

**TAHOMA UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION**  
**POLICY REGARDING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR**

Adopted June 17, 2014 by the TUUC Board of Trustees

While openness to a wide variety of individuals is one of the core values held by our congregation and expressed in our denomination's purposes and principles, we affirm the belief that our congregation must maintain a secure atmosphere where such openness can exist. When any person's physical and/or emotional well-being or freedom to safely express his or her beliefs or opinions is threatened, the source of this threat must be addressed thoughtfully and promptly. Most interpersonal conflicts may be addressed by following our Covenant of Right Relations.

The purpose of this policy is to address disruptive behavior of an individual in the church building or on the church grounds. This behavior may include:

- Threats to the safety of any person.
- The disruption of church activities.

The following shall be the policy of Tahoma Unitarian Universalist Congregation in dealing with these issues:

1) If an immediate response is required, this will be undertaken by the Minister, if available, the Sexton, and/or the leader of the group involved. This may include asking the disruptive person to leave, or suspending the activity. If further assistance is required, or imminent danger is perceived, 911 may be called. Any time these actions are undertaken without the Minister, the Minister must be notified; a follow-up letter detailing the incident and the action taken because of the incident, should be written and distributed to the Minister and the Board President. A team approach is encouraged.

2) Situations not requiring an immediate response will be referred by the minister, sexton, or leader of the group involved or to an ad hoc committee appointed by the Board. To help ensure fairness to the individual whose behavior is being questioned, the committee shall not include anyone who was directly involved in the situation.

- a. The committee will collect all pertinent information.
- b. Persons considered disruptive will be dealt with as individuals; their dignity and privacy will be respected. Stereotypes will be avoided.

c. The committee will consider:

1. Is the behavior threatening to persons or property?
2. Does the behavior interfere with church functions?
3. Why is the disruption occurring? What is the history of this behavior?
4. How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?

d. The committee will decide on the necessary response on a case by case basis.

Three steps of response are possible:

1. The committee shall inform the Minister of the problem and a member of the committee shall meet with the person to communicate the concern.
2. The individual may be excluded from specific church activities for a limited period of time, with reasons and conditions of return written and made clear (with a copy going to the individual and one going into administrative files).
3. If all possible avenues of reconciliation are exhausted, the individual may be permanently excluded from the church premises and all church activities. If it is agreed that the exclusion take place, a letter will be written and sent by the Board of Trustees to the individual outlining the exclusion, the individual's rights, and any possible recourse.

3) Committee decisions may be appealed to the Board of Trustees, and/or the Minister.

Tahoma Unitarian Universalist Congregation strives to be an inclusive community, affirming our differences in beliefs, opinions, and life experiences. Concern for the safety and well-being of the congregation as a whole must be given consideration. To the degree the disruptive behavior compromises the health of this congregation, we will do all we can to enhance the well-being of our community.