

# Safer Congregation Policies

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*Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington*

*Updates by Rev. Dr. Debra W. Haffner, May 2024, Board Approved May 21, 2024*

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## Safer Congregation Task Force Philosophy

The Safer Congregation Task Force was formulated to devise a comprehensive plan to Safeguard our congregation. We are committed to the Safety and well-being of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington community and its visitors for worship and programming. The task force included members from the Board of Trustees, the Committee on Ministry, the Religious Education Committee, the Buildings and Grounds Committee and the membership at large.

A variety of potential dangers are inherent in operating a congregation. These include the physical building and grounds, operation of the Religious Education programs, supervision of children on site, and instances of disruptive behavior involving members, friends, and/or staff of the congregation.

Our commitment, as Unitarian Universalists, to the inherent worth and dignity of every person and to justice and compassion, compel us to create a Safer and nurturing environment. This environment should protect children and adults from harm and promote their spiritual growth while part of our community. We are committed to maintaining an environment free of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, ethnicity, religion, nationality, age, physical ability, gender, or sexual/affectional orientation.

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington's mission statement says "**In religious community, we nurture our individual spirits through caring for one another and helping to heal the world.**" If we are to be that caring community, we must ensure that everyone who comes here feels valued, Safer and secure. This document is intended to be a "living document" that works to ensure that Safety and security.

Rev. Dr. Debra W. Haffner, our interim minister from February 2022 - June 2024, updated these policies to be consistent with the UUA's Safer Sex Congregation Initiative. These changes were approved by the Board of Trustees on May 19, 2024.

## Unitarian Universalist Principles and Sexual Ethics

One of the leader resources in *Creating Safer Congregations* from the UUA restates our Principles in terms of sexual ethics. They are copied here.

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person.

***Every person's sexuality is sacred and is worthy of respect, and therefore, is not to be isolated.***

- Justice, equity and compassion in human relationships.

***We treat others as we would want to be treated; therefore, sexual exploitation and interpersonal violence is wrong.***

- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregation.

***Accepting each other, as we are, means doing no harm and fostering well-being in one's self and others.***

- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

***In our relationships to others, our freedom of sexuality is as important as the responsibility for it.***

- The right to conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

***As a community and as an institution, we are responsible for creating a secure and Safer environment.***

- The goal of a world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.

***We have the opportunity to create the kind of environment that lends itself to peace, liberty and justice in human sexuality and we can become a model for the rest of society.***

- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

***When we respect each person's sexual integrity we honor the wholeness of life and we respect the web of all existence.***

## Definitions

The terms used in this document will have the following meanings:

**Abuse** includes non-accidental conduct that involves bodily injury or impairment; offensive physical or sexual contact, including physical or sexual abuse; physical or sexual harassment; physical or sexual molestation; or physical or sexual exploitation.

**Physical Abuse** includes offensive contact or activity that causes bodily harm.

**Sexual Abuse** means any sexual touching of any person or any activity that causes a person to engage in any sexual act or conduct without the person's consent, or in the circumstances where that person is unable to refrain from consenting due to age or mental capacity or unusual vulnerability derived from the person's mental health or from the existence of a relationship of significant dependency or trust.

**Physical Harassment or Molestation or Exploitation** means activity that places a person in fear of bodily injury by such acts as threatening or tormenting behavior, compelling a person by force or threat of force to engage in conduct from which the person has a right to abstain, knowingly restricting substantially the movements of another person without that person's consent, communicating to a person a threat to commit an act against the person or another person or entity where the natural consequence of the threat is to place that person in fear or cause that person to engage in conduct which that person otherwise would not engage, or similar repeated offensive physical or verbal conduct.

**Professional Sexual Misconduct** describes a sexual or romantic relationship engaged in by a religious professional who is serving the congregation of the other person/s involved. The codes of the UUMA, LREDA, and the UUMN label any romantic and/or sexual relationships by an employed minister, religious educator, or musician as professional sexual misconduct.

**Sexual Molestation and Sexual Exploitation** means activity that places another person in a situation where that person feels compelled to engage in sexual conduct to which that person would not voluntarily consent, or in circumstances where that person is unable to refrain from consenting due to age or mental capacity or unusual vulnerability derived from the person's mental health or from the existence of a relationship of significant dependency or trust.

**Sexual Harassment** means making sexual advances or requests for sexual favors to another person, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, where the other person by words or conduct has indicated that such words or conduct are not desired, or when a reasonable person would expect that such words or conduct would not be desirable. Note: this is also covered in the Personnel Handbook of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington that is available on the website.

**Vulnerable Adult** refers to someone who is unable to manage their own resources, carry out the activities of daily living, or protect themselves from physical abuse, emotional abuse, active, passive or self-neglect, financial exploitation or other hazardous situations without assistance from others according to New York State law.

## Special Relationship between Minister and Congregants

As a faith community, we expect our minister to act in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA) Code of Professional Practice. These guidelines state that “ministers are called to nourish the health and wholeness of the communities they serve, and recognizing the nature of our profession, and as stated in our actionable Code of Conduct, ministers will not engage in sexual contact, sexualized behavior, or a sexual relationship with any person they serve as a minister.”

We recognize that ministers are the recipients of automatic trust. In subscribing to this code, ministers agree not to exploit the powers inherent in their roles. This code is based on best practices drawn from the wisdom of much research across many religious organizations about what behaviors uphold healthy religious communities and ministries. In the spirit not of legalism but of deepening our understanding of loving, just, healthy relationships, these guidelines point towards truths about the profession of ministry and healthy ministerial conduct.

In a case of violation of this code, the President of the Congregation will contact the CER Regional Program Officer and the Ministerial Fellowship of the UUA. They will then initiate an investigation. Meanwhile, the Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Committee on Ministry, will establish an appropriate response to reactions and concerns within the congregation and the community.

The full text of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association *Code of Conduct* can be found on the UUA website at <http://www.uuma.org/?page=guidelines#Ethical%20Standards>.

## Special Relationship between Professional Religious Educator and Congregants

As a faith community, we expect our Religious Educator and other professional religious education staff to act in accordance with guidelines set forth in the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA) Code of Professional Practice.

These guidelines clearly state that religious educators "will not engage in sexual contact, sexualized behavior, or a sexual relationship with any person I serve as a religious professional."

The full text of Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA) *Code of Professional Practices* can be found on the website of the Liberal Religious Educators Association, at <http://www.lreda.org/code-professional-practices>.

In a case of violation of this code, the Minister or President of the Congregation will contact the CER Regional Program Officer and the UUA Professional Ministries Lead. They will then initiate an investigation. Meanwhile, the Minister and Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Committee on Ministry, will establish an appropriate response to reactions and concerns within the congregation and the community. A religious educator found to be violating this LREDA guideline will be removed from employment pursuant to the steps in the Personnel Manual for being removed with cause.

## Safer Congregation Response Team

In order to ensure continuity, the Safer Congregation Response Team will be established and in place at all times, with the names and phone numbers of team members available to all members and friends of The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington (UUFH). This Team will be composed of the Minister, Professional Religious Educator, and at least three members of the Fellowship (appointed by the minister). It is preferable that two of the lay members of the team be familiar with issues likely to arise to include but not be limited to sexual assault, sexual harassment, human resources, security and legal issues.

In cases of a conflict of interest, a Team member must be excused from participation. Guided by the Philosophy Statement, their function, individually and collectively, will be to offer confidential support, advice, and counsel with concern for the Safety of all parties involved. The Safer Congregation Response Team will generally have the following responsibilities:

- Know about community resources for child abuse, treatment for sex offenders, and support groups for survivors.
- Know about state laws regarding reporting.
- Be a resource for people to share their concerns.
- Evaluate applications for Religious Education (RE) teachers and youth group leaders that are flagged by the Minister or Religious Educator as needing more information or follow up. Facilitate annual training for RE staff and teachers on issues, policies, and procedures relevant to sexual/physical abuse.
- Receive allegations of possible abuse and develop a process for expedient handling of such allegations.
- Meet with convicted sex offenders to decide whether and how to develop a Limited Access Agreement for participation in Fellowship activities. Monitor any Limited Access agreements in effect.

All activities of the response team will be conducted in a confidential fashion and may only be disclosed when necessary and appropriate as determined by the Response Team.

## Security Team [this needs to be updated by Bryce and approved by the BOT]

In order to ensure the Safety of the congregation, a Security Team will be established in place at all services and special events. Members of the security team shall be appointed by the Safer Congregation Response Team.

### Mission Statement

The **Security Team** is a group of volunteers who regard the overall Safety of the congregation and the staff, as their main objective. The Team's primary goal is to provide discreet security consistent with Unitarian Universalist values while blending into the fabric of the UUFH community.

### Security Team Overview

The UUFH **security team** is made up of one **Team Leader**, two **Roamers** (interior and exterior), and at least two **Sectional Seating** security positions.

The **Team Leader** is the main liaison for the security team during the weekend services. Primary duties include, but are not limited to, preparing agenda and equipment for the security volunteers who are serving that weekend. The team leader is also the point person for any emergency situations that may arise during the weekend services.

The **Roamer** provides a security presence outside the sanctuary. Duties include, but are not limited to, assisting the usher team with securing the offering and checking the parking lot periodically during weekend service hours. A Roamer may be a Greeter.

The **Sectional** security volunteers are responsible for assisting the congregation, should there be a disturbance while the service is taking place. They are assigned a specific seat in the Main Hall where they can easily react to a disruption should one arise.

At least two members of the Security Team shall be equipped with two-way radios.

### Incident Leader

In the event of an emergency situation occurring during a service the initial incident leader will be the **Security Team Leader**.

The incident leader on duty assumes responsibility for implementing the UUFH emergency plan at the time of the incident, providing leadership until personnel with more experience arrive on scene.

Responsibilities include the following:

- Ensuring that all emergency response team members are assigned duties and understand all emergency procedures.
- Working with other emergency response team members to evaluate an emergency.
- Ensuring proper emergency communication.
- Delegating needed emergency actions.
- Documenting actions

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The incident leader may also be called upon by an involved emergency agency to aid in crowd control and building evacuation. The incident leader should immediately identify herself/himself as such to emergency agency personnel responding to an incident.

### **Medical Response**

In the event of a medical emergency, Team members who have been trained in medical emergencies shall be responsible for:

- Providing “first aid” to those incurring a medical emergency until medical personnel with higher training arrive on scene.
- Conducting a primary assessment of the medical emergency situation and reporting this assessment to appropriate personnel.
- Remaining “in charge” of a medical emergency situation until professional help arrives.

Medical response team members should immediately identify themselves as such to any personnel responding to the incident.

### **Missing Child Procedures (code 007)**

**007** is the code used to alert ushers and security personnel that a child is missing. The number may be communicated on the screens in the sanctuary, by radio or other means. Each usher and security person will then proceed to their assigned position and remain there until the child is found. The Incident Leader will assign the positions.

***If the child is not found in a short amount of time, call 911 and alert the police!***

### **If the Fire Warning Alarm Sounds**

- Follow Fire procedures in Safer Congregation Manual.
- Evacuate immediately, using the nearest exit. Walk quickly. Do not run.
- Assist disabled persons in your area. (Ushers, Security, others)
- If you encounter smoke, take short breaths through your nose and crawl along the floor to the nearest exit.
- Feel all doors with the back of your hand before opening. If the door is hot, do not open it. If the door is cool, open it slowly. Keep behind the door in case you have to quickly close it to protect yourself from oncoming smoke or fire.
- Proceed to the ground level and outdoors.
- Move upwind of the building at least 75 feet away from the building and beyond designated fire lanes. Go to the established designated assembly area, if possible.
- Do not go to your automobile or attempt to move it from the parking lot. This could hinder access by emergency vehicles.
- Do not congregate near building exits, driveways, or roadways.
- Do not reenter the building until an “all clear” is issued by the incident coordinator. (Note: The “all clear” should be issued by the Fire Department.)

## Building Evacuation Emergency

All leaders should know the emergency evacuation routes and procedures for the building, and their designated assembly area outside the building. Memorize the exit route closest to your work area or office.

Should the designated assembly area be deemed unSafer, an alternate assembly area will be established.

## Emergency Protocol for Violent Event (active shooter, assault, domestic situation)

In addition to the policies for disruptive individuals and intruders:

- The Security Team Leader must ensure that **911** has been called. Children's ministry, ushers, etc. should be alerted to the situation by security personnel.
- In the event of a problem during the service, the roamer should assist the Religious Education Professional in notifying each classroom to lockdown. This may not be possible depending on the circumstances.
- If the event occurs in the sanctuary, the video operator should train cameras on the disruption and record all activity. Images must not be projected onto the screens.
- If a physical altercation is taking place, security team members shall attempt to intervene by first giving verbal commands. If the situation continues, security team members shall enlist other ministry volunteer members for assistance and attempt to physically intervene.
- In the event of an active shooter situation security team personnel and usher team personnel should attempt to stop the event using whatever means are available. The congregation should be instructed via pre-planning information to either exit the nearest door or get down on the floor and out of the line of fire.
- Once the violence has subsided, the Minister should begin communication with the congregation. The Security Team and Usher Team Leaders should immediately begin working to secure the area and summon medical personnel. Life-saving first aid should be rendered accordingly.
- In the event of a shooting it is important that those attendees that are not injured be identified and their names and contact information be recorded before being allowed to leave the premises. They will need to be interviewed by the Police Investigators. The Security Team Leader should designate someone to oversee this task.

This document is not intended to address all potential issues of concern that may occur on UUFH property. It is imperative that during any potential emergency situation team members remain calm, communicate clearly, and work the plan. UUFH is fortunate to have several medical and public Safety personnel in attendance on any given weekend. In the event of a significant medical or public Safety related event they will likely provide guidance and assistance as necessary.

## Preventing Sexual Misconduct, Physical Abuse and Harassment

In our congregation, preventing sexual misconduct, physical abuse and harassment is a significant goal. Prevention education, on-going training, careful hiring, and Safety procedures are concrete steps toward creating a Safer environment for all members and friends of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington.

### Education and Training

Education and training are critical to the establishment of a Safer congregation. Knowledge and understanding support the development of healthy relationships based on positive self-esteem and respect for others. A greater understanding of sexuality and abuse will make us better able to avoid situations that could lead to abuse. To that end, it is important to promote positive self-esteem and personal responsibility among our children, our members and friends.

Our congregation will provide programs of education through our Religious Education program. Our children, youth and adults will be provided with opportunities to learn age-appropriate information about development and sexuality. They will be offered opportunities to receive clarification and understanding of the complex aspects of sexuality, with information as well on sexual abuse prevention at least every other year.

In addition, all congregants will be encouraged to avail themselves of the resources included in this Safer Congregation Policy. To that end, we will promote congregational awareness about issues pertaining to sexual misconduct, abuse and harassment.

### Hiring

Incidents of abuse and harassment often take place in the context of ongoing relationships. It is essential that hiring procedures protect staff, children, youth, vulnerable adults, members and friends from both injury and unfounded accusations, and to protect the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington from ethical and legal liability.

All persons seeking paid employment at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington will be background screened by the appropriate hiring committee in accordance with UUFH policy.

## Religious Education Safety Procedures

### Adult Volunteers

Volunteers in the Religious Education (RE) programs at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington (UUFH) must meet the following criteria:

- Be a member in good standing of the UUFH for a minimum of one year.
  - Prior to participating in the RE and Youth Group programs, all volunteers will agree to a background check. After the initial background check, a background check will be done every three years.
  - They will be asked to complete an Application Form for Volunteers and Employees Who Work with Children and Youth (Section XVII, Appendix C) and the Code of Ethics (Section XVII, Appendix D).
  - In addition, volunteer teachers will attend a yearly teacher training session to be scheduled by the Director of Religious Education (DRE).

Various supervisory methods are listed below. They will help UUFH leaders avoid setting up situations in which personal boundary issues can become a problem. Some of these methods will help leaders and teachers decrease the risk of misunderstandings and offer some support for handling various concerns.

- Regular consultations with the DRE
- Ongoing training
- Parental permission whenever necessary
- Visible classroom activity
- Support for following the behavior guidelines of the Safer Congregation Policy

### Working with Children and Youth

It is ultimately the responsibility of the entire congregation, not just those in leadership and teaching positions to create and maintain a climate that supports the growth and welfare of children and youth. We encourage all UUFH members and friends to read and abide by the Code of Ethics (Section XVII, Appendix C). However, those working with young people in the context of our UU movement have a crucial and privileged role, one which carries with it a great deal of power and influence. Whether acting as a youth advisor, chaperone, childcare worker, teacher, or in any other role, the volunteer has a special opportunity to interact with our young people in ways which are affirming and inspiring to all involved.

While it is important that volunteers be capable of maintaining meaningful relationships with the young people they work with, they must exercise good judgment and mature wisdom in using their influence with children and youth, and refrain from using young people to fulfill their own needs. Young people are in a vulnerable position when dealing with people older than themselves, and may find it difficult to speak out about any inappropriate behavior of their leaders, teachers, and caregivers.

Teachers, helpers, or youth group leaders who have gained the trust of young people, are in a unique situation to observe behaviors or be part of a conversation in which a possible abusive situation (either within or outside the UUFH) is revealed. In this situation it is the adult's responsibility to report any reasonable cause to suspect child abuse to the Minister and the Director of Religious Education as

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specified in the section of this policy titled "Reporting Child or Vulnerable Adult Abuse to Community Authorities." The Minister will provide regular training on dealing with suspected abuse or neglect.

Any participating adult may not consume alcohol or use any form of drug that can affect physical or mental performance before or during the carrying out of his/her responsibilities.

### **Religious Education Classes/Programs (Nursery – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

All classes including the nursery must be taught by a minimum of a two person teaching team. This requirement applies to off-site UUFH RE activity as well as on-site classes. Teams should consist of at least one person who has been an active participant at UUFH for at least one year. Parents may serve as classroom aides and/or visit classes at any time. Teachers are subject to the approval of the Director of Religious Education, in consultation with the RE Committee. One individual may be briefly alone with a group when the other must leave as dictated by common sense and necessity for such purposes as bathroom breaks and escorting individual children away from the group.

For grades 6-12, the youth group teachers must be at least twenty-five years of age.

### **General Supervision Guidelines (Sunday Morning programming)**

1. Each child will have a registration form on file that includes information about special needs All personal information is held confidential.
2. Parents are responsible for their children before the service begins and after the RE program has ended.
3. During services and classes, children must have a parent or another responsible adult on the premises unless prior arrangements have been made with the DRE.
4. Parents, teachers, volunteers and children are the only people allowed in the main floor and upstairs RE spaces during services.
5. While the main floor RE space is in use, the exterior door at the end of the RE hallway will be locked. Locking the door to the outside will not have any effect on our ability to exit the main floor RE space in an emergency.
6. The DRE, or designated supervisor, will do a walk-through of all RE spaces to check in with teachers during classes. Exceptions to this procedure are discouraged; however, there will occasionally be Sundays when it will not be possible for the DRE to do a walk through.
7. Nursery through Fifth grade parents (or designee) must pick up their child(ren) from the RE program at the end of service. The DRE or appropriate designee will locate parents (or designees) who fail to comply.

### **General Sleepover Guidelines**

Adults supervising youth sleepovers must be active participants at UUFH for at least one year if they have had previous youth group experience in a UU setting before volunteering. Parents who are staying over with their own youth need not have been active participants.

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There will always be a minimum of two adults present during sleeping hours regardless of the number of youth attending. Two adults must remain awake during these sleeping hours. During a sleepover at UUFH, there should be a minimum ratio of one adult to eight youth with one additional adult required for each additional four youth.

During sleepovers at the UUFH, all outside doors will be locked against entry once the last youth has arrived, and will remain locked until parents arrive for pick-up in the morning.

A Parent/Guardian Consent and Medical Release Form and a Medical Information Form (Appendix F and G) will be required for each youth at the sleepover.

Each youth will be required to complete and sign the Youth Code of Ethics (under development; Appendix tbd) for each sleepover event.

The adult supervisors will maintain a list of attendees.

Youth will sleep only in areas equipped with a functioning smoke detector.

Adults will be trained in the fire Safety procedures and youth will be made aware of fire Safety guidelines (see Emergency Evacuation Policy section in this document).

## **Transportation To and From UUFH Sanctioned Events**

It is the responsibility of the UUFH RE Program, or the parents, to provide Safer transportation to and from UUFH sanctioned events. The UUFH RE Program requires the following:

- When traveling to and from outings, conferences, meetings and other UUFH activities, a parent/guardian signed permission slip is required for each child/youth participating or being driven to an off-site activity. In addition, each youth must sign the Youth Code of Ethics (Appendix tbd) and each adult must sign an Adult Sponsor Responsibilities Form (Appendix A).
- Drivers must be at least 25 years old.
- Every person in the car will have a seat belt and age appropriate seating arranged in reference to airbag Safety rules.
- The Ratio for adults transporting youth traveling off-site is two to one. Minimally, two adults must accompany one non-related child/youth and one adult may transport two or more non-related child/youth.
- Each driver must show proof of license registration and insurance coverage upon request.
- There will be a phone chain for parents of children on trips at the discretion of the DRE for arriving at the destination and when leaving to return to home.

## First Aid, CPR and Automated External Defibrillator

First aid, CPR, and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training will be offered to UUFH volunteers through the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, a local fire department, or a certified trainer. The Safer Congregation Response Team (SCRT) will facilitate and coordinate offering this training.

## Medical Emergency Response

### Minor Injuries

Minor injuries that occur during RE should be reported to the Director of Religious Education and the office administrator using the incident report form contained in the Appendix. If a child sustains the injury, the parents should be notified promptly.

Basic first aid supplies can be found in the kitchen, the Administration bathroom, the upstairs bathroom, and at other locations at the UUFH.

Minor injuries at other times should be reported to the UUFH office administrator. A file of Incident Reports is maintained by the office administrator.

If trained, the UUFH's Security Team, or volunteers, if available, will be summoned to provide initial injury evaluation and first aid treatment.

First aid responders will use the following general response protocol:

- First, survey the area to see if it is Safer to enter
- Do respond quickly, using accepted standards of care
- Do not attempt to move anyone who is unconscious, has a broken limb or injured back. Keep person from moving.
- Administer first aid as trained. Practice Universal Precautions:
  - Do check for breathing/open airway & administer rescue breathing if needed
  - Do try to stop severe bleeding
  - Do treat for shock and make patient comfortable
  - Do get all information concerning the patient and accident or if illness if person is conscious ("SAMPLE" -- Signs and symptoms, Allergies, Medication taken, Pertinent past illnesses, Last oral intake, Events leading to the illness/injury).
  - Do request external emergency medical services if there is any question or concern
  - If contact was made with blood or body fluids follow UUFH's Blood-Borne Pathogen Standard Clean-Up and Exposure Procedures.

In the event the injured person needs additional medical attention, the preferred method of transport is the local emergency squad (ambulance). Transportation by car or personal vehicle should be avoided except for the most minor of injuries.

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Examples of injuries requiring transport by the rescue squad are potential broken bones; a head, neck or spine injury; injuries/illnesses involving the respiratory or circulatory (heart) systems; injuries with severe bleeding; and injured persons showing signs of shock or disorientation.

### **Major Injuries**

When a person sustains a major injury or is experiencing a major personal health emergency (e.g., heart attack or stroke), people in the area will immediately call for the local emergency rescue squad by calling 911. If Fellowship volunteers or Security Team members are trained, CPR and/or AED will be administered.

### **Blood-Borne Pathogen (BBP) Clean-up and Exposure Procedures**

The clean-up of body fluids or materials contaminated with or suspected to be contaminated with body fluids (blood borne pathogens, a.k.a. BBP) resulting from an injury or personal health emergency will be performed only by personnel who have received training. Personnel who should receive training include the Security Team, church volunteers (SCRT, ushers), the Director of Religious Education, and the Minister.

Use the following procedures for cleaning and sanitizing surfaces that have been contaminated with blood or bodily fluids:

1. Put on gloves.
2. Wash the surface with soap and water.
3. Rinse with water.
4. Spray the surface with a solution of 1 tablespoon of bleach to 1 quart of water.
5. Let sit for at least 2 minutes.
6. Wipe with a paper towel and let air dry.
7. Dispose of contaminated cleaning supplies in a plastic bag and secure.
8. Remove gloves and dispose of them in a plastic-line receptacle.
9. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and rinse with water.

In the event a person has or suspects they may have been exposed to BBPs (i.e., contact with), they must immediately contact their physician to obtain professional medical advice and/or attention.

Additionally, a member of the SCRT, office administrator, Director of Religious Educator Minister must be notified of the event.

### **Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Policy**

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is a condition that occurs when the electrical impulses of the human heart malfunction causing a disturbance in the heart's electrical rhythm called ventricular fibrillation (VF). This erratic and ineffective electrical heart rhythm causes complete cessation of the heart's normal function of pumping blood resulting in sudden death. The most effective treatment for this condition is the administration of an electrical current to the heart by a defibrillator, delivered within a short time of the onset of VF.

An AED is used to treat victims who experience SCA. It is only to be applied to victims who are unconscious, without pulse, signs of circulation and normal breathing. The AED will analyze the heart

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rhythm and advise the operator if a shockable rhythm is detected. If a shockable rhythm is detected, the AED will charge to the appropriate energy level and advise the operator to deliver a shock.

### **AED Team**

#### **Responsibilities**

- Selection of individuals for AED training and distribution of AED-trained employee lists as required
- Coordination of training for emergency responders
- Coordination of equipment and accessory maintenance
- Maintain on file a specifications/technical information sheet for each approved AED model assigned or donated to the UUFH
- Revision of this procedure as required
- Monitoring the effectiveness of this system
- Communication with medical director on issues related to medical emergency response program including post-event reviews

### **Applicable Documents**

- General Safety and health standard
- County/State AED Guidelines
- Medical emergency action plan
- Infection control procedure for universal precautions
- State immunity from liability exclusion
- AED Procedure Medical Control

### **Medical Control**

The medical advisor of the AED program will be named by the Safer Congregation Task Force. The medical advisor of the AED program has ongoing responsibility for:

- Providing medical direction for use of AEDs
- Writing a prescription for AEDs
- Reviewing and approving guidelines for emergency procedures related to use of AEDs and CPR
- Evaluation of post-event review forms and digital files downloaded from the AED

### **Authorized AED Users**

The AED may be used by:

- Employees of UUFH; and
- Any trained volunteer responder who has successfully completed an approved CPR/AED training program and has a current course completion card.

### **AED-Trained Employee Responsibilities**

- Activating internal emergency response system and providing prompt basic life support including AED and first aid according to training and experience

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- Understanding and complying with requirements of this policy
- Following the more detailed procedures and guidelines for the AED program Volunteer Responder Responsibilities

### **Volunteer Responders**

Anyone can, at their discretion, provide voluntary assistance to victims of medical emergencies. The extent to which these individuals respond shall be appropriate to their training and experience. These responders are encouraged to contribute to emergency response only to the extent they are comfortable. The emergency medical response of these individuals may include CPR, AED or medical first aid.

### **Security Team**

is responsible for:

- Receiving emergency medical calls from internal locations
- Using an established 9-1-1 checklist to assess emergency and determine appropriate level of response
- Contacting the external community 9-1-1 response team (EMS) if required
- Deploying AED-trained individuals to emergency location
- Assigning someone to meet responding EMS aid vehicle and direct EMS personnel to site of medical emergency

### **Equipment**

Approved equipment:

LIFEPAK® Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) have been approved for this program. The AED conforms to the state/county standards.

- The AED and first-aid emergency care kit will be brought to all medical emergencies.
- The AED should be used on any person who is at least 8 years of age. The AED will be placed only after the following symptoms are confirmed:
  - Victim is unresponsive
  - Victim is not breathing normally

NOTE: If AED program includes the treatment of children under eight years old or less than 25kg (55 lbs), equip AEDs with Infant/Child Reduced Energy Defibrillation Electrode Starter Kit (includes one pair of electrodes, storage pouch and appropriate Safety instructions and labels).

### **Location of AEDs**

The AED will be at designated locations:

- In the Gallery, mounted on the wall just outside the Coat Room; and
- In the office of the Director of Religious Education.

### Addition Resuscitation Equipment

Each AED will have one set of defibrillation electrodes connected to the device and one spare set of electrodes with the AED. One resuscitation kit will be connected to the handle of the AED. This kit contains two pair latex-free gloves, one razor, one set of trauma shears, and one facemask barrier device.

### Equipment Maintenance

All equipment and accessories necessary for support of medical emergency response shall be maintained in a state of readiness.

Specific maintenance requirements include:

- The office shall be informed of changes in availability of emergency medical response equipment. If equipment is withdrawn from service, the office shall be informed and then notified when equipment is returned to service.
- The office shall be responsible for informing response teams of changes to availability of emergency medical equipment.
- The office shall be responsible for having regular equipment maintenance performed. All maintenance tasks shall be performed according to equipment maintenance procedures as outlined in the operating instructions.
- Following use of emergency response equipment, all equipment shall be cleaned and/or decontaminated as required. If contamination includes body fluids, the equipment shall be properly disinfected.

### Routine Maintenance

- The office will perform a daily AED check following the procedure checklist. The procedure checklist will be initialed at the completion of the daily check. The procedure checklist will be posted with the AED.
  - If the OK icon is NOT present on the readiness display, contact the AED Program Coordinator or designee immediately.
- If the battery icon is visible, the battery or CHARGE-PAK™ charging unit needs to be replaced. You may continue to use the AED if needed.
  - If the wrench icon is visible, the AED needs service. You may attempt to use the AE needed. If the message CALL SERVICE appears, the AED is not usable. Continue to provide CPR until another AED is brought to the victim or EMS arrives to take over care.
- If the expiration date on the electrode is near, notify the AED Program Coordinator or designee immediately.

### Initial Training

**Trained Employees:** Must complete training adequate to provide basic first-aid, CPR and AED that will be provided on site. AED training must be a course approved by the state. Trained employees will also

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be trained in universal precautions against blood-borne pathogens. The trained employees shall be offered hepatitis B vaccination free of charge. The office shall maintain training records for the trained employees. NOTE: If the AED program includes the treatment of children under eight years old or under 25 kg (55 lbs.), training should include infant/child CPR/FBAO since techniques differ from adult CPR/FBAO.

**Volunteer Responders:** • These responders will possess various amounts of training in emergency medical response and their training may be supplied by sources outside of the company. Volunteer responders can assist in emergencies, but must only participate to the extent allowed by their training and experience. Volunteer responders may have training adequate to administer first aid, CPR and use the AEDs deployed throughout the campus. Any volunteer wishing to potentially use one of the AEDs deployed on the campus should have successfully completed a state approved AED course including CPR within the last two years. UUFH will not maintain training records for the volunteer responders.

### **Refresher Training**

Trained employees will renew first-aid and AED training every two years.

AED-trained employees will refresh AED skills using computer-based training. Each AED-trained employee will have access to AED Challenge™ interactive training software. Every six months each will perform a three-scenario test that will be reviewed by the AED Program Coordinator or designee.

Volunteer responders should obtain documented renewal training at least once every two years. Volunteer responders are encouraged to periodically refresh their AED skills. This can be accomplished through the use of AED Challenge interactive training software. A copy of AED Challenge software is available from the office upon request. All trained volunteer responders are encouraged to practice anytime.

### **Medical Response Documentation**

**Internal Post-Event Documentation:** It is important to document each use of the medical emergency response system. The following forms shall be sent to the AED Program Coordinator or designee within 24 hours of a medical event:

- An accident report form shall be completed by a responding employee for each accident requiring first-aid of any type.
- The AED-trained employee or volunteer responder shall complete a medical event form (9-1-1 form) whenever an AED is used.

### **External Post-Event Documentation**

- A copy of AED use information shall be presented within 48 hours of the emergency to the following:
- Medical director of the AED program
- Local EMS, county, state officials as designated in state AED requirements and local regulations
- At a minimum, event information supplied shall include any recorded data, and all electronic files captured by the AED.

**Post-Event Review**

Following each deployment of the response team member, or if a volunteer responder uses an AED, a review shall be conducted to learn from the experience. The AED Program Coordinator or designee shall conduct and document the post-event review. All key participants in the event shall participate in the review. Included in the review shall be the identification of actions that went well and the collection of opportunities for improvement as well as critical incident stress debriefing. A summary of the post-event review shall be sent to the environmental health and Safety committee. The Safer Congregation Task Force shall maintain a copy of the post-event review summary.

**System Verification and Review**

The medical emergency response system is ultimately successful if necessary medical assistance is provided to victims in a timely and Safer manner. Since actual use of this system procedure is expected to be very infrequent, other measures of effectiveness are required.

**Annual System Assessment**

Once each calendar year, the AED Program Coordinator or designee shall conduct and document a system readiness review. This review shall include review of the following elements:

- Training records
- Equipment operation and maintenance records

## Emergency Evacuation Policy

### Overview

UUHF endeavors to rehearse emergency evacuations by conducting a fire drill on a Sunday in the autumn and spring each year. This is traditionally done ten minutes before the usual end of the service or class, and involves everyone present in the building at that time.

Exit routes are highlighted on floor plans posted in each classroom and meeting room. Upon leaving the building, adults, children and youth will assemble at three points: at the arbor in the Memorial Garden, at the rocks on the Great Lawn, and at the trees along Browns Road opposite the Sam Philips Garden.

### Responsibilities

The UUFH **Fire Marshal**, designated by the Board of Trustees, maintains overall responsibility for fire Safety, including the planning and execution of fire drills. The Fire Marshal coordinates communications on the day of the drill.

During the drill, the Fire Marshal will:

- Check time of day at the sound of the bell.
- Walk through the building to confirm that it is empty, confirming that nobody remains in the Sound Room, Music Room, Pantry, Maintenance Room, Board Room, and all six bathrooms.
- Make note of the time taken to evacuate the building.
- Walk around the outside of the building to make contact with RE Chair(s) and Board Members, and verify that everyone has been accounted for.
- Ask Castle Care to sound the “All Clear” (dismiss the assemblies at the arbor, the rock, and the trees along Browns Road).

**RE teachers** are responsible for the safe evacuation of their students to the designated assembly points, and their release to their respective parents at the drill’s conclusion.

- People from classrooms RE 4, RE 7, RE 8, and R.A.T. will meet at the big rocks on the Great Lawn.

**The Board of Trustees and the Security Team** are responsible for ensuring the Safe evacuation of the building occupants: facilitating traffic flow (people leaving the building, emergency vehicles arriving at the scene), and for assisting (or finding assistance for) those in need.

Evacuation stations (examples):

- Main Hall, main (rear corner) doors
- Main Hall, rear (center) doors
- Foyer Exit (Main Entrance)
- Cottage Exit; after evacuation, assist with children at arbor
- Nursery (RE 4); after evacuation, assist with children at arbor
- Gallery – guide people through Social Hall and Garden to trees

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- Social Hall – guide people through Sam Philips Garden to trees
- Family Room – assist families; after evacuation, assist at arbor
- Maintain emergency vehicle access (keep pedestrians moving out of parking lot)

The **Castle Care Committee** is responsible for maintaining the physical aspects of fire Safety: alarms, signage, emergency lighting, extinguishers, etc.

The **Office Administrator** is responsible for providing notifications of upcoming drills through the various channels, and for the signage needed on the day of the drill.

The **Minister**, or leader of a **Sunday Program Committee**-sponsored service, is responsible for announcing the drill, and for identifying the exit paths for the Main Hall occupants.

### **Preparation**

The Fire Marshal notifies the buildings' tenants (including renters and the leaders of any programs concurrent with the drill) of these plans, and their expected roles.

The Office Administrator ensures the posting of signage on the entrance doors and at the assembly points.

The Castle Care Committee verifies the physical aspects of building fire Safety.

### **Execution (details in Fire Drill Procedures, below)**

Prior to the drill, the Fire Marshal and the Office Administrator notify interested parties of the scheduled drill. The Castle Care Committee ensures that the needed materials (classroom exit maps, teacher instructions, etc.) are in place.

On the morning of the fire drill, the Fire Marshal notifies affected third parties of the scheduled time for the drill. At the beginning of the service, the Minister or SPC leader announces the impending drill and outlines the exit plan. Teachers inform their students of the upcoming drill.

At the designated time, the Fire Marshal initiates the drill. Board members and the Safety Committee, operating from pre-assigned stations, ensure the complete evacuation, close steel fire doors, and ease pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow.

The Fire Marshal confirms evacuation, and dismisses the participants.

### **Conclusion**

The Fire Marshal documents observations, publishes these to the Board of Trustees, and updates (or requests that the Board of Trustees update) fire drill Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines as appropriate.

### **Fire Exit Protocol**

- Keep quiet! We all need to hear instructions.
- Keep calm! Excitement and panic are unhelpful.
- Keep together. Teachers should count heads while still in class, and again at the outdoors assembly point.

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- Remind students of precautions:
- Before opening a closed door, feel the BOTTOM of the door with the BACK of the hand. Burned fingers cannot open doors.
- Smoke and noxious gasses can build quickly; keep low for better air.
- Meet at designated assembly points, away from the building, so emergency vehicles can get close if necessary.

### **Fire Drill Procedures**

#### **At the beginning of each RE semester:**

The RE Committee briefs the teachers on their roles, and distributes to the teachers any procedures furnished by the Fire Marshal. The teachers review the fire exit protocols with their students.

The Castle Care Committee ensures the physical aspects of the fire Safety environment:

- fire exit paths are posted in all classrooms;
- fire exits (exit door crash bars, fire escape) are in good working order;
- fire alarm system is tested according to schedule, and operating instructions are maintained inside the control box;
- supplemental alarms in the Cottage and Administration Wing are in good working order, with fresh batteries;
- emergency exit signs and auxiliary lighting fixtures are in good working order;
- fire extinguishers are adequately placed throughout the premises, and are inspected and maintained as required.

In consultation with the Minister and the DRE, the Board of Trustees designates the dates and times of fire drills, and ensures that these are added to the calendars (office, website, RE, etc.).

#### **Four weeks before the drill:**

The Fire Marshal arranges for timely notifications of the upcoming fire drill to appear in The Beacon and the Fellowship Flash.

#### **Two weeks before the drill:**

The Fire Marshal arranges for timely notifications of the upcoming fire drill to appear in The Beacon, the Fellowship Flash, the Order of Service, and the weekly calendar at the building entrances.

The DRE notifies those RE teachers who will be teaching on the day of the drill.

The Office Administrator places courtesy calls to our building tenants (renters, program leaders).

**Two days before the drill:**

The Office Administrator sets out a sign (easel pad, whiteboard, Last Licks sandwich sign) in the foyer, announcing the drill.

The Office Administrator posts announcements to both sides of the door at building entrances: main, kitchen, family room, RE, cottage.

**On the day of the drill:**

1. The Fire Marshal notifies each of the following of the scheduled time for the drill:
  - a. Huntington Fire Dept. (631-427-3030)
  - b. Central Station (516-938-9077, account # 580210)
  - c. Cottage tenant (contact information inside Alarm Box)
  - d. Apartment tenant (contact information inside Alarm Box)
2. At the beginning of the service, the Minister or SPC Leader announces the impending drill and outlines the exit plan. RE teachers prepare their students as necessary; a review of the Fire Exit Protocol, above, is recommended.
3. At the designated time, the Fire Marshal initiates the drill:
  - a. Open the fire control box (key is on top of box).
  - b. Press TEST (zero)
  - c. Press ENTER.
  - d. Lights and bell will ring for five seconds. All will return to normal; only the green AC/DC lamp will be on.
  - e. Check time of day at the sound of the bell.
4. Building occupants will evacuate to designated assembly points.
5. The Fire Marshal, and his designees, will:
  - a. Walk through the building to confirm that it is empty, confirming that nobody remains in the Sound Room, Music Room, Pantry, Maintenance Room, Board Room, Finance Office, and all six bathrooms.
  - b. Make note of the time taken to evacuate the building.
  - c. Visit each assembly point to make contact with RE Chair(s) and Board Members, confirm headcounts, collect observations for lessons-learned exercise (including time required to evacuate), and dismiss the participants (children are returned to their parents).
  - d. Ask Castle Care to sound the "All Clear" (dismiss the assemblies at the arbor, the rock, and the trees along Brown's Road).
6. The Fire Marshal notifies each of the following of the drill's completion:
  - a. Huntington Fire Dept. (631-427-3030)
  - b. Central Station (516-938-9077, account # 580210)
  - c. Cottage tenant (contact information inside Alarm Box)
  - d. Apartment tenant (contact information inside Alarm Box)

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7. The Fire Marshal removes signs from the doors, assembly points, and foyer.

### **One week after the drill:**

The Fire Marshal will document the observations, circulate a draft Lessons-Learned email, and incorporate additional remarks. The Fire Marshal and Castle Care Committee will publish to the Board of Trustees and update fire drill Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines as appropriate.

The Fire Marshal will submit a notice to The Beacon and the Fellowship Flash, thanking participants for the successful drill. Ask the RE teachers to pass along to the students.

## Responding to Complaints of Sexual or Physical Abuse or Harassment

There are several situations which may prompt a response regarding a complaint or concern about sexual or physical abuse, including but not limited to:

- A child, youth or adult reports possible abuse and/or harassment by a UUFH official, member or attendee;
- UUFH official, member, friend, or attendee suspects that a child, youth, or vulnerable adult is being abused;
- Child, youth, or vulnerable adult reports possible abuse by a family member or other individual; or
- UUFH officials learn that a Fellowship member, friend, or attendee (child, youth or adult) is under investigation for allegedly abusing others.

Child abuse is addressed directly in New York state law, and is governed by Child Protective Services (CPS). Such cases require that reporting laws be followed (NY SOC Article 6 Title 6, section 415 Reporting Procedure). When any of the situations described above involving children or youth is reported, the procedures outlined (in the section of this policy titled "Reporting Child and Vulnerable Adult Abuse to Community Authorities") will be utilized.

Abuse of vulnerable adults must be reported to NYS Adult Protective Services. When any of the situations described above involving vulnerable adults is reported, the procedures outlined in "Reporting Child and Vulnerable Adult Abuse to Community Authorities" will be utilized.

Incidents of alleged sexual or physical abuse or harassment of adults will be referred to the Minister, who will investigate and make a determination whether it is appropriate to contact law enforcement. These allegations may also be referred to the Safer Congregation Response Team.

## **Reporting Child and Vulnerable Adult Abuse to Community Authorities**

For the purposes of this Policy, the Director of Religious Education and the Minister will be considered Mandated Reporters.

It is the policy of UUFH that any person who has reasonable cause to suspect that a vulnerable adult has been, or is likely to be, abused or neglected, must report this concern to the Director of Religious Education and/or the Minister. The Director of Religious Education and/or the Minister will determine the next steps, which may include reporting the suspected abuse to New York State Child Protective Services, based on the NYS requirements for Mandated Reporters, as specified in Section 413 of the New York State Social Services Law. (For additional information, see Appendix J of this Policy, "Reporting Child and Vulnerable Adult Abuse in New York.")

It is also the policy of UUFH to immediately report any situation in which any person has reasonable cause to suspect that a vulnerable adult has been, or is likely to be, abused or neglected. Any concerns must be reported to the Minister. The Minister will determine the next steps, which may include reporting the suspected abuse to New York State Protective Services for Adults. For additional information, see Appendix J of this Policy, "Reporting Child and Vulnerable Adult Abuse in New York."

Once a report is made to the appropriate authorities, the UUFH will rely on the decisions of those authorities as to the validity of the complaint. It is also the YOUTH's responsibility under these guidelines to develop an appropriate plan of response to the allegations.

In all cases, the Minister will also notify the President of the Board and the CER Regional Program Consultant, and seek their advice and counsel. Additionally, the Minister will notify the UUFH's insurance company.

In the event the accused abuser is the Minister, reports will be filed by, and the notifications referenced above will be the responsibility of the President of the Board of Trustees.

## Safety Needs of the Congregation Regarding Reports of Abuse

### Interim Safety Plan

When a report is filed by any person, or on behalf of any child or vulnerable adult, and the suspected abuser is a church employee, member or attendee, the Response Team will develop an interim Safety plan during the investigation of abuse. This plan may include, but not be limited to implementation of a draft Limited Access Agreement.

The purpose of this plan is not only to Safeguard the victim (adult or child), but also to provide protection to the accused abuser from further complaints. If either the victim or accused abuser is a youth, the plan must be developed with input from all involved sets of parents or guardians. The plan will be clearly communicated to the accused abuser, or if a minor, his or her parents or guardians, by the Response Team. The Minister and/or Director of Religious Education may implement similar steps while awaiting initial action of the Response Team.

### Permanent Safety Plan

Upon final disposition by appropriate authorities, a permanent Limited Access Agreement will be developed by the Response Team. A disposition requiring a response would be substantiation by Child Protective Services (CPS) or a conviction by a Court of Law.

In all cases, the Response Team, Minister, or President of the Board of Trustees may seek legal counsel before proceeding with either a draft or permanent Limited Access Agreement.

## Pastoral Needs of the Congregation Regarding Reports of Abuse

Following a report of suspected abuse, the Safer Congregation response Team will also develop a plan to address the pastoral needs of our congregation, including:

- The person/child who has allegedly been abused, sexually or otherwise:

This may include providing information about or referrals to appropriate professional, community, and UUFH or UU resources, as needed. Additionally the Safer Congregation Response Team may assist in dealing with Child Protective Services (CPS), the Prosecutor's Office or the Police Department.

- Other members and friends of our congregation:

Members, friends, or attendees immediately affected by the incident (such as family members or partners) whose needs we can help meet, either directly or indirectly;

The Minister (or other members of the Fellowship staff) to aid in dealing with the pastoral needs of the victim or accused person;

Other members and friends of the congregation who witnessed one or more incidents or, who having heard about them, are reminded of their own concerns; and

Other congregation members and friends who are relied on to a great degree by the person/child who has allegedly been abused (or those connected to them); and

Other congregation members and friends who are relied on to a great degree by the accused offender (or those connected to them).

- The accused person:

Support may include helping the accused person access the appropriate professional, community, and spiritual resources. While there may be feelings of ill-will toward the accused person, if that individual is a part of our community, he or she also deserves our support; withdrawing it at this critical point in that person's life might have severe detrimental long-term effects on his or her behavior in the future.

It remains the mission of this congregation to recognize and support the integrity and inherent worth and dignity of that person even though we do not condone inappropriate behaviors, and to treat him or her with compassion.

- Other persons/children who have allegedly been victims of abuse, and who have been reluctant to come forward:

If warranted, the response plan will include a way of reaching out to these individuals in a manner that is non-threatening.

The plan established will be such that other individuals are not put at risk for further incidents.

## Safety and Pastoral Needs of the Congregation Regarding Reports of Harassment

Incidents of alleged sexual or physical harassment of minors which do not warrant involvement of Child Protective Services or law enforcement, or are not accepted for investigation by CPS, after reporting, shall be referred to the Director of Religious Education and Minister. They may request that the Safer Congregation Response Team investigate such allegations. A plan shall be developed to address and resolve these complaints which shall make clear to the accused person that the UUFH will not tolerate harassment of any form, as well as provide information about appropriate counseling or other resources for both the person being harassed and the alleged offender. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the minor(s) shall also be informed of this plan and involved, as appropriate, in its development.

Incidents of alleged sexual or physical harassment of adults will be referred to the Minister. These allegations may also be referred to the Safer Congregation Response Team who will then make clear to the accused person that this congregation will not tolerate harassment of any form, as well as provide information about appropriate counseling or other resources for both the adult who has allegedly been harassed and the alleged offender. The Safer Congregation Response Team and/or the Minister may recommend to the board that the person be removed from membership or forbidden to attend worship under the disruptive persons policy. The Safer Congregation Response Team would also be available to discuss concerns regarding situations that have felt uncomfortable but may not constitute abuse or harassment as defined in this Policy. The function of the Safer Congregation Response Team would be to help individuals clarify the source of their discomfort, brainstorm effective means of resolving the problem, and share information about appropriate resources.

## Background Screening

### Goals

The goals of this policy are to protect our students and members by:

- Preventing and dealing with sexual abuse;
- Preventing interaction with sexual predators and sexual abusers;
- Preventing interaction with individuals who may be a danger to UUFH members
- Insuring that those in leadership positions within the UUFH are in compliance with UUFH Safer Congregation Standards.

### Protocols

A national screening agency shall be used to determine if any UUFH employee or volunteer who is involved in children or youth activities has a felony conviction for the following:

- Crimes against children;
- Sex abuse, rape, harassment, professional misconduct, or assault;
- Crimes of violence;
- Drug and alcohol crimes.
- Vehicular crimes
- Other felonies as determined by the Minister, Director of Religious Education, Committee on Ministry and the UUFH Board of Trustees.

If charges have been brought against the candidate without a felony conviction of a pedophilia type nature, sanctions may apply.

### Who Must Undergo Background Check/Screening

The policy requires that ALL of the following individuals must undergo the UUFH background check/screening program:

- All volunteer Religious Education teachers;
- All adult child care providers;
- All UUFH employees who are involved in child or youth activities;
- Pastoral care volunteers who provide rides or home visits
- Members of the Board of Trustees
- Persons Counting or Collecting Monies at any UUFH events

### When to Apply For the Background Check/Screening

ALL current employees of the UUFH involved in child or youth activities and all current volunteer religious education teachers must undergo the UUFH background check/screening program NOW.

ALL prospective volunteer religious education teachers obtain background screening clearance prior to the start of the start of the teaching assignment.

### Exemptions and Other Provisions

The screening is not necessary if one of the following apply:

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- Applicant is a minor;
- Applicant has passed a UUFH screening within the last 4 years

### **UUFH Background Screening Procedures**

- All reports are electronically mailed directly to the Office Administrator.
- The Office manager then notifies the member in writing (or electronic mail, if that is the preferred method of communication), that they have successfully been screened.
- If there is a felony or misdemeanor record involving:
  - crimes against children;
  - sexual abuse, rape or assault;
  - vehicular accidents
  - crimes of violence; and/or
  - other enumerated felonies and/or misdemeanors,

The applicant is notified by the Director of Religious Education by mail, (or electronic mail if that is the preferred method of communication), that a disqualifying event has appeared on their screening report and that the matter will be referred to the Minister, Safer Congregation Response Team and the Board of Trustees. A copy of this letter is sent electronically to the Minister and the UUFH President. Please note that charges of the nature outlined above can result in screening being denied. The UUFH has zero tolerance for Pedophilia and crimes against children. A misdemeanor Pedophilia charge will be referred to the Safer Congregation Response Team for investigation, report, and recommendation to the Board of Trustees for final disposition.

- The Director of Religious Education determines if they believe the member is a danger to others, and reports said findings to the Minister and Safer Congregation Response Team for further review and/or action.
- This process of the Background Screening is completed on an individual basis. A screening clearance may be given with certain restrictions, directions and/or future rescreening requirements imposed. An applicant also may be denied.
- If there is a dangerous or violent felony record, the matter is referred to the Safer Congregation Response Team for investigation, since it is contrary to our Safer Congregation policy for a member to be a dangerous or violent convicted felon.
- The applicant is notified of this in writing by the Chair of the Safer Congregation Response Team.
- The Safer Congregation Response Team then initiates an investigation and makes a recommendation to the Board of Trustees and the Board renders a disposition.

This Background Screening is good for 3 years.

## Guidelines Involving Sex Offenders

Situations may occur involving an individual accused or convicted of sexually aggressive behavior. Those situations will be addressed as follows:

- An individual who has been convicted of or pled guilty to a charge of sexual misconduct or who has been determined to have engaged in any form of child abuse in any civil, criminal, administrative or ecclesiastical forum will not have contact with children, youth, vulnerable adults, or the parties involved.
- If an individual has been legally accused of sexual misconduct and is currently involved in a civil or criminal litigation of such a charge, that individual will not have contact with children, youth, vulnerable adults, or the parties involved until there is final disposition of the case (resolution).
- In the event that a person has been convicted of a sexual offense and completed a term of incarceration and seeks to enter the life of the UUFH, the Response Team will meet to make a determination as to whether or not and the ways in which the individual may be Safety involved in the life of the congregation. If it is determined that the person can participate in congregational life, a Limited Access Plan will be developed.

In all cases, the Response Team, Minister, Director of Religious Education or President of the Board of Trustees may seek legal counsel before proceeding with either a draft or permanent Limited Access Agreement.

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**Identification of sex offenders by using the New York State Sex Offender Registry** At the time this policy becomes effective, the Safer Congregation Response Team will check the names of all members and friends of UUFH against the online sex offender registry for Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Periodically, the Safer Congregation Response Team will solicit a list of visitors, new attendees, and new members from the Membership Committee. These names will be checked against the online sex offender registry for Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

If any sex offenders are identified, the guidelines set forth above will be followed.

## Disruptive Behavior

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington (UUFH) has enjoyed a long tradition of peace, fellowship, and civility within its congregation. Each Sunday we affirm our commitment to be a free and open Fellowship where differences are respected. In order to secure our tradition of 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 Fellowship 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 and the Minister who may refer the situation to the Safer Congregation Response Team. The Board of Trustees will be notified of this action.
2. The Safer 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 Minister, if available, 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 Minister being present, the Minister and the President of the Board of Trustees must be notified. All plans for follow up steps will be referred to the Safer 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.
  - a. 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.
  - b. 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.
  - c. Level 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 Fellowship for a specified period of time, with reasons for such action, and conditions for return, clearly communicated and documented.
  - d. Level Four: The person in question is permanently excluded from the Fellowship and its premises with steps taken as needed to enforce the integrity of this decision.
7. Should the Safer Congregation Response Team decide that exclusion or expulsion from the Fellowship is necessary, they will consult the Board of Trustees prior to action being taken.
8. The four levels of response recommended by this policy may be applied in the order determined by the Safer Congregation Response Team and the Board of Trustees in their judgment.

## ***Safer Congregation Policies and Procedures***

9. If appropriate, the Safer 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 President of the Board of Trustees 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 Fellowship functions?
  - c. Congregational Integrity: How likely is it that existing or prospective Fellowship 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 Fellowship? 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?

## Communicating During a Mental Health Crisis

What to do when a mentally ill person disrupts a congregational event:

Stay calm. The majority of mentally ill persons are not dangerous, but can be difficult to manage. Commons signs of mental illness include: audio or visual hallucinations, disorientation, paranoia and aggression.

If the person states intent to harm her/himself or another person, call 911 immediately. Give explicit directions where police should enter UUFH to find you and the person.

Ask someone to let one of the Security Team know about what is happening and to return to let you know that a staff person was located. (The staff person will make sure that our RE classes are secured before they return to help you.) In the UUFH Office, call a staff person and use the emergency phrase.

Ask someone to stay nearby to assist you.

Using a soft, respectful approach, move the person away from the event and to another place where you can be seen.

Keep your tone even and conversational. In a conversational manner, ask for the person's name and where they live.

Give the person plenty of personal space. Don't touch the person unless it is necessary and if you do, let the person know you are going to touch him/her. If possible, the person should not be physically or verbally coerced to leave the building.

Stay calm until the Security Team arrives. Listen to the person's story, avoiding any attempts to challenge or argue with what may seem to be irrational remarks.

When the staff person arrives, he/she will give the person a choice of what to do next: (a) to return to their car to go home, (b) to contact a local family member or friend who can pick them up, or (c) to call the police so that they may help the person. Accompany them outside to their car or wait until the family or police arrive.

**Warning Signs:** It must be stressed that if you have had contact with ANY INDIVIDUALS who display the following tendencies, that you may contact law enforcement, and certainly notify leaders in your organization:

- Threatens harm or talks about killing others.
- Constantly starts or participates in fights.
- Loses temper and self-control easily.
- Swears or uses vulgar language most of the time.

## Management of Possible Risks and Hazards

### Firearms

With the exception of duly-licensed law enforcement officers, no firearms are permitted on the UUFH premises.

If a person possesses a firearm on the premises, the person will be asked to leave immediately.

Should that person refuse to leave, the Suffolk County Police Department will be summoned.

## **Intruder/Active Shooter Emergency**

When a hostile person(s) is actively causing deadly harm or the imminent threat of deadly harm or is barricaded within a building, the following procedures should be followed:

- Lock yourself in the room you are in at the time of the threatening activity.
- If communication is available, call 911 or other appropriate emergency numbers.
- Don't stay in open areas.
- If in the office, office staff should use the designated Safety phrase to alert staff to potential danger.
- Do not sound the fire alarm. A fire alarm would signal the occupants in the rooms to evacuate the building and thus place them in potential harm as they attempted to exit.
- Lock the window and close blinds or curtains.
- Stay away from windows.
- Turn all lights and audio equipment off.
- Try to stay calm and be as quiet as possible.

If for some reason you are caught in an open area, such as a hallway or main congregation area, you must decide what action to take.

1. You can try to hide, but make sure it is a well hidden space or you may be found as the intruder moves through the building looking for victims.
2. If you think you can safely make it out of the building by running, do so. If you decide to run, do not run in a straight line. Keep any objects you can between you and the hostile person(s) while in the building. Use trees, vehicles or any other object to block you from view as you run. When away from the immediate area of danger, summon help any way you can and warn others.
3. If the person(s) is causing death or serious physical injury to others and you are unable to run or hide, you may choose to play dead if other victims are around you.
4. The last option you have, if caught in an open area, may be to fight back. This is dangerous, but depending on your situation, this could be an option.
5. If you are caught by the intruder and are not going to fight back, follow their directions and don't look the intruder in the eyes.
6. Once law enforcement arrives, obey all commands. This may involve your being handcuffed or made to put your hands in the air. This is done for Safety reasons, and once circumstances are evaluated by law enforcement, they will give you further directions to follow.
7. If you are not in harm's way and it is appropriate for the situation, fill out the Kidnapping and Hostage Checklist form and give it to the police when they arrive.

## **Should a Shooter or Violent Person Enter the Sanctuary**

When faced with an armed, violent person, consider precautions as listed above. Follow directions from Worship/Incident Leader (or designee) when possible and consider what is best for your and others Safety. Some of the actions discussed above may be appropriate for congregants as well as calling 911, if out of sight.

## Response to Natural Disasters

### Maintaining Contact with Members

The Fellowship can play several vital roles in the event of a natural disaster: checking up on each other, assisting those with challenges beyond their capacity, even emergency shelter -- a Safer haven. Our ability to offer this support depends on our being able to contact members, as well as other agencies that can assist us.

We have implemented a Web-based computer system ("Connie") to hold the information needed to support one another. In addition to names, addresses, phone numbers and other demographic information, we collect contact information for nearby relatives, special personal needs like medical conditions or dietary considerations, and the like.

The use of a Web-based system gives UUFH leadership access to this information without having to come to the Fellowship or depending on the Fellowship's facilities being operative.

This information is useful only insofar as it is current and accurate. To this end, UUFH sponsors periodic (annual) initiatives to prompt all members to review and correct their own listings in this database, as needed.

The use of an automated outbound dialing facility (robo-calling) should be evaluated for proactive communications to our membership. This will notify them in the event of a closure due to weather or other circumstances. It can also invite those in need to seek support from the community.

In the event of unscheduled closures due to natural disaster or weather event, UUFH will notify members and the wider community through the appropriate media outlets: cable local news channels, Newsday and other vehicles for local tracking of closures and delayed openings. The decision to close will be made jointly by the Minister and the Board of Trustees President, and the notifications will be transmitted by one or more Board-designated members having the authority and ability to do so.

### Closing the Building or Delaying Activities

In situations like severe winter weather, it may be necessary to cancel UUFH activities, or to delay them by some number of hours. It is UUFH policy to follow the lead of the Huntington public school system; when the schools are closed, the Fellowship is closed. UUFH will report these decisions to the appropriate media outlets like News12 and Newsday. The decision to close is made jointly by the Board President and the Minister, and transmitted to the various outlets by competent representatives designated by those two leaders.

The answering greeting on the telephone system will be updated when this occurs (and will be reverted after the situation eases). This can be done remotely, and wallet cards with the necessary instructions are provided to the Board President for distribution as deemed necessary. The Office Administrator will use the text system to alert congregants of such closings.

Online presences such as the Web page, Facebook and Twitter accounts will also be updated to reflect the ongoing status during an emergency.

Each of these communications activities (contacting the media, changing the phone greeting, updating the online sites, etc.) will have several members capable of performing them. Training, access

### *Safer Congregation Policies and Procedures*

credentials and any other prerequisites will be established each summer, as a new Board administration assumes its responsibilities.

## Maintaining the Physical Premises

The Safety of the physical plant is maintained by the Castle Care Committee, coordinated through the Office Administrator.

Castle Care maintains a checklist of periodic maintenance activities and inspections. These include:

- Inspection and maintenance of the fire alarm system. Semi-annual inspections of the central alarm system are required by Town code. Standalone smoke alarms on the first floor of the Administration wing and in the classroom areas of the Cottage will be tested monthly, with batteries changed semiannually;
- Portable fire extinguishers of the appropriate Class (multi-class ABC extinguishers will replace older ones as opportunity arises);
- Inspection and maintenance of the kitchen fire suppression system;
- Pre-season inspections of the HVAC facilities. Four boilers and three hot water heaters are located in the Main Building basement and Maintenance Room, and in the Cottage basement. Central air conditioning equipment, serving the Main Building first floor public spaces, is located on the Gallery roof, with its air filter in the Social Hall;
- Window air conditioners are installed and removed seasonally, as are storm windows and screens;
- Plowing and snow shoveling service is contracted annually. UUFH policy is to have all walks shoveled when conditions warrant, since any walk may be used on any given day;
- Inspection and replacement of rechargeable batteries in emergency exit signs and floodlights;
- Maintenance of exterior Safety lighting equipment; and
- Pruning and/or removal of plantings that pose a threat to people or property.

Electrical receptacles (outlets) in all rooms used by children are to be protected, preferably by the use of tamper-resistant receptacles (with internal spring-loaded shutters behind the plug openings) or with plastic plugs intended for this purpose. An upgrade program is ongoing.

Hazardous conditions, indoors and out, will be addressed at the highest priority, as agreed between the Office Administrator and Castle Care. These include snow and ice removal, and remediating any hazardous materials such as lead paint and asbestos.

Emergency Information placards are to be posted on the bulletin board in the Administration wing. This includes information about emergency telephone numbers (both official response and UUFH leadership), fire alarm zones, electrical service panel locations, thermostat locations, and so on.

## Appendix A. Adult Sponsor Responsibilities and Code of Ethics

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington  
Adult Sponsor Responsibilities  
and Code of Ethics

I, \_\_\_\_\_  
(sponsor name)

am attending \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of event) on \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

and will sponsor \_\_\_\_\_  
(youth name/s)

Sponsorship means that I take responsibility for the well-being, Safety, and best interests of these youth/s during this event. While attending this event:

- I will work out a system of communication with this youth during this event, which is mutually satisfying to the youth, sponsor and parents. I recognize that this youth has agreed to abide by all federal, state and local laws while attending this event and has signed a Youth Code of Ethics indicating that he/she is responsible for his/her own behavior.
- If the youth does not act accordingly, I understand I will be responsible for the consequences of her/his actions.
- I understand the code of ethics includes no alcohol or illegal drug use during the event and that both the youth and I are bound by this code. I pledge not to arrive under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. I pledge to use no alcohol or illegal drugs during this event.
- I am not sponsoring more than a total of 8 Youth at this event.
- I have read and signed the Code of Ethics included with this form.

### Code of Ethics

All volunteers play a key role in fostering the spiritual growth and character development of our youth. It is therefore, especially important that those in leadership positions provide the special nurture, care and support that will enable our youth to develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence and responsibility. Therefore, those who teach and/or lead our youth will:

- Provide nurturing care and support to all youth.
- Work to help youth develop a positive sense of self and spirit of independence.
- Respect the selfhood of each young person, including the absolute right to privacy of his or her own mind and body.
- Not engage in any behavior with young people that constitutes verbal, emotional or physical abuse.
- Not engage in behavior or language, which is personally threatening or demeaning.
- Not engage in any sexually harassing behavior, or any sexual, seductive or erotic behavior with youth.
- Not encourage or condone any sort of illegal or unethical activity on the part of youth.

#### **Volunteer's Statement:**

*I have read the above Code of Ethics and understand that these guidelines govern expected behavior of volunteers working with young people at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature) \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

Appendix B. Application Form for Volunteers and Employees Who Work with  
Children and Youth

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington  
Application for Volunteers and Employees  
who work with children and youth

**CONFIDENTIAL**

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any volunteer position involving the supervision of minors, excluding occasional volunteers as defined in the Safer Congregation Policy of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington. The purpose of this form is to help the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington provide a Safer and secure environment for the children and youth that participate in programs sponsored by the congregation. Any information you provide here will be used solely for the purpose of determining your qualifications for working with minors.

**Personal Data**

Name: (please print)

First      Middle      Last

Have you ever used a different name?  YES  NO

If yes, please list with dates:

Street Address:

City:    State:    Zip

Code:

Home Phone:   Email:      Number of years at current address:

If you have not lived at this address for at least 5 years, please list any previous addresses with dates.

In what states have you lived in since you were 18 years old?

Employer:      Work Phone:      Number of years at current employment:

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington  
**Application for Volunteers and Employees  
who work with children and youth**

**Congregational History and Prior Work with Children/Youth**

List congregations you have attended regularly during the past five years, starting with UUFH.

<u>Name of Congregation</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u>Dates of Membership</u>
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington	Huntington, NY	

List previous congregational and community work involving children/youth: (please include name of religious institution or organization and your role or duties, and person to whom you were responsible)

**References**

May we call your current employer for a character reference?

If not, please tell us why:

List two personal references who you have known for 3 or more years (not former employers or relatives):

(name)	(relationship to you)
(address)	(phone)
(name)	(relationship to you)
(address)	(phone)

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington  
**Application for Volunteers and Employees  
who work with children and youth**

**Background Information**

Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense? .....  YES  NO

Have you ever been accused of any crimes against a person, including rape, incest, sexual exploitation of a minor, or sexual or physical assault of a minor? .....  YES  NO

Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a criminal offense related to sexual misconduct or child abuse? .....  YES  NO

Has any civil judgment ever been made against you for reasons related to sexual misconduct or child abuse? .....  YES  NO

Have you ever resigned from employment or been disciplined or terminated by an employer for reasons related to sexual misconduct or child abuse? .....  YES  NO

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, please provide details (attach a separate piece of paper if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other than above, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of children or youth?

.....  YES  NO

If yes, please provide details: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Driving Information**

Please provide the following:

- Driver's License Number: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_
- Please attach a photocopy of your current Driver's License. If you will be driving children and/or youth:
- Please attach a copy of your certificate of insurance. We recommend minimum personal injury liability insurance of \$100,000.
- Have you ever been convicted of a moving violation or driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs? .....  YES  NO
- If yes, please state date and nature of conviction:

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington  
**Application for Volunteers and Employees  
who work with children and youth**

**Applicant's Statement and Release**

*I authorize the congregation to contact references and other religious institutions listed in this application to obtain information about my background regarding my character and fitness for work with children and youth. I authorize references to provide such information (including opinions) about me. I hereby release and hold harmless from liability any person or organization that provides information. I also agree to hold harmless this congregation, its trustees, employees and volunteers.*

*Further, I understand that a person responsible for screening staff or volunteers will conduct a background check which may include the sex offender registry and/or contact with the local police. This may be waived by UUFH by providing proof of having successfully passed a comparable background check within two years of the date below.*

*I understand that any information obtained about me through this application process will be kept in the strictest confidentiality and will be available only to those responsible for screening staff or volunteers or participating in a response team, or as required by law.*

*Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the policies of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington regarding child care and youth workers. Any information obtained through this process may be used, at the sole discretion of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington, to deny this application.*

*I attest that the above information is true and correct.*

---

(signature)

---

(date)

For UUFH use only:

---

(application reviewer's name)

---

(date)

Applicant Placed? .....  YES  NO

Position Assigned:

Appendix C. Code of Ethics for Those Working with Children and Youth

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington

## Code of Ethics for Volunteers and Employees who work with children and youth

Those who teach and/or lead our children and youth play a key role in fostering the spiritual growth and character development of our children and youth. It is therefore, especially important that those in leadership positions provide the special nurture, care and support that will enable our children and youth to develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence and responsibility.

Therefore, those who teach and/or lead our children/youth will:

- Provide nurturing care and support to all children/youth.
- Work to help children/youth develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence.
- Respect the selfhood of each young person, including the absolute right to privacy of his or her own mind and body.
- Not engage in any behavior with young people that constitutes verbal, emotional or physical abuse.
- Not engage in behavior or language, which is personally threatening or demeaning.
- Not engage in any sexually harassing behavior, or any sexual, seductive or erotic behavior with children/youth.
- Not encourage or condone any sort of illegal or unethical activity on the part of children/youth.
- Not consume alcohol or use any form of drug, which can affect physical or mental performance before or during the carrying out of his/her responsibilities.

Leaders shall be informed of the Code of Ethics and agree to it before assuming their role. In cases of violation of this code, appropriate action will be taken.

*I have read the above Code of Ethics and understand that these guidelines govern expected behavior of those working with the children and youth at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington.*

---

(signature)

---

(date)

---

(printed name)

## Appendix D. Coming of Age Mentor Safety

### **Meeting Guidelines**

The overall guideline for Safer congregation is to never be alone with a child or youth. Always be sure another unrelated adult is present for your meetings. Consider meeting:

- At the public library
- At a Unitarian Universalist congregation, provided other adults are present or doors are left open
- In a restaurant, coffee shop or park
- In the mentee's home, if another adult is present
- At your home, if another adult is present *other than* your spouse, partner, sibling or other relative.
- E-mail Communication

We recommend that you copy (cc) the parent/guardian on E-mail messages between the youth and mentor.

Appendix E. Limited Access Agreement: to be adapted on a case by case basis

## Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington Limited Access Agreement

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington affirms the dignity and worth of all persons. We are committed to being a religious community open to those who are in need of worshiping (being among us) with us, especially in times of serious personal troubles. However, based on your background, we have concerns about your contact with children and youth/adults in our congregation. The following guidelines are designed to reduce the risk to both you and them of an incident or accusation. We welcome you to our congregation and our membership but your participation will be limited to ensure the Safety of our congregants and to assure that you will not be subject to future accusations.

Within these guidelines, the congregation welcomes your participation in adult worship services, coffee hour, committee meetings, adult education, and adult-only social events. You are to avoid all contact with children and youth on congregation property or congregation-sponsored events. This includes the following:

1. Please do not talk with children.
2. Please do not volunteer or agree to lead, chaperone or participate in events for children and youth including such things as religious education classes, stories or talks for worship, youth group events, activities during intergenerational events, driving or otherwise transporting children and/or youth.
3. Please remain in the presence of an adult who knows your situation at all times when children are present.
4. Do not go into the Religious Education wing or upstairs classrooms.
5. Leave your cell phone in your care and do not use UUFH computers.
6. If a child in the congregation approaches you, either at the Fellowship or in a community place, politely and immediately excuse yourself from the situation.
7. Please avoid being in the building unsupervised when activities involving children are in session, such as nursery school or youth group.

*I accept that the following people will be told of my circumstances in order for them to protect the children/young people for whom they care: I have reviewed this covenant and agree to abide by its provisions. I understand and agree that if I violate this agreement, I will be denied access to future Fellowship functions and Fellowship property.*

---

Signature	Date
Witness	Date
Minister	Date
Director of Religious Education	Date
President, Board of Trustees	Date

Appendix F. Parent and Guardian Consent and Medical Release Form

**Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington  
Parent/Guardian Consent and Medical Release**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am the parent of legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_

I give consent for him/her to attend \_\_\_\_\_  
departing from \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

and returning on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
date \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby give my consent and authority for the designated adult(s) to take action to help insure the safety, health and welfare of my son/daughter/ward. I understand that if he/she breaks any federal, state, or local laws that I will be informed. I also request and empower the event's supervising adults to authorize medical personnel and hospitals to provide all medical care, including but not limited to hospital tests, emergency surgical care, pathology, radiology and anesthesia, surgery and prescriptive drugs for the health of my child.

The child covered by this authorization is:

Child's Name	Date of Birth
Parent / Legal Guardian	Home Phone
Street Address	Work Phone
City, State, Zip Code	Parent's Cell Phone
Emergency Contact Name	Contact's Day Phone
Child's Cell Phone, if any	Contact's Night Phone

Parent Attendance information:   will  will not be attending the event.

- I have submitted medical information when a child/youth was registered for the RE Program.
- There are no changes to the medical information on file with the RE Program
- Changes to the medical information for my child/youth are attached.

The Undersigned, on his/her own behalf, and on behalf of her/his minor child/ward, does hereby RELEASE, discharge and covenant to hold harmless The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington, its officers, employees and volunteers, from any and all claims, causes of action, and liability of any kind or nature, including personal injuries or death, and including any claim based on the negligence of the said Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington, its officers, employees or volunteers.

---

Parent/Guardian signature

---

(print name)

Appendix G. Medical Information Form

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington  
Child/Youth Medical Information

Name of child/youth	
Name of Doctor	Phone
Name of Dentist/Orthodontist	Phone
Do you carry family medical/hospital Insurance? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Name of parent/person with insurance policy	Phone
Health Insurance Agency Name	
Policy #	Group #

Medications currently taken:	
Allergies/Medical conditions:	
Date of last Tetanus shot:	Is your child under a physician's care for: Epilepsy <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Diabetes <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Other	

---

Parent/Guardian signature

---

(print name)

## Appendix H. Agreement to Teach

## Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington Agreement to Teach

*I understand that this contract will be reviewed regularly every six months and will remain for an indefinite period.*

*I have attended a teacher training session. I have read the Religious Education Program Safety Policy and attached forms. I have received all training as outlined in the Safety policy and understand all procedures.*

*I have signed the Code of Ethics statement.*

*I affirm that I have never been accused of, convicted of, or pled guilty to any sexual crime. I also have not pled guilty to a lesser charge after having been charged with a sexual crime. I have never engaged in any form of child abuse, including sexual abuse. I have never been determined to have engaged in any sexual offenses in any civil, administrative, or ecclesiastical forum or any other forum.*

*If there are any facts or circumstances in my background that call into question my being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of children, youth, or vulnerable adults, I have met to review this information confidentially with the Minister and the Religious Educator.*

*Further, I agree to notify the Minister and the Religious Educator immediately should I be accused of sexual abuse, sexual offenses, sexual harassment, or other sexual improprieties in the time that I am working with children and/or youth in this congregation.*

---

(signature)

(date)

**Appendix I. Volunteer Reference Form**

## Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington Volunteer Reference

Date of Reference: \_\_\_\_\_ Taken by: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer name:	Position:
-----------------	-----------

Reference name:	Phone:	Reference address:
-----------------	--------	--------------------

What is your relationship to the volunteer applicant? \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you known the volunteer applicant? \_\_\_\_\_

How well do you know the volunteer applicant? What are their strengths? \_\_\_\_\_

How would you describe the volunteer applicant's ability to relate to children and/or youth?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How would you feel about having him/her as a volunteer working with your child and/or youth?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you know of any facts or characteristics that would negatively affect the volunteer applicant's ability to work with children and/or youth? If so, please describe.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please list any other comments you would like to make:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your time.

## Appendix J. Reporting Child Abuse in New York

### A. The Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment

The abuse or maltreatment of children is against the law. Victims need an effective child protective service to prevent them from suffering further injury and impairment.

The purpose of the Child Protective Services Act of 1973 is to encourage more complete reporting of child abuse and maltreatment. The law established a Child Protective Service in each county in New York. Each Child Protective Service is required to investigate child abuse and maltreatment reports, to protect children (under 18 years old) from further abuse or maltreatment, and to provide rehabilitative services to children, parents, and other family members involved.

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services maintains a Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR) for reports made pursuant to the Social Services Law.

The Statewide Central Register, also known as the "Hotline," receives telephone calls alleging child abuse or maltreatment within New York State. The Statewide Central Register relays information from the calls to the local Child Protective Service for investigation, monitors their prompt response, and identifies if there are prior child abuse or maltreatment reports.

The Hotline receives calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week from two sources: persons who are required by law, or mandated, to report suspected cases of child abuse and maltreatment; and calls from non-mandated reporters, including the public.

Among those who are mandated to make reports are:

- medical and hospital personnel
- school officials
- social service workers
- child care workers
- residential care workers and volunteers
- law enforcement personnel

\*This list is not all inclusive.

A signed, written report (LDSS 2221A Report of Suspected Child Abuse or Maltreatment Adobe PDF LDSS 2221A / Microsoft Word LDSS 2221A) must be filed by mandated reporters within 48 hours of an oral report. You should submit written reports to the appropriate local child protective service. You may request the address of the investigative district from the child protective specialist at the time you make the oral report to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment.

The Summary Guide for Mandated Reporters (Adobe PDF or Text), also available in Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, and Russian, provides mandated reporters with an overview of their obligations and a conceptual framework of the New York State Child Protective Services system (CPS).

Voluntary reporters (for example, neighbors, relatives and concerned citizens) may use our statewide,

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toll free number to make reports. If you suspect a child has been harmed or is at risk, please dial 1-800-342-3720, to report what you have seen or heard. You can make a difference.

### **B. Adult Protective Services**

To report adult abuse, call (within New York State only) (844)-697-3505, or contact the Suffolk County Department of Social Services Adult Protective Services at (631) 854-3195.

In providing services to impaired adults, it is required for Protective Services for Adults to work with agencies dealing with aging, medical and mental health, legal issues, and law enforcement. Services available by Protective Services for Adults include:

- Investigation and assessment of the adult's needs and risk of harm
- Counseling for the victimized adult and their family
- Advocacy and case management services including arranging for medical and mental health assessments, applying for benefits and assuring coordinated delivery services
- Finding alternative living arrangements, including providing emergency room and board for up to 30 days
- Financial management services, including serving as representative payee" Homemaker and housekeeper chore services, within specified limits
- Crisis interventions, such as securing access orders, involuntary protective service orders and orders of protection
- Long-term legal interventions, such as pursuing guardianship

For further information on any of these services, please contact your local department of social services and ask for Protective Services for Adults.

## Appendix K. Child Care Policy

The following guidelines shall be used for child care coordination at UUFH.

### Child Care Coordination

1. A committee member from the appropriate committee (i.e., the committee that is sponsoring the event) contacts the Office Administrator no less than two weeks in advance of the event with the event hours and the number of children requiring child care and their ages.
2. The Office Administrator calls and schedules the necessary babysitters, then contacts the committee member to give the list of those babysitters, no less than three days before the event.
3. There will be a minimum of two babysitters at any such event.
4. The contacted committee member, or an adult they designate, is present at the event, greets the babysitters, and is available for any questions or emergencies throughout the duration of the event.
5. The Office Administrator communicates the rules of the UUFH Safer Congregation Policy and general babysitting guidelines to all babysitters and event coordinators prior to the event.

### Parent Responsibility

1. Parents of children being cared for must have an up-to-date Religious Education Registration form on file.
2. It is the parent's responsibility to notify babysitters of any allergies, concerns, or limitations.
3. Parents are required to stay on Fellowship grounds and be available for any concerns that the babysitters may have.

### Babysitter Responsibility

1. The babysitter will respect and care for each child in accordance with each child's needs.
2. The babysitter will report any problems or concerns promptly to the designated committee member and follow up with the CCC as necessary.
3. The babysitters will coordinate childcare with each other to ensure that two babysitters are in the same room at the same time (except for bathroom or parent visiting.)
4. The babysitters will use a sign-in sheet to record the children and parents participating.

### Event Coordinator Responsibility

1. The event coordinator, or an adult they designate, is present at the event, greets the babysitters, and is available for any questions or emergencies throughout the event.
2. At larger events, the event coordinator must designate a separate adult to be specifically in charge of babysitting on site.
3. At events of long duration, the event coordinator or their designee should periodically check in on the sitters and children.
4. The event coordinator collects the sign-in sheet and delivers it to the UUFH administrator. (Administrator will give sign-in sheet to DRE for archiving, and for filling out a check requisition.)

## **UUFH Responsibility**

1. To offer and provide a Safer and loving environment for children to enjoy supervised free play while their parents attend UUFH-sponsored events.
2. To pay babysitters the prevailing hourly rate as determined by the CCC and the DRE.
3. As per the Safety policy, a minimum of two babysitters must be present in the same room at all times. If more than one room is in use (e.g., nursery & main RE space), then the number of sitters should be increased to maintain this quota. The number and age of children needing babysitting will also determine the number of babysitters needed.
4. For events and meetings where formal child care is not practical, or a babysitter is not available for that date, the Fellowship and the CCC will support the sponsoring committee in finding other solutions (e.g. holding committee meetings in the RE space so children of committee members can play during the meeting).
5. Off-site Events: UUFH is not responsible for arranging babysitting for off-site Fellowship events.
6. UUFH is not an allergen-free environment, especially not a nut-free facility.

## **Child Care Coordinator (CCC) Job Description**

1. Using the DRE's approved list of babysitters, hires and coordinates the appropriate number of babysitters.
2. Is familiar with the UUFH Safer Congregation Policy, including RE space evacuation guidelines, and communicates this information to all baby-sitters and event coordinators.
3. Coordinates with designated committee members and UUFH administrators to ensure that babysitters are paid accurately and promptly. (Sitters are paid by check in the mail after the event.)
4. Seeks counsel from the DRE.
5. Must have a completed background check.

## **Appendix L. Procedures for Overnight Trips with Youth**

These procedures are to cover the following trips and environments: hotels, motels, Bed and Breakfasts, and other church sites.

These procedures, based on Safer Congregation RE Policies, are in descending order of preference. Whenever possible, trip arrangements should be made in advance to adhere to the most stringent of these procedures.

As part of trip preparations, sleeping arrangements should be discussed with the youth so that all are comfortable with the plan. In the spirit of community building and inclusion, it is preferable for overnight space to accommodate all youth with correct adult ratio in the same room. The next preferable accommodation is single beds. If double beds are the only option, then youth need to bring sleeping bags.

One adult on each trip will be responsible for assuring adherence to these procedures. Prior to each trip, the DRE shall review and approve the specific procedure to be employed as set forth herein.

The preferred arrangement is for two adults to remain awake in close proximity to where the youth are sleeping. They are to monitor all issues related to Safety and/or inappropriate behavior.

For group accommodations: If there are not enough adults on the trip to accommodate the above arrangement, the next preferred arrangement is to have two adults sleep in the same quarters as the youth as a presence to ensure Safety. If either adult is awakened due to any disturbance, inappropriate behavior or by a youth who wishes to report the same, that adult is to immediately awaken the other adult before proceeding further.

For hotel, motel, and Bed and Breakfast type accommodations: The next preferred arrangement is that one adult must randomly spot check the sleeping quarters of the youth at least once during the night. The adults on the trip may divide this duty among themselves in order to ensure that they are alert and responsible throughout the trip. Note that room monitoring may include placing tape on the outside of the youths' doors in order to assure that no one has left his or her room.

All trip attendees must be made aware of pertinent fire Safety information at the site(s) of the overnight.

The adult in charge of each trip shall review the specific Safety procedures for the trip with all attendees.

A copy of UUHF travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all athletes, parents and other adults traveling with the UUHF youth.

Chaperones and other adults who are to supervise the youth must be members of the UUHF and have successfully passed a UUHF-Administered criminal background screening.

When only one youth and one chaperone travel to an event, the youth must have his/her parent's (or legal guardian's) written permission in advance to travel alone with the chaperone.

During overnight travel, if youth are paired with other youth they shall be of the same gender and should be a similar age. When youth are age 13 and over, chaperones and/or team managers would ideally stay in nearby rooms. When youth are age 12 and under, chaperone and/or adult supervisors

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may stay with the youth. Where coach/chaperones/supervisory adults are staying in a room with youth, they should be the same gender as the youth and written consent should be given by parents (or legal guardian).

The parents of all minor children shall be provided with all contact information (names, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, etc.) for the hotel, group leader, support staff, chaperones, and the UUFH Main Office.

If traveling to a foreign country, the group leader must maintain photocopies of all travel documents and passports.

UUFH Group Leaders should carry a signed Medical Consent or Authorization to Treat Form for each youth.

## Appendix M. Rationale and Guidelines for Including Sex Offenders – Balancing Act

**From *Balancing Acts, Keeping Children Safer in Congregations*, Reverend Debra W. Haffner ([www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org))**

According to the federal Center for Sex Offender Management, “the criminal justice system manages most convicted sex offenders with some combination of incarceration, community supervision, and specialized treatment... the majority are released at some point on probation or parole (either following sentencing or after a period of incarceration in prison or jail.) About 60% of offenders managed by the U.S. correctional system are under some form of conditional supervision in the community.”[xiii] And many of them want to attend worship and participate in the life of a faith community. In fact, attendance and membership in a local congregation may be encouraged by their treatment provider and parole supervisor, often to cut down on their social isolation.

There are those who believe that a convicted sex offender never belongs in one of our communities. In fact, one of the ministers I interviewed for this manual was quite clear about this: “I told the Board that they could have the minister or the pedophile. Not both.” A former Director of Ministry for the UUA, took this position in a 1991 article, “my own bias is this, based on what I know now – that an identified pedophile should not be part of congregational life. They must cease any physical presence.”[xiv]

This manual offers information and guidance for congregations wishing to consider including a person with a history (or an accusation) of sexual abuse. This manual also offers resources for inclusion such as a sample Limited Access Agreement. A review of the literature on sex offenders, interviews with congregations that have successfully integrated a convicted sex offender into adult worship and education, and a theological commitment to the dignity and worth of all people, even those that have committed morally repugnant acts, suggest that inclusion is possible. And each congregation faced with this situation will make its own decision about what is right given the particular facts and circumstances.

**Peer reviewed literature suggests that, depending on the nature of the offense and assuming successful completion of treatment, most treated sex offenders do not recidivate.** As religious communities, we can provide compassion, support, and reconciliation to those who truly have indicated that they have changed and have taken responsibility for their actions. We believe in the healing power of involvement in a spiritual home, and in the words of one affirmation heard in many Unitarian Universalist congregations, “to seek the truth in love and help one another.” Sex offenders who have completed prison sentences and mandated treatment as well as registered with the state have according to the court system complied with their punishments. As faith-based communities, we can provide support and compassion with awareness and vigilance so that all are Safer as those who have sexually offended return to or join our church community. A Case Study: A Sex Offender in Church discusses how one congregation has faced these issues and is follows the list of Resources at the end of this document.

In many ways, the person with a history of sex offenses has the same needs for a faith community as the rest of us. But the sex offender needs more to assure that his involvement doesn’t pose risks to the congregation and that standards are in place for protection against false allegations and suspicions. “Such involvement needs to include helping him manage his behavior and not get into situations which in the past led to offences... an offender who truly wishes to participate in the life of the church, who realizes the extent of his crime and the difficulty his presence may cause to survivors, and who is truly committed to a new life will understand and accept the need for the imposition of restrictions...”

But in order to do so Safely, we must ensure that the convicted sex offender does not have the opportunity in our congregations to re-offend again. This includes avoiding situations where they can be accused falsely. The fact is that a person with a history of sex offense against children should never be allowed to be with children, work with children and youth, or socialize with children at the congregation. **No person who has been convicted of, or with an unresolved accusation of, any sexual misconduct can be permitted to be involved in any religious education or youth group activities.**

**The core response of the congregation to a convicted or accused sex offender is a Limited Access Agreement.** This agreement invites the person with a history of sex offenses to participate in certain aspects of congregational life, setting clear boundaries including what the individual will not do. Typically a Limited Access Agreement will specify participation in adult worship services, coffee hour, committee meetings, adult education, all-adult social events, and well-supervised intergenerational events as acceptable. It asks the person to avoid all contact with children on congregation property or congregation-sponsored events. This includes not talking with children, volunteering or chaperoning children's events, including children's religious education classes, talks with children during worship, and children's activities during intergenerational events. It generally requires the person to remain in the presence of an adult who knows their situation at all times when children are present, including in some cases, asking the person to suggest a group of people to act as companions at church events where children may be present. It denies the person access to keys to the building and asks them to avoid being in the building unsupervised when activities involving children are in session, such as nursery school or youth group. The sample Limited Access Agreement that can be modified based on the feedback of the committee and the individual circumstances of the offender, can be found in the Appendix of this document. It includes two introductory paragraphs: one for a person who has been accused of a sexual offense, the other for someone who has been convicted. It's available in checklist format as well. **The message to the sex offender should be that they are both welcome to participate in adult worship, adult social, and adult educational activities and that they must covenant with the congregation to avoid all contact with children.**

Many congregations already have policies on how to deal with disruptive behaviors including

- perceived threats to the Safety of other members
- disruption of church activities
- diminishing appeal of the church to its current and potential members

In general, these policies first ask the minister to meet with the offending individual to address the concern. If the behavior continues, the offending individual may be asked to leave the congregation for a period of time, with reasons for suspension and conditions of return made clear. Individuals are generally not excluded from the congregation completely except by agreement of the Board of Trustees and the Minister, who will communicate the decision.

In the words of one policy, we strive "to be an inclusive community, affirming our differences in beliefs, opinions, and life experiences. However, concern for the Safety and well-being of the congregation as a whole must be given priority over the privileges and inclusion of the individual. To the degree the disruption compromises the health of this congregation, our actions as a people of faith must reflect this emphasis on security."

If your congregation already has a policy for dealing with disruptive behavior it can be amended to include a section addressing the inclusion of sex offenders as many of the same conditions apply. It is good practice for a congregation to develop a draft of a Limited Access Agreement or check list that can be a template when a situation arises.

There are generally a few ways that the presence of a convicted sex offender becomes known in a congregation. In an ideal world, a person with this background would come to the minister before they started coming to the congregation to discuss limits on their participation. Sex offender treatment specialists often encourage their clients to do just that. One community facing this issue wrote, "The Board's response to this situation would have been made easier if, before becoming so deeply involved in church activities, the individual had approached our church, explained his situation, asked whether there was some arrangement under which he could participate, and then awaited our response."

This is probably not often the case. In some cases, people reveal their backgrounds to the ministers. In other circumstances, another congregant may discover a congregant's history of sexual offenses. Congregants should know that in these cases they should make their concern known to the minister. In other cases, someone may see a familiar name on the sex offender registry. Or, perhaps it becomes known that a long standing member of the congregation has been accused of a sexual offense.

### **Steps to Take**

1. No matter how the situation is revealed, the minister as quickly as possible should meet privately with the individual to discuss the concerns that have been raised. The minister may want to check the local sex offender registry before meeting with the person. (If the minister is the one being accused, this manual and these steps do not apply. Instead, the President of the Board should be contacted immediately and the president should contact the Director for Congregational Services at the UUA and/or the District Executive serving the congregation.) If the person is a member of the congregation and has a partner who also attends the church, then the minister should reach out to the partner as well.
2. If the minister determines that there is genuine cause for the concern, the person should then be asked to meet with the hopefully pre-existing Sexual Misconduct and Abuse Response Team (hereinto referred to as the Response Team). If such a team does not exist, the Minister in consultation with the President of the Board of Trustees, should convene such a group, consisting of the minister, the Religious Educator, and if possible at least three members of the congregation who have professional expertise with this issue.
3. The individual should be asked to sign a release form so that the minister can contact his/her sex offender treatment provider and/or current therapist. Ask if those people are members of ATSA, the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers. The therapist and, if applicable, the parole officer should be asked for their professional assessment of the likelihood that the sex offender will re-offend and whether additional restrictions beyond the standard Limited Access Agreement ought to be placed on the person's participation. It will be helpful to know the number, timing and nature of offenses. Such information allows consideration of different situations. For example, an 18 year old male who had sex with his 16 year old girlfriend and against whom her parents pressed charges or the person who has served time in jail for sex offenses against neighborhood children. In the second scenario, if the person has been in the community for some time and has previously completed

mandated treatment, the committee would be wise to ask the person to go for a professional assessment with a therapist who specializes in working with sex offenders. The congregation may choose to provide the funding for this assessment. If the offender refuses permission to contact the therapist or refuses to go for an assessment, the congregation would be right to refuse participation in any congregation activity. For more information on this issue, go to Reasons for Excluding a Person from All Congregation Activities.

It is beyond the scope and experience of congregations to assess the risk or probability that a sex offender will re-offend. According to the Center for Sex Offender Management, even therapists with special training in treating sex offenders can be wrong. They write, “There are no absolutes or magic bullets in identifying these risk factors. Rather, this process is an exercise in isolating factors that are associated with specific behaviors. While this association reflects likelihood, it does not say that all individuals who possess certain characteristics will behave in a certain manner. Some offenders will inevitably commit subsequent sex offenses...likewise not all sex offenders who have re-offense characteristics will recidivate.”[xvi]

The question the Response Team (or other responsible entity in the congregation) must be able to answer is this: given what professionals have advised you, will this person sign and obey a Limited Access Agreement that they can maintain with the leadership in order to assure the Safety of children and youth?

4. If the assessment indicates that the person has completed or is participating successfully in treatment and is not at high risk for recidivism, the Response Team may choose to develop a Limited Access Agreement. If the professional assessment indicates that the person is at high risk for re-offending, it is appropriate to deny that person involvement in the faith community until treatment is successful at reducing the risk. One denomination that has developed a resource for assisting congregations in making these decisions recommends that “a small group should be set up, consisting of approximately five persons, including the minister, persons who have agreed to offer pastoral support for the offender, and accompany them in worship and other church activities, someone with expertise or experience in this field, and someone to represent the wider church community. The group should acquaint itself with any therapeutic program the offender has undergone or will continue to be part of. The group should meet the offender, their probation officer, and other appropriate people so that clear boundaries can be established for the protection of children and youth and to reduce the likelihood of false allegations or suspicions. This group will, at best, operate alongside other agencies in a multi-agency approach to the offender’s rehabilitation.” Meeting with the other support people in the offender’s life – their family, therapist, probation officer – can powerfully demonstrate the faith community’s desire to support the person

**Reasons for Excluding a Person from All Congregation Activities**

- Refusal for the minister to contact the treatment provider and parole officer.
- Refusal to go for a risk assessment with a qualified therapist.
- Report by a treatment provider that the individual is at too high risk for recidivism.
- Refusal to sign a Limited Access Agreement.
- Refusal to comply with the requirements of the Limited Access Agreement.

Once an individual decides that they can comply with these conditions, the process would begin again to reassess the individual and see if they could be welcomed into the life of the congregation anew.

and hold them accountable. If the person has a partner in the community, that person should be involved in developing the Limited Access Agreement as well.

It is important to point out that a person with a commitment to avoiding future abuses will welcome the opportunity for controls on their behaviors. Stop It Now! writes, “You can show your support of the abuser’s willingness to live a different life that keeps children Safer. Your support and watchfulness can help in his or her recovery. It is also a chance to let the abuser know that you are aware of the past and are watching his or her actions today.”

All persons with past histories of sexual offenses should be asked to sign a Limited Access Agreement or Check List. Upon entry into the congregation and depending on the circumstances, the person may be asked to sign one annually. If the offender refuses to do so, it is then appropriate to deny the person access to congregation functions and church property. An offender who refuses to sign a Limited Access Agreement should know that if they enter the congregation or its property, they will be asked to leave by a member of the Response Team or the Board of Trustees. If the person further refuses, the local police will be called for assistance.

5. The Response Team should meet at least quarterly with any individual with whom it has a Limited Access Agreement to review the arrangement and address any concerns. If the minister or the Religious Educator changes, as well as the chair of the Board of Trustees, it is important that the departing person inform the new person of this situation to ensure provision of pastoral support for the offender as well as continuity of awareness of the situation. In sharing information appropriately it is also important to remain aware of confidentiality and privacy for all involved. Copies of files including Limited Access Agreement information should be treated with care, and kept in a secure file drawer.
6. If and when legal questions arise, the minister and/or Board President should contact a lawyer who can provide information and advice informed by local and state statutes that apply.
7. Decide who needs to know. One of the very important and difficult questions is who needs to know that a congregant has a history of sex offense. Clearly, key people, including the Minister, the Religious Educator, the Chair of the Board and the Response Team need to know that the person is attending church, that he or she has agreed not to have contact with children, has signed a Limited Access Agreement or check list, and that he or she should never be alone with children and adolescents.

According to the Methodist Church of the United Kingdom, “there is much to be said for explaining the circumstances to the whole congregation, to promote understanding and support for the individual but also to ensure that church members do not unwittingly allow children contact with the individual concerned. However, this needs to be weighed against any need for confidentiality or pastoral sensitivity...the need to know must be balanced with the danger that the offender may be hounded out of the community (to his detriment and to the greater danger of the other children if he decides to maintain a low profile next time around.)[xix]

One congregation has devised a policy in between: the congregation knows the policies that have been developed to keep children Safer. The name of a particular person with a history of sexual offending is known to the minister and the Religious Educator. The minister will share that name with any parent who requests it in a private meeting. The Board of Trustees, in grappling with the

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issue of sex offenders in the congregation, will want to make the decision about how confidentiality will be handled, and it is that decision that should be communicated to the entire congregation.

## Appendix N. Youth Who May Be Abusers – Balancing Act

**From *Balancing Acts, Keeping Children Safer in Congregations*, Reverend Debra W. Haffner ([www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org))**

One of the most difficult possible situations is when a teenager or child in the congregation has been accused of inappropriately sexually touching a child in the congregation. The difficulty is that in some cases these children may simply be acting on their sexual feelings impulsively, not quite understanding the importance of boundaries, whereas in other cases, youth and children who engage in sexual activity with younger children may become future adult offenders. If an older child forces sex on a younger child or exposes his or her genitals to a younger child, both of these children will need professional help. If an older child demonstrates inappropriate sexual interest in younger children that doesn't extend to these behaviors, there may or may not be cause for congregational involvement. However, "any child who engages in sex play with a much younger child, or children who coerce or force someone to engage in sex, is beyond normal sexual exploration. If a child is being used in any way to meet the sexual needs of another, then it is sexual abuse." [xx] And some children who behave this way are acting out their own history of sexual abuse.

After such an incident comes to the attention of the minister or other staff member, the minister should initiate contact individually with the parents of both children to discuss the allegation and next steps. In both of the congregations that I spoke to where this had happened, the ministers reported that the parents had simply stopped coming to the congregation rather than seeking help for their children and support from the faith community during what is surely a difficult time.

The minister should encourage the parents of the child who was touched to seek an evaluation for this child. Some children may seem unchanged by the incident. However, a child who has been sexually abused, according to Stop It Now!, "needs specialized help and attention to heal from this abuse" through treatment with a specialist, "otherwise he or she might be at risk for further abuse or for showing abusing behaviors." However, with treatment and support, the risk of either further abuse or for abusing is dramatically decreased. Contact the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA) or the Safer Society Foundation for referrals if you don't have a local list of therapists with expertise in this area.[xxi]

The parents of the child who initiated the sexual contact need to be engaged more thoroughly in discussions about next steps. Depending on the state law and the nature of the incident, it may be necessary to call Child Protective Services. Regardless, before the initiator is allowed to continue to attend religious education, this child should receive an extensive assessment by a child psychologist or psychiatrist with experience with children with sexual behavior problems. It is NOT the responsibility of the minister or the response team to decide if abuse has occurred, but rather to assure that such assessment does take place.

While this review is occurring, it is important that the child's religious education teacher be informed of the allegation and for the parents to agree to closely monitor their child before and after the religious education program. It may make sense to remove the child from religious education during this time. It would certainly be prudent for the child not to be allowed unsupervised time with other children until the assessment is complete.

The minister will need to decide if the situation warrants the involvement of the entire Response Team and at what point. If the evaluation finds that this was simply a case of inappropriate boundaries or impulsive behavior, and with the recommendation of the therapist that the child can Safely attend church functions with other children, the minister and the parents can meet with the child to discuss the importance of never repeating the behavior, the harm it can do to other children, and the consequences should such a situation occur again.

On the other hand, if the treatment provider reports that the child has a sexual behavior problem that is likely to be repetitive, the minister, the Religious Educator, the response team, and the parents need to meet to decide how and if the child can Safely be involved with the Religious Education or Youth Group program. A modified Limited Access Agreement should be developed and signed by both the child and the parents. In some cases, it may be necessary to deny the young person continued involvement with other children until treatment is completed and to consider alternative ways to provide religious education, such as through individual sessions with a Religious Educator or home schooling.

In some situations, a family will want to bring a child who has been treated for sexual offenses back into the congregation after treatment is completed. In such cases, the steps for involving an adult offender can be followed, including a Limited Access Agreement signed by both the youth and their parents.

In any of these cases, pastoral care and support for the families involved is crucial. This will be very difficult for the parents involved, and they will need the support of their church community, especially the minister and the Religious Educator. Helping them to feel welcome and supported is essential, as is the ongoing offer of ministry.

## **Appendix O. Physical Access Policy**

The Safety and security of our members, staff, tenants, guests, and, especially, children are critical. It is recognized that building security is linked to key distribution. Therefore, the Board of Trustees establishes the following Physical Access Policy and its associated Procedures.

Access to the premises and its facilities is to be controlled in a manner that ensures the wellbeing of our community. Appropriate procedures for doing so shall be employed during normal operations as well as outside of business hours. The ability to enter UUFH buildings, outside of normal operating hours, is to be limited to those with a genuine need to do so, when no other arrangement can be made to support the Fellowship's needs.

Persons with infrequent needs for off-hours access shall be provided such access on a short-term basis. Only those with regular and frequent needs shall be given access through long-term means.

The building can be entered using either an exterior master key or a lock combination. The exterior master key opens all of the regularly used entrance doors. The Administration entrance door can also be entered by using a lock combination. The combination lock is the preferred means of entering the building; this will minimize the number of master keys in circulation. Keys are to be provided only to those members whose access needs cannot be satisfied by entering through the Administration entrance door, i.e., those who need to use a specific door (e.g., handicapped access).

### **Securing the premises**

The Main Building will be secured in zones:

- Exterior (perimeter) doors;
- Interior doors and closets;
- Classrooms (a subset of Interior doors and closets);
- Restricted-access areas; and
- Areas leased to tenants.

The Cottage will be secured in zones:

- Residence;
- Classroom area; and
- Basement.

The Board will establish an Exterior Master key system so that exterior door locks can be accessed with a single key, with these exceptions:

- Maintenance Room exterior door, which must be dead-bolted from within. However, if and when this door is replaced, it will be unlocked by the single Exterior Master key;
- Second floor Fire Escape door, which has no exterior handle or lock; and
- Social Hall exterior door (to Sam Philips Garden), which has no exterior handle or lock.

In addition to the exterior door locks that accept the Exterior Master key, the Administration exterior door will be fitted with a combination lock, and will be opened using either the proper key or combination.

The Board will establish an Interior Master key system so that a single key will provide access to all areas within the Fellowship not designated as “restricted.” This includes closets, except as noted.

To provide security while meeting the needs for access within the building, certain areas (designated as “restricted”) will not be accessible with the Interior Master key. These areas are:

- the Minister’s Office;
- the Office of the Director of Religious Education;
- the Sound Room (Green Room); and
- the Finance Office.

Each of these will have a distinct, individual key. This means a total of six (6) keys secure the entire Main Building.

Areas of the Main Building and the Cottage that are leased to tenants will have separate and distinct keying arrangements. Locks protecting the leased areas will not be opened by Master Keys. However, one original key for each door lock in these areas will be retained in the Key Box.

### **Handling of Original Keys**

The original keys (factory- or locksmith-issued) for all locks will be secured in a locked Key Box located within the Main Building. Keys to this Key Box will be issued to the Fellowship Administrator, the Chair(s) of Castle Care, and others specifically authorized by the Board of Trustees. These original keys are never

issued to individuals, and are used only for making duplicate keys. Duplicate keys will be made only by a licensed locksmith, and will be stamped DO NOT DUPLICATE. Only the Fellowship Administrator, the Chair(s) of Castle Care, or their designee may have Fellowship keys duplicated, and these must duplicate the originals from the Key Box.

### **Accessing the Main Building**

It is recognized that some Fellowship members need regular and unrestricted access to the Main Building and all areas within. Other members have an intermittent need to obtain entrance to the Main Building and to selected areas within. Members' access must take into consideration the frequency and predictability of their needs, and whether the building will otherwise be open.

Access outside of regular operating hours can be provided through assigned keys and/or lock combinations.

Persons having an urgent need (i.e., they are locked out as an event they're running is scheduled to begin) can call one of several names whose phone numbers will be displayed on the Admin entrance door. A one-time combination will be disclosed over the phone; this combination will thereafter be changed as soon as convenient.

### **Distribution of Keys and Combinations**

All keys remain the property of the Fellowship. They are considered to be "borrowed" by recipients, whether for short- or long-term use.

The Castle Care Chair(s), on behalf of the Board of Trustees, shall designate:

- those persons who need to have an Exterior Master key, an Interior Master key and any restricted-area keys;
- specific Committee Chairs who need an Exterior Master key or lock combination and an Interior Master key; and
- those persons, such as lessees, who need access to the building, whether by Exterior Master key or lock combination.

The following persons shall (if they so desire) have all (6) keys assigned to them:

- Board President
- Board Vice President
- Fellowship Administrator
- Chair(s) of Castle Care Coordinating Council
- Minister
- Director of Religious Education
- UUFH Cleaning Service Provider

Other persons (members, renters, and trusted service providers) needing intermittent access to the building shall be loaned the appropriate keys and/or lock combination by the Fellowship Administrator, acting in the role of Building Use Coordinator.

Groups of people that meet off-hours shall be given lock combinations instead of master keys.

## **UUFH Safe Congregation Policies and Procedures**

The exterior door combination lock can accept multiple valid combinations. Combinations shall be distributed according to duration of access need: short-term (two weeks or less) and long-term.

Short-term combinations shall be handled in a manner similar to loaner keys. The Fellowship Administrator shall erase or nullify the combination after the agreed-upon duration of need has elapsed.

Long-term combinations are used with contractors, lessees, and others with an ongoing relationship that also meets other requirements (frequent or urgent off-hours access). These combinations shall be replaced promptly as each relationship ends. The Fellowship Administrator will change each long-term combination on or about the yearly anniversary of its issuance. Different combinations are issued to different entities, so that the impact of a relationship's ending will be minimized.

Technology limits the number of concurrently active combinations. Individuals will be assigned to one of several groups of people needing off-hours access. While several people may belong to a group and therefore use the same combination, the sharing of that combination with anyone else, even other members of that group, is prohibited. Each individual who needs off-hours access must follow procedures to obtain a combination from the Office Administrator, including a brief mandatory training session.

The unauthorized sharing of combinations and duplication of keys is regarded as a serious breach of trust, and will be brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees for consideration.

All persons who are issued keys or combinations, by definition, will use the building off-hours and therefore are specifically responsible for maintaining access security. They shall receive training in building security procedures from the Fellowship Administrator, Castle Care Chair(s), or their designee.

### **Logging the Distribution of Keys and Combinations**

The issuance and return of keys and combinations shall be recorded in the Key Log by the Fellowship Administrator or designee. The Administrator may choose or change the medium and format of the Key Log, provided that its history is preserved.

For both assigned and loaned keys and combinations, no key or combination will be released until the borrower has signed for it in the Key Log. The date of agreed-upon return of the key or expiration of the lock combination will be recorded at the time of its issuance. Upon return of the key, the borrower is responsible for seeing that fact recorded in the Key Log. The Administrator will invalidate the assigned combination once its agreed-upon expiration has passed. No notice to the recipient will be required of the Administrator to accomplish this.

### **Religious Education uses**

The RE teachers have recurring needs to unlock certain interior doors. The RE classrooms (RE-1, RE-2, RE-3, and RE-4) and the RE Closet (between RE-2 and RE-3) shall be secured with a sub-master key which opens all of these areas but not others.

All RE teachers are responsible for ensuring that all classrooms are locked after classes end.

### **Immediate Access Needs and Community Keys**

## *UUFH Safe Congregation Policies and Procedures*

From time to time, including on Sunday mornings when RE classes are held, Fellowship members will need access to certain areas for which prior arrangements have not been made. For this purpose, a single copy of each key needed for these areas will be kept near the mailboxes, for immediate use and immediate return. The areas for which these community keys are available include:

- RE classrooms (RE-1 through RE-4, RE-7, and RE-8)
- Kitchen pantry
- Pantry cupboards
- Cottage basement

No Master Keys shall be left in an unsecured area such as the mailboxes. Prior approval is required from the Board of Trustees or their designee for all issuances of Master Keys.

## Appendix P. Checklist for Closing the Building

# Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington

## Checklist for Closing the Building

- MAIN HALL – All lights turned off, either with switches or the special light key (hanging above the switches at the Main Hall entrance)
  - Side Lights
  - Stage Lights
  - Metal Halide Lights (special key)
  - Illuminated Memorial Plaque (push dimmer switch)
- Furniture returned to its original location. Folding chairs and tables returned to the closet.
- Borrowed keys returned, including Pantry keys.
- CLEANUP – Room(s) is clean and orderly. Chairs and tables are put away. Trash is disposed of outdoors.
- Windows closed and locked
- Fans and heaters turned off and unplugged
- KITCHEN – The dishwasher emptied and drained (must turn off before draining); all washed items put away; pantry locked and keys returned; stoves and ovens turned off and wiped down; counters wiped down; all food waste in dumpster; recyclables (cardboard “broken down” to fit) in covered containers outside; sinks and drainboard emptied and cleaned; new bags (available inside Maintenance Room door) in pails. Take home any leftovers, partially-consumed packages, etc.
- ALL LIGHTS throughout the building turned off
- RESTROOMS vacated and no toilets left running
- ADMINISTRATION OFFICE – Copier turned off (Energy Saver), office door locked
- FIRE DOORS – All red steel doors (including kitchen) closed, as required by law. Music Room and both Sound Room doors locked
- EXTERIOR DOORS – All doors to the outside are closed throughout the building (Main Entrance, Social Hall, Kitchen, Family Room, RE Exit to Cottage, Administration). Use the key as needed to lock exterior handles. Push on inside of all doors to verify.
- FRONT DOOR locked, including deadbolt. Left door secured with top and bottom pins. (You can lock the deadbolt from the inside and leave through the kitchen door, making sure you have locked the kitchen door behind you. You may also leave through the Administration door: once outside, push the SCHLAGE button and turn the thumbturn.)

## Appendix Q. Injury Report

# Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Huntington Injury Report

Date of incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of day: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of incident	
Injured person's name	
Address	
Phone numbers	
Date of birth	
If a minor, Parent / Guardian names	
Health insurance carrier & policy #	
Describe what happened:	

Were the authorities contacted?	Was the involved person seen by a physician?	Was first aid administered?
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Who was contacted?:	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Physician's Name: When:	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes by (name): When:
	Where:	Where:

Witness names	Contact information

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Prepared by

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Date of report

### Preparer's contact numbers