

OUUC Disruptive Behavior Policy

DRAFT June 3rd, 2020

We, the members and friends of the Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation are a caring and covenantal community where mutual respect prevails. We believe in the democratic process in human relations. Anyone operating within the church or at an authorized congregational event outside the church is required to follow the congregation's covenant. Meetings within the church will adhere to standard ground rules which may be updated with additional ground rules as needed by any appropriate congregational leaders responsible for meeting management.

When a participant does not follow the rules, the disruptive behavior shall be addressed as soon as possible. Congregants are encouraged to resolve conflicts themselves. However, should congregants need support, a multi-step process has been developed to deal with these problems of unacceptable behavior.

Applicability:

This policy applies to anyone using the OUUC church facilities or grounds at any time and to all church-sponsored events wherever they may occur.

Definitions:

Accused party: any individual accused of disruptive behavior.

Aggrieved party: any individual or individuals who feel they have been subjected to disruptive behavior.

Disruptive behavior is defined as:

- Any real or perceived threats, verbal or physical, to the physical or emotional safety of any adult or child on the premises of OUUC; or
- the disruption of church activities; or
- significant lessening of the church's reputation to members, guests, or the wider community.
- It is the perception of others and not the intention of any one individual that is the deciding factor of disruptive behavior.

Standard Ground Rules are defined as:

- Be clear on the purpose and desired outcomes of your meeting
- Be prompt and come prepared

- Engage and participate fully in the meeting; everyone participates, no one dominates
- Speak respectfully, and share your unique perspectives; do not represent the ideas of others
- Allow everyone an opportunity to share ideas
- Listen to understand and appreciate the diversity of thought
- Speak honestly; critique ideas but not people
- Stay on schedule
- Bring your humor and have fun (as appropriate)

Process

Disruptive behavior shall not be tolerated by a committee/team/group *or the* congregation. When it occurs, a member of leadership (i.e. a committee chair or Board member) should draw the disruptive person aside, identify the disruptive behavior, and state that the behavior is not acceptable and shall not continue.

If a member of leadership is not present any member of the congregation is empowered to provide constructive feedback to the disruptive individual as outlined previously. Congregational members who do this should inform a committee chair, a member of the Board or the senior minister of the matter.

If the disruptive behavior continues to occur and a second complaint is made by the aggrieved party, the aggrieved party must inform the Board of trustees.

The Board will conduct a fact-finding examination of the aggrieved party's accusation.

If the Board determines that the behavior meets the definition of disruptive behavior, a meeting shall occur between a member of the Board and the individual responsible for the disruptive behavior (a third party may be present at this meeting if desired). After the meeting, a letter will be written by the appropriate leader to the accused person, stating that the behavior needs to be corrected, with copies to the Board president and the senior minister. This letter will be delivered in person to the accused party to allow for dialogue and better understanding unless the Board determines that such a step is unwarranted.

At any time, the Board in consultation with the senior minister and aggrieved party(s) may form an ad-hoc mediation committee to address the disruptive behavior situation. Should this occur, the ad-hoc mediation committee will discuss the problem and assign a member of the Committee to meet with the accused person and the aggrieved party to resolve the problem as quickly as possible. The ad-hoc mediation committee will report back to the Board.

If the aggrieved individuals and the accused individuals are unable to resolve the situation or the accused is unwilling to participate in the recommended process or mediation, then the Board shall

draft a formal letter of consequence. This letter will outline the consequences of continued behavior, which may include removal from meetings and up to revocation of membership.

Above steps must be handled expeditiously.

Accused parties receiving formal letters of consequence may appeal decisions to the Board according to processes outlined in the bylaws.

Note: In some situations, where physical safety of any adult or child is in potential jeopardy, immediate action is warranted and should be taken. It is appropriate to call the police to remove any person exhibiting violent behavior or credibly threatening violent behavior.

The Board, at its sole discretion, may seek additional outside mediation support and expend reasonable funds to support such activities.