

Guidelines for Caring for your Called Workers (Pastor, Deacons and Other Called Workers)

You have heard the solemn promise of him called to be your pastor. Will you receive him, show him that love, honor and obedience in the Lord that you owe to the shepherd and the teacher placed over you by the Lord Jesus Christ, and will you support him by your gifts and pray for him always that in his labors he may retain a cheerful spirit and that his ministry among you may be abundantly blessed?

Installation of a Pastor

Introduction: These guiding principles, based on best human resource practices, are designed to help the congregational and employer leadership create a positive, healthy environment which supports the well-being of Called Workers allowing him/her to serve effectively and wholeheartedly. While the guidelines below are meant for Called Workers, many of them can also be applied to other church workers.

As Scripture reminds us in **1 Thessalonians 5:12–13**,
“We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.”

The care and support of your Called Workers are not only acts of kindness—they are biblical responsibilities.

1. **Establish an Elders Committee or Ministry Board:** Establish a group of dedicated elected lay members to support your Called Worker(s), facilitate open communication, and proactively address concerns.
Example: Holding regular meetings with the committee/board to discuss any issues and offer encouragement and propose solutions.
2. **Promote a Healthy Work Environment:** Prioritize the Called Worker’s well-being by fostering a safe, respectful workplace and providing resources for stress management.
Example: Encouraging enrolment in periodic wellness workshops or stress management and mental health seminars. Ideally these would be in-person events but could also be online.
3. **Recognize and Appreciate Called Worker’s Efforts:** Regularly acknowledge the Called Worker’s contributions through affirmations, written notes, public recognition and acts of appreciation.
Example: Celebrating the Called Worker’s anniversary with the church, a gift of appreciation such as a weekend getaway at a congregant’s cottage.
4. **Support Professional Development:** Provide time and resources for continuing education and spiritual renewal beyond required LCC activities.
Example: Provide funding towards attendance at conferences, retreats or workshops for skill development, spiritual renewal and rejuvenation.
5. **Respect Personal Boundaries:** Clearly define expectations regarding the Called Worker’s availability, ensuring adequate personal and family time.

Example: Establishing “office hours” and discouraging non-emergency church-related communications outside of those hours. Respecting designated day off is essential. Help the Called Worker understand and create personal boundaries by making every effort not to send messages outside office hours, establishing the expectation that the Called Worker will respond when they are back in the office.

6. **Manageable Workload:** Assist the Called Worker in delegating tasks to empower church staff and volunteers, preventing overload.
Example: Creating congregational teams responsible for specific church programs, allowing the Called Worker to focus on their ministerial role.
7. **Conflict Resolution Mechanisms:** Implement procedures for addressing conflicts that encourage mediation and open dialogue.
Example: If conflict cannot be resolved within the congregations, guidance can be sought first from Circuit Counsellors and then Regional Pastors. If the conflict is not resolved amicably, offer a mediation session led by trained facilitators e.g. Ambassadors of Reconciliation.
8. **Set Realistic Expectations:** Clearly define and regularly review the Called Worker’s roles and responsibilities to ensure they are attainable.
Example: Hold quarterly check-ins to evaluate priorities, review responsibilities and gather feedback on workload challenges.
9. **Nurture a spirit of Unity:** Foster unity by encouraging respectful discussions on topics while maintaining a focus on shared beliefs.
Example: Hosting community forums focused on common values and mission rather than divisive issues.
10. **Encourage Self-Care:** Support the Called Worker’s physical, emotional, and spiritual health through various self-care initiatives.
Example: Encouraging participation in fitness classes, counseling, or spiritual retreats.
11. **Care and support the Called Worker’s family:** Acknowledge family responsibilities (caring for children, elderly parents and medical needs) by allowing personal days outside vacation time.
Example: Allowing flexibility in scheduling to accommodate significant family events or personal appointments without added stress.

By integrating these principles, you can create a supportive framework that reinforces the Called Worker’s well-being and effectiveness, strengthening the entire church community.