

**Southeastern Yearly Meeting  
The Religious Society of Friends**

**PERSONNEL POLICIES**

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# Southeastern Yearly Meeting The Religious Society of Friends

## PERSONNEL POLICIES

### 1. Introduction and Purpose of Policies

**Introduction:** Southeastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM) is a nonprofit, charitable, tax-exempt organization of its constituent Monthly Meetings in The Religious Society of Friends (“Quakers” or “Friends”). Friends in the Yearly Meeting discern and provide care for certain programs and the corresponding budget to serve the needs of its constituents. Funds to support the budget are raised through individual donations from Friends and annual apportionments of costs to its constituent Monthly Meetings. The Yearly Meeting exercises only the most general care and loving concern over the constituent Monthly Meetings in those things that concern the welfare of the Society itself, in general leaving to the Monthly Meetings the proper ordering of their worship, their fellowship, and their internal business affairs.

Because of our charitable status and our adherence to the traditional Quaker Concerns and Testimonies, we believe that Southeastern Yearly Meeting’s employees have a special responsibility to follow the highest standards of ethics and professionalism in representing Southeastern Yearly Meeting and in carrying out our programs. We hire our employees in good faith that each will use his or her ingenuity, creativity, and best possible human relations in all interactions, to the benefit of and as a representative of the Yearly Meeting.

We also want the employee to work in the good faith that the Yearly Meeting will provide support, information, guidance, and encouragement as needed by the employee.

**Purpose of These Policies:** These Personnel Policies are to serve as a guideline, describing the basic policies and practices ordinarily applied by SEYM to its employees. They are not intended to create and are not a contract of employment. No contractual rights are conferred on the employee by this Policy Statement; its provisions shall not constitute contractual obligations enforceable against SEYM.

SEYM reserves its right to make changes, from time to time and at its sole discretion, in the policies and/or practices described herein as circumstances warrant. In most such instances every effort will be made to provide reasonable prior notice of such changes to the employees.

If questions arise, or suggestions occur for improvement concerning the policies and procedures described herein, please contact the Clerk of the SEYM Executive Committee (EC).

### 2. Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee of SEYM shall be its Executive Committee (EC), or, when approved by the EC, a sub-committee of EC as appointed by the Clerk of EC.

### Responsibilities of the Personnel Committee:

- Hire, supervise, and dismiss paid staff. Immediate supervision of the Administrative Secretary is provided by the Clerk of EC. Other employees are under the immediate supervision of the Administrative Secretary, unless otherwise stipulated.
- Provide for support and training for staff members.
- Review and approve a job description for each authorized position.
- Review job performance of each employee in writing at least once each calendar year, meeting with each one individually and advising the employee in writing of both areas of satisfactory or better performance and areas of performance that are in need of improvement. Materials available for the person or committee writing the review should include, but are not to be limited to, the Administrative Secretary's reports to EC that cover the time period under review, and a written performance report covering the time period under review from the employee's immediate supervisor, which is to include a record of the employee's attendance during that time.
- Review and recommend salary ranges for each authorized paid position and determine individual salary adjustments within the approved salary ranges.
- Make recommendations to, and seek approval from, the Yearly Meeting concerning the staffing plan after consultation with the Finance Committee concerning the related personnel budget.

### 3. Terms of Employment

#### a. Hiring

- Openings for employment will be posted in SEYM communications (e.g. newsletters, website) and in other publications as needed and appropriate. Applicants must submit written references from previous employment as well as written character references. In addition, contact information for all references and written permission to contact references are required of all applicants. Completed applications are submitted to EC for review.
- The clerk of EC will appoint an ad hoc sub-committee of no less than 5 EC members to review applications, follow up references, and interview those applicants who meet all or most position criteria. The sub-committee will report back to EC for further discernment and decisions. All candidates will be notified of their status at the end of the process.
- SEYM does not discriminate in hiring staff with regards to gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity or age. SEYM also complies with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended.

#### b. Categories of employment

- All employees are hired for an indefinite period of time and are not guaranteed any specific term of employment.
- Full time employment constitutes 35 or more hours per week, usually 5 of the 7 days per week, depending on the requirements of the position.
- Part time employment constitutes less than 35 hours per week, proportioned according to the needs of the position.

c. Termination of employment

- The employees of SEYM are terminable-at-will, meaning that either the employee or SEYM may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause.
- Termination of employment by the employee may occur through retirement, resignation, relocation, or other personal reason.
- SEYM may terminate the employment relationship due to unsatisfactory job performance, extended or permanent disability which does not permit reasonable job performance and to which reasonable accommodations cannot be provided, or any other corporate reason pertaining to the proper functioning of SEYM, including the well-being of other employees. The decision regarding termination by SEYM is made by the EC acting as the Yearly Meeting Personnel Committee and may not be delegated to a sub-committee thereof.
- SEYM program changes may make some positions obsolete, necessitating transfer to another position or termination of employment.

d. Confidentiality, Personnel Files and References

All employee personnel files shall be kept for a period of 5 years from the date of the end of the employee's employment. At the end of that time they are to be destroyed.

All information in the employee personnel files, such as applications, references, salary and tax records, and performance reviews or evaluations, are kept by the Administrative Secretary under strictest confidence, except to those members of EC involved in hiring, evaluating, terminating, or making recommendations for other employment as requested by the employee or former employee.

4. Salary Policies

a. Levels and Ranges

Salaries and part-time pay, and any changes in them, are determined by the EC in consultation with the Finance Committee, and are subject to approval by the Yearly Meeting in annual sessions. While SEYM seeks to pay a fair wage for job performance, it should be noted that Yearly Meeting finances are dependent largely on monthly meeting and individual member contributions, and Yearly Meeting goals and needs change over time. Absolute certainty of employee increases or tenure can not be guaranteed.

b. Consideration for Increases/Decreases

Salary and pay increases, including those for cost of living, occur at the beginning of the Yearly Meeting's fiscal year and are based upon job performance evaluations, length of employment, the Yearly Meeting's financial status, recommendation by the EC, and approval of the Yearly Meeting in annual sessions. Decreases in salary are rare and would depend largely on a decrease in job tasks and hours.

c. Withholdings and Garnishments

Deductions from salary or pay are those required by law, namely Federal income tax as stipulated by the withholding form submitted by the employee, Social Security payments, state taxes (if any), and other deductions which may be authorized in writing by the employee.

- d. Peace Witness and Military Portion of Federal Tax  
This portion of the Policy is to be developed at the time of its need, in consultation with the specific prospective employee(s) desiring it.

5. Work Environment

a. Place of Work

The official office of the Yearly Meeting is usually at a location determined by the convenience of the Administrative Secretary. It is recognized that the Administrative Secretary may not always be available at the office during the regular hours, as some of the Yearly Meeting's work also must necessarily be accomplished outside of the office. In addition, employees are also expected to work at, and on the location of, various regular Yearly Meeting functions such as the Annual Sessions, the Interim Business Meetings, and some Committee meetings, as required by their position and described in SEYM's Operational Handbook.

b. Working Hours, Overtime, and Compensatory Time

Regular office hours are generally Monday through Friday, from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. An Individual's actual required hours will depend upon the tasks involved, as described in the SEYM Operational Handbook. SEYM is fully cognizant of the fact that flexibility is imperative in distributing the hours of work, and, in general, must be subject to the good judgment of the employee. There are times when the work load cannot be evenly distributed on an hourly or weekly basis, given the nature of the tasks. Full time and salaried positions are expected to work at least 35 hours in a normal calendar week. Part time positions are expected to work less than 35 hours per calendar week, as scheduled to fit the demands of the particular position.

The need of and the schedule for overtime work (work in excess of the weekly amount stated) is recommended by the Administrative Secretary, and may be paid as determined with the consent of the Clerk of EC, though compensatory time off on a one-for-one hourly basis during non-demanding times is the normal manner of reimbursing overtime.

c. Travel Requirements

See requirements specified in the SEYM Operational Handbook position descriptions.

d. Confidentiality and Inquiries

Employees of SEYM are expected to maintain confidentiality in all matters where private views or information is brought to an employee's attention through a confidence or inquiry. If confidential information needs to be brought to another person or committee, this should be discussed in advance with the involved individual and permission obtained from that person. The only exception to this policy is where keeping the information confidential violates a law which requires reporting to an authority.

Inquiries about personal (non-public) information are to be handled with tact, while still maintaining confidentiality.

## 6. Holidays, Authorized Leave, and Benefits

### a. Holidays

The following eleven (11) holidays are observed each calendar year, with the SEYM office being officially closed. During these holidays, staff members will be paid at their regular rate. When any holiday listed below falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be observed; when on Sunday, the following Monday shall be observed.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday Observance
- President's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- July 4th
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Two Days around Christmas

**Working on Holidays:** Holidays occurring during a regular SEYM function, such as the Annual Sessions or other event, will not be observed on the set date by the staff assigned to the event. However, compensatory time off on a one-for-one hourly basis (at a time of the employee's choice, subject to office requirements) shall be substituted. Any employee who wishes to voluntarily work on an observed holiday must first obtain approval to do so from the Administrative Secretary or the Clerk of the Executive Committee (EC), and may then substitute compensatory time off on a one-for-one hourly basis at a time of their own choice, subject to office requirements. The scheduling of use of any compensatory time shall be subject to approval of the Administrative Secretary or the Clerk of the Executive Committee.

### b. Vacation and Other Authorized Leave

The Executive Committee of SEYM has discretionary authority in administering leave, as it does in all situations.

- i. **Vacation:** Vacation leave will be arranged by employees with EC, to be taken at mutually convenient times. Vacation may not be taken in increments of less than a half day. Vacation may not be taken before it is accrued.

#### Accrual Rate:

- Full-time employees will accrue paid vacation in the first calendar year of employment at the rate of one day after the first three months of full time work, and one additional day credited at the end of each month thereafter, up to a maximum of ten (10) days in the calendar year. In calendar year two of employment and after, the employee will receive ten days each year at the beginning of the calendar year. Vacation not used within the calendar year will be forfeited, except as allowed by special arrangement with the Clerk of EC for accumulation of up to twenty (20) days in very unusual circumstances.
- Part-time Employees will accrue paid vacation under most of the same conditions as full-time employees, except that it will accrue at a pro-rated rate proportional to the length of the employee's normal work-week and with a similarly pro-rated annual maximum, and vacation for a

part-time employee not used during the year it is accrued will be forfeited. Part-time employees will not be allowed to accrue vacation above their respective annual maximum.

For instance, a half-time employee will accrue vacation in the first calendar year of their employment at a rate of one half-day after the first three months of full time work, and one additional half-day credited at the end of each month thereafter, up to a maximum of five (5) days in the calendar year, all of which must be used in that year, or forfeited. In year two of employment and after, the half-time employee will receive five (5) days each year at the beginning of the calendar year, all of which must be used in that year, or forfeited.

- ii. Medical/Sick Leave: Sick leave usage will be paid at the employee's regular rate, will become part of the employee's personnel file, and will be considered along with other factors during the employee's formal performance appraisals. Time off for an illness contracted during vacation, if the employee must remain off work after the scheduled end of the vacation because of the illness, will be considered sick leave beginning on the first scheduled work day after the end of vacation.

Accrual Rate:

- Full-time employees: Sick leave will accrue at the rate of one day per month credited at the end of each month, to a limit of 30 days, beginning at the end of the first full month of employment.
- Part-time Employees: The rate and limit of sick-leave accrual for part-time employees will be adjusted proportionally to their normal work week. For instance, a two-thirds-time employee will accrue sick-leave at the rate of two-thirds of a day per month credited at the end of each month, to a limit of 20 days, beginning at the end of the first full month of employment.

- iii. Personal and Family Leave

- Personal Leave (also known as Administrative Leave) for employees may be permitted at the sole discretion of the Administrative Secretary or the Clerk of EC for unusual circumstances such as, for example, emergencies or unavoidable appointments that can not be re-scheduled. It is to be taken only for the minimum amount of time consistent with accomplishing the immediate purpose of the leave, and may not exceed one-half day per occurrence. Routine doctor and dentist appointments are considered to be personal leave, and not sick leave, if made during the working day. The employees are encouraged to schedule them during evening or Saturday hours, or at the start or end of a working day.
- Family Leave may be granted as unpaid leave. Any employee who has been employed by SEYM for twelve or more months at 60% or more time shall be entitled to a total of twelve work-weeks of family leave, first using any accrued paid vacation leave and/or compensatory time (except that the staff person may choose to keep five days of vacation leave for other use), during any twelve month period in order to care for the spouse or domestic partner, son, daughter, or parent of the employee, if such person has a serious health condition, or for birth or adoption of a child. Employees requesting such leave are responsible

for providing the Administrative Secretary or the Clerk of the EC reasonable and adequate notice of the requirements for such leave as well as appropriate certification of need.

- iv. **Pregnancy, Adoption and Parental Leave:** Upon the written advice of the employee's physician, unpaid leave because of pregnancy may be given after all other leave, including sick leave, is exhausted. Similarly, unused accrued vacation may be utilized immediately after the arrival of a new child, whether by natural birth or adoption.
    - **Parental Leave:**
      - **Primary Caregiver:** Any employee who is the primary caregiver and has worked for SEYM at 60% or more time for one year or longer may take up to 12 weeks of leave for the birth or adoption of a child at the time of the birth or adoption. Of these twelve weeks, six weeks are paid parental leave. The remaining six weeks may include accumulated sick leave, vacation/personal leave, and/or compensatory time (all of these are paid leave), and/or unpaid family leave.
      - **Non-Primary Caregiver:** Any employee who has worked for SEYM at 60% or more time for one year or longer and who is not the primary caregiver of a newborn or newly adopted child may take up to two weeks off from work with pay at the time of the birth or adoption.
  - v. **Jury Duty:** An employee who is summoned to jury duty may respond accordingly and serve as his/her conscience dictates without jeopardizing his/her employment or regular rate of pay.
  - vi. **Compassionate Leave:** The Clerk of EC or the Administrative Secretary has sole discretionary ability in administering leave in compassionate situations.
  - vii. **Other Leave (Sabbatical, etc.):** All other leave, such as Sabbatical, shall be considered at the request of the employee to the Clerk of EC. Length of employment and the length, merit and need of the leave shall be evaluated, as well as the ability of the Yearly Meeting to fill in the gap in operations that will result from granting the requested leave. Determination of continuity of pay and benefits, and other terms of the leave, will be negotiated with the employee at the time of considering the request.
- c. **Benefits**
- i. **Health Insurance:** Future participation by SEYM in group health insurance policies is actively being considered. At this time, however, only a monetary contribution (the amount as provided in the SEYM approved annual budget) will be paid the employee towards the cost of individual health care insurance, which each employee must purchase for him/herself.

ii. Life and Other Insurance:

SEYM does not offer Life or other forms of insurance for its employees at this time.

iii. Other Benefits (e.g., Unemployment Compensation, Retirement Plans, Savings Plans):

SEYM does not offer any other forms of employee benefits at this time.

7. Reimbursement for Expenses

Eligibility and procedures for reimbursement for employee expenses, such as travel, internet access, telephone, postage, and office supplies is described in the SEYM Operational Handbook.

8. Professional Training and Development

SEYM encourages continuing development of job skills. Requests to attend workshops or job training courses during working hours, and for reimbursement of costs for these development venues, must be submitted before the event to EC for approval. Approval of and financial support for such training and development by the Yearly Meeting may be limited by budget and/or program demands.

9. Performance Expectations and Appraisals

a. Periodicity, Procedures and Format

- A written report by the employee is submitted to the Administrative Secretary or to the EC prior to the Fall and the Winter Interim Business Meetings, the Annual Sessions, and the June EC meeting. Reports should account for the employee's time by describing the work and activities involved. Accomplishments, needs, and difficulties related to the position are to be included.
- EC is responsible for approving the report or raising any relevant questions and concerns.
- A more detailed process may need to be developed if and when the number of SEYM employees increases.

b. Dealing with Results

It is the responsibility of EC to take the appropriate action, based upon performance evaluations, whether satisfactory or unsatisfactory. At times it may be useful to report satisfactory, or better, job performance to the Yearly Meeting in the EC report. It may also be necessary to terminate employment, due to unsatisfactory or unimproved performance, and termination is also reported to Yearly Meeting through the EC report. Privacy and confidentiality shall be maintained to the maximum extent possible, and sensitivity to the effects of such reports on the SEYM community shall be particularly observed.

10. Discrimination and Harassment

SEYM, in keeping with Friend's historical concerns for equality and justice, is committed to providing an environment for its staff, volunteers, committee members, and program participants which is free of discrimination and harassment. Demeaning actions, words, jokes or comments which are based on gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, or faith will not be tolerated. SEYM's policies regarding

discrimination and harassment will be provided to all employees and volunteers as part of their orientation and training.

- Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual or gender-based behavior generally involving the exercise of formal or informal power by the perpetrator over the victim. It is a form of misconduct that is demeaning to another person and undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. It is illegal, and is strictly prohibited within SEYM. Sexual harassment may be verbal (suggestive comments, threats, insults, jokes, sexual propositions), nonverbal (suggestive, insulting or obscene gestures, noises, leering, displaying pornographic material), or physical (touching, brushing body, coercing sexual intercourse, assault). Sexual harassment includes cases in which submission to such conduct by an employee is made a term or condition of that individual's employment or used as a factor in other decisions affecting that individual's employment. It also includes cases in which the conduct substantially interferes with the work performance of an employee, volunteer, or committee member, or creates an intimidating or offensive environment for an employee, volunteer, committee member, or program participant.
  - Confronting Sexual Harassment: Any employee or volunteer who experiences or observes such behavior is encouraged, if possible, to tell the perpetrator plainly that his or her behavior is objectionable harassment and to ask him or her to stop it.
  - Reporting Sexual Harassment: Any employee, volunteer, committee member or program participant who experiences or observes sexual harassment should report it to the Yearly Meeting's Presiding Clerk or its Assistant Clerk, or to the Clerk of the Executive Committee. If none of them is available, the report should be made to the staff person or committee member with overall responsibility for the event or occasion. Anyone can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal from SEYM. The individual receiving such a report must document the allegation and place the documentation in the confidential files of SEYM. Willful false allegations of sexual harassment will not be tolerated and are subject to disciplinary action.
- Investigating Allegations of Harassment or Discrimination: Any allegation of harassment or discrimination will be investigated by the Executive Committee acting as the Yearly Meeting Personnel Committee, or by a designated subcommittee of the Personnel Committee, unless a member of that Committee is alleged to have perpetrated, participated in or condoned the behavior, in which case the Presiding Clerk of the Yearly Meeting, or their designee, will empanel and head an Ad Hoc Committee that will conduct the investigation. The investigation will be confidential, thorough, impartial and prompt.

All parties involved will be interviewed and asked to submit signed, written statements. The involved parties and the Personnel Committee will be informed as to the findings of the investigation and the corrective action taken, if any. All others should understand and respect the need for confidentiality in such investigations.

- Consequences: Anyone found to have engaged in sexual harassment or other unlawful harassment or discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action. For employees, this could involve a range of actions, up to and including termination without notice. For volunteers, committee members, or program participants, the consequences could also involve a range of actions, up to and including separation from the organization or program.

## 11. Grievance Procedures

If problems arise, they should be addressed promptly, preferably through mutual discernment of the issues and possible steps to resolve them, with caring, concerned and impartial Friends present. Neither staff nor other Friends should let unresolved concerns build up that would involve grievances stretching back for many months or incidences. Steps in attempting to resolve a grievance should be implemented in a timely fashion.

### Informal Procedure

- a) Each party to the grievance should be heard --- the person(s) having the grievance and the person(s) alleged to have caused or contributed to the grievance. When mutual discussions are arranged, each party to the grievance may bring one support person (but not legal counsel) to any discussion, provided the other participants in the discussion are notified well in advance. The role of the support person is to listen and provide support to the entire process, not to "argue the case".
- b) The privacy and dignity of each person must be respected, and confidentiality regarding the content and status of the grievance must be maintained by all involved.
- c) Those involved in trying to resolve the grievance under this informal process may wish to consider the possibility of using an outside mediator or any other mutually-acceptable problem-solving approach.

Formal Procedure: When a process of dialogue involving the parties fails to lead to a satisfactory resolution of the grievance, or when the aggrieved party is unable to conduct a direct discussion with the person with whom he or she has the grievance, the following formal procedure should be initiated. The formal procedure includes more than one step, to be taken in a specific order; at any point that a mutually satisfactory resolution is reached, the parties should agree to end the procedure. The steps to be taken are:

- a) The Clerk of EC, on behalf of the Personnel Committee, must be informed of the relevant circumstances by a formal grievance (complaint) in writing by the employee. This grievance notification should be made as promptly as reasonably possible, and include all the details that the employee feels are important to the issue.
- b) The Personnel Committee will review the grievance and within thirty (30) days of its receipt will develop a plan of action, with timelines for each step, and coordinate it with the employee.
- c) The plan will be implemented, accompanied by continuing discernment along the way. If a satisfactory outcome is achieved, the matter ends.
- d) If a satisfactory conclusion is not achieved, the Clerk of EC shall meet with 2 elders, chosen by the clerk from the Yearly Meeting membership, to determine a just way forward.

## 12. Actions to be Taken at Ending of Employment

- a. Resignation or Retirement: To give SEYM time for filling a job opening, any employee who wishes to resign or retire is requested to give at least 60 days notice, and preferably 90 days.
- b. Dismissal for Cause, and Appeal Thereof
  - When the conduct of an employee has been destructive or unethical as determined by the Personnel Committee, or may threaten the well-being and effectiveness of the other employees or the organization, the person's employment can be terminated without notice.
  - A person whose employment is terminated for poor performance or for cause may ask for a review by EC of her or his termination.
- c. Payments at End of Employment
  - Accrued Leave: All unused accrued annual leave shall be paid to the employee at the end of employment, at their then-current rate of pay.
  - Employees who resign or whose employment is terminated by SEYM shall be responsible for reimbursing SEYM for any deficit of accrued annual leave time.
  - No payments "In Lieu Of Notice" shall be paid to any employee or former employee.

### **END OF SEYM PERSONNEL POLICIES DOCUMENT**