

# 10 – Employee Handbook

Version one of the Mayflower employee handbook — time and communication expectations, confidentiality, allowances, benefits.

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# Overview: Employee Handbook

## Status

**Implementation status:** In Process

## Principle (from Streamline)

Lukaszewski's principle (placeholder): A written employee handbook protects the church, protects the employee, and removes ambiguity about expectations, benefits, and conduct. It should be specific enough to use, short enough to read.

## Mayflower's Current Practice

Week 10 of the implementation. Planned work: outline handbook sections, draft time and communication expectations, draft confidentiality guidelines, draft allowance and benefits section, compile handbook version one. Due June 30, 2026.

## Governance & Document

## References

- Mayflower Constitution and Bylaws — personnel sections
- Position Descriptions (for role-specific references)

## Open Questions

- PTO / sabbatical policy
  - Remote work expectations
  - Confidentiality scope (pastoral counsel vs. admin)
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*Page template: Principle + Mayflower Practice. Part of The Streamline Admin System, adapted from Michael Lukaszewski's Streamline: How To Create Healthy Church Systems.*

# Employee Handbook — Draft

## April 2026

### MAYFLOWER CHURCH

Kingston, Massachusetts

*Incorporated 1917*

### Employee Handbook

Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by the Servants Council: \_\_\_\_\_

## Welcome

Welcome to the staff of Mayflower Church. Whether you serve in a pastoral, ministry, or administrative role, your work contributes directly to the mission Christ has given us as a local body.

*“Building a discipleship community rooted in the knowledge of Christ, driven by faith, empowered to share the Gospel, and committed to welcoming and equipping others in Love and Truth.”*

**Vision:** To Know Christ and Make Him Known.

This handbook sets out the basic expectations, policies, and protections that govern your employment at Mayflower Church. It is intentionally brief. Pastoral care, supervision, and common sense fill the gaps.

Questions about any policy should be raised with your direct supervisor or the Senior Pastor.

## 1. Purpose and Scope

This handbook applies to all paid staff of Mayflower Church — full-time, part-time, and temporary — regardless of role. It applies to clergy and lay employees alike, except where a signed call agreement or employment contract governs a specific provision differently.

This handbook is a statement of current policy. It is not a contract of employment. Mayflower Church may revise, add, or remove policies at any time, with notice to staff through ordinary channels.

Where this handbook conflicts with the Mayflower Constitution and Bylaws, the Bylaws govern.

## 2. Employment Basics

### 2.1 At-Will Employment

Employment at Mayflower Church is at-will. Either the employee or the church may end the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause and with or without notice, subject to the governance provisions of the Bylaws for pastoral and elder-approved roles. Nothing in this handbook creates a contract of employment or a guarantee of continued employment.

### 2.2 Equal Employment Opportunity and Religious Employer Status

Mayflower Church does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other category protected by applicable law.

As a religious employer, Mayflower Church exercises its rights under the First Amendment and Title VII, including the ministerial exception and the Title VII religious-employer exemption, to consider religious belief, practice, and adherence to Mayflower's Statement of Faith and standards of Christian conduct in employment decisions. All positions at Mayflower Church carry a ministerial character.

### 2.3 Background Checks

All employees must complete a Massachusetts CORI background check and any other background screening required for their role before their first day of work. Employees whose duties include contact with minors or vulnerable adults must also complete Mayflower's child and youth safety training and recheck CORI on the schedule the church specifies. A clear background check is a condition of employment.

## 2.4 Employment Classifications

Each employee is classified at hire as full-time or part-time, and as exempt or non-exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act and Massachusetts wage law. The classification is documented in the offer letter. Non-exempt staff must record all hours worked and are eligible for overtime as required by law. Exempt staff are paid on a salary basis and are not eligible for overtime.

# 3. Work Hours and Office Operations

## 3.1 Standard Office Hours

The church office is generally open Monday through Thursday during posted hours. Individual work schedules are set by your supervisor and may vary based on your role (for example, pastoral staff carry a Sunday obligation and flex weekday hours accordingly).

## 3.2 Office Closure Days

The church office is closed on all federal bank holidays. If the bank is closed, the office is closed. Staff may choose to work, but the office will not be open to the public, and standing meetings and broad communications should not be scheduled.

The office is also closed for two additional closure weeks each year:

- **Christmas Closure Week** — the week following Christmas Day.
- **Easter Closure Week** — the week following Easter Sunday.

On closure days and during closure weeks, each employee has three options, in coordination with their supervisor:

- Use paid vacation time.
- Work a normal schedule at home.
- Come into the church building to work, recognizing that the office is closed to the public.

Closure weeks are not additional paid holidays. They are office-closure weeks during which work may continue in a lighter, remote-friendly form. Staff choosing to work should coordinate coverage so that urgent pastoral needs are still covered.

## 3.3 Remote Work

Mayflower is primarily an in-person workplace. Remote work is available during office-closure days and weeks, and on an ad hoc basis with supervisor approval. Remote work must not impair ministry presence, pastoral availability, or team collaboration.

## 3.4 Sunday and Evening Expectations

Staff whose roles touch worship services, youth, or programming are expected to be present on Sundays and at scheduled evening ministry events as their role requires. These hours are part of the role and are not separately compensated for exempt staff.

# 4. Compensation and Expenses

## 4.1 Pay Schedule

Employees are paid on the church's regular payroll cycle, as stated in the offer letter. Pay is delivered by direct deposit unless otherwise arranged.

## 4.2 Expense Reimbursement

Work-related expenses (ministry supplies, mileage, approved travel, approved meals, books and continuing education within budget) are reimbursed when submitted with receipts through the church's reimbursement process within 30 days of the expense. Pre-approval from the supervisor is required for any expense over the threshold set by the Board of Finance.

## 4.3 Clergy Housing Allowance

Ordained ministerial staff may receive a portion of their compensation designated as housing allowance, approved in advance by the Servants Council in accordance with IRS rules. The designation is documented in writing and may not be changed retroactively.

# 5. Time Off

## 5.1 Paid Vacation

Full-time employees accrue ten (10) days (two weeks) of paid vacation per calendar year, available for use after ninety (90) days of employment. Vacation is scheduled with supervisor approval and should be requested at least two weeks in advance where possible. Up to five (5) unused days may be carried into the next calendar year; any balance beyond five days is forfeited at year-end. Vacation is not paid out on separation except as required by Massachusetts law.

Part-time employees accrue paid vacation on a pro-rata basis based on scheduled hours.

## 5.2 Sick Time

In accordance with the Massachusetts Earned Sick Time Law, all employees accrue one hour of paid sick time for every thirty hours worked, up to forty hours per year. Sick time may be used for the employee's own illness, medical appointments, care for a sick family member, or matters related to domestic violence, as defined by law. In practice, Mayflower trusts its staff: reasonable sick time for illness or medical care is taken as needed, coordinated with the supervisor.

## 5.3 Paid Holidays

The following are paid holidays for full-time staff:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Presidents' Day
- Patriots' Day (Massachusetts)
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day / Indigenous Peoples' Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Day After
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

When a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, it is observed on the banking day designated by the Federal Reserve. Holidays are paid at the employee's regular rate for their normally scheduled hours.

## 5.4 Bereavement, Jury Duty, and Other Leave

Paid bereavement leave of up to three (3) working days is provided for the death of an immediate family member. Jury duty is handled in accordance with Massachusetts law. Other statutory leaves — including Massachusetts Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML), parental leave, and military leave — are administered per applicable law. Contact the Senior Pastor for questions.

## 5.5 Unpaid Leave

Unpaid leave may be requested for reasons not covered above. Approval requires written consent of the supervisor and, for leave longer than two weeks, the Senior Pastor.

# 6. Standards of Christian Conduct

Every Mayflower employee — clergy and lay — serves in a ministerial capacity. This is a religious institution, not a secular workplace that happens to do religious work. What you do, say, and represent carries the church's witness.

## 6.1 Statement of Faith

Each employee is required, as a condition of employment, to read and affirm without reservation the Mayflower Church Statement of Faith and the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 as adopted by the church. Affirmation is documented at hire and reaffirmed annually.

## 6.2 Standard of Conduct

Employees are expected to live, on-duty and off, in a manner consistent with biblical Christian teaching as Mayflower Church confesses it, including fidelity in marriage, sexual purity outside of marriage, honesty, sobriety, financial integrity, and faithful participation in the life of the church. Persistent conduct inconsistent with these standards, without repentance, is grounds for discipline up to and including termination.

This standard is not a demand for perfection. Sin, repentance, and restoration are part of Christian life and are handled pastorally. The concern here is unrepented, ongoing conduct that contradicts what the church teaches.

## 6.3 Confidentiality

Employees have access to sensitive information: pastoral conversations, member records, giving information, counseling matters, personnel files, legal matters, and minors' information. This information is held in trust.

- Do not discuss, share, or disclose confidential information outside the scope of your role.
- Do not discuss members' giving, family situations, or pastoral care matters with other members.

- Personnel and salary information is confidential.
- Confidentiality continues after employment ends.

The only exceptions are the mandatory reporting obligations described in Section 7.2, lawful disclosures required by subpoena or court order, and disclosures the Senior Pastor or Elders direct for the good of the church.

## 6.4 Social Media and Public Representation

On public social media, in media interviews, and in public settings, employees should remember they are identifiable as Mayflower staff. Avoid posting anything that would contradict the Statement of Faith, disparage members or partners, or damage the church's witness. Speak for the church only when authorized to do so.

# 7. Workplace Safety and Respect

## 7.1 Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Policy

Mayflower Church is committed to a workplace free from unlawful harassment and discrimination. Harassment on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or any other category protected by law is prohibited. Sexual harassment, as defined by Massachusetts law, is specifically prohibited. This includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission is made a term of employment, is used as a basis for employment decisions, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

**How to report:** If you experience or witness harassment or discrimination, report it immediately to your supervisor, the Senior Pastor, or any member of the Board of Elders. If the complaint involves the Senior Pastor, report directly to the Chair of the Board of Elders. Reports may be made verbally or in writing.

**Investigation:** Every complaint will be taken seriously, handled confidentially to the extent possible, and investigated promptly. Mayflower Church will not tolerate retaliation against any employee who reports harassment or participates in an investigation in good faith.

**External agencies:** Employees also have the right to file a complaint with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) or the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Addresses and contact information are posted on the employee bulletin board.

## 7.2 Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

Under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 119, Section 51A, all clergy, and all employees whose duties bring them into contact with children, are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. Mayflower extends this standard to all employees of the church.

If you have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 is suffering physical or emotional injury, neglect, or sexual abuse, you are required by law to report it.

- **Immediate report:** Call the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) at 1-800-792-5200 (available 24 hours).
- **File the 51A:** File a written 51A report within 48 hours.
- **Notify the Senior Pastor:** Inform the Senior Pastor and the Chair of the Board of Elders as soon as the report is filed. Internal notification does not replace the legal obligation to report to DCF directly.

Mayflower Church will not retaliate against any employee who makes a good-faith report of suspected abuse or neglect. Failure to report is a violation of law and of this handbook and is grounds for termination.

## 7.3 Grievance and Concerns Procedure

Concerns about supervision, working conditions, policy application, or conduct should first be raised informally with your direct supervisor. If the concern is not resolved or if raising it with the supervisor is not appropriate, it may be brought in writing to the Senior Pastor. Concerns about the Senior Pastor may be brought to the Chair of the Board of Elders. All grievances will be handled in good faith, with pastoral care, and without retaliation.

# 8. Separation of Employment

## 8.1 Resignation

Employees are asked to give at least two (2) weeks' written notice of resignation. Pastoral staff are asked to give at least thirty (30) days, consistent with the call-agreement terms.

## 8.2 Final Pay and Property Return

Final pay will be issued in accordance with Massachusetts law. On the last day of employment, the employee will return all church property, including keys, building access credentials, laptops, phones, files, and any other church-owned materials.

## 8.3 Termination

Mayflower Church may terminate employment at any time. Where possible, termination is preceded by pastoral conversation, clear expectations, and an opportunity to improve. Immediate termination without prior warning may occur in cases of serious misconduct, including but not limited to breach of confidentiality, harassment, theft, abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult, failure to report suspected abuse, falsification of records, or conduct that would disqualify from ministry under the Statement of Faith.

# Appendix A: Biblical Standards for Staff

## A.1 Purpose

Every person employed by Mayflower Church participates in the church's ministry. Whether you preach, counsel, disciple, lead music, keep the books, answer the phone, or care for the building,

your work is part of how Christ's body functions in this place. For that reason, the Bible's expectations for those who serve the church shape what we ask of every staff member.

These standards are not a ladder to earn favor with God. Salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. These are the ordinary patterns of a life formed by that grace — what the New Testament calls walking in a manner worthy of the calling to which we have been called (Ephesians 4:1). We aim at them together, we fall short of them, we repent, and we press on.

We are a Reformed Baptist congregation. These standards reflect our reading of Scripture as summarized in our Statement of Faith. They apply to all staff, on duty and off, and are an expression of the ministerial character of every role at Mayflower.

## A.2 Character

The apostolic qualifications for elders and deacons (1 Timothy 3, Titus 1) describe the settled character we look for in every Mayflower staff member — not as a test of office, but as the shape of Christian maturity we are growing into together:

- Above reproach in public and private conduct.
- Self-controlled, sober-minded, and disciplined.
- Hospitable, patient, and gentle — especially under pressure.
- Not quarrelsome, not quick-tempered, not given to dispute for its own sake.
- Not a lover of money; not using ministry for personal gain.
- Well thought of by those outside the church, so far as it depends on us.
- Managing our own households faithfully, whether married or single.

“Be holy, because I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16).

## A.3 Spiritual Life

The health of our work flows from the health of our walk with Christ. Staff are expected to maintain an active life of faith:

- Regular personal Scripture reading and prayer.
- Participation in the Lord's Day corporate worship of Mayflower Church, not merely as a duty of employment but as an act of worship.
- Regular participation in the Lord's Supper as a member.
- Ongoing growth — reading, learning, being disciplined, and discipling others.
- Observing a weekly sabbath rhythm of rest and worship.

# A.4 Church Membership and Submission

Staff are expected to be members in good standing of Mayflower Church (or actively pursuing membership within the first six months of hire, in coordination with the Elders). Membership is not an add-on to employment; it is the ordinary way a Christian belongs to a local church, and the way staff live under the same care and accountability as the congregation they serve.

Staff submit to the spiritual oversight of the Elders and the corrective care of the church as set out in the Bylaws and Statement of Faith. Where a staff member is the subject of formal church discipline by the Elders, that discipline ordinarily carries employment consequences.

# A.5 Marriage, Sexuality, and Gender

We hold a biblical understanding of marriage, sexuality, and the human person. This section states that understanding directly, because ambiguity here has caused real harm in other churches and because every staff member should know what they are agreeing to.

**Marriage.** Marriage is a covenant designed by God between one man and one woman, for life, as described in Genesis 2:24 and affirmed by Jesus in Matthew 19:4-6. Mayflower staff who are married are expected to honor and keep that covenant — loving their spouse, pursuing reconciliation in conflict, and guarding the marriage against unfaithfulness.

**Sexual expression.** Sexual activity is reserved for marriage as defined above (1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Hebrews 13:4). Outside of marriage, staff are expected to live in chastity, including in dating relationships, in engagement, in singleness, and in widowhood.

**Sex and gender.** God created humanity male and female (Genesis 1:27). Mayflower staff are expected to live, dress, and present themselves consistent with their biological sex, and to embrace as good the body God has given them.

**Temptation versus practice.** Temptation is not sin. Faithful Christians experience desires they do not act on, and honesty about struggle is welcome here. The standard is not the absence of temptation, but the direction of life, that we put sin to death by the Spirit (Romans 8:13) rather than defending or practicing it.

**Pornography.** The use of pornography is inconsistent with Christian fidelity and with staff service at Mayflower. Staff who are struggling are invited to seek pastoral help and accountability; persistent, unrepented use is grounds for discipline.

## A.6 Speech and Truthfulness

Our words carry weight, especially when we speak as people associated with Christ's church.

- **Truthful.** We do not lie, exaggerate, or shade the truth for advantage. We keep our promises (Ephesians 4:25; Matthew 5:37).
- **Wholesome.** Our speech is seasoned with grace and aims to build up, not tear down (Ephesians 4:29). Crude talk, coarse joking, and slander have no place among the staff (Ephesians 5:4).
- **Not gossip.** We do not carry reports about members or colleagues. Concerns go to the person involved, to a supervisor, or to an Elder — not into the church's bloodstream as gossip.
- **Confidential.** What is told to us in pastoral and staff confidence stays there, subject only to the mandatory reporting and safety exceptions stated in the handbook.

## A.7 Financial Integrity

Ministry staff handle Christ's money on behalf of Christ's people. That trust demands a higher bar, not a lower one.

- Scrupulous honesty in expense reports, reimbursements, time records, and compensation matters.
- No use of church funds, accounts, credit cards, or facilities for personal benefit outside stated compensation and benefits.
- Contentment rather than the love of money (1 Timothy 6:6-10); freedom from envy of colleagues' compensation or outside opportunities.
- Faithful personal generosity to the Lord through the local church, in keeping with our means and our faith.
- Paying personal debts and fulfilling personal financial obligations (Romans 13:7-8).

"We aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man" (2 Corinthians 8:21).

# A.8 Sobriety and Stewardship of the Body

- **Alcohol.** Mayflower does not require staff to abstain from alcohol. Staff who drink do so in moderation, never to drunkenness (Ephesians 5:18), not in settings where it would cause a brother or sister to stumble, and not during working hours or at church functions where alcohol is not being served by the church.
- **Drugs.** Staff do not use illegal drugs, misuse prescription medication, or use marijuana for recreational purposes, regardless of state-law legalization.
- **Tobacco.** Smoking and vaping are discouraged as a matter of witness and health, and are not permitted on church property.
- **The body.** The body is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19–20). We care for the body God has given us through reasonable sleep, rest, exercise, and care, and we resist the idolatries of either neglect or vanity.

# A.9 Relationships and Ministry Boundaries

- **No favoritism.** We do not show partiality based on wealth, status, family name, or giving record (James 2:1–9). Every member receives the same pastoral care.
- **Appropriate intimacy.** Staff maintain clear boundaries with members and colleagues. Romantic or sexualized relationships with any member of the congregation or staff are disclosed promptly to the Senior Pastor and Elders; relationships that create supervisory conflicts are not permitted.
- **One-on-one counseling.** Follow Mayflower’s counseling and meeting policies, including visibility and the presence of a second adult where required, particularly in counseling with the opposite sex and in any setting with minors.
- **Ministry with minors.** Staff working with minors follow the Child and Youth Safety Policy without exception — two-adult rule, open-door rule, and reporting obligations under Section 7.2.
- **Digital and social-media contact.** Use church-provided channels for communication with minors. Keep private correspondence with any member appropriate, respectful, and — for sensitive pastoral matters — documented and known to a supervisor.

# A.10 Conflict, Confession, and Reconciliation

Christians do not avoid conflict; we work through it as family.

- **Matthew 18.** When a staff member is wronged by, or has a grievance against, a colleague, we begin by speaking with that person directly (Matthew 18:15). If that is unfruitful, we bring a supervisor or fellow staff member in.
- **Quick repentance.** We confess our sins to one another and pray for one another (James 5:16). We do not let the sun go down on anger (Ephesians 4:26). We apologize plainly, without qualification, when we have wronged someone.
- **Forgiveness.** We forgive as we have been forgiven in Christ (Colossians 3:13), while still upholding wise boundaries and accountability.
- **No triangulation.** We refuse to use peers, members, or family as weapons in conflict. Concerns go through the people who can address them.
- **Biblical Reconciliation Process.** Mayflower Church has a process for reconciliation included in the bylaws. Please refer to the process.

# A.11 Grace, Failure, and Restoration

This appendix describes a life to grow into, not a perfection to defend. Every staff member will fail at some point, in some area. Mayflower's instinct in failure is pastoral: confession, repentance, accountability, and restoration where possible.

The distinction that matters for employment is between sin that is confessed and turned from, and conduct that is ongoing, unrepented, and inconsistent with the ministerial character of the role. Mayflower may, in cases of serious or persistent breach, discipline up to and including termination, as described in Section 8.3 of the handbook. In every case, our aim is the glory of Christ, the health of the church, and the good of the person involved.

“Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted” (Galatians 6:1).

# A.12 Annual Affirmation

Each staff member signs an affirmation of these standards at hire and annually thereafter, on or near their work anniversary. The annual affirmation is an opportunity to name any area where the standards feel out of reach, to seek pastoral help, and to recommit. A staff member who cannot in good conscience affirm these standards should speak with the Senior Pastor.

# Employee Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Mayflower Church Employee Handbook, including Appendix A: Biblical Standards for Staff. I understand that:

- This handbook is not a contract of employment, and my employment is at-will.
- Mayflower Church may revise this handbook at any time.
- I am responsible for reading and understanding the policies in this handbook, and for asking my supervisor or the Senior Pastor when I have questions.
- I have read, understand, and affirm the Mayflower Church Statement of Faith, the Standards of Christian Conduct set out in Section 6, and the Biblical Standards for Staff set out in Appendix A.
- I understand my obligations as a mandated reporter of child abuse and neglect under Massachusetts law.
- I understand Mayflower Church's anti-harassment policy and the procedure for reporting concerns.

Employee Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_