

UUCB DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY

PURPOSE OF POLICY:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that members, friends and visitors to Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick are able to worship and participate in activities on the premises in a safe and welcoming environment.

STATEMENT OF POLICY:

Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick, Maine strives to be an inclusive community, affirming our differences in beliefs, opinions and life experiences as expressed in our denomination's purposes and principles. 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 disruptive behavior compromises the health of this congregation, our actions as people of faith must reflect this emphasis on security. When any person's physical and/or emotional well-being is threatened, the source of this threat will be addressed firmly and promptly, even if this ultimately requires the expulsion of the offending person or persons. The disruptive behaviors that this policy addresses include, but are not limited to:

1. Perceived threats to the safety of any adult or child;
2. The disruption of church activities;
3. Creating an unpleasant environment that limits people's engagement or involvement in church life.

OFFICER OR COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

The Board of Trustees is responsible for implementation of this policy.

DATE OF APPROVAL BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES: April 19, 1916

PROCEDURES

The following procedures of the policy of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick are written in such a way as to protect the person/people who intervene from harm and false accusation. Whenever a disruptive person is invited to go to a separate location for discussion, a minimum of two interveners shall be present.

Weapons Free Zone: In keeping with the UUCB Policy of a Weapons Free Zone, any person showing evidence of carrying a perceived weapon on to church property will be asked to leave the property. They may return if they store the weapon away from the church. The Police Department will be called immediately in the event the person refuses to comply.

Church Services

1. **STEP 1:** If an immediate response is required, an usher will approach the person and ask that the person stop the offending behavior.
2. **STEP 2:** If the disruptive behavior does not stop, a minimum of two church leaders (ushers, members of the board, worship committee) may ask the person to leave or may escort the person to a room where attempts to defuse the situation will ensue.
3. **STEP 3:** If not resolved, appropriate authorities (Police Department) will be called to assist with subduing the problem.
4. **STEP 4:** The service will be suspended if danger is imminent.
5. **FOLLOW UP:** Anytime any of these actions are undertaken the Minister must be notified; a follow-up letter detailing the offense and the action taken because of the offense, should be written and distributed to the Minister and the Board Chair.

Other church activities, programs and rentals

1. **STEP 1:** If an immediate response is required, the Minister, if available, and/or the identified leader of the group activity will approach the person and ask that the person stop the offending behavior.
2. **STEP 2:** If the disruptive behavior does not stop, two leaders present may ask the person to leave or may escort the person to a room where attempts to defuse the situation will ensue.
3. **STEP 3:** If not resolved, appropriate authorities (Police Department) will be called to assist with subduing the problem.
4. **STEP 4:** The activity will be suspended if danger is imminent.
5. **FOLLOW UP:** Anytime any of these actions are undertaken the Minister must be notified; a follow-up letter detailing the offense and the action taken because of the offense, should be written and distributed to the Minister and the Board Chair.

FOLLOW UP PROCEDURES

Situations not requiring immediate response will be referred to an ad hoc committee appointed by the Board of Trustees. The committee will respond in terms of their own judgment observing the following:

1. The committee will respond to problems as they arise. There will be no attempt to define "acceptable" behavior in advance.
2. Persons identified as disruptive will be dealt with as individuals. Stereotypes will be avoided.
3. The committee will collect all necessary information.
4. To aid in evaluating the problem, these points will be considered:
 - DANGEROUS — The source of a threat or perceived threat to persons or property
 - DISRUPTIVE — Interference with church functions and/or activities
 - OFFENSIVE — Prospective or existing members could be driven away

To determine the necessary response, these 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 or mental illness? Abuse of alcohol and/or drugs?
2. **HISTORY**—What is the extent, if any, of disruption caused in the past?
3. **PROBABILITY OF CHANGE**—How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?

The committee will decide on the necessary response on a case by case basis. However, three levels of action/response are recommended:

1. **LEVEL ONE**—The committee shall inform the Minister and/or Board Chair of the problem and two people (Minister, Board Chair, Board member, ad hoc committee member) shall meet with the offending person or persons to communicate the concern.
2. **LEVEL TWO**—The offending individual(s) will 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 offender and one going into congregational files)
3. **LEVEL ONE OR LEVEL TWO** action taken may be appealed to the ad hoc committee of the Board, and/or the Minister.
4. **LEVEL THREE**—The offending individual is excluded from church premises and all church activities. Before this is carried out, the committee will consult with the Board of Trustees and the Minister. If it is agreed that the expulsion take place, a letter will be written and sent by the Minister and/or the Board Chair outlining the expulsion, the individual's rights, and any possible recourse.

UUCB Policy Disruptive Behavior Addendum 1.A.

Limited Access Agreement – Confidential in cases of convicted sex offender

Date of approval by the Board of Trustees:

UUCB affirms the dignity and worth of all persons. We are committed to being a religious community open to those who choose to worship with us, especially in times of serious personal troubles. However, based on your background and the population of our congregation, we have concerns about your contact with children, youth and adults in our congregation. The following guidelines are designed to reduce the risk to both you and them of an incident or accusation. We would like you to be part of our church community but your participation will be limited in ways to ensure the safety of others and to assure that you will not be subject to future accusations.

Agreement:

You understand that you will not be allowed to volunteer for or chaperone events that include children and adolescents, including children’s religious education classes, talks with children/adolescents during worship, youth group, children’s and adolescents’ activities during intergenerational events, and driving children and young people.

The following activities checked “yes” are activities that we feel are appropriate for your participation.

- Worship services
No Yes With support person* No Yes
- Coffee Hour
No Yes
- Adult meetings when children are in the building
No Yes
- Adult meetings when children are not in building
No Yes
- Intergenerational church activities
No Yes With support person* No Yes
- Intergenerational group outings such as rallies, hikes
No Yes With support person* No Yes
- Alone in building with minister or other staff

No Yes

- Access to church computer
No Yes
- Church social activities in other member's homes with children present
No Yes With support person* No Yes
- Chalice group meetings in member's homes
No Yes At discretion of Chalice group leader No Yes
- Other:
Activity: Helping with Community Dinner
No Yes

Other activity: _____
No Yes

* A support person is a person who knows about your history/situation and has been designated by you with our approval to accompany you to activities where children and youth may be present.

I accept that the following people will be told of my circumstances in order for them to protect the children/young people for whom they care: (INSERT NAMES AND/OR POSITION IN CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP)

I have reviewed this covenant and agree to abide by its provisions. I agree that if I violate this agreement, I will be denied access to future church functions and church property. I understand that this contract will be reviewed regularly every six months and will remain for an indefinite period.

Signature:
Date:

Witness:
Date:

Minister:
Date:

Director of Religious Education:
Date:

Board Chair:
Date:

No Yes

- Access to church computer
No Yes

- Church social activities in other member's homes with children present
No Yes With support person* No Yes

- Chalice group meetings in member's homes
No Yes At discretion of Chalice group leader No Yes

- Other:
Activity: Helping with Community Dinner
No Yes

Other activity: _____
No Yes

* A support person is a person who knows about your history/situation and has been designated by you with our approval to accompany you to activities where children and youth may be present.

I accept that the following people will be told of my circumstances in order for them to protect the children/young people or other vulnerable adults for whom they care: (INSERT NAMES AND/OR POSITION IN CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP)

I have reviewed this covenant and agree to abide by its provisions. I agree that if I violate this agreement, I will be denied access to future church functions and church property. I understand that this contract will be reviewed regularly every six months and will remain for an indefinite period.

Signature:
Date:

Witness:
Date:

Minister:
Date:

Director of Religious Education:
Date:

Board Chair:
Date: