



Temple Rodef Shalom

Code of Ethics

Temple Rodef Shalom (TRS) strives to be a safe, welcoming, and sacred community. In keeping with our Jewish values, we hold ourselves to the highest standards of personal integrity, social responsibility, and human decency. We adopt this Code of Ethics to define and hold ourselves accountable to that goal.

This values-based Code of Ethics sets forth the principles and expectations for adherence to standards of conduct for our clergy, staff, and adult congregants, visitors, and guests, whether participating in any TRS activity that is in the building, online, or offsite. This document is not intended to supersede more specific professional and or employment-related conduct requirements to which TRS clergy and staff may be subject, including but not limited to the CCAR Ethics Code, employment agreements, handbooks and policies.

As a community, we will implement this Code of Ethics in a manner that balances the principles of *midat hadin* (justice) and *midat harachamim* (compassion). We intend for this Code of Ethics to be a “living” document, which we will regularly evaluate in light of our experience, and update as appropriate.

Exemplify Holiness (*K'dushah*)

TRS welcomes all who wish to engage with our sacred community.

1. We value diversity, embracing everyone without regard to ability, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationality, religious background, political belief, marital status, or socioeconomic status.
2. All members of our community deserve to be treated with equity, dignity, and fairness.
3. We strive to make all who participate in our community feel a sense of belonging with the expectation that their ideas and concerns can be openly stated and responded to with respect.

Honesty (*Yosher*)

TRS expects all who engage in our community to conduct themselves in an honest manner.

1. We endeavor to create a safe space where open and honest communication allows for addressing ideas and differences constructively.
2. We make decisions regarding Temple-related matters with transparency, openness and accountability, unless appropriate confidentiality considerations dictate otherwise.
3. We act honestly and solely according to the Temple's best interest when acting on its behalf.
4. We refrain from using our position of leadership or authority in the Temple for personal gain, advantage or benefit or the appearance thereof. For example, we refrain from hiring or firing, rewarding or punishing staff or volunteers, and awarding or denying contracts or making other Temple-related business decisions based on personal considerations such as favoritism or nepotism. To this end, we comply with the TRS Policy on Managing Nepotism and Conflicts of Interest.
5. We conduct financial matters related to Temple activities with complete integrity. For example, we refrain from any actual or apparent financial impropriety in decisions regarding restricted, committed, and discretionary funds.
6. We respect the efforts of others and do not take credit for their work, and we recognize, respect, and protect copyright and other intellectual property rights.

Honor (*Kavod*)

TRS values acting with integrity.

1. We conduct employment practices and related decision-making in an ethical and legal manner.
2. We establish and enforce the appropriate policies and procedures to protect the employees of the congregation, such as fair employment policies, grievance reporting, and conflict resolution procedures. These policies are incorporated in the TRS Employee Handbook.
3. We protect the confidentiality of personal and privileged information, either about an individual or the Temple, and do not disclose it without permission. This includes personnel information such as employment status, compensation, and performance review, as well as personal information about an individual's health, financial status, or family matters.

Compassion (*Rachamim*)

TRS embraces the fundamental value of performing acts of loving-kindness (*g'milut chasadim*). Within our congregation and congregation-related events and communication:

1. We treat others with respect, dignity, fairness, and compassion.
2. We refrain from derogatory speech, negative talk, malicious gossip, and slander, whether about people who are present or not present, and whether in person or via electronic communication, including social media.
3. We oppose bullying, including any unwanted behavior that degrades, humiliates, or oppresses another. Verbal, physical, or cyberbullying is never acceptable.

Justice (*Tzedek*)

TRS believes everyone participating in our community has the right to feel safe and respected, and that we are morally and ethically responsible for one another (*kol yisrael areivim zeh bazeh*).

1. We recognize that power and privilege influence relationships on interpersonal, intergroup, and institutional levels and consider how they have been affected by those dynamics.
2. We do not tolerate sexual harassment (including requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, written, or visual conduct of a sexual nature), racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, ageism, classism, transphobia, including misgendering, or forms of discrimination.
3. We will be mindful of people who are different from us and be conscious of the potential and actual impact of our words.
4. We will recognize our own responsibility to stand up to exclusion, prejudice, and injustice.
5. We do not tolerate acts or behaviors that exploit the vulnerability of another, take advantage of a power imbalance, compromise one's moral integrity, or create an intimidating, offensive, abusive, or hostile environment.

Reporting and Addressing Reports of Unethical Behavior

We encourage and expect compliance with this Code of Ethics, synagogue employment policies and procedures, and applicable laws and regulations. All persons involved with the synagogue are encouraged to raise concerns about any potential actions or behaviors that are not in accord with our Code of Ethics. In addition, certain persons connected with the Temple have a legal or professional duty to report certain cases of suspected, actual, or potential violations of law, or this Code of Ethics, and to protect individuals against retaliation for reporting such violations.

We shall maintain and widely communicate our open and safe policy for internal reporting of suspected violations of our Code of Ethics. Matters that must be reported under this Code or applicable laws include but are not limited to actual or suspected abuse, neglect, or sexual harassment; fraud; theft or misuse of assets; harassment of or improper retaliation against a person; discrimination; breaches of confidential information; and undisclosed conflicts of interest.

An Ombudsperson for the Temple shall be appointed by the Temple Rodef Shalom President and approved by the Executive Board. They will be responsible for overseeing investigations and resolving all reported complaints and allegations about violations of this Code of Ethics. Any person, including any employee, congregant or visitors to the congregation, wishing to report a potential Code violation should contact the Ombudsperson at ombudsperson@templerodefshalom.org. Employees are covered by their employee code of conduct and issues involving or between employees shall be addressed through that process and not through the Ombudsperson.

The Ombudsperson shall address any report or complaint received with the appropriate modality according to their judgment and accounting for considerations of fairness and appropriate process. Depending on the severity and complexity of the complaint, the Ombudsperson will determine whether the situation can be resolved with a series of conversations or whether an investigatory committee is necessary. This will be up to the Ombudsperson's discretion, although a committee must be involved if significant remedial actions are possible or expected – up to and including banning from the building or dismissal from the congregation. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout any complaint management process to the extent reasonable and practicable under the circumstances and consistent with applicable laws and appropriate investigative and corrective action.

No person associated with the Temple shall harass, take adverse action against, or engage in any other form of retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report of a violation or suspected violation of law, regulations, this Code of Ethics, or other policies or procedures, or assists in any investigation thereof. This policy applies to good faith internal and external reports to outside agencies with jurisdiction over the matter reported.

The Position of Ombudsperson

The position of Ombudsperson shall be created in accordance with appropriate Temple governance processes and shall be filled by a past president of the congregation or someone with similar credentials. The Ombudsperson shall serve for a period of 3 years.

When an issue or complaint is brought to the Ombudsperson's attention, they shall determine if the issue or complaint can be resolved by a conversation or series of conversations, or whether a committee needs to be established to investigate and respond. If conversations fail to resolve the issue satisfactorily or are deemed, in the judgment of the Ombudsperson, to be not productive given the known facts and circumstances, the Ombudsperson can then choose to form a committee to address the issue further.

After making an initial determination about whether a committee needs to be formed or not, the Ombudsperson will inform all interested parties that a complaint has been made and what the anticipated next steps will be. The Ombudsperson will continue to update interested parties at regular intervals throughout, accounting for issues of confidentiality as dictated by prudence, policy or legal requirements.

The Ombudsperson shall have the responsibility for creating a separate, select committee to investigate and resolve each specific allegation or complaint. At the discretion of the Ombudsperson, the committee can be composed of 3-5 people, potentially including a member of the clergy, a member of the executive board, a member of the senior staff, and/or a lay congregant unless it is inappropriate to include someone from one of these groups. The committee will be responsible for determining the appropriate resolution to the issue, by consensus vote.

We are committed to promptly investigating any alleged or reported violations and, under our Code of Ethics, relevant persons are expected to assist in such investigations upon request. The Ombudsperson, whether acting individually or with a committee, shall endeavor to complete their actions with all reasonable speed, accounting for considerations of fairness and appropriate process. The Ombudsperson shall be responsible for informing all interested parties of the resolution reached. The Ombudsperson shall maintain records of incidents, investigations, and corrective actions, and shall ensure that those records shall be passed along to the next Ombudsperson at the termination of their term. The Ombudsperson shall report general statistics as to their activities to the Temple's Executive Board, maintaining confidentiality whenever possible.

Plan for Advertising and Communicating the Code of Conduct

1. The Ethics Code will be posted in the lobbies of the Temple, with a QR code for anyone to download it and read it.
2. The congregation will be mailed or emailed the code, with reminders sent annually.
3. New congregational board members will be reminded of it as part of their onboarding process.
4. Board members and other lay leaders will be reminded of the ethics code annually or at regular intervals.
5. Based in part on the report and experience of the Ombudsperson, this Ethics Code shall be updated as needed.