

## Employment Equity

### 1. Purpose

The Employment Equity Act (1995) is a federal legislation that aims to provide equal workplace opportunities to people from four designated groups: “Women, Aboriginal peoples (for the purposes of the United Church of Canada’s policy, the church uses the term “*Indigenous Peoples*”), persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities (for the purposes of the United Church of Canada’s policy, the church uses the term “Racialized peoples”).”

In keeping with the Act, The United Church of Canada’s Employment Equity policy documents the ways in which the United Church strives to address issues of systemic discrimination and inequity for these four federally designated groups, as well as people of all identities, so as to reduce barriers in our places of work for all.

### 2. Definitions

The following definitions are as used by the Government of Ontario:

*2.1. Employment Equity:* “encourages the establishment of working conditions that are free from barriers, seeks to correct conditions of disadvantage in employment, and promotes the principle that it requires special measures to accommodate differences for the four (4) designated groups in Canada.”

*2.2. Reasonable Accommodation:* “employers and unions, housing and service providers have a legal duty to accommodate the needs of people because of their gender identity or gender expression, unless it would cause undue hardship. The goal of accommodation is to help everyone have equal opportunities, access and benefits.”

*2.3. Designated Groups:* “refer to Women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities.”

*2.4. Women:* “the category of women includes people who identify as cisgender and trans.”

*2.5. Aboriginal peoples:* “persons who are Indians, Inuit or Métis” (For the purposes of the United Church of Canada’s policy, the church uses the term “*Indigenous Peoples*”; peoples who have inhabited territories since before the arrival of colonizers — First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.).

*2.6. Persons with disabilities:* “persons who have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric or learning impairment; and who consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment, or believe that an employer or potential employer is likely to consider them to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment, and includes persons whose functional limitations owing to their impairment have been accommodated in their current job or workplace.”

*2.7. Disability:*

a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes

diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;

b) a condition of mental retardation impairment or a developmental disability;

c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;

d) a mental disorder; or

e) an injury or disability for which benefits are claimed or received under the workplace injury or illness insurance plan established by the applicable province.

2.8. *Members of visible minorities*: “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour” (For the purposes of the United Church of Canada’s policy, the church uses the term “*Racialized People*”; this term is commonly used instead of “racial minority,” “visible minority,” “person of colour,” or “non-White.”).

### 3. Policy

3.1. This policy applies only to the General Council Office and the Regional Councils offices. However, communities of faith are welcome to use this policy as applicable.

3.2. The United Church of Canada is committed to creating an equitable and just workplace in the calling, appointment, development, and advancement of staff. The church will use data-informed approaches, in keeping with its commitments to equity, inclusion, diversity and accessibility, to reduce employment barriers and discriminatory employment practices.

3.3. Recruitment, employment, development, promotion practices, succession planning and policies shall be as free as possible from both systemic and institutionalized barriers. Proactive and progressive measures for recruiting, employing, training, and promoting members of designated groups will be implemented.

3.4. The United Church of Canada will strive to incorporate strategies to increase the inclusion and participation of Indigenous peoples, racialized peoples, women, and persons with disabilities, across all occupational categories and at all levels of employment, in keeping with the organization’s strategic objectives.

### 4. Procedures

#### 4.1. *Posting*

Each job posting shall contain a statement that references the United Church’s policy commitments to equity and anti-oppression, as well as a welcoming message to encourage applications from members of the designated groups, and people from all identities to apply. There will be additional and concerted efforts to actively recruit diverse and minoritized candidates to further diversify the United Church’s staff team.

#### 4.2. *Job Descriptions*

Documentation listing of the requirements needed to perform the job satisfactorily must be developed and approved by Human Resources prior to the posting of a vacancy. Employing Units of the General Council Office and Regional Councils

will ensure that the competencies and qualifications are bona fide requirements and do not preclude specific groups. These job descriptions will also include clear statements that reference the church's various commitments to equity, anti-racism and anti-oppression, as well as copyright/ownership clauses.

#### *4.3. Reasonable Accommodation*

In keeping with our duty to accommodate, Employing Units of the General Council Office and Regional Councils will provide reasonable accommodation to applicants, candidates and employees, when requested.

#### *4.4. Selection Panel*

Human Resources and the respective Hiring Manager will make every effort to have a balanced and fair representation of qualified diverse team members to participate in the panel which will review a candidate's suitability for an advertised position.

#### *4.5. Selection Process*

Selection will be based on the principles of merit, fairness and equity. Some staff positions, however, require membership in The United Church of Canada. The Ministry and Employment Unit shall ensure that extreme care is taken to justify this requirement before recruiting begins and will liaise with the regional Human Rights Commission as required. Additional efforts to create equitable interview processes and practices will also be put into place.

#### *4.6. Compensation*

Existing and new employees will be compensated in a systematic and fair manner as per the United Church's Salary Schedule for General Council Office & Regional Council Staff, updated and published annually. The salary schedule is developed in a way to ensure that employees receive a livable wage and competitive in comparison to industry (not for profit) standards. Where practical and sustainable, the salary schedule may be adjusted to take into account cost-of-living calculations.

#### *4.7. New Hires*

Demographic statistics on new hires, relevant to meeting Employment Equity standards, will be collected to assist the United Church in capturing data which will better inform the organization's commitments to meet workplace equity and diversity.

#### *4.8. Retention and Workplace Change*

Staff of the General Council Office and Regional Councils are invited to participate in surveys surrounding workplace equity, yearly. These surveys are utilized in working towards workplace change and creating a more equitable workplace year to year.

## **5. Responsibility**

5.1. Human Resources will collect, house and analyze the individual and notational data on the representation of designated groups, and other minority groups, and provide aggregate data to the Anti-Racism and Equity Lead who will report same to the General

Secretary. Analysis of said data will also be used to inform the administration of the Employment Equity Policy by Hiring Managers.

5.2. Staff of the General Council Office and Regional Councils will be invited to participate in Leadership Counts — the voluntary identity-based data collection for staff. Aggregate data on staff identities, so that no one individual may be identified, may also be shared and reported.

5.3. Human Resources will assist the General Council Office and Regional Councils in complying with this policy, including the evaluation and progress of its commitments.

5.4. Senior Leadership and Human Resources will:

- Establish and enable an environment that is supportive of diversity and employment equity; and
- Analyze and monitor employment systems to identify and remove barriers to employment, retention and advancement for members of the designated groups.

5.5. The General Secretary will report on its progress in employment equity yearly to the Executive of the General Council (GCE), including recommendations to address gaps.

## 6. Education

Integral to successfully administrating and practicing the principles of this policy is ongoing training. The Anti-Racism and Equity Lead, in collaboration with the Learning and Development Lead, will utilize the following methods to inform and prepare training on equity, diversity, accessibility and inclusion:

6.1. *Equity Arc* - Consists of staff training material to assist in recognizing and responding to issues surrounding, but not limited to:

- Anti-Racism and Racial Justice
- Disabilities
- Indigenous Church
- Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, Violence Response
- Mental Health Equity
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

6.2. *Review the United Church's Equity Commitments*: The United Church's [Commitments to Equity](#) are published and accessible by the general public. These commitments are lived out in ways that influence staff annual goal reviews and training materials, as well as influence other ongoing operational and administrative processes of the General Council Office and respective Regional Council Offices.

## 7. Confidentiality

7.1. All information gathered for the purposes of employment equity is kept confidential, accessible only by appropriate Ministry & Employment team members, with aggregate data being provided to the Anti-Racism and Equity Lead to inform required reporting by the General Secretary.

## **8. Retention and Use of Equity Information**

8.1. Specific demographical data is collected to ensure compliance with employment equity standards regarding The United Church of Canada's hiring and staff compliment. This information is kept confidential and used for the purposes of yearly reporting.

## **9. Additional Notes to the Policy**

This policy should be read along with the following:

- Employment Equity Act (1995)
- Accessible Canada Act (2019)
- Accessibility and Customer Service
- Workplace Accommodation: Disability