

Nursery Caregiver Position Recommendation

Faith formation is a lifelong process in which people claim their identity as beloved children of God and their call to participate in God's purposes for the world. This process begins at birth and involves **information** (what we know), **formation** (who we are and who we are becoming), and **transformation** (how the world is changed because of who we are and how we live). A life of faith, then, includes cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. The effectiveness of this process has an impact on how well a local church fulfills its mission "to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world" (¶120, *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*).

A nursery caregiver needs basic knowledge and skills in several areas to be effective:

- Child development
- Child care
- Relationship building
- Spiritual disciplines
- Communication
- Safe Sanctuaries®

Some potential nursery caregivers will already possess many of these skills. Other skills will be developed as a person works in the nursery.

Each nursery caregiver must be at least eighteen (18) years of age.

The nursery caregiver is committed and willing to support the Christian faith and the vision and mission of The United Methodist Church.

Useful skills for this position are the ability to listen to and communicate with people of all ages; the ability to work with other adults, parents, and guardians, infants, and toddlers; and the ability to show genuine interest in responding to the needs and concerns of children.

Since each nursery is usually hourly or part-time, the staffing needs related to the nursery will vary. However, there are a number of factors that will have an impact on the successful employment of a nursery caregiver. Factors to be considered include realistic job expectations, adequate compensation, and regular feedback.

Recommendations for Hiring Nursery Caregivers

Screening Process

Each church needs a screening process for potential caregivers. This process should include a reference check, a criminal background check, and a review of the candidate's social media.

Job Description

The staff-parish relations committee should provide a written job description. The job description should be used for ongoing evaluation of the nursery caregiver. It should also be updated whenever a person's responsibilities are altered.

The nursery caregiver will be attentive and responsive to the nurture, safety, and developmental needs of children in nursery care.

Compensation

Churches should pay equitably, demonstrating the importance of children's ministry and considering the local economy and the resources of the congregation.

Additional factors to consider include:

- Previous experience
- Scope of responsibility
- Local cost of living

Increases in salary should be based on merit and on increases in the cost of living.

Churches can consult with [The United Methodist Association of Preschools - Florida](#) and/or Discipleship Ministries to determine current compensation ranges for nursery caregivers.

Supervision and Retention

Supervision

The nursery caregiver serves as a member of a team. The person's supervisor should be clearly identified, and the two should meet on a regular basis for prayer, planning, and conversation about the nursery. Supervisors should be trustworthy, respectful, and collegial.

At a minimum, the staff-parish relations committee should conduct an annual evaluation of the nursery caregiver. The evaluation should be based on the nursery worker's written job description and include documentation of effectiveness and any need for improvement. It can be helpful to schedule quarterly or midyear evaluations for new staff.

Communication

Consistent communication between the nursery caregiver and supervisor should be the norm. The nursery caregiver will need to communicate regularly with other nursery staff, parents, and guardians.

Spiritual, Physical, and Emotional Health

Part of supervision is working to ensure the nursery caregiver takes care of his or her spiritual, physical, and emotional well-being. Effective caregivers nurture their relationship with God. This should be encouraged and supported by the supervisor and church.

Termination of Professional Relationship

Termination of employment should occur only after adequate measures have been taken to improve performance, resolve conflict, or address other issues. When termination becomes necessary, all people involved should demonstrate grace in the process.