

Staff Relations Committee Policy

A Staff Relations Committee of three shall be appointed by the Congregation Council, subject to Pastoral and ministry staff concurrence. Congregation Council, Nominating Committee, and staff members are not eligible to serve on this committee. Term of service shall be three years, with one member appointed each successive year.

- I. This committee is responsible to the Congregation Council for assisting all staff in resolving personnel issues.
 - A. The role of the Staff Relations Committee is to be a mediating body.
 - B. To demonstrate that issues are being resolved, the committee shall report quarterly to the Council the following metrics:
 - Number of cases received in the last quarter.
 - Number of cases dispositioned in the last quarter (and age of each).
 - Number of cases currently undergoing resolution (and age of each).
 - Any trends that the committee desires to highlight to the Council (such as number of repeat issues).
 - C. The Committee will develop and document their own operating guidelines and report them to the Council.
- II. Members of this committee should have a professional background in personnel management, human resources, parish ministry, or the mental health professions, and they should have substantial understanding of this congregation's ministry.
- III. This committee shall meet at least four times a year and as often as it feels necessary to carry out its responsibilities.
 - A. The committee should take advantage of the meetings to discuss matters such as general issues that may affect their conduct and readiness to handle issues, outside/environmental factors that could act as leading indicators for issues that they may want to prepare to handle, or general "training" type sessions to enhance the committee's effectiveness.
- IV. In the case of difficulties between staff members, or between staff members and members of the congregation, this committee shall serve as an intermediate step for conflict resolution. Ordinarily the persons involved shall come to this committee only after first seeking to work out differences between themselves, and if that is unsuccessful, with the assistance of the Lead Pastor. Should resolution not be attained with the assistance of the Staff Relations Committee, the issues may be brought to the Congregation Council, at the Executive Committee's discretion.
 - A. The Staff Relations Committee, Executive Committee, and Congregation Council involvement in any issue must avoid conflicts of interest. In the instance that the issue involves any members of the Executive Committee, they shall recuse themselves from the decision to elevate the issue.
 - B. The role of the Executive Committee is to decide whether to elevate the issue to the Congregation Council. The decision is to be based solely on information submitted by the Staff Relations Committee, specifically, a description of the differences between positions and the unsuccessful recommendations of the Staff Relations Committee.

- C. Once an issue is elevated to the Congregation Council, it will hear the case anew directly from the involved parties.
- V. Confidentiality is required for this committee to work effectively. In order to maintain confidentiality, meetings of this committee are open only to its members and those it invites to attend. However, all who take part in said meetings shall do so with the understanding that confidentiality does not prevent the committee from alerting the Congregation Council that it has been asked to help resolve a conflict, naming the specific individuals involved in the conflict, and, if deemed necessary for the well-being of the congregation, describing the general nature of the conflict.
- VI. The committee shall notify the Executive Committee in a timely manner when it determines that it can no longer function effectively in dealing with issues before it and it believes the issues warrant Council attention.