

W. LAY EMPLOYEES BENEFIT/MINIMUM SALARY GUIDELINES

(Approved 1995)

This report is in response to a 1992 Conference motion by Karen Layman, that a study be made to "...create benefit guidelines and minimum salary scales for lay employees of local churches..." and the results of a study by the Council on Finance and Administration of the progress report of the Commission on Equitable Compensation Subcommittee that was referred to CCF&A by action of the 1993 Conference. The original motion is recorded on page 225 of the 1992 CONFERENCE JOURNAL. The 1993 motion to refer the progress report to CCF&A for study is recorded on page 243 of the 1993 CONFERENCE JOURNAL and the complete progress report is printed on pages 332-334 of the same Journal.

Care should be taken that we neither inhibit nor negate our emphasis on volunteers in the local church. However, for those churches desiring to hire lay employees, the following paragraph from THE DISCIPLINE, Par. 270.2(f)(9), is offered for consideration by the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee:

"To recommend to the Administrative Council or Administrative Board, after consultation with the pastor and the Council on Ministries (where such exists), the professional and other staff positions needed to carry out the work of the church or charge. The committee and the pastor shall recommend to the Administrative Board or Council a written statement of policy and procedures regarding the process for hiring, evaluating, promoting, retiring and dismissing staff personnel who are not subject to episcopal appointment as ordained clergy. Until such a policy has been adopted, the committee and the pastor shall have the authority to hire, evaluate, promote, retire, and dismiss non-appointed personnel. When persons are hired, consideration shall be given to the training qualifications and certification standards set forth by the general church agency to which such positions are related. The committee shall further recommend to the Administrative Council or Administrative Board provisions for adequate health and life insurance, pension benefits, and severance pay for all lay employees."

In keeping with these disciplinary mandates the following guidelines are offered:

GUIDELINES FOR COMPENSATION OF LAY EMPLOYEES IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

1. As employers, local churches are subject to many of the same employment regulations as are secular employers and as such need to comply with the regulations regarding wages, benefits and Social Security.
2. The Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee should prepare a written job description for every position for which compensation is provided.
3. Full-time lay employees should receive health insurance and pension benefits provided by the church, or at least be offered the option to participate at their own cost in such plans.
4. Compensation should be determined by the local church. Professional preparation and experience should be considered when establishing levels of compensation.
5. Diaconal Ministers should be compensated with due consideration for their certification, training and experience. Paragraph 315.1 of the DISCIPLINE states that agencies employing Diaconal Ministers should provide "adequate salaries plus pension benefits, with an opportunity to participate in the United Methodist pension and benefit funds, health care insurance, and continuing education. It is expected that these will be guided by Annual Conference standards for ordained elders."
6. Churches are encouraged to refer to publications such as the *Church Secretary's Communiqué*, P.O. Box 2301, Matthews, NC 28106; *Guidelines for Developing Church personnel policies* and *Guidelines for the Professional Staff Person*, both available from Division of Diaconal Ministry, P.O. Box 871, Nashville, TN 37202-0871; Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Bureau of Labor Standards, 1305 Labor and Industry Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; and salary guidelines of the American Guild of Organists, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 1260, New York, NY 19915 in determining compensation and benefits.