

Behavior Policy

The Unitarian Universalists of the Cumberland Valley strives to be an inclusive community, celebrating diversity and individual freedom of belief as stated in our Association's Statement of Principles and Purposes. We encourage free expression of ideas and opinions consistent with our Behavioral Covenant, which states:

We, the Unitarian Universalists of the Cumberland Valley, covenant to embody the seven Principles through:

- **RESPECT**—*being patient; listening carefully; and communicating directly, speaking truth with compassion;*
- **ADVOCACY**—*challenging privilege, dominance, and majority opinion, wherever we encounter them; and*
- **CELEBRATION**—*working and playing together with enthusiasm and joy.*

The call back into covenant is the essential act of a joyful community of faith. When we fall short of our ideals, we will seek forgiveness and call one another lovingly but firmly back into community, reminding one another of our shared mission and purpose.

Beyond the Principles and our Covenant, we recognize that exchanges and situations will arise that threaten the wellbeing of a person or the wellbeing of the congregation as a whole (the church), or the safe expression of beliefs or opinions. Respecting the worth and dignity of each individual includes compassionately holding individuals responsible and accountable for their behavior.

The following shall be the Behavior Policy of the UUCV:¹

•••For any life-threatening situation, call 911 immediately!•••

I. Types of Disruptive Behavior and Responses

A. Regarding non-covenantal behavior:

1. **Non-covenantal behavior** is when individuals are dishonest, belittling, demeaning, or fail to respect another person's boundaries of mind, body, or spirit.
2. **Response:** Individuals and leaders bear the responsibility to recognize and name conflicts and address them under the guidelines of our Covenant. If the conflict cannot be resolved to both individual's satisfaction, then it can be considered as disruptive behavior (see below).
3. **Notification:** Timely notification of the incident can be made to the ministerial staff if it remains unresolved or repeated.

B. Regarding disruptive behavior:

1. **Disruptive behavior** is when an individual's behavior disrupts church activities, diminishes the appeal of those activities, or violates church policy.

¹ This policy has derived from the policy of Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, CA.

2. **Response:** Members present may notify the ministerial staff, get help from a church leader, ask for a cool-off/timeout period, adjourn, have a one-to-one discussion, or as a last resort, request that the disruptor leave the premises.
 3. **Notification:** Timely notification of the incident shall be made to ministerial staff if it remains unresolved or repeated.
- C. Regarding threatening behavior:
1. **Threatening behavior** is when an individual's behavior poses an immediate threat by being destructive, creating disorder, or verbally or physically threatening destructive actions against persons or property.
 2. **Response:** Members who are threatened or witness disruption or threat may ask others for help, request that the disruptor leave, and/or call 911 for police help. If it is suspected a crime has been committed, the police must be called.
 3. **Notification:** Ministerial staff or the President of the Board shall be immediately notified.

II. Formal SCRT Responses

A. Processing inappropriate behavior. Instances of inappropriate behavior may be processed through any one or more of the following levels. Should the resolution not be satisfactory to any of the parties involved, the matter will be referred to a higher level.

1. **Level 1** (generally for less inappropriate behaviors): A minister or lay leader will consult with the member and explore plans to resolve the problem.
2. **Level 2:** A hearing with the Safe Congregation Response Team. The Team will confer with the member, collect relevant information relating to the incident, including interviews if necessary, and adopt a plan for resolution of the problem. If no resolution is found or if the disruption continues, the case will be referred to a higher level with the Team's report and recommendation.
3. **Level 3:** A hearing with the Board of Trustees. The Board may sustain the report and recommendation of the Team and/or confer with the individuals, communicating concerns and suggesting steps for resolution.

B. Failure by individuals to honor this policy could result in expulsion from UUCV and/or loss of membership.