



#### SESSION 5

### **Ways to Soften the Blow When a Religious Institute is Required to Reduce Staffing Levels**

A religious institute can discover an unavoidable need to reduce staffing as a result of its strategic property planning process. This can happen because of a decision the institute makes to divest itself of real estate assets that decrease staffing needs or due to a greater awareness of financial challenges the institute faces for the future. Staff reductions are never easy in any organization but are particularly antithetical to religious institutes not only because of who they are but also because long and close ties between staff and members are so common. When the need for staff reductions is unavoidable, just and humane actions the institute can consider include:

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| ✓ | Make all reasonable reductions in other operating costs first           | ✓ | Allow staff reductions to occur through normal attrition if the institute can afford to do this                         |
| ✓ | Encourage early staff retirements or institute an early retirement plan | ✓ | Try structuring jobs so they can be shared by two or more individuals   |
| ✓ | Hold off on filling any vacancies where possible                        | ✓ | Limit or eliminate pay for staff overtime   |
| ✓ | Impose salary freezes before reducing staff                             | ✓ | Implement unpaid furlough days so everyone contributes to lower staffing costs  |
| ✓ | Arrange for outplacement services for staff who must be let go          | ✓ | Take advantage of worker dislocation resources available for free through the local public workforce development agency |

