

Policy-Procedure

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Los Gatos Personal Safety and Prevention of Abuse

PURPOSE:

Our congregation is committed to creating and maintaining a church community in which all people can worship, learn, and be together in an atmosphere free of all forms of discrimination, harassment, abuse, exploitation, and/or intimidation.

This policy outlines UUFLG's commitment and plan for creating and maintaining a safe congregational environment for members, friends, visitors, and others who participate in programs and activities associated with the Fellowship.

POLICY:

UUFLG is a safe congregation, an environment free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, abuse, exploitation, and/or intimidation. We agree to treat others with dignity and respect, regardless of age or other status.

Behavior that promotes discrimination, harassment, abuse, exploitation, and/or intimidation will not be tolerated within our programs or in any Fellowship related activity or setting.

Examples of such behavior include sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that a reasonable person would find unwelcome, exploitative, hostile, intimidating, or abusive.

SPECIFIC PROVISIONS FOR NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION:

New Member Orientation workshops will include a discussion of the Fellowship's Personal Safety and Prevention of Abuse Policy, including the status of any current Covenants of Right Relationship active in the congregation.

SPECIFIC PROVISIONS FOR ONGOING EDUCATION:

Biannually in October and May, the board will review the congregation's Policy of Personal Safety and Prevention of Abuse and circulate the revised version to the membership via our discussion list, to remind the congregation of our commitment.

SPECIFIC PROVISIONS FOR ADDRESSING CONCERNS, ANSWERING QUESTIONS, OR MAKING PROPOSED CHANGES:

1. Those involved with UUFLG who have concerns or issues related to personal safety are asked and encouraged to share them with the Minister, the Director of Religious Education, the Committee on Shared Ministry, and/or a member of the Board. Incidents or occurrences deemed unsafe or of concern should be reported immediately.
2. Concerns or questions about this policy, its implementation, or its revision should be directed to the Minister or a member of the Board.

3. Hereafter this policy refers to any person raising a concern or question under this policy as "the reporter." This policy refers to the Minister, the Director of Religious Education, or any member of the Board of Trustees with whom the reporter shares the concern or question as "the person informed."
4. The person informed will immediately consult with the reporter to ascertain what, if any, steps are necessary for the reporter to be and feel safe at the Fellowship and in any Fellowship-related activity or setting. The person informed will, within 24 hours, contact both the Minister and a member of the Board to ascertain if those steps are inconsistent with any other Fellowship policy or procedure. If not, the person informed, the Minister, and/or the member of the Board will immediately implement the steps. During or after the procedure described above, the Minister, in consultation with the Board and the reporter, will develop a specific plan of action in response to the concern. The Minister will describe the plan of action to the Board at its next monthly meeting, and to the reporter; the Minister will, upon request, report to the Board the steps taken.
5. At any stage of this process, the Minister or other person informed may keep the names of any individuals involved confidential and report the incident, plan of action, and steps taken to the Board without using names. If the Minister or other person informed believes the sharing of names is necessary for the safety of the congregation or anyone involved with it, he or she will consult with the reporter and the Board and develop a plan for sharing the name/s that will not violate legal privacy or confidentiality rights.
6. These provisions apply to anyone participating in any program or activity associated with the Fellowship, on or off the Fellowship grounds.

SPECIFIC PROVISIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

We seek teachers, advisors, caregivers, mentors, and sponsors who promote a spiritual community that affirms the principles of Unitarian Universalist Association and who demonstrate personal integrity. We seek individuals who nurture, care for, respect, and support children and youth and who are worthy of our trust. All people engaged in programs for children, youths, and families at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Los Gatos (UUFLG) are responsible for knowing the possible impacts of their words and actions on the children with whom they work.

With the above purposes in mind, we have developed a separate Safe Church for Children and Youth Policy. Please refer to that policy for further information on promoting and maintaining personal safety for our youth.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees on May 8, 2008

Revised by the Board of Trustees on July 21, 2016

Revised by the Board of Trustees on August 15, 2019

Revised by the Board of Trustees on February 13, 2020

Revised by the Board of Trustees on October 14, 2021