

ALL SOULS

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Safe Congregation Policy Disruptive Behavior Policy

Although the congregation of All Souls believes in civility and tolerance, we recognize the need to address the potential for behavior that may challenge our sense of individual and communal safety and well-being. Therefore, the following shall be the policy of the Church if, and when, such a challenge may arise:

1. Situations involving disruptive behavior will be brought to the attention of the President of the Board of Trustees, the Ministerial Team, and staff as deemed necessary. The Senior Minister will determine if the situation should be referred to the Safe Congregation Response Team (Section XI). All situations referred to the Safe Congregations Response Team will also be reported to the Board of Trustees.
2. The Safe Congregation Response Team will investigate the matter using this policy for guidance.
3. If an immediate response is required, this will be undertaken by the Senior Minister or Staff member onsite and/or the leader of the group involved. This may include asking the offending person or persons to leave, or suspending the meeting or activity until such a time as it can safely be resumed. If further assistance is required, the Police Department may be called. Any time any of these actions are undertaken without the Senior Minister being present, the Senior Minister and the President of the Board of Trustees must be notified. All plans for follow up steps will be referred to the Safe Congregation Response Team.
4. Persons identified as being disruptive will be responded to as individuals of dignity and worth.
5. Information concerning the alleged incident(s) that led to concern will be systematically collected from the concerned parties by delegated Response Team members and documented before any action is taken.
6. The Response Team will meet to assess the findings and decide on a course of action, with the following four levels of response recommended to them.

Level One: A Response Team member or members contacts the person named as the source of the disruption and informs them of the nature of the concern. The person's viewpoint of the matter will be elicited, valued, and documented. Response Team members will then assess the situation.

Level Two: If the basis of the original concern is determined to be valid, this finding will be clearly communicated to the person in question and a "contract" for clearly defined behavior change will be negotiated. Such communication and contract will be documented.

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Three: If the person in question refuses to negotiate a contract, refuses to abide by a contract or is engaging in behavior of sufficient severity, he or she may be excluded from the Church for a specified period of time, with reasons for such action, and conditions for return, clearly communicated and documented.

Level Four: The person in question is permanently excluded from the Society and the Society premises with steps taken as needed to enforce the integrity of this decision.

7. Should the Safe Congregation Response Team decide that exclusion or expulsion from the Church is necessary, they will consult the Board of Trustees prior to this action being taken. The minutes of the Board of Trustees shall record the name of any person permanently excluded from the Society.

8. The four levels of response recommended by this policy may be applied in the order determined by the Safe Congregation Response Team and the Board of Trustees in their judgement.

9. If appropriate, the Safe Congregation Response Team may offer referrals for professional services.

10. All documentation developed in the course of investigating and resolving allegations of disruptive behavior will be kept confidential. The Senior Minister will be responsible for determining access to such documentation and for ensuring its security.

11. To aid in evaluating the problem and determining the appropriate response, the following points will be used in assessing the nature and severity of referred problems.

- a. Dangerousness: Is the individual a source of threat or harm to persons or property?
- b. Disruptiveness: What is the extent of disruption to Church functions?
- c. Congregational Integrity: How likely is it that existing or prospective Church members will be driven away by the alleged behavior?
- d. Causes: Why is the disruption occurring? Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the Church? Is it due to a professionally diagnosed condition of mental illness?
- e. Probability of Change: How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?
- f. History: What has been the frequency and the degree of disruption caused by the individual in the past?

Approved by Board of Trustees, May 21, 2019