



Introduction to Church HR, Staffing and P/SPRC  
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### Who is responsible for HR and staffing in the church?

A) Pastor B) S/PPR C) Jesus D) Church Members E) Someone Else

Answer: It depends on the church governance policy, usually "A" but sometimes "B".

- Typically, the Senior Pastor serves as the CEO and therefore is given authority over all church staff.
- Typically, the S/PPR serves as wise council for the Senior Pastor regarding staffing decisions.
- Typically, the S/PPR will hold the Senior Pastor accountable for HR responsibilities.

### What are the administrative HR responsibilities of a church?

- 1) Creating a Healthy and Safe Work Environment (physically, emotionally, and spiritually)
  - o Written Employee Policy/Handbook that addresses compensation, time reporting, vacation/sick/leave benefits, professional expectations, supervision, disciplinary process, grievance, harassment, etc.
  - o Creating Appeal and Feedback Process.
  - o Making sure work expectations and requirements are within "reasonable standards".
- 2) Employee Files (beyond pastoral staff)
  - o I-9 Forms
  - o W-4 Forms (state and federal)
  - o Safe Gathering Background Checks and Certification
  - Additional items might include:
    - o Application, Resume, Job Description
    - o Church Property List (credit cards, computers, password forms, etc)
    - o Compensation History, Evaluations Disciplinary Issues
    - o Staff Handbook Acknowledgement
  - Employee Files MUST BE LOCKED in a secured area!!!
- 3) Benefits and Payroll
  - o Clergy compensation is different than all other employees.
  - o All employees must be treated constantly according to employment classifications (exempt, non-exempt, part-time, full-time, etc).
  - o Churches must follow all Department of Labor (DOL) laws and requirements, especially regarding compensation, overtime and time off.
  - o Gifts and Bonuses must be disclosed as income, including from all church related groups (UMM, UMW, Sunday School groups, etc).



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- 4) Hiring, Firing, Evaluations and Disciplinary Issues
  - Clear hiring process for communication, interviews, reference checks, and orientation.
  - Documented process for termination of employment which may include separation agreement, severance, and communication.
  - Written evaluations must be recorded and kept.
  - Disciplinary issues (even verbal warnings) must be written down and kept.
  
- 5) Staff Development (Continuing Education)
  - Plan and resources for staff development.
  - What is your church's "Value added proposition"? What benefits do people get from working at your church?

#### **Clarifying HR questions for churches to consider:**

##### Questions about Communication:

- Who has authority to speak about church staffing issues?
- Do you have stated expectations from board members about how to handle staffing questions or comments?
- What guidelines or resources do you have about communicating staffing issues in the church?

##### Questions about Hiring

- Who has authority to hire?
- Do you have a budget for advertising?
- Do you have intentional ways to network (or for your pastor to network)?
- What process do you have for job descriptions, compensation guidelines and interviews?
- Do you ask what are your reference questions, were the calls made and what was the response?
- Who is responsible for new staff orientation?

##### Questions about Supervising

- Do you have clearly articulated supervision structure?
- Do you have documented supervision meetings?
- Do you have clear, measurable goals and outcomes (rather than inputs)?
- How often do you have formal written evaluations and what is that process?
- How do you maintain accountability structure from external influences?

##### Questions about Termination

- Who has authority to terminate? What process does this require?
- Do you have an idea of termination documentation and severance?
- If you had a termination, do you have a list of identified property, keys, passwords, credit cards, etc.?