

## 3 – Employee and Volunteer Safety

### Staff Conflict and Complaint Resolution Procedure

v. Oct 21, 2019

Transparent communication is at the heart of good staff relations. In line with the FUSM Staff Covenant and to maintain healthy relationships, we promote open, direct and honest communications and positive efforts towards resolution.

For handling complaints, conflicts or concerns, whenever possible staff members should first express their concerns to the other individuals involved and attempt to settle differences among themselves.

If this does not resolve the problem, then the staff member should present in writing any complaint or grievance to her/his supervisor and discuss the problem, applicable policies, and possible resolution. Staff members who have a concern or grievance involving their supervisor should present the matter to the Head of Staff, the Senior Minister.

Staff members should be able to share concerns without fear of retaliation, and under no circumstances will an employee be penalized for constructively presenting a good-faith complaint to supervising staff. When the concern is between staff members, supervising staff should consider facilitating a mediation or conflict resolution meeting with the affected employees. When the concern is between a member of the congregation and a staff member, supervising staff should consider facilitating a mediation or conflict resolution meeting with the people involved. Supervisors should address such concerns or grievances in a timely manner.

If discussion and/or a conflict resolution meeting with the supervisor does not resolve the matter to the complainant's satisfaction, then the complainant should submit the concern or grievance in writing to the Head of Staff, the Senior Minister.

The Senior Minister will consult with the Personnel Team for their expertise and advice, as appropriate. If there has been a violation of the Personnel Policy, the Senior Minister and the Personnel Team will develop a plan to remedy the violation, and will inform the complainant of that plan. They will also inform the Board of Trustees of the plan.

The Senior Minister will recommend a resolution to the involved parties, which shall be binding.

# First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee

## Policy Regarding Disruptive Behavior

The First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee strives 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 that disruptive behavior compromises the health of this congregation, our actions as people of faith and compassion must reflect this emphasis on safety. Consequently, when any person's physical and emotional well being, or freedom to safely express his or her beliefs or opinions is threatened, the source of this threat must be addressed firmly and promptly.

More specifically, it has come to our attention that other Unitarian Universalist churches have experienced the disruptive behavior of individuals within their church buildings which has led members to voice concerns about one or more of the following:

1. Perceived threats to the safety of an adult or child;
2. The disruption of church activities;
3. Diminishment of the appeal of the church to its potential and existing membership.

Consequently, the following shall be the policy of the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee in dealing with these issues:

1. If an immediate response is required, one of the Society's ministers, if available, and/or the leader of the affected group involved will speak with the individual. This may include asking the offending person or persons to leave, or if necessary suspending the activity or meeting until such a time as it can safely be resumed. If further assistance is required, the Milwaukee Police Department may be called. Any time any of these actions is undertaken without a minister being present, one of the ministers must be notified. A follow-up letter to the offending person discussing the incident, and clarifying behavioral expectations will be sent by one of the ministers. The minister and the group leadership will determine if activities can safely be resumed.
2. Situations not requiring an immediate response will be referred to an ad hoc committee appointed by the President of the Congregation in consultation with a minister. The committee will respond in terms of their own judgment observing the following:
  - a. The committee will respond to problems as they arise. There will be no attempt to define "acceptable" behavior in advance.
  - b. Persons identified as disruptive will be dealt with as individuals; stereotypes will be avoided.
  - c. The committee will collect all necessary information.
  - d. To aid in evaluating the problem, the following points will be considered:
    1. DANGEROUSNESS- Is the person the source of a threat or perceived threat to persons or property?
    2. DISRUPTIVENESS- How much interference with church functions is going on?
    3. OFFENSIVENESS- How likely is it that prospective or existing members will be driven away?
  - e. To determine the necessary response, the following points will be considered:

1. CAUSES-Why is the disruption occurring? Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the church? Is it due to a professionally diagnosed condition of mental illness?
  2. HISTORY- What is the frequency and degree of disruption caused in the past?
  3. PROBABILITY OF CHANGE- How likely is it that the problem behavior will change or diminish?
- f. The committee will decide on the necessary response on a case-by-case basis. However, the following three levels of response are recommended. It is recommended that except in extreme cases the levels be used in succession.
1. LEVEL ONE- the committee shall inform one of the ministers of the problem and either the ministers, a member of the committee, or both, shall meet with the offending individual to communicate the concern.
  2. LEVEL TWO- The offending individual is excluded from the church and /or specific church activities for a limited period of time, with reasons and the conditions of return made clear.

Any action taken under f. (above) may be appealed to the Senior Minister and/or the President of the Congregation who may appoint a subcommittee of the Board to meet with the aggrieved individual.

3. LEVEL THREE- The offending individual is permanently excluded from the church premises and all church activities. Before this is carried out, the committee will consult with the Board of Trustees and Minister(s). If it is decided that the expulsion will take place, a letter will be sent by the Minister(s) and the Board of Trustees explaining the expulsion.

--approved by the Board of Trustees March 28, 2006

[ACK/Board of Trustees/  
"Disruptive Behavior policy-final".doc]

First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee

**Firearm/Weapons Policies**

(2010, 2011)

To date, the church Board has passed two weapons-related policies.

1. August 10, 2010:

**FIREARM/WEAPON POLICY and PROCEDURES:** On a motion by Rivera, seconded by Gill and carried, the board adopted the following Fire arm/weapon policy: FUSM prohibits the open or concealed carry of weapons, except by law enforcement officers, in the church or on its grounds.

2. September 27, 2011:

**FIREARMS POLICY AND SIGNAGE:** Gilbertsen presented several options for “No Firearms” signs as discussed at the previous Board meeting. Signs need to be posted on four doors – the two wooden doors to the Sanctuary, the glass doors to the corridor, and the inner door at the service entrance at the south end of the building. The main purpose of the signs is to state First Church’s no weapons policy and be in compliance with Wisconsin’s “concealed carry” law, which goes into effect in November.

After considerable discussion, on a motion by Pajewski, seconded by Gill and carried, the Board asked the task force assembled to finalize the signage to mount four signs with the message, “Love is the Spirit of This Church. No Weapons Permitted” on the appropriate doors, unless that wording is unworkable. The Board agreed that the task force could now go ahead and procure the signs.

The sign finally agreed upon and posted:

