



**The United Church
of Canada
General Council**

GC45 PM06 Denominational Pay Equity for Summer 2025

True Document Date: June 28, 2025

1. What is the issue? Why is it important?

The Pacific Mountain Regional Council believes that the recent decision of The General Council Executive at its meeting from September 27-28, 2024, undertook an action related to the remuneration of The General Council (General Council Office staff and staff deployed to Regional Councils) that is not congruent with existing employment and equity policies.

Furthermore, the decision creates a disparity between Ordered people who are serving a Community of Faith and those who are serving The United Church of Canada in either a Regional Council or General Council capacity. It appears that General Council employees are being required to subsidize the General Council budget.

While it could be argued that the 0.5% difference is marginal, it represents the creation of a systemic devaluation of work and the creation of a distinction between those in ministry with a Community of Faith, who will receive a 3.0% increase, and those in ministry with the wider Church, who will receive a 2.5% increase. This action implies that those serving the wider Church deserve less or can afford to receive less, are more privileged, or are less impacted by inflation and increasing costs of living than their counterparts in Community of Faith ministries. The Pacific Mountain Regional Council does not support the logic behind this decision, the creation of economic limitations based on the type of employment, nor the dismissal of existing denominational policy.

2. What is happening now?

The United Church of Canada Employment Equity Policy states (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.”

The action of the GCE imposes an economic barrier instead of removing one.

In its equity statement on the denominational website, The United Church of Canada states, “The United Church of Canada is committed to maintaining a fair and just workplace in the calling, appointment, development, and advancement of staff. As much as it is in its power to do so, the church will eliminate discriminatory employment barriers and practices and work to increase the participation of women, Indigenous people, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities, in all occupational categories and at all levels of employment.” The action taken by the General Council Executive directly undermines the commitment to maintaining a fair and just workplace. Creating pay discrepancies based on the perceived scarcity of one court over another does not agree with this statement.

In The United Church of Canada’s Human Resource Manual (2022), it states in section 2.2, “The United Church of Canada will provide fair and equitable benefit plans and compensation to all employees by ensuring that total compensation is internally equitable and externally competitive with medium-sized public sector organizations (except in the case of senior management in categories 10 and higher, whose salaries will not lag by more than 10 percent with those of non-profit organizations).” While section 2.1 does state that the denomination will undertake these decisions in a manner cognisant of its fiscal responsibility, the Pacific Mountain Regional Council does not believe that the intent of this policy is to create unfair economic practices within the denomination. Furthermore, it is difficult to discern how the creation of compensation disparity based on the court of employment is in keeping with the policy’s requirement that compensation is internally equitable. Section 2.2 requires further clarification of the decision. Does the 2.5% increase apply to only those under Category 10 or to all General Council employees, including those in Category 10 or higher? It appears that in order to follow its own policy the General Council Office may be required to increase salaries of those in Category 10 and higher by more than 2.5% in order to maintain the 10% minimum salary lag.

It is also difficult to perceive how this action is in keeping with the identity statements of deep spirituality, bold discipleship, and daring justice. Rather than stepping out in faith, the

Denomination seems to be retreating inward and, in doing so, achieving the complete opposite of its stated call, objectives, and values. The world is increasingly polarized by those who experience privilege and benefit the most from colonial institutions and policies. Creating an intentional pay inequity is one more example of an institution relying on its colonial past and privilege. It is simply not who the Denomination says it is and its actions need to be congruent with its words.

3. What is the recommendation?

The General Council could take the following action:

- a. Create mandatory pay equity amongst all staff serving The United Church of Canada such that those serving Communities of Faith and those serving The General Council experience the same annual cost of living adjustments.
- b. Create a policy that would empower the General Council Executive to approve an annual cost of living increase yet limit its authority to establish any pay variance based on employer.
- c. Provide a one-time lump sum payment to those who did not receive the 0.5% increase effective January 1, 2025.
- d. Authorize Regional Councils to fund any future discrepancies in the annual cost of living adjustment amounts.

4. Background information:

The United Church of Canada is currently studying its compensation model for all denominational staff. Decoupling the annual cost of living increase from the consumer price index seems premature to the outcome of the study and subsequent recommendations. It seems equally premature to impose a pay discrepancy based on employer (Community of Faith or General Council) prior to a new compensation model being approved.

This action seems to reflect a distinctive shift away from being a conciliar community, one based on early Church models described in Acts and how financial matters were handled, away from equity, especially when there is a cost, away from existing policies and values and a move towards a more corporate model based on profit, loss, and affordability.

Additionally, in 2023, it was determined by the General Council Executive that those serving communities of faith received a 6.3% cost of living increase, while General Council employees received 2%. While this proposal is directly about the 0.5% inequity in 2025, it is acknowledged that this appears to be a developing trend towards systemic inequity.

5. How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity?

This proposal is about pay equity. Equity regardless of the employer within the Denomination. The proposal is in keeping with both the articulated statements and policies as well as the spirit in which they have been lived to date.

The proposal was developed by the Pacific Mountain Regional Council Executive and forwarded from them.

For the body transmitting this proposal to the General Council:

Please select the appropriate option and provide the key discussion points for items being forwarded to the General Council:

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree without forwarding to the General Council
- ☐ Disagree and forwarding to the General Council

If you have questions regarding this proposal, please send them to: GCinfo@united-church.ca

Document Type: [Proposal](#)

General Council: [GC45](#)

Originating Body: [Pacific Mountain Regional Council](#)