

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2018
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-B006
TITLE: Amend Canon I.17
PROPOSER: The Rt. Rev. Shannon Johnston
TOPIC: Canons

Directly Related: (Attached)

2000-D015 Urge Adoption of Guidelines on Employment Practices in the Church Workplace
1988-D084 Define Employment Relationships With Written Agreements

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

2000-D013 Refer a Resolution on Dispute Resolution for Church Employees

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1976 through 2015, selecting "direct" resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The "direct" resolutions are attached and "indirect" resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.

B006 Amend Canon I.17

Proposer	The Rt. Rev. Shannon Johnston
Endorsed by	Alexander, The Rt. Rev. J. Neil; Whitmore, The Rt. Rev. Keith
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. 58
HiA / Leg. Cttee	/
Current Status	Pre-Filed Resolution
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That Canon 1.17: Of Regulations Respecting the Laity is hereby amended to include the following addition:
- 2 *Sec. 9. Any Lay Person accepting employment within the Church in any capacity is entitled to a letter of agreement describing the duties and responsibilities of the position, including details of salary and any benefits. The letter will include provisions for an annual performance evaluation, procedures for the reconciliation of disagreements, and contain a clearly articulated dissolution clause. Employees are to be circumspect in their conduct avoiding any moral or pastoral conduct of a nature to bring material discredit upon the Church.*

EXPLANATION

The proposed Canon is presented to support the ministry of Lay Employees. The duties and requirements for the ministries of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons are outlined in multiple Canons giving the requirements and duties of those in holy orders. No Canon is provided, however, outlining the duties and responsibilities of Lay Employees. Since these ministries vary and have specific requirements in different settings, their descriptions cannot be set by Canon. However, for clarity in these situations, a letter of agreement should outline the duties and responsibilities of a particular ministry, including details of salary and benefits, and a “clearly articulated dissolution clause,” as provided for assistant clergy in Canon III.9.3c.

It should also include provision for an annual performance evaluation and procedures for the reconciliation of disagreements, as recommended for both Clergy and Lay Employees in General Convention Resolution Do84 of 1984. This proposed Canon would direct that Lay Employees have their duties and responsibilities set forth in a document that is signed by both Rector and Lay Employee. In this way, both parties have accountability to each other and to the church. This is the norm in other professions and should be no less so in the Church. Having letters of agreement for Lay Employees enshrined in Canon gives Clergy, Vestries, and Lay Employees recourse in the event that disputes arise.



Resolution Number: 2000-D015
Title: Urge Adoption of Guidelines on Employment Practices in the Church Workplace
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention call on each diocese to present to its convention principles and guidelines of justice and accountability in the church workplace for discussion and action; and be it further

Resolved, That other Episcopal organizations and institutions discuss and act on principles and guidelines similarly; and be it further

Resolved, That the attached principles and guidelines from the Colloquium of Episcopal Professional and Vocational Associations be a part of that discussion; and be it further

Resolved, That the Executive Council monitor and report back to the 74th General Convention on the progress of these discussions and actions.

PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES

If the Episcopal Church is to fulfill its mission to the world to proclaim and to teach gospel values of personal dignity and justice in our common life, we must practice those same values in our everyday Church working relationships. Workplace issues such as wages, *pro forma* resignations, and regular evaluations should not be addressed apart from the principles of our Baptismal Covenant.

People who work in the Church - including bishops, kitchen aides, presbyters, headmasters, sextons, deacons, secretaries, musicians, youth workers, teachers, administrators, and others - each, according to assigned responsibilities and personal talents, serve the Church's mission.

Therefore, in our various church workplaces - parishes, schools, seminaries, camps, institutions, diocesan and national church administration, and so on - we need to promote the right ordering of relationships by fostering the principles of personal dignity, justice, accountability, and participation. By such principles we seek to promote both the dignity of individuals and the corporate responsibilities of church institutions.

Using such principles, it is imperative that we develop church workplace procedures and policies that honor the rights of individuals while serving faithfully the over-arching common good entrusted to us as the church, that is, the mission of Jesus Christ to the World.

- 1. Employment policies and practices in the Episcopal Church - recruitment, selection, training, policy development, salary, benefits, due process, termination, and retirement - must manifest respect for the dignity of every person, in accord with the Baptismal Covenant.**

2. **Respect for the mission, ideals, and structures of the organization is expected of all who work within the Church.**
3. **Respect for the rights and responsibilities of each worker is essential to church workplaces.**

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES FOR LAITY AND CLERGY

The Call

1. **The format of the calling process is to be publicly stated in writing.**
2. **The description of each position and its requirements is to be clearly defined in writing.**
3. **A definite calendar and sequence of the process is to be publicly stated in writing.**
4. **Members of the calling Community are to be represented in the selection process.**

The Covenant Between the Person Called and the Calling Community

1. **The responsibilities of the person called are to be stated in a clear and definite format within a written covenant.**
2. **The responsibilities of the calling community to the person called are to be stated in a clear and definite format within a written covenant.**
3. **Provision for mutual, annual evaluation is to be included in the written covenant.**
4. **The dates for the inception and expiration of the covenant are to be specified with the written covenant.**
5. **A complete compensation package, including how and when it will be reviewed, is to be specified within the written covenant.**

Continuing the Covenant

1. **The spiritual, mental, physical, and social health of every employee deserves support through opportunities for professional development, spiritual nurture, personal growth, and personal time.**
2. **A standard and regular process of mutual reporting by all parties on their covenanted responsibilities is essential to their shared ministry.**
3. **All parties share responsibility for fostering a wholesome working environment.**

Ending the Covenant

1. **Sufficient notice is to be given by either party intending not to renew the covenant upon its stated expiration.**
2. **When a covenant is not renewed, reasons for the decision are to be given.**
3. **Appropriate assistance for continuing ministry is to be offered by and to each party.**
4. **The covenant may be ended, by mutual agreement, prior to the expiration of its stated term.**

5. **If one party believes the provisions of the covenant are not being fulfilled and wishes, therefore, to terminate the covenant prior to the expiration of its stated term:**

When applicable, canonical procedures will be followed.

Written documentation, based on the provisions of the covenant must be presented by the terminating party.

6. **The dignity of all parties shall be respected in leave-taking. Leave-taking should be marked by the community in a mutually agreed upon manner.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), pp. 350-353.



Resolution Number: 1988-D084
Title: Define Employment Relationships With Written Agreements
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That this 69th General Convention encourage all hiring authorities of the Church to define employment relationships with both lay and ordained personnel by means of written policies or agreements, which should include procedures for performance review and dispute resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Detroit, 1988* (New York: General Convention, 1989), p. 213.