

Just Employment Policy Model

PREAMBLE

The Catholic social tradition has steadfastly endorsed the rights of workers since the days of the Industrial Revolution. Moved by the inhumane treatment of workers, Catholic leaders such as Archbishop von Ketteler, Cardinal Gibbons and Pope Leo XIII became allies of the burgeoning labor movement. Since those days Catholics such as Msgr. John A. Ryan, Mary Harris “Mother” Jones, César Chávez and Dorothy Day have drawn inspiration from their Christian faith and Catholic social teaching to promote worker justice. Catholics from around the globe continue to play leading roles in the struggle for workers’ rights.

Catholic teaching rightly insists on respecting the dignity of all people and posits that certain rights are necessary for the protection of human dignity and full human flourishing. As the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* states, the dignity and well-being of workers requires safeguarding their rights to work, to a just wage, to form unions, to strike, to safe work conditions, unemployment benefits, health care, a pension and adequate rest (nos. 287, 301-305). Many of the world’s great religions affirm these rights, which are also enshrined in the U. N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

This Jesuit, Catholic institution seeks to embody the Ignatian ideals of *cura personalis*, the commitment to justice, and the principles of Catholic social teaching, including the rights of workers, in all of its policies. Grounded in these ideals, this policy aims to help *[institution’s name]* fulfill an important dimension of its mission and strengthen an essential element of its identity by clearly and specifically enumerating the rights and principles that should guide all of our employment relationships.

Wages

[Institution’s name], as a Catholic and Jesuit institution, is committed to providing fair and competitive compensation packages for University employees and full-time contract workers who provide services on its campuses in *[Location]*.

Catholic social teaching holds that a just wage must *at least* be a living wage. Our tradition maintains that all persons must be able attend to their own and their dependents’ material, social, cultural, and spiritual needs, and to live a life of dignity, developing their capacities to the fullest extent possible. Therefore, all workers have a *right* to a just wage.

This wage is based on a variety of factors, including input from the university committee overseeing this policy, the salary and benefits structure of university employees, existing

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[institution's name] collective bargaining agreements and the *[institution's name]*'s overall financial resources and ability to sustain academic excellence.

In principle, this policy is designed to provide a floor for minimum total compensation appropriate for full-time *[institution's name]* workers in the *[location]* metropolitan area. The rate for minimum total compensation takes into account the costs of housing, health care, child care, transportation, taxes, food and other basic necessities (sometimes called a living wage or a just wage,). This rate reflects the need to compensate employees without jeopardizing services or jobs. It attempts to mirror *[institution's name]* employee compensation system and existing union contracts. It provides an ongoing mechanism to evaluate employee compensation, and it ensures that hourly wage earners will receive equivalent pay for equivalent work.

Given these principles, *[institution's name]* will ensure that total compensation for full-time workers (both directly employed and subcontracted) meets the standards of a living wage by *[time]*.

- After FY _____, compensation packages will be adjusted annually taking into consideration Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers in the *[location]* Area (CPI-W) and regional labor market conditions.
- Our institution will use *[specific standard]* as its living wage calculator.¹

This proposal enables the *[University/College]* to ensure regular compensation increases for all full-time employees (both directly employed and subcontracted); recognizes negotiated union agreements already in place; addresses the need to adjust salaries to prevent compression and layoffs; provides a substantially greater total compensation package than called for by existing metro-area wage ordinances; is fiscally responsible and enables *[institution's name]* to sustain academic excellence; and recognizes the value of making annual adjustments.

Workers' Rights

This proposal affirms *[institution's name's]* commitments to:

- a safe and harassment-free work environment, including protection against emotional mistreatment, workplace bullying and harassment;
- the right to freely associate and organize in the manner of workers' choosing, and to bargain collectively;
- and to respect the rights of employees to vote for or against union representation without intimidation, unjust pressure, undue delay or hindrance in accordance with applicable law.

¹ A number of living wage calculators have been developed (e.g. <http://livingwage.mit.edu/>). Institutions should avail themselves of such official or peer reviewed instruments to determine just compensation.

Preference for Full-Time Positions with Benefits

[Institution's name] will provide, and will seek commitments from its contract employers that they will provide full-time jobs when possible and part-time or temporary work only when necessary.

This proposal commits *[institution's name]* to either directly provide, or require its contractors to provide, certain types of benefits to all of *[institution's name]* workers. These include:

Grievance Procedures

Workers should:

- have access to appropriate grievance procedures, which would include an appeal to a neutral party as a final step;
- not be required to give up other rights in order to take advantage of the grievance procedure.

Access to Community Resources

- Equal access to *[institution's name]* community resources that are regularly made available to directly-hired employees, including: library privileges, English as a Second Language courses, transportation, and general financial planning information.

Preference for Job Security/Employee Continuity

[Institution's name] will attempt to avoid employee job loss as the result of implementation of this policy. If *[institution's name]* no longer contracts work to a subcontracting firm, the *[University/College]* will prioritize employment of any workers who presently work under those subcontractors at *[Institution's name]*, to the extent legally possible.

Disclosure and Oversight

Finally, *[institution's name]* commits, to the extent its contractual arrangements permit it to do so, to disclose pertinent economic details to the appropriate *[university/college]* bodies. In particular, the *[name of the committee charged with oversight of this policy]* will have access to information regarding the implementation of this policy, including wage scales, benefit packages, grievance procedures, and neutrality policies.

Request For Proposal Language

To the extent appropriate, *[institution's name]* will revise all existing contracts to reflect and include this policy before they are renewed, and ensure that all new contracts will reflect and include this policy.

Ongoing Implementation and Enforcement

The *[campus oversight committee]* will function as an ongoing deliberative body with a charter to oversee implementation of this policy. The Committee should have the power to recommend that a contract with a company be cancelled or suspended because of the company's failure to comply with *[institution's name]*'s employment policy.

The Committee will work to ensure a safe environment for all members, and the Committee's deliberations will be confidential.

This committee of eleven persons shall be constituted as follows:

1. Two student representatives, chosen by the student government body.
2. To the extent possible, four employees: two "exempt" regular employees of the University; one directly-hired hourly employee; and one subcontracted employee.
3. Three faculty members to be appointed (or elected) by the Faculty Senate, at least one with expertise in Catholic social teaching.
4. One representative of the human resources department, to be appointed by the Director of Human Resources.
5. A member of the Jesuit community, to be elected by the community or appointed by its Rector.

The Committee may invite other participants as needed, such as finance or business officers, human resources representatives, university counsel, or contractor representatives. The President may appoint a representative to provide staffing support to the Committee.