

Managing Risk as an Employer

Congregational Risk Management Wave Cohort

What Keeps You Up at Night?

Is Your Congregation a Faithful* Employer?

*Faithful to the law and to our values

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Our Brief Time Together

First Be Legal

- Worker Classification
- Benefits
- Employment Agreements/Letters of Hire
- Personnel Policies

Live Our Shared UU Values

- Attract and retain great staff
- Minimize risk

We are not legal or tax professionals.

We provide general information to help equip and empower congregational leaders.

Congregations are solely responsible for their decisions and legal obligations.

Be aware of state law.

Consider consulting your own legal or tax advisors for specific guidance.



Worker Classification

[Worker Classification](#) LeaderLab page

Employee or independent contractor?

Exempt or nonexempt?

We advise on federal law.
Know **state law** for both types of classification.

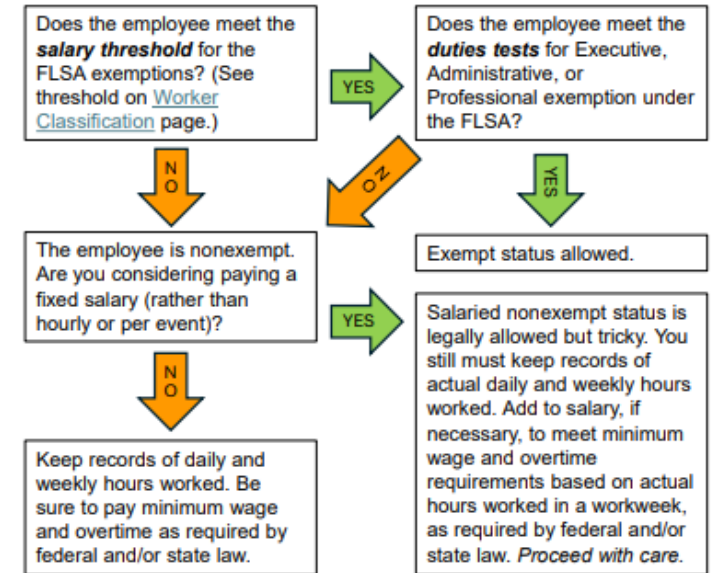
Exempt or Nonexempt?

Every employee must be classified as exempt or nonexempt. The default is nonexempt; you are not *required* to treat any employee as exempt. **Before using this chart**, learn about the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and exemption criteria on our Worker Classification page: <https://www.uua.org/leaderlab/worker-classification>.



Important: Ministers and some program staff may be classified as exempt through the **ministerial exception**. There is no salary requirement, but these workers must have **essential religious duties**. [See our materials](#) for more info. The chart below does not apply to those exempt under the ministerial exception.

Proceed with care! Use of the ministerial exception may result in the staff member's loss of various employment law protections.



The preceding is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Be aware of applicable state law. Congregations are solely responsible for legal obligations. Employers may wish to consult their own legal and tax advisers for guidance specific to their organization.

Benefits Administration

[Benefits Tune-up Workbook](#)

Eligibility criteria (set by UUA)

Enrollment windows (set by UUA)

Administrative requirements

Rules based on federal law

Tax implications

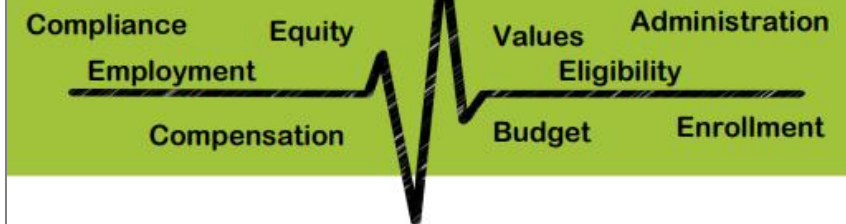
Who is responsible for onboarding and offboarding staff?

Who handles ongoing benefits administration?

How are they trained? Do you have backups?



UUA Church Staff Finances



Benefits Tune-up Workbook

Know Our Plans
Live Our Faith



8th edition, February 2025

Personnel Policies

[Sample Personnel Policy Manual](#)

Clarity and consistency of expectations
across the staff

Legal commitments

A starting point.

UUA does not mandate
particular policies.

Know state law.

Remember our disclaimer.

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Personnel Manual Acknowledgment

Employment Agreements

[Employment Agreements](#)

Clarity of expectations for individual employee

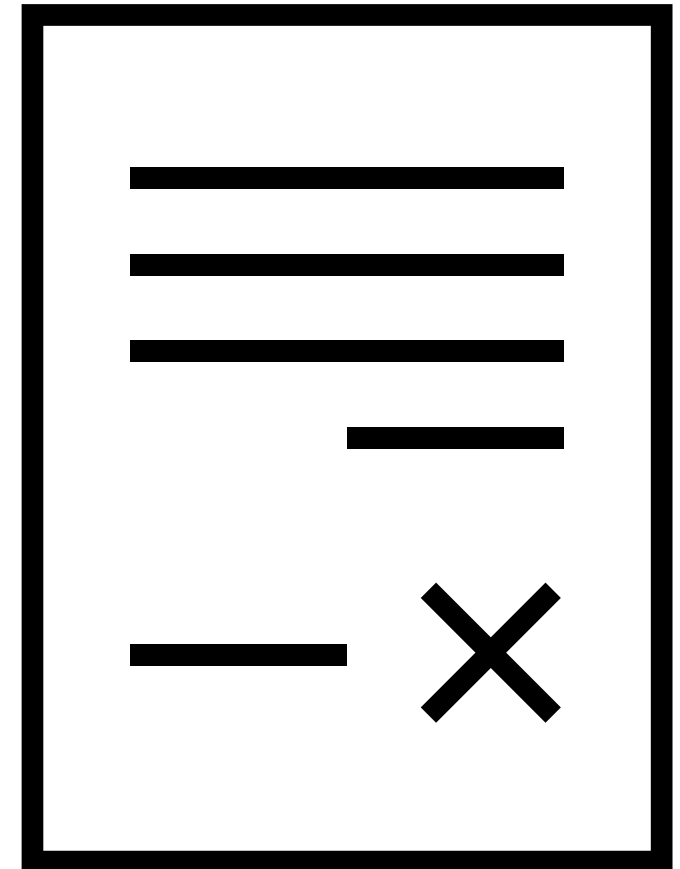
Supersede personnel policies

Legal commitments

Ministers: typically have "contracts"

Other staff: at-will employees, letters of hire

Resources for both on our page



Living Our Shared Values

[Congregational Salary Program](#)

Grounded in economic justice

[Benefit Recommendations](#)

[Compassionate Staff Terminations](#)

[Staffing Sustainably and Faithfully](#)

[Covenants for Staff Transitions](#)

[Performance Evaluations](#)

[Staffing for Diversity](#)

[On Hiring Members](#)

Alert your Congregational Life
contact when challenges arise.



***And much
more!***

Operating from Shared Values Reduces Risk of...

Legal consequences

Financial losses

Conflict

Organizational disruption

Security or confidentiality breaches

Reputational damage

Spiritual, emotional, or psychological harm

**Avoid
becoming a
cautionary
tale!**

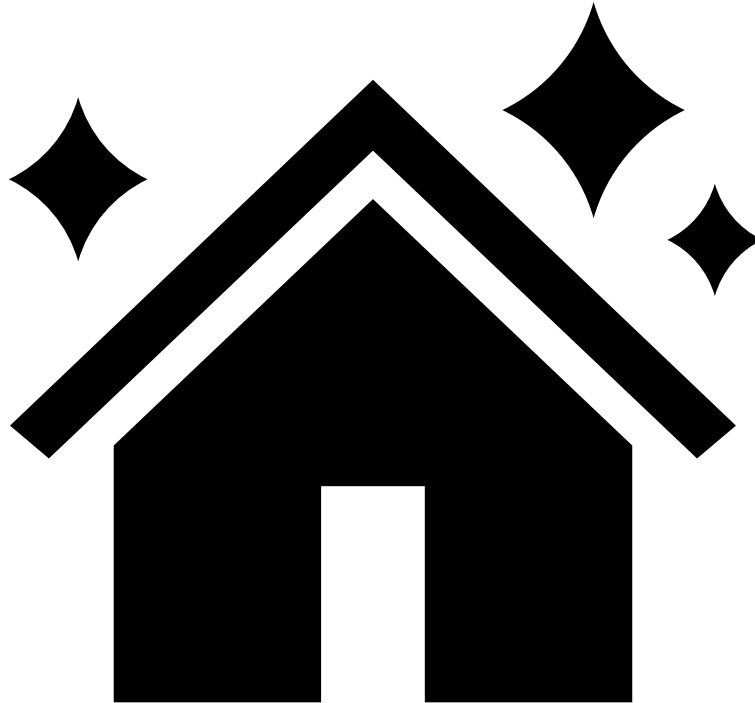
Take good care of your staff!

- Clear expectations
- Appropriate hours
- Reasonable pay
- Supportive supervision
- Strong team culture

Risks are things that make it harder for you to fulfill your mission.

Managing Risk as an Employer

Sleep better. Be a faithful* employer.



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