08 – Hiring Process (Non-Pastoral)

The workflow for hiring non-pastoral staff — theology, character, and competence criteria; decision authority; elder review gates.

- Overview: Hiring Process (Non-Pastoral)
- Non-Pastoral Staff Hiring SOP — April 2026
- One-Page Quick Reference — April 2026

Overview: Hiring Process (Non-Pastoral)

Status

Implementation status: Approved by Servants Council

Date: 2026-05-30

What’s in this book

- **Non-Pastoral Staff Hiring SOP — April 2026** — the full Standard Operating Procedure. Purpose and scope, seven guiding principles, roles and authority, the ten-stage process (Discern & Define → Recruit & Screen → Interview → Decide & Offer → Onboard & Evaluate), common pitfalls, and maintenance. Eight appendices include the Position Description template, Search Team charter template, interview question sets for all five interviews, scoring rubric, reference script, offer letter template, onboarding checklist, and 90-day review template.
- **One-Page Quick Reference — April 2026** — companion card for Servants Council meetings and staff onboarding conversations. Guiding principles, the ten stages grouped by phase, decision rights, and a typical 10–14-week timeline on one screen.
- **Overview** (this page) — status, principle, Mayflower’s practice, references, open questions.

Principle (from Streamline)

Lukaszewski’s principle: the most important decisions a ministry makes are not *what* decisions but *who* decisions. A clear, repeatable hiring process protects the congregation from the emotion of urgency, the temptation to hire a friend without fit, and the lasting damage of a mismatched hire. Better no hire than the wrong hire.

Mayflower’s Current Practice

The SOP above is Mayflower’s practice as of April 2026. The Servants Council coordinates all non-pastoral hiring under Bylaws Article II, Section B, Item 4(c)(9), with the Board of Finance confirming funding, the Board of Elders confirming confessional alignment of the top candidate, and a Search Team of 3–5 members running the day-to-day process under a written charter. Every candidate for every paid non-pastoral role follows the same ten-stage process, with the same questions at each interview, the same reference script, and the same scoring rubric. Where this SOP conflicts with the Mayflower Constitution and Bylaws, the Bylaws govern. The Servants Council reviews the SOP annually each January.

Governance & Document References

- Mayflower Constitution and Bylaws (Article II, Section B, Item 4(c)(9))
- Position Descriptions Manual — Church Secretary (§15), Director of Biblical Counseling (§16)
- Decision-Making Framework (April 2026) — personnel tier P-3 references this SOP
- Streamline: Healthy Church Systems — Lukaszewski (hiring and “who” decisions)
- The Guide to Healthy Church Operations — Ministry Brands (staff policies, background checks, onboarding)

Open Questions

- Does a 21-day posting window work for all role types, or should bivocational / part-time roles have a longer window?
- Who is the default Search Team chair for routine openings (e.g., Church Secretary replacement) vs. new roles the church has never held before? The SOP currently leaves this to Servants Council discretion per opening.
- Should Stage 5 pre-screen outputs (Advance / Hold / Decline) be archived with the Clerk, or only the hired candidate’s file? Recommended: keep the full pool record for one hiring cycle to document equal process.
- Does the rubric weighting (Character 40% / Competence 35% / Chemistry 25%) match the congregation’s practice? Review after the first two hires under this SOP.

Page template: Principle + Mayflower Practice. Part of the Operations Plan, adapted from Michael Lukaszewski’s Streamline: How To Create Healthy Church Systems, with detail drawn from The

Guide to Healthy Church Operations (Ministry Brands) and anchored in the Mayflower Bylaws (March 2026).

Non-Pastoral Staff Hiring SOP — April 2026

Mayflower Church — Kingston, Massachusetts. Non-Pastoral Staff Hiring Process. Standard Operating Procedure. Draft v1.0 — April 2026. Adopted by the Servants Council under Bylaws Article II, Section B, Item 4(c)(9). "To Know Christ and Make Him Known."

> **Status:** Draft v1.0 — April 2026. Presented to the Servants Council for adoption. Governs every non-pastoral paid hire at Mayflower Church until revised. Where this SOP conflicts with the Mayflower Constitution and Bylaws, the Bylaws govern.

"*To Know Christ and Make Him Known*"

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 Purpose

This Standard Operating Procedure establishes a deliberate, repeatable process for hiring non-pastoral staff at Mayflower Church. Its aim is not merely to fill vacancies but to ensure that every person added to the church payroll strengthens the ministry, reflects the character and confession of the congregation, and is set up to flourish in their role.

Hiring is one of the most consequential decisions a church makes. As Jim Collins observed and the *Streamline* framework reminds us, the most important decisions leaders make are not *what* decisions but *who* decisions. A clear process protects the church from the emotion of urgency, the temptation to hire a friend without fit, and the damage of a mismatched hire.

1.2 Scope — Positions Covered

This SOP applies to all non-pastoral paid positions at Mayflower Church, whether full-time, part-time, salaried, hourly, regular, or term-limited. Representative roles include:

- Church Secretary (currently 25–30 hrs/week, per Position Descriptions Manual §15)
- Director of Biblical Counseling (currently 15 hrs/week part-time, per Position Descriptions Manual §16)
- Future roles as the Servants Council may authorize: e.g., Office Administrator, Bookkeeper/Accounting Assistant, Director of Children's Ministry, Director of Music, Worship/Audio-Visual Technician, Communications Coordinator, Facilities Coordinator, Nursery Supervisor, and similar support positions.

1.3 Scope — Explicitly Not Covered

This SOP does not govern:

- **Pastoral hires.** The Senior Pastor and other pastoral staff follow the search and call process in the Bylaws (Article II, Section A) and the SBC Guidelines for Seeking a Pastor.
- **Elected Church Officers.** Church Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Assistant Financial Secretary, Clerk, Moderator, and Auditors are nominated by the Servants Council and elected by the Membership. They are not hired.
- **Volunteer Ministry Team Leaders.** These positions are filled through the Servants Council's volunteer recruitment process, not payroll hiring.
- **Independent contractors and vendor services.** Custodial service, snow removal, HVAC, landscaping, and similar contracted work are retained by the Board of Trustees (Bylaws Article II, Section B, Item 2). Contractor onboarding requires a separate procedure and is outside the scope of this SOP.
- **Short-term stipended helpers** (e.g., a summer intern or a one-time event coordinator under $1,000 total compensation), provided the Servants Council formally waives the full process for that engagement.

2. Guiding Principles

Seven commitments shape every step that follows. When the process seems slow or cumbersome, return to these.

2.1 Process before urgency.

The pain of an unfilled need tempts leaders to lower the bar. A written process removes the emotion from the moment and protects the church from a hire that "feels" right but is not.

2.2 Better no hire than the wrong hire.

A bad hire is far more costly than a long search. The Servants Council will hold the line on this principle even when a seat has sat empty for months.

2.3 Character, competence, and chemistry — in that order.

Non-pastoral staff are not ordained officers, but they represent the church every day. Every candidate is weighed on confessional fidelity and integrity of life first, demonstrated ability second, and team fit third.

2.4 Confessional alignment.

All paid staff at Mayflower Church are expected to be Members in good standing, affirming the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant, unless the Servants Council explicitly documents an exception for a narrowly defined technical role.

2.5 Protection of the flock.

Every hire has the potential to interact with children, vulnerable adults, confidential records, or church funds. Background checks and reference checks are not optional and are not a formality. As the *Guide to Healthy Church Operations* instructs, screening is “one of the primary tools at our disposal” to protect the church’s most precious resource — its people.

2.6 Consistency across candidates.

Every candidate for a given position goes through the same interviews, the same questions, and the same reference checks. Inconsistent process is the seedbed of both bad hires and discrimination claims.

2.7 Stewardship and transparency.

Every hire is a financial decision. The Board of Finance must confirm funding before a search begins, and any compensation exceeding the approved annual budget requires the authorizations set in Bylaws Article II, Section B, Item 5.

3. Decision Rights and Authority

Mayflower Church governs hiring through a shared-leadership model. No single person — including the Senior Pastor — hires a non-pastoral staff member alone. The following table names each body, its role in the process, and the Bylaws citation that anchors its authority.

Body	Role in Hiring	Bylaws Anchor
Servants Council	Authorizes the opening of any non-pastoral paid position; approves the Position Description; approves the Search Team roster; approves the final candidate recommendation; extends the formal offer. Final decisional authority.	Art. II §B 4(c)(9)

Body	Role in Hiring	Bylaws Anchor
Board of Finance	Confirms the position is funded in the approved annual budget. Any non-budgeted position under $5,000 annually may be approved by Finance; $5,000 or more requires congregational approval at a business meeting.	Art. II §B 5
Senior Pastor	Initiates the need discussion with the Servants Council; chairs or co-chairs the Search Team; conducts day-to-day supervision of the hired staff member after onboarding.	Art. II §A 3
Board of Elders	Reviews and affirms confessional alignment of the top candidate(s); weighs any doctrinal, covenantal, or character concerns before an offer is extended.	Art. II §B 1
Search Team	Ad hoc team chartered for each hire. Drafts or refreshes the Position Description, posts the position, screens applications, conducts interviews 1–5, performs reference and background checks, and recommends a candidate to the Servants Council.	Chartered per Art. II §B 4(c)(3)
Board of Trustees	Consulted when the role has a facilities dimension (e.g., Facilities Coordinator). Retains contractors directly and does not hire staff under this SOP.	Art. II §B 2
Church Treasurer	Sets up payroll, withholding, and benefits. Confirms W-4, I-9, and any required state forms are on file before the first paycheck. Maintains personnel financial records.	Art. II §B 6
Clerk	Archives the signed offer letter, position description, background check authorization, and onboarding records in the personnel file per the records management policy.	Art. II §B 9

Chartering the Search Team. For each new hire, the Servants Council charters a Search Team of three to five people. The default composition is: Senior Pastor or designated Elder (chair), one Deacon, one Trustee, the direct supervisor of the role if different from the Pastor, and one member-at-large with relevant expertise. The Search Team operates under a written charter that defines its scope, timeline, and completion criteria.

4. The Hiring Process — Ten Stages

The process moves through five phases and ten numbered stages. Each stage has a clear owner, inputs, outputs, and a decision gate before the next stage begins. Skipping stages is not permitted; compressing them (for example, running two interviews in a single day) is permitted with Search Team chair approval.

Phase A — Discern and Define

Stage 1 — Identify the Need

Owner: Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Servants Council.

Trigger: A gap in ministry capacity, a departing staff member, or a strategic initiative that cannot be met by volunteers or existing staff.

Before any outside conversation begins, the Servants Council must answer in writing:

- What specifically will this person do, and how is that work getting done today?
- Where does this role fit on the church organizational chart? Who supervises, who collaborates, who reports in?
- How will this role change team dynamics, Sunday rhythms, and the workload of existing staff and volunteers?
- Is the need a permanent capacity gap, or a seasonal/project need that should be met by a contractor or a time-limited engagement?
- Is this a genuine ministry need, or a frustration we are trying to fix by adding a paycheck?

Output: A one-page Position Authorization Memo approved by a majority of the Servants Council and signed by the Chair. Without this memo, no posting, no recruiting, no promises of employment.

Stage 2 — Secure Funding

Owner: Board of Finance, working from the Position Authorization Memo.

- If the role is already in the approved annual budget, Finance confirms available funds and notes any budget constraints (start date, phased pay increases, benefits cap).
- If the role is not in the approved budget and annual compensation is less than $5,000, the Board of Finance may approve the position directly.
- If the role is not in the approved budget and annual compensation is $5,000 or more, the position must be presented to the congregation for approval at the next Quarterly Meeting, or authorized on an emergency basis by the Board of Finance subject to congregational affirmation at the next meeting.

Output: A Finance Memo naming the budget line, the annual compensation range, any benefits, and the fiscal-year impact. The Search Team may not post the role until this memo is in hand.

Stage 3 — Write or Refresh the Position Description

Owner: Search Team chair, drafting; Servants Council, approving.

The Position Description is the single most important document in the entire process. It forces the church to think clearly about the role before asking anyone to apply, and it sets the new hire up for a defined win. Every Mayflower Position Description includes the sections listed in Appendix A. At minimum it must name:

- The church’s mission and vision, stated specifically (not generic language anyone could agree with).
- The role’s purpose in one sentence.
- Accountability (who supervises, who else this role coordinates with).

- Qualifications, including confessional requirements (Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, Member in good standing).
- Key responsibilities, written as outcomes rather than activities.
- Performance expectations / Key Performance Indicators — what does a “win” look like at 90 days, at one year.
- Candidate profile — the kind of person most likely to flourish here.
- Job details — hours, schedule, location, compensation range, benefits, start date, any travel.
- Training and support the church will provide.

Output: The Position Description is merged into the existing Position Descriptions Manual (Part II) upon Servants Council approval. It is also the posting text used in Stage 4.

Phase B — Recruit and Screen

Stage 4 — Post the Position and Invite Applications

Owner: Search Team.

The Search Team publishes the position through at least three of the following channels:

- A dedicated page on the Mayflower Church website with the full Position Description and an application form.
- An email to the congregation describing the opening and inviting referrals.
- Announcements at two consecutive Sunday services.
- Outreach to sister churches in the Southern Baptist Convention of New England and Pastor Anton’s network of Reformed Baptist pastors in the region.
- Relevant job boards — e.g., The Gospel Coalition, 9Marks, ACBC (for counseling roles), Church Staffing.
- Social media through the church’s public channels.

Application form. The application form collects contact information, a résumé, and the standardized pre-screening questions listed in Appendix B. The form makes clear whether every applicant will receive a response or only those selected for an interview, and sets a posted closing date no less than 21 days from first publication.

Output: A dated, logged, complete pool of applications. No application is evaluated until the posting closes, except in specific cases where the Search Team chair authorizes early review of a candidate who volunteers a tight availability window.

Stage 5 — Pre-Screening

Owner: Search Team.

The Search Team reviews every application against the Position Description's minimum qualifications. Each applicant receives one of three dispositions:

- **Advance** — clearly meets minimum qualifications and the pre-screening answers are substantive. Invite to Interview 1.
- **Hold** — meets minimums but pool is strong; hold pending top-tier outcomes.
- **Decline** — does not meet minimums or answers indicate poor fit. Send a courteous decline within seven days.

The Search Team documents the disposition of every applicant in a single tracker, retained in the Search Team file.

Phase C — Interview

The Mayflower interview process adapts the five-interview sequence from *Streamline*: Screening, Patterns, Results, References, and Relationships. Every candidate for a given position goes through the same five steps, with the same questions. Interviewers take notes against a standardized scoring rubric (Appendix C).

Stage 6a — Interview 1: Screening

Purpose: Confirm quickly whether the candidate is worth a longer investment. Eliminate mismatches courteously and efficiently.

Format: 45–60 minutes, video or in-person. Two interviewers from the Search Team.

Questions (the same four for every candidate):

- What are your career goals?
- What are you really good at professionally? Give 8–12 examples with specifics.
- What are you not good at, or not interested in doing professionally?
- Who were your last three to five supervisors, and how would each of them rate your performance on a 1–10 scale when we call them?

Decision gate: Advance, decline, or hold. Decline letters go out within seven days.

Stage 6b — Interview 2: Patterns

Purpose: Past behavior is the best predictor of future performance. Walk the candidate chronologically through every job and substantive ministry role held, looking for patterns.

Format: 2–3 hours, in-person when possible. Three interviewers: the Search Team chair, the future supervisor, and one Elder.

Questions applied to every chapter of the candidate's vocational and ministry history:

- What were you hired or recruited to do?
- What accomplishments are you most proud of in that role?
- What were the low points in that role?
- Who did you work with? What would your supervisor say is your biggest strength? Your biggest weakness? How did you rate the team when you arrived vs. when you left?
- Why did you leave?

Stage 6c — Interview 3: Results

Purpose: Drill down on the two or three most important outcomes named in the Position Description. Evaluate whether the candidate has actually produced results like these before.

Format: 90 minutes, in-person when possible. The future supervisor and one Deacon or Trustee.

For each key outcome in the Position Description, ask:

- The purpose of this part of the interview is to talk about [specific outcome]. Walk us through your biggest accomplishment in this area.
- What was your role? What part was you, what part was the team?
- What mistakes did you make? What did you learn?
- How will you approach this outcome in your first 90 days here?

Stage 6d — Interview 4: References

Purpose: This is an interview of the candidate's references, not another interview of the candidate. The *Church Operations* guide is emphatic that skipping or softening reference checks is one of the most dangerous mistakes a church makes. We will not skip this step.

Format: Verbal conversations (phone or video) with at least three references named by the candidate, plus at least one back-channel reference the Search Team identifies independently. Written references alone are not sufficient.

Permissions: The candidate signs a written Reference Authorization form (Appendix D) before any reference call is placed.

Questions for every reference:

- In what context did you work with the candidate, and for how long?
- What were the candidate's biggest strengths?
- What were the candidate's biggest areas for growth?
- On a 1–10 scale, how would you rate their overall performance? What drives that rating?
- Would you hire them again? Why or why not?
- The candidate mentioned struggling with [X]. Can you tell us more about that?

For roles with exposure to children, youth, vulnerable adults, or confidential information or finances, ask additionally:

- Do you have any concerns — any at all — about this person being alone with a child or in a position of trust?
- Are you aware of any conduct, habit, or pattern that a parent at our church would want to know about before this person began working here?

Stage 6e — Interview 5: Relationships

Purpose: Assess cultural and relational fit in a non-interview setting.

Format: A shared meal, a dessert, or an informal gathering. Include the Search Team chair, the future supervisor and their spouse if married, and one member-at-large. Invite the candidate's spouse if married.

No scripted questions. The goal is to see how the candidate relates outside an interview room — with their spouse, with church members, and with their future colleagues. If the evening is awkward, listen to that signal. You do not need to be best friends with every staff member, but it should not be a chore to share a meal.

Stage 7 — Background Checks and Screening

Owner: Search Team chair, with the Church Secretary processing the paperwork.

Following the *Church Operations* guide, Mayflower Church runs a formal background check on every non-pastoral staff finalist, without exception. The scope depends on the role.

Check	Required For
National criminal records	Every non-pastoral hire, without exception.
National Sex Offender Registry	Every non-pastoral hire, without exception.
Social Security verification	Every hire (completed as part of the I-9 process).
Motor vehicle records	Any role that may drive a church vehicle or transport congregants.
Credit / financial history	Any role with access to church funds, bookkeeping, or financial records.
Child protection screening (enhanced)	Any role with supervisory or direct-service contact with minors, including nursery, children's ministry, youth, and childcare during events.
Professional license verification	Any role where a credential is claimed (e.g., ACBC certification for the Director of Biblical Counseling).
Continuous monitoring	All staff, post-hire. Re-screening at a minimum every 24 months, with continuous monitoring for reportable criminal events between scheduled checks.

Consent, confidentiality, and adverse findings. Written authorization is obtained from the candidate before any check is ordered. Results are held by the Search Team chair and the Senior

Pastor; no other body sees them. If a background check surfaces an adverse finding, the Search Team pauses the process and refers the question to the Board of Elders for discernment before any final decision. An adverse finding is not automatically disqualifying — the Elders weigh the nature of the finding, the time elapsed, demonstrated repentance, and the requirements of the role — but findings involving abuse of children, sexual offenses, fraud, or violent crime are disqualifying.

Phase D — Decide and Offer

Stage 8 — Deliberation and Recommendation

Owner: Search Team, recommending to the Servants Council.

The Search Team meets within seven days of completing the final interview and background check. Deliberation is structured against the scoring rubric (Appendix C) and concludes with one of three recommendations:

- **Recommend.** Forward the candidate to the Servants Council with a written memo naming the fit evidence, any noted weaknesses, and the proposed compensation.
- **Continue searching.** No finalist meets the bar. Return to Stage 4 or adjust the Position Description.
- **Decline and reopen.** Decline the current finalist(s) courteously; consider revising the Position Description before reposting.

Servants Council vote. The Servants Council reviews the memo, may interview the candidate directly if desired, and votes on the recommendation. A majority vote is sufficient; the Senior Pastor's vote is not weighted above others. The Board of Elders confirms confessional alignment before the vote.

Stage 9 — Written Offer

Owner: Chair of the Servants Council, drafting; Senior Pastor, delivering.

Every offer is made in writing, using the template in Appendix E. The offer letter specifies:

- Position title and Position Description reference
- Start date and initial schedule
- Compensation: hourly rate or salary, pay frequency, any signing or relocation terms
- Benefits, if any (health, retirement, paid time off, sabbatical provisions)
- Accountability and supervisor name
- Expected hours per week
- Confessional and conduct expectations (Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, Mayflower staff policies)
- The 90-day probationary period described in Stage 10
- At-will employment language conformed to Massachusetts law, with the spiritual caveat that staff service is also a covenantal relationship subject to pastoral care and discipline

- The response deadline (typically 7–10 calendar days)

Verbal offers before the written offer are prohibited. A candidate may be told they are the Search Team's recommendation, but no terms are communicated orally. The written letter is the only offer.

Phase E — Onboard and Evaluate

Stage 10 — Onboarding and 90-Day Probationary Review

Owner: Senior Pastor (or designated supervisor), Church Secretary for paperwork.

Before day one, the following must be on file (Appendix F checklist):

- Signed offer letter and staff acknowledgment of policies
- Form I-9 (with supporting documentation) and Form W-4
- Massachusetts state tax form M-4
- Direct deposit authorization, routed to the Church Treasurer
- Background check results and continuous-monitoring enrollment
- Emergency contact and health benefits elections (if applicable)
- Keys, building access, technology accounts, and email provisioned
- Child protection training scheduled or completed (mandatory before any unsupervised contact with minors)

First 14 days. Orientation with the Senior Pastor covers the Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, staff culture, calendars and rhythms, a walking tour of the facility, introductions to each Board, and a review of the position's KPIs.

30-day check-in. Supervisor and hire review the first-month KPIs, surface any friction, and adjust expectations if needed.

60-day check-in. Supervisor, hire, and one Elder review progress. The Elder is present so that the Board has direct insight into the fit of the hire before the 90-day decision.

90-day probationary review. Supervisor prepares a written review against the Position Description KPIs. The Servants Council confirms continued employment, extends probation for a defined additional period, or separates the hire. A clear written decision is documented.

Annual review. Thereafter, the hire participates in the church's annual staff review cycle, aligned with the April Quarterly Meeting reporting.

5. Documentation, Confidentiality, and Non-Discrimination

5.1 The personnel file

Upon hire, the Clerk opens a personnel file containing the Position Authorization Memo, Finance Memo, Position Description (as posted), signed application, interview notes and scoring, signed reference authorization, reference summaries, background check consent, background check results, signed offer letter, I-9/W-4/M-4, and onboarding checklist. Interview notes and reference summaries are retained; transcripts are not.

5.2 Retention

Personnel files are retained for the duration of employment plus seven years after separation, consistent with the church's records management policy. Background check results and any associated adverse-action documents are secured separately with access restricted to the Senior Pastor and the Servants Council Chair.

5.3 Confidentiality of candidates

Candidate names, application materials, and interview notes are treated as confidential. Search Team members sign a confidentiality acknowledgment at the start of their service. Unsuccessful candidates are not discussed outside the Search Team or the Servants Council.

5.4 Non-discrimination

Mayflower Church hires on the basis of demonstrated character, competence, and confessional alignment. The church does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (as defined biblically), age, disability, or veteran status. Where a role is a ministerial role, or where confessional alignment is a bona fide occupational qualification, the church exercises its religious liberty to hire only those who affirm the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant. The Senior Pastor and Board of Elders will document any such determination for the personnel file.

5.5 Reconsideration and appeal

A candidate who believes the process was applied unfairly may submit a written concern to the Servants Council Chair within 30 days of the adverse decision. The Chair will convene a review with at least one Elder and one Deacon not on the Search Team. The review is advisory and does not reverse hiring decisions automatically; its purpose is to learn and improve the process.

6. Expected Timeline

A typical Mayflower non-pastoral search runs 10–14 weeks end to end. The table below shows a representative schedule for a part-time role. Full-time roles and specialized roles (e.g., counseling, music) may run longer.

Week	Stage	Deliverable
Week 1	Stages 1–2: Need identification, Finance confirmation	Position Authorization Memo, Finance Memo
Weeks 2–3	Stage 3: Position Description drafted and approved	Approved Position Description, added to Manual
Weeks 3–6	Stages 4–5: Post position, collect and pre-screen applications	Complete applicant pool, dispositions recorded
Weeks 6–9	Stage 6: Five-interview sequence	Completed interview scorecards (Appendix C)
Week 10	Stage 7: References and background checks	Reference summaries, cleared background results
Week 11	Stages 8–9: Recommendation, Council vote, written offer	Servants Council vote record, signed offer letter
Weeks 12–14+	Stage 10: Onboarding and 90-day probation begins	Onboarding checklist complete, first paycheck issued

Appendix A — Position Description Template

Every Mayflower non-pastoral Position Description includes these sections, in this order. Use this template when drafting new roles or refreshing existing ones.

- **Title.** Use the exact title carried in the Position Descriptions Manual.
- **Purpose.** One sentence: why this role exists.
- **Accountable To.** The direct supervisor, and the body to which the supervisor is accountable.

- **Term of Service.** Paid, hours per week, whether subject to annual review.
- **Selection Process.** Reference to this SOP and the Bylaws article.
- **Qualifications.** Required: Member in good standing, affirmation of Statement of Faith and Church Covenant, specific skills and certifications. Preferred: additional qualifications that strengthen the candidate.
- **Key Responsibilities.** Outcomes-oriented, not activity lists. Five to ten bullets.
- **Key Performance Indicators.** Three to five measurable indicators of a "win" at 90 days and at one year.
- **Candidate Profile.** Short narrative of the kind of person most likely to flourish here. Use language that helps poor fits self-deselect.
- **Time Commitment.** Hours, schedule, Sunday expectations, evening and event expectations.
- **Compensation.** Range, benefits, any stipends.
- **Training and Support.** What the church will provide (software, supervision, professional development budget, retreat participation).

Appendix B — Application Pre-Screening Questions

Every application form carries the full Position Description and these standardized pre-screening questions. Answers are reviewed alongside the résumé during Stage 5.

- Please tell us your story, including how you came to faith in Christ and how you came to Mayflower (or this application).
- What compelled you to apply for this position specifically? What about this role fits your sense of calling?
- How does Mayflower's vision — "To Know Christ and Make Him Known" — connect with your personal walk and gifting?
- Please describe your current church membership and active involvement. Are you prepared to affirm Mayflower's Statement of Faith and Church Covenant?
- Where do you currently work or serve? What are you responsible for, and what have you accomplished?
- What are your two or three greatest strengths, with a specific example of each?
- What are two or three areas where you know you need to grow?
- What books have shaped your thinking in the past twelve months?
- What are you looking for in your next role, and what would cause you to leave a role?
- Is there anything in your background — legal, relational, doctrinal, or otherwise — that we should know about before we begin the interview process? (Disclosure here will not automatically disqualify you; non-disclosure will.)

Appendix C — Interview Scoring Rubric

Interviewers score each candidate from 1 (low) to 5 (high) on each dimension below, with a written justification for any score of 2 or lower. Rubrics from all five interviews are compiled before Stage 8 deliberation.

Dimension	What to look for
Confessional alignment	Substantive, non-rote affirmation of the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant. Fluent in the language of grace, gospel, and Reformed Baptist ecclesiology.
Character	Honesty under probing, humility about weakness, evidence of teachability, history of covenantal faithfulness in marriage and family and church.
Competence	Demonstrated results in comparable work. Specific examples rather than abstract claims.
Chemistry	Ease of relationship with team; would you enjoy being in a foxhole with this person on a hard day.
Ownership	Takes responsibility for past results and mistakes. Avoids blame-shifting.
KPI fit	Evidence that candidate has produced outcomes like the ones named in the Position Description.
Reference signal	Consistency between what candidate said and what references observed.

Appendix D — Reference Check Script

Phone each reference personally. Introduce the church, the role, and the process. Obtain explicit verbal consent to record notes. Ask every question below, in order, for every reference.

- How long did you work with the candidate, and in what capacity?
- What were the candidate’s most significant contributions?
- What were their biggest areas for growth?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate their overall performance? What drives that rating?
- Would you hire them or serve with them again, given the opportunity?

- How would you describe their walk with Christ and engagement in their local church?
- Is there anything you would want to know about them if you were in our seat, that we have not asked?
- For child-facing, financial, or confidential roles: Do you have any concerns — even small ones — about this person being in a position of trust with children, money, or sensitive information?

Document one to two paragraphs of summary per reference. Record direct quotes where the language is distinctive. Flag inconsistencies with the candidate's own account. Share summaries with the full Search Team.

Appendix E — Offer Letter Template

[Letterhead — Mayflower Church, Kingston, Massachusetts]

[Date]

[Candidate Name]

[Address]

Dear [Name],

On behalf of the Servants Council of Mayflower Church, and with the prayerful support of the Board of Elders, I am delighted to offer you the position of [Title], in accordance with the attached Position Description.

Terms of employment. This is a [full-time / part-time] position of [X] hours per week at a [salary of $X per year / hourly rate of $X per hour]. You will be accountable to [supervisor name] and through them to the [Board of Elders / Senior Pastor]. Your anticipated start date is [date].

Compensation and benefits. Pay is issued [semi-monthly / bi-weekly] on [schedule]. Applicable federal and state taxes will be withheld. The following benefits apply: [list — or state "No additional benefits apply to this position"].

Confessional and conduct expectations. As a paid servant of Mayflower Church, you affirm the church's Statement of Faith and Church Covenant and agree to live consistently with them. You will abide by the staff policies in the Mayflower Policies Manual, including those governing confidentiality, fiduciary integrity, and child protection. Any material change in your membership status, doctrinal conviction, or personal conduct that may affect your eligibility to serve should be disclosed promptly to the Senior Pastor.

Probationary period. The first 90 days of your employment are a probationary period. You will receive structured check-ins at 30, 60, and 90 days. At the conclusion of the 90-day period, the Servants Council will confirm your continued employment, extend your probation, or conclude the engagement.

Background screening. Employment is contingent on satisfactory completion of the church's background screening process, including [list of checks from Stage 7]. You consent to continuous monitoring through our screening provider while employed.

Nature of the relationship. Employment at Mayflower Church is at-will under Massachusetts law; either party may conclude the relationship at any time, with or without cause. At the same time, staff service at Mayflower is a covenantal relationship subject to pastoral care and, where applicable, the church discipline provisions of Article I, Section A of the Bylaws.

Please indicate your acceptance by signing and returning this letter by [date]. The attached Position Description, W-4, M-4, I-9 instructions, and direct deposit form will complete the onboarding packet.

With gratitude for your willingness to consider serving Christ's Church among us,

_____

[Name], Chair, Servants Council

Mayflower Church

Accepted: _____ Date: _____

[Candidate Name]

Appendix F — Onboarding Checklist

Paperwork (complete before Day One)

- Signed offer letter on file
- Form I-9 with supporting identity and work authorization documents
- Form W-4 (federal)
- Form M-4 (Massachusetts)
- Direct deposit authorization submitted to Church Treasurer
- Emergency contact form
- Benefits election form (if applicable)

- Background check cleared and continuous-monitoring enrollment active
- Signed acknowledgment of Mayflower staff policies, including confidentiality and child protection

Access and equipment (complete by Day One)

- Building keys / key fob issued and logged
- Alarm code provisioned
- Email address and church management system (ChMS) login created
- Shared drive and calendar access provisioned
- Phone extension or mobile allowance set up
- Office space or workstation assigned

Orientation (complete by end of Week 2)

- Welcome and prayer with Senior Pastor
- Review of Statement of Faith and Church Covenant with Senior Pastor or designated Elder
- Walking tour of the facility and introduction to Trustees
- Meet-and-greet with Board of Deacons
- Meet-and-greet with Board of Elders
- Review of Position Description, KPIs, and 90-day expectations with supervisor
- Calendar walk-through (Sunday rhythms, staff meetings, Quarterly Meetings, event debrief cadence)
- Introduction to the church’s financial policies (where relevant)

Training (complete within the first 30 days, or before first exposure)

- Child Protection training — required before any contact with minors, even incidental
- Confidentiality training — required before access to counseling notes, financial records, or member data
- ChMS and office software training
- Position-specific training as named in the Position Description

Appendix G — 90-Day Probationary Review Template

Staff member: _____ **Position:** _____

Supervisor: _____ **Review date:** _____

Part 1 — KPI review

For each Key Performance Indicator in the Position Description, describe what was achieved, where progress is ahead of expectation, and where it is behind.

- KPI 1: _____
- KPI 2: _____
- KPI 3: _____

Part 2 — Fit observations

The supervisor and a participating Elder each respond briefly:

- What has the staff member done that has strengthened the team?
- Where have there been points of friction, and what has been tried to address them?
- How has confessional and covenantal alignment held up under the real weight of the role?
- What support does the staff member need from the church in the coming months?

Part 3 — Decision

The Servants Council confirms one of the following and records the decision:

- Confirm continued employment. Move to annual review cycle.
- Extend probation for a defined period (e.g., 30 or 60 additional days) with specific improvement targets in writing.
- Conclude the engagement. Issue separation letter and proceed with exit checklist.

Supervisor signature: _____ Date: _____

Servants Council Chair signature: _____ Date: _____

Staff member signature (acknowledgment): _____ Date: _____

Appendix H — Quick-Reference Process Flow

A one-glance summary of the ten stages, for use during Servants Council meetings. A standalone one-page summary document accompanies this SOP.

#	Stage	Owner	Decision gate to advance

1	Identify the Need	Senior Pastor + Servants Council	Position Authorization Memo signed
2	Secure Funding	Board of Finance	Finance Memo on file
3	Write Position Description	Search Team	Position Description approved
4	Post and invite applications	Search Team	Posting closed, pool complete
5	Pre-screen	Search Team	Dispositions recorded
6	Five-interview sequence	Search Team	Scorecards complete
7	References + background	Search Team chair	Clear results on file
8	Recommend + Council vote	Search Team → Servants Council	Majority vote recorded
9	Written offer	Servants Council Chair	Signed offer letter returned
10	Onboard + 90-day review	Senior Pastor / Supervisor	Confirmation into annual review cycle

Sources consulted in drafting this SOP: Michael Lukaszewski, "Streamline: How To Create Healthy Church Systems" (ChurchFuel, 2018) — especially the chapter "Create a Hiring Process"; Ministry Brands, "The Guide to Healthy Church Operations" — especially Chapter 13 ("Background Checks and Screenings") and Chapter 15 ("Staff Growth and Development"); Mayflower Constitution and Bylaws; Mayflower Church Position Descriptions Manual, April 2026.

See also: One-Page Quick Reference (companion card) · Overview. The source Word document is attached to this page for download.

One-Page Quick Reference — April 2026

Mayflower Church — Non-Pastoral Staff Hiring Process. One-page quick reference. v1.0 · April 2026.

> Companion to the full SOP. The SOP is authoritative; this card is a pocket reference for Servants Council meetings and staff onboarding conversations.

Guiding Principles

1. **Process before urgency.**
2. **Better no hire than the wrong hire.**
3. **Character → Competence → Chemistry** — in that order.
4. **Confessional alignment.** Member in good standing affirming Statement of Faith & Church Covenant.
5. **Protect the flock.** Screening is not optional.
6. **Same process, every candidate.**
7. **Stewardship and transparency.**

The Ten Stages

Phase A — Discern & Define

- **Stage 1 — Identify the Need.** Senior Pastor + Servants Council. *Gate: signed Position Authorization Memo.*
- **Stage 2 — Secure Funding.** Board of Finance. *Gate: Finance Memo; congregational vote required if non-budgeted > $5,000.*
- **Stage 3 — Write Position Description.** Search Team → Servants Council. *Gate: PD approved and added to the Manual.*

Phase B — Recruit & Screen

- **Stage 4 — Post & Invite Applications.** Search Team. *Gate: posting closed (21+ days), pool complete.*
- **Stage 5 — Pre-screen.** Search Team. *Each applicant: Advance / Hold / Decline (response within 7 days).*

Phase C — Interview

- **Stage 6 — Five Interviews.** 1. Screening · 2. Patterns · 3. Results · 4. References · 5. Relationships. Same questions, every candidate; scored on the Appendix C rubric.
- **Stage 7 — References & Background Checks.** Search Team chair. Verbal references (3+). Criminal · Sex offender registry · role-specific checks · continuous monitoring post-hire.

Phase D — Decide & Offer

- **Stage 8 — Recommend & Council Vote.** Search Team → Servants Council. Elders confirm confessional alignment. Majority vote recorded.
- **Stage 9 — Written Offer.** Servants Council Chair drafts; Senior Pastor delivers. *No verbal offers.* Contingent on background clearance. 7–10-day response window.

Phase E — Onboard & Evaluate

- **Stage 10 — Onboard + 90-Day Probation.** Paperwork (I-9, W-4, M-4, direct deposit) before Day 1. 30 / 60 / 90-day check-ins. Council confirms continued employment at 90 days.

Decision Rights

- **Servants Council** directs all non-pastoral hiring (Bylaws Art. II §B 4(c)(9)).
- **Board of Finance** confirms funding; non-budgeted > $5,000 needs congregational approval.
- **Board of Elders** confirms confessional alignment of the top candidate.
- **Search Team** (3–5 members) runs Stages 3–8 under a written charter.
- **Church Treasurer** sets up payroll; **Clerk** archives the personnel file.

Typical Timeline (10–14 weeks)

When	What
Week 1	Stages 1–2 — need + funding
Weeks 2–3	Stage 3 — write Position Description
Weeks 3–6	Stages 4–5 — post + pre-screen
Weeks 6–9	Stage 6 — five-interview sequence
Week 10	Stage 7 — references + background
Week 11	Stages 8–9 — recommend, vote, offer
Weeks 12+	Stage 10 — onboard + 90-day probation

See the full SOP for the Position Description template, interview question sets, reference script, offer letter, onboarding checklist, and 90-day review template. Adapted from Streamline: Healthy Church Systems and The Guide to Healthy Church Operations, anchored in Mayflower Bylaws (March 2026). The source Word document is attached to this page.