

# ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

## CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

For Exempt Employees Whose Salary is not Based on an Hourly Rate

### Teacher Commitment (ARKLA Ed Handbook 0110)

“Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to accomplish His work.’”  
John 4:34 RSV

Employees of the Conference subscribe to this same commitment. It is the desire of each educator to properly represent Jesus and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in attitude, philosophy and conduct.

“Jesus...was perfect as a workman, as He was perfect in character. By His own example He taught that it is our duty to be industrious, that our work should be performed with exactness and thoroughness.” Desire of Ages p. 72.

### Nondiscrimination Exception Employment Policy (ARKLA Ed Handbook p. 3-40115; SWUC Code 600; NAD Policy FEA 05 30)

*For Seventh-day Adventists the free exercise of religion includes the right to operate educational institutions that are distinctively Seventh-day Adventist. The creation and maintenance of such institutions require that they be staffed only by those individuals who are in complete harmony with the beliefs and practices of the Church. Hence, in the employment of personnel for its educational institutions, one of the occupational qualifications for any position is that the individual must be a Seventh-day Adventist, committed to the program of the Church.*

*School boards shall, officially and in practice, abide by the following policies relating to employment:*

- 1. Equal employment opportunities shall be afforded to all on the basis of qualifications, without regard to race, color, gender, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, age, height, weight, marital status (single or married), or prior military service.*
- 2. Inasmuch as the personal life and the professional identity of an individual are inseparable, all employees are expected to conform to the standards of conduct that are in harmony with Seventh-day Adventist principles.*

## **Philosophy of Remuneration (ARKLA Ed Handbook 0120; See also, ARKLA Working Policy p. 22-23)**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has accepted the commission given by Jesus Christ to His disciples to proclaim the gospel to all the world. The church employs many agencies to accomplish its spiritual task, but all of its organizations (Conferences, schools, Adventist Book Centers, etc.) have one central objective – the salvation of man. Because of this, every denominational employee has a responsibility to participate in the mission of the church.

To provide a basis for the remuneration of various classes of employees, a denominational wage scale has been adopted. The philosophy of this wage scale is predicated upon the fact that a spirit of sacrifice and dedication should mark God's employees irrespective of the position they hold or the department they represent. The work of the church, including every denominational organization, is a mission to which lives are dedicated rather than a business or commercial venture. The church wage scale does not always compensate its dedicated employees in monetary units commensurate with their talents, accomplishments, and contributions, but does provide employees with a modest living income, which gives recognition of responsibilities borne, preparation undertaken, professional attainment, previous experience, and years of service.

The church believes that modesty and good taste with reasonable comfort will govern the lives of Christian employees. It recognizes that some areas of its work are more directly affected by economic factors conditions prevailing in different geographical areas.

The spirit of sacrifice on the part of Seventh-day Adventist employees will be manifested not only by the level of their financial remuneration but also by the dedication of time, talents, and energy to the cause of God and humanity. Men and women called to labor in the cause of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are to be employees of single purpose and allegiance. With Paul, the great missionary of the early Christian church, they say, "This one thing I do."

The philosophy of remuneration was developed on the scriptural and spiritual imperative, "Give us this day our daily bread." It is a plan which provides for a salary covering the needs of individuals who believe that God blesses the spirit of selfless service and who believe that the Seventh-day Adventist employee will also, from his modest salary, make voluntary gifts to accelerate the proclamation of the Gospel, and thus exhibit a further demonstration of faith and commitment. Because of this philosophy, all denominational employees in the Seventh-day Adventist Church are placed in one of two harmonious categories and designated either as ministers or missionaries. Both categories call for a commitment and sacrifice but allow for different functions.

## Qualifications for Employment (ARKLA Ed Handbook 0130; See also, ARKLA Working Policy p. 4-5)

Employees of the Conference are expected to possess certain characteristics and to maintain the standards of the organization listed below:

1. A personal relationship with Jesus Christ, membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and unreserved commitment to its objectives.
2. Full acceptance and total support of Seventh-day Adventist fundamental beliefs as indicated in the 28 points adopted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
3. A careful adherence to fundamental Bible teachings and standards of the Seventh-day Adventist Church which forbids the following:
  - a. Use of alcoholic beverages and tobacco;
  - b. Illegal possession and/or misuse of drugs;
  - c. Use of profanity;
  - d. Immoral conduct, including but not limited to adultery, fornication, and homosexuality;
  - e. Immodest dress, inappropriate use of cosmetics or jewelry; (See Section 0170)
  - f. Gambling, lotteries, and other chance-type games; or
  - g. Physical or emotional abuse of students.
4. A high professional and ethical standard of integrity and confidentiality.
5. Consistent loyalty and cooperation.
6. A faithful steward in matters of tithe, time, and talents. Tithing practices may be audited annually.
7. Careful management of personal finances and meeting all just obligations on a current basis.
8. An unreserved commitment and fidelity to Christian service.
9. Avoidance of conflicting interests and enterprises.

10. A willingness to resolve conflicts, disputes, complaints, and grievances in a timely professional manner.
11. A willingness to comply with all policies of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
12. To support Seventh-day Adventist Education by enrolling their children in the schools of the church, unless otherwise recommended by Education professionals and Conference officers and approved by the Conference Executive Committee or Board of Education. (See also ARKLA Ed Handbook pp. 71-74; ARKLA Working Policy pp. 33-35)

### **Separation, Divorce, and Remarriage (ARKLA Ed Handbook 0135; ARKLA Working Policy p. 12)**

Employees whose homes are involved in separation or divorce proceedings may be terminated. Employment may be continued, provided approval is given by the Conference Executive Committee.

### **Hiring Persons With Non-SDA Spouses (ARKLA Working Policy p. 12)**

Applicants whose spouses are non-Seventh-day Adventists, shall not be employed unless approval is granted by the Conference Executive Committee.

### **Marriage of a Non-Adventist (ARKLA Ed Handbook 0140; ARKLA Working Policy p. 12)**

An employee who marries a non-Seventh-day Adventist may be terminated unless approval is granted by the Conference Executive Committee.

### **Spouse to Move with Mate (ARKLA Ed Handbook 0142; ARKLA Working Policy p. 13)**

When an employee from outside the immediate area of his or her assignment is hired by the Conference, the employee's spouse must join the employee within 90 days. If the spouse fails to move, the employee will no longer be employed by the Conference when the 90 day time period ends. Additional time may be granted or the policy waived by the Conference Executive Committee.

### **Church Membership (ARKLA Ed Handbook 0150; See Also, SWUC Code 3114, 3758)**

The teacher's church membership shall be at a constituent church where he or she teaches. The teacher should attend the Sabbath services in this church at least three out of every four Sabbaths unless he or she is asked to participate in worship services of other churches. The tithe shall be

returned where the teacher has his/her membership. When more than one church operates a school, the teacher may choose one of the churches as home church.

## **Tithing/Personal Finance (ARKLA Ed Handbook 0155)**

### *TITHING:*

Tithing is a basic Biblical principle which speaks to a person's relationship with his Creator. This relationship is ordained of God for the benefit of His children. Systematic and regular tithing yields rich rewards. Among these is the bond which results between a person and his Creator. Another is experiencing the intrinsic satisfaction of giving one's self and one's means to the Lord. Our Lord's promise of special blessings to the faithful tither can be received in no other way.

Because of the importance of the tithing principle and all that it represents as a basic tenet of the Church, it becomes a clear condition of employment for all credentialed/licensed employees. Consequently, at the time of employment, each individual who is eligible for a credential/license shall be informed in writing of the basic requirements and conditions of employment, including the expectancy of a regular tithing program. Employees shall also be informed that their tithing practices may be audited annually. A statement acknowledging this condition of employment and giving the Conference permission to conduct the audit shall be signed by the employee and kept on file in the personnel office of the Conference.

If it should be discovered and verified that this requirement is not being satisfied, it becomes a signal of significant spiritual concern. Discussions with the employee shall be of a pastoral concern with the view of helping the individual understand that he/she is depriving himself/herself of a blessing and is following a course that will be harmful to his own relationship with his Creator.

If a favorable change has not occurred within a reasonable time, the matter must then be referred to the appropriate administrative body for resolution. If efforts at this level prove to be unsuccessful, the employee has thereby disqualified himself for continuing denominational employment. The terms and conditions of this termination should be clearly outlined.

The chief executive officer or his designee shall be responsible for implementing this policy.

### *PERSONAL FINANCE:*

It is also expected that employees will refrain from all business enterprises that will interfere with their work. It is inappropriate for our employees to seek personal gifts or discuss personal finances with members of the church. Employees are expected to pay their just obligations, and arrange for financial obligations to be paid before transferring.

### **TB Test (ARKLA Ed Handbook 0160; See Also, Union Code 3115)**

1. The teacher shall secure a statement of freedom from communicable Tuberculosis (TB test) as a condition of employment.
2. The statement shall be on a form provided by the Conference Office of Education, Department of Public Health, or physician, completed in the fall and signed by a physician or local health department official. The statement shall be valid for four years from the date of signing, or meet state law.
3. The employee shall hold a valid statement of TB freedom during employment.
4. A copy of the statement shall be on file at the Conference Office of Education.

### **Physical Examination (ARKLA Ed Handbook 0165; See Also, Union Code 3114, 3115)**

The teacher shall obtain a complete physical examination from a licensed physician upon employment and once every four years thereafter, indicating adequate physical condition to perform the responsibilities of employment. A copy of the physical report will be mailed to the Conference Office of Education and placed in the teacher's locked file. The teacher shall be reimbursed for the physical examination at the NAD medical examination rate. Refusal to comply with this policy will make the teacher ineligible for employment.

### **Personal Appearance (ARKLA Ed Handbook 0170; See Also, ARKLA Working Policy p. 12)**

Teachers are expected to maintain a professional appearance at all times while on duty. Dress and conduct should be in harmony with the dignified standards of a professional employee. Clothing worn while on duty should be neat, clean, of conservative style, and in good taste.

All extremes should be avoided. The wearing of jewelry and the use of colorful cosmetics and extreme coiffures are not considered good taste and are not accepted standards of proper professional appearance. All staff members are expected to comply with this appearance standard as a condition of employment.

The North American Division has determined that the wearing of the wedding band in North America is not to be regarded as an ornament. In districts where the wearing of the wedding band is an issue the employee should demonstrate sensitivity to this concern. *"Let us not therefore judge one another anymore; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." Romans 14:13 KJV*

*“Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit which is of great worth in God’s sight.” 1 Peter 1:3-4 NIV*

The setting of professional standards may be arbitrary but in harmony with the concepts and tastes of the organization that is periodically to evaluate these standards and to constantly implement them.

We as a people earnestly seek to uphold Christian dress standards in our offices, in our classrooms, on our Conference committees, and in remembering the importance of the hidden man. Further, the ornamentation of our people should be that of purity, meekness, and simplicity.

**Confidentiality (ARKLA Ed Handbook 0175; See Also, ARKLA Working Policy p. 10; SWUC Code 3610)**

Privileged information is strictly confidential and may not be disseminated unless authorization to do so has been granted by the appropriate individuals or as allowed by law.

**Side Lines (ARKLA Ed Handbook 0550; See Also, ARKLA Working Policy p. 25)**

Conference and institutional employees shall refrain from any side lines, business or activity, either denominational or extra-denominational which has the effect of diminishing their influence and/or infringing on the time and efficiency of the work to which they are assigned.

**Automobile Insurance (ARKLA Working Policy p. 25)**

Teachers and all school or church appointed drivers must carry on their vehicle the minimum automobile insurance requirements as follows:

Bodily Injury Liability	\$100,000/300,000
Property Damage Liability	\$50,000
<i>(Optional \$300,000 single limit policy is acceptable)</i>	
Medical payments	\$5,000
Comprehensive and Collision	Employee choice

## Background Check Policy/Verified Volunteer (ARKLA Working Policy p. 22)

All new employees of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference are required to go through a Verified Volunteer training and agree to a background check, which includes, but is not limited to, searching federal, state, county and parish criminal records, motor vehicle checks, and social security checks. All volunteers working with minors shall and must go through a Verified Volunteer training and agree to a background check.

Each new employee/volunteer will fill out a “Secured Personnel Data System User Agreement” and return it to the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference office where the background check will be initiated. The Arkansas-Louisiana Conference is responsible for the cost of all background checks for individuals employed by the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference.

All individuals who are employed by the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference but funded by local church, elementary school, academy, or who are volunteers who are regularly in contact with children/students, shall also be required to agree to a background check and supply the required information to the conference office. The conference office will facilitate the background search; however, the local church/school is responsible for the cost of the search(es). The local church/school will be notified of the completion of the background search; however, the documents will be kept on file in the conference Human Resource office. It must be renewed after 3 years.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge and agree to practice these basic requirements and conditions of employment and give the employing organization permission to conduct annual tithe audits and periodic background checks.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please sign and return this entire document, keeping a copy for your records.**