

**CALGARY UNITARIAN CONGREGATION**  
**Disruptive Behavior Policy - Revised and approved, March 10, 2021**

This policy applies in the event that a member, friend or visitor is deemed by the Minister, the Board or any members of the Congregation to exhibit behavior that has a negative effect on congregational functions or mission, as defined by any of the following:

- Dangerous (whether a threat, perceived or observed, to persons or property)
- Disruptive (interfering with congregational activities)
- Offensive (exhibiting a manner that is likely to drive away members, friends or visitors)

**I. Situations requiring an immediate response.**

The Minister and/or the leader of the group or activity involved will respond. The response may include:

- Asking the offender to leave;
- Suspending the meeting or activity until it can be resumed safely;
- Calling the police department if further assistance is required.

If such actions are required in their absence, the Minister and Board President will be notified as soon as practical. A follow-up letter or document will be sent to the offender by the Board President detailing the required steps to be taken by the offender before being allowed to return to the activities involved.

**II. On-going situations and those not requiring an immediate response.**

The witness or witnesses will provide the Minister and/or Board President with a written, signed explanation of the offending behavior and its impact on the witness(es). The Minister or Board President will determine whether the situation needs to be handled privately or whether to ask the Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM) to investigate the matter further. When appropriate and possible, the Minister or a committee member will inform the person that a complaint has been made and is being investigated.

**Investigation Guidelines**

The Minister and/or COSM will respond to situations as they arise, using their own judgment, without defining acceptable behavior in advance.

- People and situations will be dealt with individually.
- Stereotypes or stereotyping will be avoided.
- The Minister and/or COSM will collect any additional information needed to obtain a complete picture of the situation and research any applicable laws.
- If necessary, the Board shall authorize funds to pay costs for a professional background check, to provide such facts as the correct identity of the person in question, and records of past criminal activity involving threats, harassment, or actual harm to other persons or property.

The Minister and/or COSM will consider the following questions in making any decision:

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- **Dangerous:** Is the individual the source of a threat or perceived threat to persons or property, including themselves?
- **Disruptive:** How much interference is occurring with Calgary Unitarians functions?
- **Offensive:** How likely is it that prospective or existing members will be driven away?
- **Causes:** Why is this disruption occurring? Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the congregation? Is it due to a professionally diagnosed condition of mental illness?
- **History:** What is the frequency and degree of disruption caused in the past?
- **Probability of Change:** How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?

The Minister and/or COSM will respond on a case-by-case basis. Mediation by a neutral party is a possibility. The following levels of response are options that may be implemented:

- **No Action:** It may be determined that the complaint is not warranted. The Minister and a COSM member will explain and discuss this with the person making the complaint.
- **Warning:** The Minister and a COSM member will meet with the offending individual to communicate the concern and expectations for future behavior.
- **Suspension:** The offending individual is excluded from the congregation and/or specific activities for a limited period of time with the reasons and conditions of return clarified in writing by the Board President.
- **Barred:** COSM recommends to the Board that the offending individual be barred from congregational activities. If the individual is a registered member of the Congregation a recommendation to remove from membership may also be made. Removal will be done by special resolution of the Board as per the UCC bylaws. If so approved, the Board President will write a letter to the individual explaining the reasons, the individual's rights, and possible recourse.
- **Appeals:** The offending individual may appeal the decision to the Board.

**In the rare and extraordinary case that an individual is being considered for removal from membership, the Board of Trustees will also consult the Canadian Unitarian Council.**