

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

and **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta

12 Ford Avenue, Oneonta New York 13820



*Affirmed by the Board of Trustees
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I. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES

1. ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

- 1.1 This handbook has been prepared to clarify the policies and procedures of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta (referred to herein as “UUSO” or “Employer”). All employees are expected to familiarize themselves with the contents of this handbook as it provides basic information about UUSO’s expectations, policies, procedures, and benefits.
- 1.2 This handbook replaces all previous UUSO personnel manuals, employee handbooks, or personnel-related policies. However, from time to time, changes in this document may be made. Therefore, UUSO reserves the right to amend, supplement, or rescind any provisions in this handbook. In such instances, employees will be advised in writing of any changes, and will be provided with up-to-date copies of the handbook.
- 1.3 All employees are hired on an at-will basis per New York State regulations, unless otherwise provided for in a separate letter of agreement. This means that the employee may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, and that the employer retains the same right.
- 1.4 All clauses contained in this handbook stating that a requirement is to be completed “in writing” shall also be considered satisfied by communication via email.
- 1.5 Please note that the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook do not apply in their entirety to ordained ministers or any other employee whose employment is covered by a separate letter of agreement.
- 1.6 Employees who have questions about the terms of this handbook should consult the Head of Staff or the President of the Board of Trustees.

2. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

- 2.1 UUSO affirms its commitment to equal employment opportunity for all individuals. Decisions about recruiting, hiring, training, promotions, compensation, benefits, and all similar employment decisions will be made in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws, and without regard to religious practice or belief, sexual or affectional orientation, gender identity and expression, age, race, national origin, ethnic background, socioeconomic status, marital status, size, disability, neurodivergence, or physical and mental health.

3. EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 Federal law requires that prospective employees must show proof of eligibility to work in the United States in the position for which they are applying. Employees must provide to the Head of Staff an original document or documents which establish identity and employment eligibility from the date that employment begins.
- 3.2 Safe Congregations practices require that all employees complete a criminal background check. Employment is contingent upon the successful completion and results of a background check.

4. FREEDOM FROM WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

- 4.1 UUSO prohibits conduct directed to its employees that shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of their religious practice or belief, sexual or affectional orientation, gender identity and expression, age, race, national origin, ethnic background, socioeconomic status, marital status, size, disability, neurodivergence, or physical and mental health. or any other classification protected by law, and that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment, or otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.
- 4.2 Any employee who believes they have been harassed by another employee, a supervisor, or any other person encountered in the course of their employment by UUSO should report that conduct immediately to the Head of Staff, following the procedures for grievance outlined in Section I.6 of this manual. In the event that the Head of Staff is a subject of the complaint, the employee should contact the President of the Board of Trustees.

5. SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

- 5.1 The Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta is committed to maintaining a workplace free from sexual harassment. UUSO's Sexual Harassment Policy is located in the Appendices of this document.

6. RESOLUTION OF EMPLOYEE CONCERNS AND/OR GRIEVANCES

- 6.1 Any UUSO employee who has concerns or believes they have been harassed or otherwise subjected to discriminatory behavior by another employee, a supervisor, or any other person encountered in the course of employment, should use the grievance procedure that follows below.
- 6.2 Grievances are to be submitted in writing to the Head of Staff. In the event that the Head of Staff is a subject of the complaint, the employee shall contact the President of the Board of Trustees. The grievance should be a concise statement of facts upon which the complaint is based. It should include specific reference to the policies, procedures, or practices which have allegedly been misinterpreted, misapplied, or violated. It must be dated and signed.
- 6.3 The Head of Staff (or the President of the Board of Trustees) shall respond to the employee in writing within a reasonable span of time to acknowledge receipt of the complaint. The Head of Staff (or the President of the Board of Trustees) shall meet with the employee to discuss the grievance as soon as possible thereafter. A written response, with supporting reasons, will be supplied to the employee following this meeting.
- 6.4 If the employee is not satisfied with the disposition of the complaint, the employee has the right to notify the Head of Staff (or the President of the Board of Trustees) in writing, requesting reconsideration of the matter. Such request should be sent as soon as possible after receipt of the written response.

- 6.5 A second conference will be held between the previous UUSO representative and the aggrieved employee. The individual representing UUSO shall communicate their second decision in writing with supporting reasons to the employee as soon as possible following that conference.
- 6.6 If the complaint is still not resolved to the employee's satisfaction, or if no communication has been rendered within a reasonable period of time, the employee may file the grievance with the Board of Trustees. The employee shall submit a copy of the original statement of grievance and copies of the decisions rendered, if any, to the President or Vice President of the Board of Trustees for review.
- 6.7 The Board of Trustees shall then act on the request for review by considering it at an executive session of the Board of Trustees, to be held within 30 days of receiving the request. The person seeking review shall be given the opportunity to speak to the Board, and to be present when others are permitted to speak to the Board on the subject of the review.
- 6.8 The resolution determined by the Board of Trustees will be communicated in writing to the employee within a reasonable time frame and shall be binding upon all affected parties.

7. WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

- 7.1 Any UUSO employee who has knowledge of what they believe to be a violation of any law, mismanagement, gross waste or misappropriation of UUSO funds or assets, a substantial and specific danger to public health and safety, or other alleged wrongful conduct, is encouraged to report the situation to the Head of Staff. In the event that the Head of Staff is a subject of the complaint, the employee should contact the President of the Board of Trustees. Any such report or complaint should be made in writing and should include the date on which the report was made.
- 7.2 Every complaint or report under this category will be promptly investigated with sensitivity to confidentiality issues.
- 7.3 The employee will be informed of the conclusion of the investigation.
- 7.4 Retaliation or reprisal against any employee who reports whistleblower claims is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Any violation of this policy will be treated as a serious matter and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

8. MEDIA INQUIRIES

- 8.1 The Minister and the President of the Board of Trustees are the only persons authorized to speak on behalf of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta. All requests for information about UUSO from print, internet, television, radio, or other media should be directed to the Minister. In the event any such inquiry is made when the Minister is not available, media inquiries should be directed to the President of the Board.

9. EMPLOYEE CONFIDENTIALITY

9.1 All requests for information concerning past or present employees received from organizations or individuals should be directed to the Head of Staff. In the event any such inquiry is made when the Head of Staff is not available, inquiries should be directed to the President of the Board.

10. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

10.1 A conflict of interest is defined as a conflict between the personal interests and the official responsibilities of an employee. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Financial interest: Receiving personal gifts or loans from third parties dealing or competing with UUSO; having any kind of financial interest in any third party dealing with UUSO; being in a position with another organization that leads to approaching the same donors on behalf of both organizations
- Personal interest: Relationship to a Board member, another employee, or contractor of UUSO, by blood, adoption, marriage, or domestic partnership; serving in a supervisory capacity to another staff member so related
- Professional interest: Holding office, serving on a board, participating in management or ownership, or being employed by any third party dealing with UUSO

10.2 Employees are required to disclose any competing financial, personal, or professional obligations or interests that do or might interfere with their ability to perform their responsibilities to the UUSO in a fair and objective manner.

10.2.1 At the time of hire, and periodically thereafter as requested, or when there is a change in circumstance involving a potential conflict of interest, the employee will complete the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form, appended to this handbook as Appendix A.

10.2.2 Employees who have questions about whether an activity constitutes a conflict of interest should discuss the matter with the Head of Staff.

10.3 Following notification of a possible conflict of interest, the Board of Trustees and the Head of Staff shall meet in executive session within 30 days to determine whether a conflict of interest exists.

10.3.1 If a conflict is found to exist, the Board shall vote to take any action deemed necessary to address the conflict and protect UUSO's best interests.

10.3.2 All votes and actions regarding the resolution of a conflict of interest shall be recorded in the meeting minutes, identifying the individual with the conflict, the date, and the actions taken to resolve the conflict.

10.3.3 The employee will be notified in writing of the Board of Trustees' decision within five working days.

11. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

11.1 An employee shall not engage in any outside employment which, by its nature, hours, or physical demands, would impair the employee's performance of UUSO duties or reflect discredit on UUSO.

12. PERSONNEL RECORDS

12.1 Employees must make certain that all the information provided to the UUSO at the time of hire is kept up-to-date. Employees should promptly notify the Head of Staff, Bookkeeper, and/or Treasurer of any changes in the following:

- Address, telephone number, and email address
- Marital status (including legal separation)
- Legal change in employee's name
- Dependents
- Beneficiaries
- Emergency contact information
- Licensing or education, if relevant to their employment

12.2 The Head of Staff will promptly forward this information to the appropriate person for the updating of personnel records.

13. EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE REVIEW

13.1 The Head of Staff will assist employees in learning their jobs and identifying priorities and goals. The Head of Staff will meet with employees on a regular basis and as needed to identify and assess needs and/or challenges.

13.2 The Head of Staff will organize and lead an annual performance review for each employee, in an honest and respectful exchange of mutual feedback.

13.3 The following activities will be included in the annual performance review:

- Review of primary job functions and expectations; discussion of possible revision or updating of job description
- Evaluation of employee performance for each function, including quality of work, productivity, communication, timeliness, planning and organization, initiative, and teamwork
- Identification and discussion of special challenges
- Identification and discussion of goals for the future

13.4 The Head of Staff will provide a written report to the employee following each performance review. This report will be included in the employee's personnel file. The Head of Staff will inform the Board of Trustees when a performance review has been completed.

14. SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

- 14.1 UUSO would appreciate at least 14 days' written notice to the Head of Staff from employees who plan to resign or retire.
- 14.2 Employees who give two weeks' notice of their intent to leave UUSO employment will be compensated financially for any unused accrued paid time off. Employees who do not give two weeks' notice will not be compensated for unused paid time off.
- 14.3 In cases where termination is the result of misconduct or failure to meet the duties of the job, employees may forfeit all unused paid time off.
- 14.4 Additional compensation at the end of employment (“severance pay”) will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Head of Staff and the UUSO Personnel Committee.
- 14.5 The Head of Staff may conduct an exit interview with a resigning or retiring employee, and will write a report of the exit interview. This report will be placed in the employee’s personnel file.

II. WAGE AND HOUR ADMINISTRATION

1. EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION

- 1.1 For purposes of determining the applicability of various policies, practices, and benefits, employees are classified by the nature of the position for which they are hired and by their work schedule.
- 1.2 Employees may be classified in four categories:
- 1.2.1 Full-Time: An employee who regularly works 40 hours or more per work week is considered a full-time employee. In some instances, 30 hours or more per work week is considered full time.
 - 1.2.2 Part-Time: An employee who regularly works less than 40 hours per work week is considered a part-time employee.
 - 1.2.3 Temporary Employee: An employee who works full-time or part-time for a specific time period, for specific projects, to fill in for an absent regular employee, or for other reasons for a limited period of time, is considered a temporary employee.
 - 1.2.4 Per-Service Employees: An employee who is hired to perform a specific activity at a time whose start and end is determined by UUSO, for which they are paid a pre-determined amount, is considered a per-service employee.

2. HOURS OF WORK AND OVERTIME

- 2.1 Individual work schedules will be arranged with each employee, and may change from time to time.
- 2.2 A part-time employee who works in excess of their regularly scheduled hours, up to 40 hours during any work week, will be compensated for the additional hours at their regular hourly rate, provided the work is previously authorized by the Head of Staff.
- 2.3 Work by any employee over 40 hours per week will be designated as overtime, and will be compensated at a rate of time and one-half. No employee is permitted to work more than 40 hours per week without prior approval from the Head of Staff.
- 2.4 Attendance at meetings at the request of the Head of Staff will be considered time worked.

3. TIME-KEEPING

- 3.1 Hourly employees must track their time on a per-day basis. The UUSO will maintain an appropriate system for keeping accurate records of hourly employee work.

4. HOLIDAYS

- 4.1 The UUSO offices will be closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Veterans Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Indigenous Peoples' Day
Presidents' Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Fourth of July	Winter Holiday (on or near Dec. 25 th)
Labor Day	Day following the Winter Holiday
- 4.2 Part-time employees may arrange their schedules around office closures in consultation with the Head of Staff.

5. PAY AND PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

- 5.1 UUSO strives to offer its employees fair compensation as recommended by Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Compensation adjustments become effective at the beginning of the fiscal year. There is no guarantee of an annual adjustment.
- 5.2 Federal law requires deductions from pay for income tax, Social Security, and Medicare. Other deductions may include state and local taxes or wage garnishments. Additional optional deductions, such as those for retirement or insurance premiums, may be available if authorized by the employee.
- 5.3 Employees will be paid twice per month. Pay checks and pay stubs should be reviewed when they are received. If an employee believes a mistake has occurred, or if there are any questions, the Head of Staff should be contacted immediately.

III. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

1. EMPLOYER REVIEW

1.1 The policies related to UUSO's employee benefits will be reviewed periodically. Any changes in these policies will be communicated to the employees in writing, and a revised copy of the Employee Handbook will be provided to each employee.

2. PAID TIME OFF

2.1 All UUSO employees (excepting those covered by a separate letter of agreement) receive the equivalent of four weeks' paid time off (PTO) per year. The amount of paid time off awarded to each employee will be based on either their normal scheduled hours per week for the current year, or the average hours per week worked in the preceding year, as determined by the Head of Staff.

2.2 PTO accrues monthly

2.3 PTO may include, but is not limited to, holidays, vacation, sick days, and personal days.

2.4 All paid time off must be approved by the Head of Staff.

2.5 Employees are required to arrange for appropriate coverage of essential job functions, in consultation with the Head of Staff, prior to taking paid time off.

2.6 Employees may carry up to one week of unused PTO over to the following year, with prior approval from the Head of Staff. Paid time off may never exceed five weeks per fiscal year.

3. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

3.1 Employees shall contact the Head of Staff as far in advance as possible when requesting a leave of absence, in order to provide the UUSO with the opportunity to arrange alternative coverage if necessary.

3.2 UUSO will not retaliate against any employee who requests or takes a leave of absence for which they are eligible.

3.3 Bereavement Leave

3.3.1 Leave due to a death in the employee's immediate family may be taken with pay, not to exceed three consecutive days.

3.3.2 "Immediate family" shall include parent, spouse, domestic partner, sibling, child, grandparent, grandchild, in-law relatives, other close relatives, or another member of the employee's household.

3.3.3 If an employee encounters more than one incident of bereavement in the same year, they should request the approval of the Head of Staff for a second paid leave of absence.

3.4 Family Leave

3.4.1 Employees are entitled to family leave to attend to a serious health condition of the employee's parent, spouse, domestic partner, sibling, or child, or following childbirth or adoption of a child, in accordance with the New York State Paid Family Leave Acts of 2016 and 2021.

3.5 Jury Duty, Witness Duty

3.5.1 Employees called to jury duty or witness duty will be paid regular salary for all court-mandated days.

3.5.2 The Head of Staff should be notified immediately by the employee upon notice of selection by the court. The employee shall, however, report for work as scheduled when on stand-by status or otherwise excused as a juror or witness during working hours.

3.5.3 An employee who is party to a legal action will not be granted paid leave under this section.

3.5.4 An employee who is the victim of a criminal offense, or who notifies the Head of Staff of their intent to exercise victim's rights under state law, will be allowed paid leave for this purpose.

3.6 Military Leave

3.6.1 A military leave of absence will be granted to employees who are absent from work due to service in the U.S. armed forces, including Military Reserve and National Guard, in accordance with USERRA (Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act) and applicable state law.

3.6.2 Advance notice of impending military service is required as soon as it is known by the employee, or as soon as possible.

3.6.3 Military Leave is unpaid; however, employees may choose to use paid time off if they want to be paid while on Military Leave.

3.6.4 Continuation of health and welfare benefits during this time will follow USERRA guidelines and is based on length of the military leave and the terms and conditions of applicable benefit plans for which the employee is eligible.

3.6.5 Employees on military leave are treated as if they were continuously employed for the purpose of determining benefits.

3.7 Leave for Spouse or Domestic Partner of Member of Armed Forces

3.7.1 An employee who is the spouse or domestic partner of a member of the armed forces of the United States, National Guard, or Reserves, will be allowed up to ten days of unpaid leave when the employee's spouse or domestic partner who has been deployed during a period of military conflict to a combat theater or combat zone of operations is on leave from such combat service.

4. NURSING BREAKS

- 4.3.1 UUSO will allow break time for nursing employees to express breast milk or nurse a child. Generally, these breaks should be limited to 20 to 30 minutes in duration, once every three hours. If an employee requires a different break schedule, they should notify the Head of Staff, who will work with them to accommodate their needs.
- 4.3.2 Eligible employees will be allowed breast-milk expression or nursing breaks for up to three years after the birth of a child.
- 4.3.3 If appropriate coverage is unavailable, an employee may be required to postpone a scheduled breast-milk expression or nursing break for up to 30 minutes.
- 4.3.4 UUSO prohibits discrimination against employees who qualify for this break time.
- 4.3.5 UUSO will make reasonable efforts to provide a nearby private room for employees to express breast milk or nurse.

5. INSURANCE PROGRAMS

5.1 Workers' Compensation and Short-Term Disability

- 5.1.1 UUSO provides certain employee benefits, including state-law-mandated workers' compensation coverage and New York State short-term disability insurance. All on-the-job injuries or illnesses, regardless of severity, should be reported immediately to the Head of Staff.
- 5.1.2 Employees may be required to provide a physician's statement in order to receive workers' compensation benefits, or to return to work.

5.2 Health Benefits

- 5.2.1 Employees who work an average of 15 hours per week are eligible for coverage under the UUA health plan.
- 5.2.2 Payment of premiums for health benefits will be pro-rated according to the percentage of time worked. For employees working 20 hours per week or more, UUSO will pay 80% of the premium for individual (single) coverage.
- 5.2.3 Dependents may be added to the plan at the employee's expense.
- 5.2.4 An employee who chooses an alternate source of health insurance may receive taxable additional pay (prorated by their percentage of full-time employment) to offset a portion of the cost of the health insurance.

5.3 Life Insurance, Long-Term Disability, Dental, and Vision Coverage

- 5.3.1 Life insurance, long-term disability, dental, and vision coverage are available to eligible employees through the UUA Insurance Program, subject to program conditions, if the employee chooses to purchase these benefits.

6. PROFESSIONAL EXPENSE ALLOWANCE

- 6.1 U.S. tax law provides that congregations may consider certain items as usual business expenses. Such expenses are not included in the compensation paid to individuals; they are part of the necessary expenses of the organization and are not reported for income tax purposes. At UUSO, an annual Professional Expense Allowance is budgeted for certain employees.
- 6.2 Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to, professional dues, conference fees, travel, religious garments, tuition for professionally related training or workshops, books, periodicals, and entertainment expenses directly related to UUSO's mission or programs. All expenses shall be approved by the Head of Staff prior to purchase.
- 6.3 Items of enduring value purchased with professional expense funds are the property of the congregation. Such items may subsequently be purchased at their depreciated value by the employee.
- 6.4 IRS regulations specify that receipts should be provided for professional expenses over \$75; however, UUSO requests receipts for all expenses submitted for reimbursement.
- 6.5 Per IRS regulations, unused Professional Expense Allowances may not be converted to salary.

7. RETIREMENT

- 7.1 The UUA maintains a retirement plan to assist eligible employees to accumulate tax deferred savings for retirement. Employees aged 18 or above are eligible to participate in the plan on the first day of the month on or after the date on which they commence employment.
- 7.2 UUSO contributes an amount equal to 10% of the employee's wages to the UUA retirement plan for employees working 20 hours per week or more. The employee has the option of making additional voluntary contributions on a pre-tax basis. These benefits are immediately vested.
- 7.3 Full details of the UUA retirement plan may be found at UUA.org/retirement.

IV. WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR

1. ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

- 1.1 Employees are expected to be prompt and regular in their attendance at work. Personal appointments should be scheduled before or after work hours, if possible.
- 1.2 All scheduled absences must be approved in advance by the Head of Staff.
- 1.3 Employees who are unable to report to work at their scheduled time must contact the Head of Staff as soon as possible to report the absence and the expected time of return to work.
- 1.4 An employee who is absent for three consecutive days without notifying the Head of Staff, or who fails to report to work when expected to return from leave, will be deemed to have resigned, consistent with applicable law.

2. WORK AND DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES

2.1 Engaging in any of the following examples of unacceptable conduct may result in disciplinary actions. These examples are intended only as a guide and are not all-inclusive.

- Failure to perform work in a manner acceptable to UUSO
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness
- Leaving work without permission
- Failure to report absences as required in section IV.1
- Sexual harassment or other harassment described in this handbook
- The use, possession, or sale of, or being under the influence of, alcohol or controlled substances (other than those used for bona fide medical purposes) while working or while on UUSO premises (including during meal and other breaks)
- Unauthorized possession of weapons on UUSO premises or property
- Disclosure of confidential information
- Smoking anywhere on church property
- Failure to report on-the-job injuries
- Theft
- Dishonesty
- Falsifying records or information
- Misuse or unauthorized manipulation of any computer or electronic data, data-processing equipment, or administrative system
- Discourteous treatment of others
- Taking UUSO property without paying for it or without written permission
- Reckless, careless, or unauthorized use of UUSO property, equipment, or materials
- Violation of any other UUSO policy

2.2 Violations may result in disciplinary measures including verbal warnings, written warnings, or termination.

3. SAFETY AND ACCIDENTS

3.1 The safety of all employees, congregants, and visitors is of paramount concern at UUSO. All employees are expected to abide by accepted safety standards at all times.

3.2 Employees should know the location of all first-aid kits, as well as the location and proper operation of fire extinguishers and the automatic external defibrillator (AED).

3.3 Any unsafe condition, equipment, or practice observed by an employee should be reported immediately to the Head of Staff.

3.4 All on-the-job accidents or injuries to employees, no matter how minor, should be reported immediately to the Head of Staff.

3.5 In the event of a fire or other emergency, 911 should be called immediately, and all staff and occupants should leave UUSO's premises.

4. PERSONAL PROPERTY

- 4.1 UUSO cannot be responsible for damage to, or loss of personal property, including loss or damage to vehicles or other property in or on UUSO property.
- 4.2 Employees should report any lost items to the Office Administrator so that the item can be returned if it is found. If an employee finds an item, it should be immediately turned in to the Office Administrator or Head of Staff.

5. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

- 5.1 Employees should maintain a professional attitude and appearance that is appropriate to their position and UUSO.
- 5.2 Personal mail and telephone calls while at work are permitted, if necessary, within limits, as determined by the Head of Staff.
- 5.3 UUSO provides internet access (including email) to certain of its employees to perform their work. Inappropriate internet use may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to transmitting, accessing, displaying, downloading, or distributing obscene, harassing, offensive, or inappropriate images or messages.
- 5.4 Employees should not consider their internet usage or email communications to be private. UUSO reserves the right to monitor employee use of the email system or the internet at any time, including the right to access and read any information in the email system, with or without prior notice to any employee using that system.
- 5.5 Transmitting any of UUSO's confidential or proprietary information, including member/friend data or other materials covered by any confidentiality policy adopted by UUSO, is prohibited except in cases where UUSO is legally compelled to share such information, or when disclosure is made at the request of, or with the consent of, those affected. In such cases, the Head of Staff must be notified before any such information is transmitted.
- 5.6 The use of the title, prestige, or influence of UUSO for personal gain or advantage is strictly prohibited.

6. SECURITY AND INSPECTION RIGHTS

- 6.1 UUSO has on its premises storage facilities such as desks, file cabinets, closets, and storage areas for the use of employees. UUSO makes no assurances that they will always be secure.
- 6.2 The storage of unauthorized alcohol, illegal drugs, or drug-related paraphernalia on UUSO premises is prohibited.

6.3 UUSO reserves the right to open and inspect any desk, file cabinet, storage closet, or storage area at any time and without prior notice or employee consent.

6.4 Employees may not use personal locks on UUSO-owned desks, cabinets, closets, or storage areas.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE & COMPUTER USE

1. The administrative office of UUSO and the equipment therein shall be used for fulfilling the administrative needs and supporting the work of UUSO.
2. Use of the administrative office by all persons other than UUSO employees shall be with permission and by arrangement of the Office Administrator, Head of Staff, or Board of Trustees.
3. All materials, information, and software created, transmitted, downloaded, or stored on the UUSO's computer system are the property of UUSO and may be accessed only by authorized personnel.
4. Any software or other material downloaded onto UUSO's computers may be used only in ways that are consistent with the licenses and copyrights of the vendors, authors, or owners of the material.
5. Introduction of any software onto UUSO's computer system is not permitted without prior approval from the Head of Staff.
6. The following clauses shall be in effect upon the securing of the administrative office, per the recommendations of the UUSO Safety Committee:
 - 6.1 The administrative office of UUSO shall be kept locked at all times unless the office staff of UUSO is present in the office or the administrative office is staffed by authorized volunteers.
 - 6.2. Use and possession of the key to the administrative office is by authorization of the Office Administrator or the Head of Staff.

APPENDIX A: SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES

Approved January 2023 by the UUSO Board of Trustees
Replaces all previous policies, both Full and Condensed

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta, Inc. (hereafter known as “UUSO”) is committed to maintaining a workplace free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of workplace discrimination. All Employees are required to work in a manner that prevents sexual harassment in the workplace. This Policy is one component of UUSO’s commitment to a discrimination-free work environment. Sexual harassment is against the law. All Employees have a legal right to a workplace free from sexual harassment. Employees are urged to report sexual harassment by filing a complaint internally with UUSO using the form provided at the end of this policy. Employees can also file a complaint with a government agency or in court under federal, state, or local antidiscrimination laws.

While this policy specifically addresses sexual harassment, harassment of and discrimination against persons of all protected classes is prohibited. In New York State, such classes including, race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, sex, disability, marital status, domestic violence victim status, gender identity and criminal history.

Policy:

1. UUSO’s policy applies to all Employees, ministers, applicants for employment, interns, whether paid or unpaid, contractors, volunteers acting as staff, and persons conducting business, regardless of immigration status, with UUSO (examples follow). In the remainder of this document, the term “Employees” refers to this collective group:
 - a. Sexual harassment by Employees upon other Employees
 - b. Sexual harassment by members, friends, or visitors of UUSO upon Employees
 - i. Employees are covered by this Policy, while members, friends, and visitors of UUSO are held accountable to their actions by the congregational covenants, safer congregations guidelines, and/or disruptive behavior polices.
 - c. Sexual harassment by Employees upon members, friends, or visitors of UUSO shall be subject to personnel disciplinary processes, which may lead to termination of employment.
 - d. This Policy does not apply to sexual harassment between members, friends, or visitors of the congregation. Members, friends, and visitors of UUSO are held accountable to their actions by the congregational covenants, safer congregations guidelines, and/or disruptive behavior polices. Violation of these polices and/or breaking covenants and guidelines may lead to limited access, cease and desist letters, court appointed probation order, or membership termination.
2. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Any Employee, as defined above, covered by this policy who engages in sexual harassment or retaliation will be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action (e.g., counseling, suspension, termination).
3. Retaliation Prohibition: No person covered by this Policy shall be subject to adverse action because the Employee reports an incident of sexual harassment, provides information, or otherwise assists in any investigation of a sexual harassment complaint. UUSO will not tolerate such retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports or provides information about suspected sexual harassment. Any Employee of UUSO who retaliates against anyone involved in a sexual harassment investigation will be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

All Employees working in the workplace who believe they have been subject to such retaliation should inform a supervisor, manager, Head of Staff, or the UUSO President or other Board of Trustees member. All Employees who believe they have been a target of such retaliation may also seek relief in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.

4. Sexual harassment is offensive, is a violation of our policies, is unlawful, and may subject UUSO to liability for harm to targets of sexual harassment. Harassers may also be individually subject to liability. Employees of every level who engage in sexual harassment, including managers and supervisors who engage in sexual harassment or who allow such behavior to continue, will be penalized for such misconduct.
5. UUSO will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation that ensures due process for all parties, whenever management receives a complaint about sexual harassment, or otherwise knows of possible sexual harassment occurring. UUSO will keep the investigation confidential to the extent possible. Effective corrective action will be taken whenever sexual harassment is found to have occurred. All Employees, including managers and supervisors, are required to cooperate with any internal investigation of sexual harassment.
6. All Employees are encouraged to report any harassment or behaviors that violate this policy. UUSO will provide all Employees a complaint form for Employees to report harassment and file complaints.
7. Managers and supervisors are **required** to report any complaint that they receive, or any harassment that they observe or become aware of, to the Head of Staff, UUSO President, or other BOT member.
8. This policy applies to all Employees, as defined in the first section of this Policy, and all must follow and uphold this policy. This policy must be provided to all Employees and should be posted prominently in all work locations to the extent practicable (for example, in a main office, not an offsite work location) and be provided to Employees upon hiring.

What Is “Sexual Harassment”?

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, self-identified or perceived sex, sexual orientation or affection, gender identity or expression, and the status of being transgender.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature, or which is directed at an individual because of that individual’s sex, gender, orientation, etc., as defined above when:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, even if the reporting individual is not the intended target of the sexual harassment;
 - A sexually harassing hostile work environment includes, but is not limited to, words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation or physical violence which are of a sexual nature, or which are directed at an individual because of that individual’s sex, gender, orientation, etc., as defined above.

- Such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual's employment.
- Sexual harassment also consists of any unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone which are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, which cause the recipient discomfort or humiliation, which interfere with the recipient's job performance.
- Sexual harassment also occurs when a person in authority tries to trade job benefits for sexual favors. This can include hiring, promotion, continued employment or any other terms, conditions or privileges of employment. This is also called "quid pro quo" harassment.

Any Employee who feels harassed should report so that any violation of this policy can be corrected promptly. Any harassing conduct, even a single incident, can be addressed under this policy.

Examples of sexual harassment

The following describes some of the types of acts that may be unlawful sexual harassment and that are strictly prohibited:

- Physical acts of a sexual nature, such as:
 - Touching, pinching, patting, kissing, hugging, grabbing, brushing against another Employee's body or poking another Employee's body
 - Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults
- Unwanted sexual advances or propositions, such as:
 - Requests for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning the target's job performance evaluation, a promotion or other job benefits or detriments
 - Subtle or obvious pressure for unwelcome sexual activities
- Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks or jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality, sexual experience, gender identity, which create a hostile work environment.
- Sex stereotyping occurs when conduct or personality traits are considered inappropriate simply because they may not conform to other people's ideas or perceptions about how individuals of a particular sex should act or look.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the workplace, such as:
 - Displaying pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading materials or other materials that are sexually demeaning or pornographic.
 - This includes such sexual displays on workplace computers or cell phones and sharing such displays while in the workplace.
- Hostile actions taken against an individual because of that individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and the status of being transgender, such as:
 - Interfering with, destroying or damaging a person's workstation, tools or equipment, or otherwise interfering with the individual's ability to perform the job;
 - Sabotaging an individual's work;
 - Bullying, yelling, name-calling.

Who can be a target of sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment can occur between any individuals, regardless of their sex or gender. New York Law protects Employees, paid or unpaid interns, independent contractors, and those employed by companies contracting to provide services in the workplace. Harassers can be a superior, a subordinate, a coworker or anyone in the workplace including an independent contractor, contract worker, vendor, and, in the case of the congregation, members, friends, and visitors, and participants at events.

Where can sexual harassment occur?

Unlawful sexual harassment is not limited to the physical workplace itself. It can occur while Employees are traveling for business or at employer sponsored events or parties. Calls, texts, emails, and social media usage by Employees can constitute unlawful workplace harassment, even if they occur away from the workplace premises, on personal devices or during non-work hours.

Retaliation

Unlawful retaliation can be any action that could discourage a worker from coming forward to make or support a sexual harassment claim. Adverse action need not be job-related or occur in the workplace to constitute unlawful retaliation (e.g., threats of physical violence outside of work hours). Such retaliation is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. The New York State Human Rights Law protects any individual who has engaged in “protected activity.” Protected activity occurs when a person has:

- made a complaint of sexual harassment, either internally or with any anti-discrimination agency;
- testified or assisted in a proceeding involving sexual harassment under the Human Rights Law or other anti-discrimination law;
- opposed sexual harassment by making a verbal or informal complaint to management, or by simply informing a supervisor or manager of harassment;
- reported that another Employee has been sexually harassed; or encouraged a fellow Employee to report harassment.

Even if the alleged harassment does not turn out to rise to the level of a violation of law, the individual is protected from retaliation if the person had a good faith belief that the practices were unlawful. However, the retaliation provision is not intended to protect persons making intentionally false charges of harassment.

Reporting Sexual Harassment

Preventing sexual harassment is everyone's responsibility.

UUSO cannot prevent or remedy sexual harassment unless it knows about it.

Any Employee who has been subjected to behavior that may constitute sexual harassment is encouraged to report such behavior to a supervisor, manager, Head of Staff, UUSO President, or other BOT member.

Anyone who witnesses or becomes aware of potential instances of sexual harassment should report such behavior to a supervisor, manager, Head of Staff, UUSO President, or other BOT member.

Reports of sexual harassment may be made verbally or in writing. A form for submission of a written complaint is attached to this Policy, and all Employees are encouraged to use this complaint form.

Employees who are reporting sexual harassment on behalf of other Employees should use the complaint form and note that it is on another Employee's behalf.

Employees who believe they have been a target of sexual harassment may also seek assistance in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.

Supervisory Responsibilities

All supervisors, managers, Head of Staff, and Board of Trustee Members who receive a complaint or information about suspected sexual harassment, observe what may be sexually harassing behavior or for any reason suspect that sexual harassment is occurring, **are required** to report such suspected sexual harassment to the Head of Staff, UUSO President, or other BOT Member.

In addition to being subject to discipline if they engaged in sexually harassing conduct themselves, supervisors, managers, Minister, Head of Staff, and Board of Trustee members will be subject to discipline for failing to report suspected sexual harassment or otherwise knowingly allowing sexual

harassment to continue. Supervisors, managers, Minister, Head of Staff, and Board of Trustees members will also be subject to discipline for engaging in any retaliation.

Complaint and Investigation of Sexual Harassment

All complaints or information about sexual harassment will be investigated, whether that information was reported in verbal or written form. Investigations will be conducted in a timely manner and will be confidential to the extent possible.

An investigation of any complaint, information or knowledge of suspected sexual harassment will be prompt and thorough, commenced immediately and completed as soon as possible. The investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible. All persons involved, including complainants, witnesses and alleged harassers will be accorded due process, as outlined below, to protect their rights to a fair and impartial investigation.

Any Employee may be required to cooperate as needed in an investigation of suspected sexual harassment. UUSO will not tolerate retaliation against Employees who file complaints, support another's complaint or participate in an investigation regarding a violation of this policy.

While the process may vary from case to case, investigations should be done in accordance with the following steps:

1. Upon receipt of complaint, the Head of Staff, UUSO President, or other BOT member, in collaboration with the Personnel Committee, President, and Head of Staff (excluding any who have been implicated in the harassment), conducts an immediate review of the allegations, and take any interim actions (e.g., instructing the respondent to refrain from communications with the complainant), as appropriate. If complaint is verbal, encourage the individual to complete the "Complaint Form" in writing. If they refuse, prepare a Complaint Form based on the verbal reporting.
2. If documents, emails, or phone records are relevant to the investigation, take steps to obtain and preserve them.
3. Request and review all relevant documents, including all electronic communications.
4. Interview all parties involved, including any relevant witnesses.
5. Create a written documentation of the investigation (such as a letter, memo, or email), which contains the following:
 - a. A list of all documents reviewed, along with a detailed summary of relevant documents;
 - b. A list of names of those interviewed, along with a detailed summary of their statements;
 - c. A timeline of events;
 - d. A summary of prior relevant incidents, reported or unreported; and
 - e. The basis for the decision and final resolution of the complaint, together with any corrective action(s).
6. Keep the written documentation and associated documents in a secure and confidential location.
7. Promptly notify the individual who reported and the individual(s) about whom the complaint was made of the final determination and implement any corrective actions identified in the written document.
8. Inform the individual who reported of the right to file a complaint or charge externally as outlined in the next section.

Legal Protections and External Remedies

Sexual harassment is not only prohibited by UUSO but is also prohibited by state, federal, and, where applicable, local law. Aside from the internal process at UUSO, Employees may also choose to pursue legal remedies with the following governmental entities. While a private attorney is not required to file a complaint with a governmental agency, you may seek the legal advice of an attorney.

In addition to those outlined below, Employees in certain industries may have additional legal protections.

State Human Rights Law (HRL)

The Human Rights Law (HRL), codified as N.Y. Executive Law, art. 15, § 290 et seq., applies to all employers in New York State with regard to sexual harassment, and protects Employees, regardless of immigration status. A complaint alleging violation of the Human Rights Law may be filed either with the Division of Human Rights (DHR) or in New York State Supreme Court. Complaints with DHR may be filed any time **within one year** of the harassment. If an individual did not file at DHR, they can sue directly in state court under the HRL, **within three years** of the alleged sexual harassment. An individual may not file with DHR if they have already filed a HRL complaint in state court.

Complaining internally to UUSO does not extend your time to file with DHR or in court. The one-year or three years is counted from date of the most recent incident of harassment. You do not need an attorney to file a complaint with DHR, and there is no cost to file with DHR.

DHR will investigate your complaint and determine whether there is probable cause to believe that sexual harassment has occurred. Probable cause cases are forwarded to a public hearing before an administrative law judge. If sexual harassment is found after a hearing, DHR has the power to award relief, which varies but may include requiring your employer to take action to stop the harassment, or redress the damage caused, including paying of monetary damages, attorney's fees and civil fines.

DHR's main office contact information is: NYS Division of Human Rights, One Fordham Plaza, Fourth Floor, Bronx, New York 10458. You may call (718) 741-8400 or visit:

<http://www.dhr.ny.gov>. Contact DHR at (888) 392-3644 or visit dhr.ny.gov/complaint for more information about filing a complaint. The website has a complaint form that can be downloaded, filled out, notarized and mailed to DHR. The website also contains contact information for DHR's regional offices across New York State.

Civil Rights Act of 1964

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces federal anti-discrimination laws, including Title VII of the 1964 federal Civil Rights Act (codified as 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.). An individual can file a complaint with the EEOC anytime within 300 days from the harassment. There is no cost to file a complaint with the EEOC. The EEOC will investigate the complaint and determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred, at which point the EEOC will issue a Right to Sue letter permitting the individual to file a complaint in federal court.

The EEOC does not hold hearings or award relief but may take other action including pursuing cases in federal court on behalf of complaining parties. Federal courts may award remedies if discrimination is found to have occurred. In general, private employers must have at least 15 Employees to come within the jurisdiction of the EEOC.

An Employee alleging discrimination at work can file a “Charge of Discrimination.” The EEOC has district, area, and field offices where complaints can be filed. Contact the EEOC by calling 1-800-669-4000 (TTY: 1-800-669-6820), visiting their website at <http://www.eeoc.gov> or via email at <mailto:info@eeoc.gov>.

If an individual filed an administrative complaint with DHR, DHR will file the complaint with the EEOC to preserve the right to proceed in federal court.

Local Protections

Many localities enforce laws protecting individuals from sexual harassment and discrimination. An individual should contact the county, city or town in which they live to find out if such a law exists.

Contact the Local Police Department

If the harassment involves unwanted physical touching, coerced physical confinement or coerced sex acts, the conduct may constitute a crime. Contact the local police department.

Sexual Harassment Complaint Form

If you believe that you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you are encouraged to complete this form and submit it to the Head of Staff, President, or other BOT member of UUSO in a sealed envelope marked “urgent” to our UUSO office at 10 Ford Avenue, Oneonta, NY 13820 and/or contact the Head of Staff, President, or other BOT member by phone. You will not be retaliated against for filing a complaint.

If you are more comfortable reporting verbally or in another manner, your employer should complete this form, provide you with a copy and follow its sexual harassment prevention policy by investigating the claims as outlined at the end of this form.

For additional resources, visit: ny.gov/programs/combating-sexual-harassment-workplace

COMPLAINANT INFORMATION

Name:

Work Address:

Work Phone:

Job Title:

Email:

Select Preferred Communication Method: Email Phone In person

SUPERVISORY INFORMATION

Immediate Supervisor's Name:

Title:

Work Phone:

Work Address:

COMPLAINT INFORMATION

1. Your complaint of Sexual Harassment is made about:

Name:

Title:

Work Address:

Work Phone:

Relationship to you: Supervisor Subordinate Co-Worker Other

2. Please describe what happened and how it is affecting you and your work. Please use additional sheets of paper if necessary and attach any relevant documents or evidence.

3. Date(s) sexual harassment occurred:

Is the sexual harassment continuing? Yes No

4. Please list the name and contact information of any witnesses or individuals who may have information related to your complaint:

The last question is optional but may help the investigation.

5. Have you previously complained or provided information (verbal or written) about related incidents? If yes, when and to whom did you complain or provide information?

If you have retained legal counsel and would like us to work with them, please provide their contact information.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C: ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received copies of the Employee Handbook of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta and the Sexual Harassment Policy, included in the Handbook. I understand that it is my responsibility to read these documents and to comply with the policies, practices, and rules as outlined therein.

Employee's Name (print)

Employee's Signature

Date

Head of Staff Name (print)

Head of Staff Signature

Date