

Congregation Beth Shalom of Napa Valley

Code of Ethics

Introduction

Congregation Beth Shalom of Napa Valley ("CBS") is a multi-generational Reform Jewish community, guided by tradition and the sacred values of our faith. The Congregation Beth Shalom Code of Ethics ("Code") articulates and codifies principles and expectations for the highest standard of conduct and ethical behavior for our community to ensure that CBS is a safe, welcoming, and sacred environment for all.

The Code was developed by a committee with representation from the CBS Board, congregation and staff, and was approved by the CBS Board. It is a living document. Review and revisions of the Code is a recurring responsibility of CBS, and is essential to ensuring the Code's relevance and effectiveness.

The Code articulates the principles and expectations for ethical behavior of our clergy, lay leaders, congregants, staff, volunteers, visitors, and guests, whether attending and participating in a CBS program or activity at CBS, offsite or online. Examples contained in the Code are not all-inclusive.

The Code will be communicated to all congregants, staff, and clergy. Visitors and guests will be able to see the Code on request from the CBS office. The Code will also be published on the CBS website.

Our Values and Principles

I. Holiness (*K'dushah*) And Welcoming The Stranger (*Hachnasat Orchim*)

Jewish values embody the teaching that every human being evolved with a spiritual and intellectual nature that is uniquely sacred.

- We receive everyone, including ourselves, with *ayin tovah* – alive with divine, ultimate goodness.
- CBS respectfully welcomes all who wish to engage with our sacred community without regard to religious background, age, ability, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/family status, medical condition/disability, military or veteran status, political affiliation, or socio-economic status.

- 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.
- We are open and willing to engage with other members of the CBS community and support one another's work.
- CBS members, lay leaders, clergy and professional staff, hold ourselves to the highest standards of personal and professional integrity, moral conscience, social responsibility and human decency. Our actions will follow this ethics code and we hold ourselves accountable for our conduct.
- We refrain from derogatory speech, negative talk, gossip, and slander, whether in person, print or on social media.

II. Kindness (Chesed)

CBS embraces the fundamental value of performing acts of lovingkindness (*g'milut chasadim*).

- We treat others with respect, dignity, fairness, and compassion.
- We oppose bullying, including any unwanted behavior that degrades, humiliates, or oppresses another. Bullying or harassing, whether verbal, physical, or online, is never acceptable. This includes making threats (e.g. inappropriate sexual, discriminatory, or hurtful comments), social misconduct (e.g. spreading rumors or excluding others), physical behavior (e.g. harming a person's body or possessions), or cyberbullying using electronic media.

III. Respect (Kavod)

CBS values acting with integrity, decency and respect.

- We act solely in the synagogue's best interest when acting on its behalf.
- We make decisions regarding synagogue-related matters with transparency, openness and accountability, unless confidentiality dictates otherwise.
- We respect the efforts of others and do not take credit for their work.
- We refrain from using one's synagogue position for personal advantage or benefit. For example, we refrain from hiring or firing, rewarding or punishing staff or volunteers, and

awarding or denying contracts based solely on personal considerations such as favoritism, nepotism, or bribery.

- We conduct financial matters related to the synagogue with complete honesty. For example, we refrain from financial impropriety in decisions regarding synagogue finances, investments, contributions, restricted and discretionary funds.
- We uphold financial agreements made with the synagogue. If a change in personal circumstances occurs, we will inform those charged with managing synagogue finances and make appropriate arrangements.
- We conduct employment practices and related decision-making in a principled and legal manner. 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.
- We are expected to behave in a manner that brings credit to our congregation and to the community. This includes reporting unethical or illegal conduct, establishing and enforcing appropriate procedures to protect CBS assets; and conducting ourselves in an honest manner and being truthful in communications and conduct.
- When acting on behalf of the synagogue, a congregant or staff member should never, without full disclosure and appropriate approvals from relevant synagogue leaders:
 - Divulge or release proprietary or confidential information about the synagogue, its deliberations, congregants or staff members;
 - Obtain personal advantage or benefit due to one's synagogue position; or
 - Use the synagogue's property or resources for personal benefit.
- We maintain the confidentiality of privileged, personal or private information about congregants, employees, volunteers, and business and financial data of CBS, and do not disclose it without permission. This includes, for example:
 - Employment-related information about others such as employment status, compensation, and performance reviews/evaluations; and
 - Personal information about a person's health, finances, or family matters.
- The board, officers, clergy, and staff, should conduct all congregational business in a manner that is morally, exemplary, and fiscally of the highest order. Decisions of the

board, officers, clergy and staff shall be guided by the policies of the synagogue and in its best interests. Actions should not be influenced by personal considerations or the appearance of such factors.

- We understand the inherent challenges in using the internet, email, and social media, as well as texting and other electronic communications. Members of the CBS community should demonstrate respect, professionalism, and good judgment when using any such technology. Special care should be taken to protect confidentiality when using social media (e.g. blogs, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, and other sites and services that permit users to share information and photographic images with others).

IV. Justice (Tzedek)

CBS believes everyone entering our sacred space has the right to feel safe and respected, and that we are morally and ethically responsible for one another (*kol yisrael areivim zeh bazeh*).

- We do not tolerate sexual harassment, including unwelcome sexual advances or comments, bullying, electronic communications, stalking or invasion of privacy, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, written, or visual conduct of a sexual nature.
- 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.
- We protect those who appear to be the victims of abuse or neglect, including spousal abuse, child abuse, elder abuse, other types of domestic abuse, verbal abuse, physical abuse, and financial abuse.
- We do not tolerate retaliation against those who have made a complaint under this Code.
- We implement this Code in a manner that balances the principles of justice (*Tzedek*) and compassion (*Rachamim*).

V. Responsibility To Make The World A Better Place (Tikkun Olam)

CBS believes it is important to repair the world through human actions.

- Each person and community has a hand in improving their own existence, the lives of others and future generations.

- It is important for CBS clergy, lay leaders, staff and congregants to participate in repairing the world by participating in *tzedakah* (justice and righteousness) and *g'milut hasadim* (acts of lovingkindness).
- CBS has an obligation to seek peace and pursue it. The Hebrew word for peace, *shalom*, means a sense of completion, perfection, wholeness – an ideal state of affairs. This means seeking peace when conflict comes to our doorstep and pursuing opportunities to practice peace, near and far. The pursuit of peace is central to our relationships.

Reporting and Addressing Allegations Of Unethical Behavior

CBS is committed to responding appropriately to allegations of conduct that violate this Code. The following procedures delineate how allegations of unethical behavior will be addressed by CBS:

1. Allegations of unethical behavior should be reported to the CBS President, Rabbi, or Synagogue Director.
2. When an allegation is reported to CBS:
 - a) The CBS President may, where appropriate, confer with independent legal counsel and CBS' insurance carrier.
 - b) If an allegation raises the possibility of imminent and substantial harm to a person or property, the CBS President may take whatever action they deem appropriate. Legal obligations will supersede any procedures set forth in this Code.
 - c) Certain situations may require notifying law enforcement and/or government authorities.
3. CBS is committed to promptly investigating any reported violations.
4. The Executive Committee of the CBS Board shall be responsible for overseeing investigations and resolving all reported complaints and allegations of violations of this Code. The Executive Committee may, in its discretion, refer the matter to the CBS Board and/or legal counsel, or appoint an ad hoc committee. The Executive Committee may also appoint, on an ad hoc basis, individuals with a special ability or skill when needed to address a particular issue.
5. Everyone involved in the alleged unethical behavior is expected to comply with requests for information concerning the allegation.

6. All members of the Synagogue community are expected to assist in such investigations upon request.
7. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the processing of a complaint to the extent reasonable and practicable under the circumstances, and consistent with appropriate investigative and corrective action. The investigation and corrective actions will be documented, and documentation securely held by the Synagogue Director.
8. The process for handling allegations of unethical behavior shall include information gathering, deliberation, and resolution of the issue based upon the facts at hand. All efforts will be made to resolve matters as promptly as possible.
9. If the person who allegedly violated this Code is a member of a professional organization with its own code of ethics (e.g. Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), American Conference of Cantors (ACC), Association of Reform Jewish Educators (ARJE), or National Association for Synagogue Administration (NATA)), the Executive Committee or its designee may – upon investigation and consideration – consult with the ethics committee chair of that organization to coordinate CBS' process with that of the professional organization. The Executive Committee shall balance the needs of the congregation and the professional body.
10. A member of the Executive Committee, Board or ad hoc committee shall be disqualified from involvement in the handling of the alleged violation in the following circumstances in which their impartiality might reasonably be questioned:
 - (i) They are personally involved in the alleged unethical behavior.
 - (ii) They are related, by blood or marriage, to the person reporting the allegation, the person who allegedly violated the Code, or the victim of the alleged violation, if any.
 - (iii) They had or have a fiduciary, domestic, business or close personal relationship with any person involved in the alleged violation.
11. The individual reporting the allegation may request that an Executive Committee, Board or ad hoc committee member, be recused if they have credible information to support the recusal.
12. CBS is mindful that we are a sacred community. Allegations will be responded to with sensitivity and compassion. Judgment will not be made until a full evaluation is completed. Consideration should be given to the goals of healing and reconciliation in determining how to proceed and what actions should be taken. This suggestion is not intended to minimize the importance or the consequence of violating this Code. Rather, given the broad range of possible code violations, responses to such behavior should be proportional and sensitive to the fact that there are circumstances in which congregants are dealing with fellow congregants.

13. All attempts will be made to protect those who make an allegation of unethical behavior from retaliation.