



UNION *for*
REFORM
JUDAISM

Congregational Ethics Code

Temple Emanu El Code of Ethics

VISION: Temple Emanu El (TEE) is an inclusive, caring community that encourages individuals to discover what it means to be Jewish today and inspires our youth to become the leaders of tomorrow. We empower our congregants to share their passion for Judaism, lifelong learning, and social action within and beyond our walls. We strive to hold ourselves to the highest standards of personal integrity, social responsibility and human decency. This values-based Code of Ethics sets forth the principles and expectations for adherence to standards of conduct, whether participating in Temple Emanu El activities in the building, online, or off-site, or participating in events at TEE sponsored by organizations with long-term rental agreements.

We are all created in the image of God. We are an inclusive community that seeks to respect the dignity and worth of everyone who engages with our community. We endeavor to create an environment where all who participate in our community feel a sense of belonging, with the expectation that ideas and concerns can be openly stated and responded to with respect.

We are responsible for one another. We strive to ensure that everyone engaging with our sacred community feels safe, respected, and treats one another without bias. We do not tolerate harassment, discrimination, or other acts or behaviors that exploit the vulnerability of another.

We are thoughtful with our words and actions. We strive to be honest and respectful in our interactions with one another. Verbal, physical or cyber-bullying is never acceptable; disagreements shall be limited only to principles and priorities, not personalities.

TEE values acting with integrity. All members are expected to act solely according to the Temple's best interest when acting on its behalf. We refrain from using one's temple position for personal advantage or benefit. We conduct financial matters related to temple involvement with complete honesty. We are bound by sacred obligation to uphold financial agreements made with the Temple. If a change in personal circumstances occurs, we will inform those charged with managing temple finances and make appropriate arrangements.

An allegation of unethical behavior should be directed to the Temple President, Rabbi or Executive Director. **The procedure for addressing allegations of Unethical Behavior is available, upon request, from the TEE office.**

Temple Emanu El Procedure for Addressing Allegations of Unethical Behavior

The TEE Code of Ethics will be provided to members, staff and Rabbi via a stand-alone email and in the Weekly Email for several weeks. Ongoing, it will be provided to new members and be published on the TEE website. The Code of Ethics and Addressing Allegations of Unethical Behavior documents will be updated, as appropriate. Examples contained in the Code are not all-inclusive.

The following procedures delineate how allegations of unethical behavior, based on the TEE Code of Ethics, will be addressed.

An allegation of unethical behavior should be directed to the Temple President, Rabbi or Executive Director. To initiate an Ethics Committee process, the person who received the allegation will share the information with the other two. If the allegation pertains to any one of the three, that person must recuse themselves. Upon receipt of such an allegation, the Temple President will appoint a congregant, not otherwise involved in the allegation, to chair an ad-hoc Ethics Committee for addressing the allegation. In the event of a recusal by the President, the Rabbi or Executive Director will appoint an ad-hoc Ethics Committee chair. The Ethics Committee chair will select a minimum of three and maximum of five temple members to serve on the committee based on the following qualities: integrity, leadership, independence, and ability to handle challenging situations. The Temple President shall be an ex-officio member of the Ethics Committee. The Temple President, if unable to serve, shall appoint a member of the Board of Trustees to serve in that capacity.

The Ethics Committee will decide whether to consult independent legal counsel representing the Temple. Where an allegation raises the possibility of imminent and substantial harm to the person(s) of concern, legal obligations will take precedence and supersede any procedures otherwise delineated by this Code. The Temple President, in consultation with the Ethics Committee chair, may take such action as deemed appropriate.

The assigned Committee members will reach out to the Complainant within 10 days of receipt of the Complaint.

The investigation will consist of interviewing all parties concerned in a fair and consistent manner. An initial investigation will be completed within 30 days of receipt of the Complaint and reported at the next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting.

If a Complaint pertains to a Temple Emanu El employee, the investigation will default to procedures in the Personnel Practices Manual. It may also be turned over to the appropriate professional organization with its own Code of Ethics, such as the Central Conference of American Rabbis, Association of Reform Jewish Educators, National Association for Temple Administration, Early Childhood Educators of Reform Judaism, or other appropriate organization.

The results of the investigation and resolution or recommended solution consistent with TEE's Bylaws will be shared with the Board of Trustees. The Ethics Committee will endeavor to maintain confidentiality unless the situation requires disclosure to remain compliant with the law.

Should a complaint rise to the level of the need for legal action, an emergency meeting of the Board of Trustees and/or expedited investigation will be conducted.

The Ethics Committee will maintain appropriate records of any complaints brought before it and all actions taken by the committee.

The Complainant will be informed on the status of their complaint as soon as appropriate. All attempts will be made to protect the Complainant from retaliation. Retaliation, in and of itself, will be considered a violation of Temple Emanu El's Code of Ethics, and will result in a separate investigation regarding the retaliation.

While there is no time limit to making an allegation of unethical behavior, the time that has elapsed since the alleged violation will be one of many factors in the totality of circumstances considered by the Ethics Committee.

Violation of the Code of Ethics could result in recommendation to the Board of Trustees of the following, as appropriate:

- a) loss of membership in the Temple
- b) removal from the Board of Trustees and/or volunteer committees
- c) referral to an employee's supervisor for loss of employment with TEE
- d) referral to renting organization of participant's exclusion from future events at TEE

This document does not limit a person's ability to proceed with other avenues of redress.