies of the employer, the employees will be required to use those accrued benefits to provide compensation during all or any part of the twelve (12) weeks leave. If the employee's paid benefits are exhausted, the remainder, if any, of the Family and Medical Leave will be unpaid. The use of accrued benefits will not extend the duration of a Family and Medical Leave.

Eligibility. To be eligible for leave under this policy an employee must have been employed by the Georgia-Cumberland Conference for at least twelve (12) months in total, and must have worked for the Conference for at least twelve hundred fifty (1250) hours during the twelve- (12) month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave.

All denominational employees within the United States who meet the above eligibility requirements, regardless of the size of the employer or location of the work site, are covered under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

Reinstatement. An employee who takes leave under this policy will be able to return to the same job or a job with equivalent status, pay, benefits, or one that requires substantially equivalent skill, effort, responsibility, and authority.

- 1 *Exemption from Family and Medical Leave Act Policy.* The employer may choose to exempt certain salaried, highly compensated "key" employees from this requirement and not return them to the same or similar position.
- 2 *Completion of Leave.* Once leave has been completed, the employee must obtain job-related certification from the physician or health care provider that the employee is able to resume work.

Basic Regulations and Conditions of Leave.

- 1 The Georgia-Cumberland Conference will require medical certification to support a claim for leave for an employee's own serious health condition or to care for a seriously ill child, spouse, or parent. A copy of the medical certification form is available from Human Resource Services.
- 2 The Georgia-Cumberland Conference may require a second medical opinion and periodic re-certification at its own expense. If the first and second opinions differ, the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, at its own expense, may require the binding opinion of a third health care provider, approved jointly by the Georgia-Cumberland Conference and the employee.
- 3 An employee will need to obtain a job-related "fitness for duty" certificate from the attending physician or health care provider prior to his/her return to work if the Family and Medical Leave taken was based on the employee's own serious health condition.
- 4 If the leave is medically necessary for a serious health condition of the employee or his/her spouse, child or parent, the leave may be taken on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule. If the leave is requested on this basis, however, the Conference may require the employee to transfer temporarily to an alternative, but equivalent in pay and benefits, position that better accommodates recurring periods of absence or a part-time schedule.
- 5 Exempt employees will not be docked for Family and Medical Leave of less than one (1) day.

NOTE: Leave for a particular duration means a block, or blocks, of time beginning no earlier than the first day for which leave is needed and ending no later than the last day on which leave is needed, and may include one (1) uninterrupted period of leave. The entire period of leave taken will count as Family and Medical Leave.

- 6 When both spouses are employed by the Georgia-Cumberland Conference and are requesting the Family and Medical Leave for the same qualifying event, both are entitled to a total of twelve (12) weeks of leave (rather than twelve (12) weeks each) for the birth, adoption, or placement of a child for foster care or for the care of sick parent or a parent-in-law.

Notification and Reporting Requirements.

- 1 When the need for leave is foreseeable, such as the birth or adoption of a child, or planned medical treatment, the employee must provide thirty (30) days notice and make efforts to schedule leave so as not to disrupt Georgia-Cumberland Conference operations. In unforeseen circumstances, thirty (30) days of notification may not be possible; in such cases, as much prior notice as possible must be given. In cases of illness, the employee will be required to report periodically on his/her leave status and intention to return to work.
- 2 If an employee fails to provide thirty (30) days notice for foreseeable leave with no reasonable excuse for the delay, the leave request may be delayed until at least thirty (30) days from the date the supervisor or Human Resource Services receives notice.

Status of Employee Benefits During Leave.

- 1 While an employee is on leave, the Georgia-Cumberland Conference will continue the employee's health care benefits during the leave period at the same level and under the same conditions as if the employee had continued to work.

- 2 If the employee pays to opt-in eligible dependent(s) and/or spouse, then while on **paid leave** the Georgia-Cumberland Conference will continue to make payroll deductions.
- 3 While on **unpaid** leave, the employee must continue to make his/her payment for opt-in eligible dependent(s) and/or spouse. Payment must be received in the Conference Treasury office by the 15th of each month. If the employee does not continue these payments, the Georgia-Cumberland Conference may discontinue dependent/spouse coverage during the leave period or will recover payments at the end of the leave period, in a manner consistent with the law.
- 4 Benefit entitlements based upon length of service will be calculated as of the last paid day prior to the start of the unpaid leave of absence.

Procedures.

- 1 A request for Family and Medical Leave Form must be obtained from Human Resource Services and completed by the employee. This form should then be initialed by the supervisor and returned to Human Resource Services through the Secretariat's office. The Georgia-Cumberland Conference has the right to invoke the Family and Medical Leave Act as needed.
- 2 All requests for Family and Medical Leave due to illness will additionally require the completion of the Certification of Physician or Practitioner Form, which must also be returned to Human Resource Services. The employee should return the form within fifteen (15) days of the request for Family and Medical Leave or provide an acceptable explanation for the delay.

HEALTH CARE ASSISTANCE PLAN – ARM

L3060

Revised 8/19/15

The Seventh-day Adventist Church recognizes that it has a fundamental interest in the health and general welfare of its employees, which is partially expressed by its Health Care Assistance Plan.

Health Care Assistance Plan Services. Adventist Risk Management, Inc. Health Care Services is the health care plan administrator for the Georgia-Cumberland Conference. ARM/Health Care Services has arranged with a third party to serve the Conference.

Eligibility. Effective January 1, 2014, the conference adopted a 9-month measurement period (January – September each year), a 3-month administrative period (October – December each year) and a 12-month stability period (January – December the following year) to determine eligibility during the stability period for all non-exempt (hourly) employees based on federal health care laws. Subsequent measurement periods for new employees will begin on their date of hire.

Open Enrollment. Open enrollment occurs annually September 15 – October 31, with changes effective January 1 of the upcoming year. This period is to determine new eligibility, ineligibility, or change in status. In order to be eligible for the Plan, a dependent under the age of 26 must meet one of the following criteria:

- 1 Dependent born to the covered employee;
- 2 Dependent legally adopted by the employee and/or spouse (including children living in the home for whom documentation is provided showing that the adoption is in process);
- 3 Dependent for whom the employee and/or spouse are legal guardians in accordance with the laws of the state of the employee's permanent residence; or

- 4 The employee's stepchildren.

Participating Employee Premium. Depending on coverage selected, the employee may be required to pay a premium. For current amounts, contact the Office of Vice President for Finance/Treasurer.

Health Care Assistance Plan. Full details of the Health Care Assistance Plan, including benefits, coverage, exclusions and limitations can be accessed at www.adventistrisk.org.

EMPLOYEE DISABILITY INCOME PLAN (LONG-TERM DISABILITY)

L3070

Revised 8/19/15

The Employee Disability Income Plan provides partial income during a prolonged absence from work because of a disability. Adventist Risk Management coordinates this program which is underwritten by a third party.

Eligibility. All regular **full-time** denominational employees shall be eligible to participate in the Employee Disability Income Plan commencing with the first day of employment.

Further information, including an application form, can be obtained from the Office of the Associate Treasurer/Payroll or www.adventistrisk.org.

PAYROLL SCHEDULE

L3090

Bi-weekly Payroll. Payroll is processed bi-weekly and pay dates are every other Friday for time worked in the preceding pay period.

Direct Deposit. Employees are encouraged to have their pay deposited by automatic direct deposit. Those who choose to receive a check are required to pay any stop payment charges if checks are lost.

Payroll Advances. Payroll advances are not given.

Non-Exempt (Hourly) Employees

Record Keeping. Records must be kept locally of hours worked for all non-exempt employees. If a time clock is not used, the employee will prepare a report of hours worked indicating when work begins and ends each day and the hours worked each day. Reports should indicate any administrative leave and vacation hours taken, or other adjustments. The report must be signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor/designee and kept on file at the local entity.

Pay Period. A typical bi-weekly pay period concludes midnight, Saturday night, prior to pay day. If an earlier pay period conclusion date is needed, the entity may set their own, provided the period dates are documented and the employee is informed.

Payroll Reporting. Payroll information is due the Monday preceding pay day and will be submitted by the local entity treasurer online. Payroll information submitted after 10:00 am Tuesday will be processed the following pay period.

RETIREMENT

L3100

Revised 8/29/18

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference participates in the North American Division Adventist Retirement Plan for eligible employees regularly working 20 or more hours per week. For more information on eligibility, retirement benefits and planning, contact Human Resource Services or the Payroll office.

Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC) employees are not eligible for employer provided retirement contributions.

VACATIONS AND HOLIDAYS - NON-EXEMPT (HOURLY)

L3110

Revised 12/6/23

Basis for Vacations. Annual vacation with pay shall be provided for hourly full-time employees (38 hours per week) and may be accrued and calculated on the following basis:

During first four-year period	1.4575 hours per 38-hour week (2 weeks)
During next five-year period	2.1863 hours per 38-hour week (3 weeks)
After nine years of service	2.9151 hours per 38-hour week (4 weeks)

Employees are eligible to begin accruing vacation at the 3 and 4 week rates after completing 4 and 9 years of service or in harmony with mandated government requirements.

Part-time (20+) and (30+). Part-time hourly employees shall receive vacation and holiday time based on hours reported. The rate of vacation time accrual is on the basis of years of full-time equivalency.

Part-time Excluding Benefits/Temporary/Occasional. Part-time Excluding Benefits and Temporary/Occasional hourly employees are not eligible for vacation accrual or paid holidays. See Policy L2080 for classification definitions.

Scheduling. Hourly employees should discuss their proposed vacation time with their supervisor.

Maximum Accrual. Vacation time may only be earned and accumulated from year to year up to a maximum of 150% of the annual vacation entitlement including current year accruals.

<u>Vacation Earned per Year</u>	<u>Maximum Accrual</u>
2 weeks	114 hours
3 weeks	171 hours
4 weeks	228 hours

Paid Holidays. The following are recognized as paid holidays and will not be counted as vacation (holiday pay based on hours typically scheduled for the week day). Part-time 20+ and Part-time 30+ employees will receive paid time according to their regular work schedule.

New Year's Day (January 1)
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (third Monday in January)
Presidents Day (third Monday in February)
Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
Juneteenth National Independence Day (June 19)
Independence Day (July 4)
Labor Day (first Monday in September)
Columbus Day (second Monday in October)
Veterans Day (November 11)
Thanksgiving Day plus Friday (fourth Thursday in November)
Christmas Day (December 25)

Transfer, Termination or Retirement. At the time of transfer to another denominational employer, termination from employment or retirement, all accrued but unused vacation time shall be paid to the employee. Negative vacation balances will be reconciled in the final paycheck. The maximum shall be up to 150% of the annual vacation entitlement, including current year accruals.

Usage. Vacation time should generally be taken in the calendar year in which it is earned.

VACATIONS AND HOLIDAYS – EXEMPT (SALARIED)

L3115

Revised 12/6/23

Basis for Vacations. Annual vacation with pay shall be provided for full-time employees as follows:

During first four-year period	2 weeks (10 days)
During next five-year period	3 weeks (15 days)
After nine years of service	4 weeks (20 days)

For vacation record keeping purposes, Georgia-Cumberland Conference has standardized the typical work week to be considered as Monday through Friday, five working days.

Employees are eligible to begin accruing vacation at the 3 and 4 week rates after completing 4 and 9 years of service or in harmony with mandated government requirements. Transition from one accrual level to the next will become effective on the employment anniversary date of the employee.

Personal Absences. A sick leave bank is not provided for exempt employees but the local entity may choose to compensate employees for short-term absences such as personal appointments or illness.

Part-time (20+) and (30+). Part-time exempt employees are not eligible for vacation accrual. See Policy L2080 for classification definitions.

Part-time Excluding Benefits/Temporary/Occasional. Part-time Excluding Benefits and Temporary/Occasional exempt employees are not eligible for vacation accrual or paid holidays. See Policy L2080 for classification definitions.

Scheduling. Salaried employees should discuss their proposed vacation time with their supervisor.

Maximum Accrual. Vacation time may only be earned and accumulated from year to year up to a maximum of one hundred fifty percent (150%) of the annual vacation entitlement including current year accruals.

<u>Vacation Earned Per Year</u>	<u>Maximum Vacation Accrual</u>
2 weeks (10 days)	15 days
3 weeks (15 days)	22.5 days
4 weeks (20 days)	30 days

Paid Holidays. The following are recognized as paid holidays and will not be counted as vacation:

New Year's Day (January 1)
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (third Monday in January)
Presidents Day (third Monday in February)
Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
Juneteenth National Independence Day (June 19)
Independence Day (July 4)
Labor Day (first Monday in September)
Columbus Day (second Monday in October)
Veterans Day (November 11)
Thanksgiving Day plus Friday (fourth Thursday in November)
Christmas Day (December 25)

Transfer, Termination or Retirement. At the time of transfer to another denominational employer, termination from employment or retirement, all accrued but unused vacation time shall be paid to the employee. The maximum shall be up to 150% of the annual vacation entitlement, including current year accruals. Any unearned vacation taken will be deducted from the final pay check.

Usage. Vacation time should generally be taken in the calendar year in which it is earned.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

L3120

Revised 4/9/2014

All states have laws that provide compensation to workers if they are injured while at work for an employer, whether or not the employer has been negligent. Workers' Compensation benefits can include medical expenses, loss of earnings, permanent disability benefits, death benefits, and rehabilitation benefits. All benefits are subject to state law and may have a waiting period. Each location must post a panel of doctors in clear view of all employees.

The states of Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina require that the "First Report of Injury" claim form be in the hands of the insurance carrier within three (3) days of the injury. A job-related death must be reported within twenty-four (24) hours. Failure to notify the State within this time period can cause a fine to be levied against the entity. **It is the responsibility of every employee to report a work-related accident as soon as it happens.** Claims must be filed with the Conference Risk Management Department (800-567-1844 or 706-629-7951).