

CONGREGATION BETH EL
Sexual Abuse and Misconduct Prevention Policy

Congregation Beth El, (hereinafter “Beth El”) prohibits and does not tolerate sexual abuse or misconduct in the workplace or during any organization-related activity. Beth El has a **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY** regarding any acts of prohibited conduct. Beth El provides procedures for employees, volunteers, board members or any other victims of sexual abuse or misconduct to report such acts. Those reasonably suspected or believed to have committed sexual abuse or misconduct will be appropriately disciplined, up to and including termination of employment or membership, as well as criminally prosecuted. No employee, volunteer, board member or other person, regardless of his or her title or position has the authority to commit or allow sexual abuse or misconduct.

Definitions and Examples

The following definitions or examples of sexual abuse, misconduct or harassment, may apply to any and/or all of the following persons - employees, volunteers or other third parties.

Sexual abuse or misconduct may include, but is not limited to:

- Child sexual abuse - any sexual activity, involvement, or attempt of sexual contact with a person who is a minor (under 18 years old).
- Sexual activity with another who is legally incompetent or otherwise unable to give consent.
- Physical assaults or violence, such as rape, sexual battery, abuse, molestation or any attempt to commit such acts.
- Unwanted and intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, brushing, massaging someone’s neck or shoulders, and/or pulling against another’s body or clothes.
- Material such as pornographic or sexually explicit images, posters, calendars or objects.
- Unwelcome and inappropriate sexual activities, advances, comments, innuendoes, bullying, jokes, gestures, electronic communications or messages (e.g. email, text, social media, voicemail), exploitation, exposure, leering, stalking or invasion of sexual privacy.
- A sexually hostile environment characterized as comments or conduct that unreasonably interferes with one’s work performance or ability to do the job or creates an intimidating, hostile or offense environment.

- Direct or implied threats that submission to sexual advances will be a condition of employment or affiliation with the organization.

Reporting Procedure

Immediately report suspected sexual abuse or misconduct to: the President or any Officer. It is not required to directly confront the person who is the source of the report, question or complaint before notifying any of the individuals listed. Beth El will take every reasonable measure to ensure that those named in complaint of misconduct, or are too closely associated with those involved in the complaint will not be part of the investigative team.

Anti-retaliation and False Allegations

Beth El prohibits retaliation made against any employee, volunteer, board member, or other person who lodges a good faith complaint of sexual abuse or misconduct or who participates in any related investigation. Making knowingly false or malicious accusations of sexual abuse or misconduct can have serious consequences for those who are wrongly accused. Beth El prohibits making false or malicious sexual misconduct allegations, as well as deliberately providing false information during an investigation. Anyone who violates this rule is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or membership and criminal prosecution.

Investigation and Follow-up

Beth El will take all allegations of sexual abuse or misconduct seriously and will promptly, thoroughly and equitably investigate whether there is a reasonable basis to believe that sexual abuse or misconduct has been committed. The organization may utilize an outside third party to conduct an investigation of misconduct. Beth El will cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by law enforcement or other regulatory/protective services agencies. Beth El will make every reasonable effort to keep the matters involved in the allegation as confidential as possible while still allowing for a prompt and thorough investigation. Beth El reserves the right to place the subject of the investigation on an involuntary leave of absence or to resign that person to responsibilities that do not involve personal contact with individuals or minors to the fullest extent possible, but consistent with its legal obligation to report suspected abuse to appropriate authorities.

Reporting to Law Enforcement or Appropriate Child or Adult Protective Services

Beth El is committed to following the state and federal legal requirements for reporting allegations or incidents of sexual abuse or misconduct to appropriate law enforcement, child protective agencies or adult protective agencies. Beth El does not have to attempt to investigate or assess the validity or credibility of an allegation of sexual or physical abuse as a condition before reporting the allegation to proper law enforcement authorities or protective agencies.

Employee and Worker Screening and Selection

As part of its sexual abuse and misconduct prevention program, Beth El is committed to maintaining a diligent screening program for prospective and existing employees, volunteers and others that may have interaction with those employed by, associating with or serviced by Beth El. The organization may utilize a variety of methods of screening and selection, including but not limited to applications, personal interviews, county, state and federal criminal history checks, sex offender and abuse registry checks, prior employment checks and personal and professional references.

National background checks are required and national background checks need to be completed every three years.

All offers of employment or continued employment, whether paid or volunteer, are contingent upon satisfactory background checks.

A formal written application for all employees and volunteers will be required to be submitted. All applications including questions relating to the conviction of crimes and abuse will be reviewed by Beth El's legal counsel.

Background checks on all employees and volunteers will be repeated every three years.

Training Requirements

Beth El will require formal in-service training and education on abuse and molestation for all employees and volunteers on an annual basis.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Beth El will not tolerate any behavior that is classified under the definition of bullying, and to the extent that such actions are disruptive, Beth El will take steps needed to eliminate such behavior.

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms, including:

- a. Physical bullying - when one person engages in physical force against another person, such as hitting, punching, pushing, kicking, pinching or restraining another.
- b. Verbal bullying - when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as by belittling or calling another hurtful names.

c. Nonverbal or relational bullying - when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This includes social exclusion, friendship manipulation or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.

d. Cyberbullying - the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website posting (including blogs). Cyberbullying can involve:

- Sending mean, vulgar or threatening messages or images.
- Posting sensitive, private information about another person.
- Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
- Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.
- Hazing - an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers that person regardless of that person's willingness to participate.
- Sexualized bullying - when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying behaviors include sexting, bullying that involves exposure of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.

Anyone who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is engaging in bullying. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and members.

Crisis Response Plan

Beth El will establish a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) who will be responsible to ensure that the policies set forth herein are fulfilled. The CIMT will be responsible to do the following including, but not limited to: educate all employees and volunteers on what to do if someone alleges current or historical abuse involving a Beth El member, employee or volunteer; follow all mandated reporting requirements and contact the authorities as appropriate; where applicable, prevent the accused from having further access to children until a thorough incident review is completed; if the accused person is an employee, follow discipline procedures accordingly which may involve suspending the accused during the investigation; when applicable, notify other employees, volunteers and members; designate a point person to respond to all inquiries from parents, the media and other sources; meet in person with identified victims and their parents/guardians and reassure them that Beth El is taking this seriously; determine how to manage ongoing relations with authorities, parents, the community and media.

Supervision of Youth

To provide a safe environment for minors, Beth El strives that a minimum of two adult workers supervise or be in attendance with minors during organization-related activities. The purpose is to avoid one-on-one interactions between adults and minors that are not easily observable by others. If individual meetings with a minor must be held in an office, keep the door open. Only conduct closed door meetings when another adult is put on notice of the meeting and the door remains unlocked.

Acknowledgment

This policy must be read and understood by each and every employee and volunteer and signed acknowledging same.

Adoption of Resolution

The Board of Trustees, at a duly authorized meeting held in accordance with its Constitution on October 25, 2020, has hereby adopted a Resolution confirming the terms as set forth herein regarding its Sexual Abuse and Misconduct Prevention Policy

/s/ Deborah Acevedo _____
Secretary

/s/ Meeshel L. Tarsa _____
President/Vice-President