

POLICY REGARDING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Adopted by the Live Oak Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Board of Trustees
October 9, 2014

While openness to a wide variety of individuals is one of the prime values held by our fellowship and expressed in our Unitarian Universalist purposes and principles, we affirm the belief that our fellowship must maintain a safe atmosphere where such openness can exist. When the behavior of any person threatens another person's physical and/or emotional well-being or freedom to safely express his or her beliefs or opinions, or disrupts worship services or any formal meeting, the source of this threat must be addressed firmly and promptly, even if this ultimately requires the removal of the disruptive person or persons.

If the disruptive behavior of any individual or group at any fellowship service or function has led members or friends of the fellowship to voice their concerns about one or more of the following:

1. Perceived threats to the safety of any adult or child
2. The disruption of church activities
3. Diminishment of the appeal of the church to its potential and existing membership

Then the following shall be the policy of the Live Oak Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in dealing with these issues:

1. If an immediate response is required, this will be undertaken by the President of the Board of Trustees if available, and/or the leader of the group involved. This may include asking the disruptive person or persons to leave, or suspending the meeting or activity until such a time as it can safely be resumed. If further assistance is required, the Police Department may be called. Written communication detailing what steps must be taken before returning to the activities involved will be sent by the Board of Trustees to the disruptive party or parties.
2. Situations not requiring immediate response will be referred to the Board of Trustees. The Board will respond in terms of their own judgment observing the following:
 - a. The Board will respond to problems as they arise. There will be no attempt to define "acceptable" behavior in advance. Only actual behavior will be addressed. This policy will not be interpreted to treat the content of speech, even expression of unpopular opinions, as disruptive.
 - b. Persons identified as disruptive will be dealt with as individuals; stereotypes will be avoided.
 - c. As determined by the Board of Trustees, or in their absence, by the leader of the group affected by the disruptive behavior, this policy will

apply to persons whose behavior is found to be one or more of the following:

- i. UNSAFE –a threat or perceived threat to persons or property
 - ii. DISRUPTIVE- interferes with current activities or functions of the fellowship or the building or property used by the fellowship
 - iii. OFFENSIVE – is likely to offend or drive away prospective or existing members of the fellowship
3. To determine the necessary response, the following points will be considered:
- a. CAUSES - Why is the disruption occurring? Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the church? Is it due to a professionally diagnosed condition of mental illness?
 - b. HISTORY - What has been the frequency and degree of disruption caused in the past?
 - c. PROBABILITY OF CHANGE - How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?
4. The Board will decide on the necessary response on a case-by-case basis. However, the following three levels of response are recommended:
- a. LEVEL ONE - The president of the Board of Trustees or a member of the Board of Trustees delegated by the president shall meet with the disruptive individual to communicate the concern.
 - b. LEVEL TWO -The disruptive individual is excluded from the fellowship and/or specific fellowship activities for a limited period of time, with reasons and the conditions of return made clear in written communication from the Board of Trustees.
 - c. LEVEL THREE - The disruptive individual is permanently excluded from the fellowship premises and all fellowship activities. If it is decided that expulsion will take place, the Board will communicate in writing with the excluded individual explaining the expulsion.

The Live Oak Unitarian Universalist Fellowship strives to be an inclusive community, affirming our differences in beliefs, opinions and life experiences. However, concern for the safety and well-being of the fellowship as a whole must be given priority over the privileges and inclusion of the individual. To the degree the disruptive behavior compromises the health of this fellowship, our actions as people of faith must reflect this emphasis on creating a safe community.

This Disruptive Person policy was created by the Live Oak Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Alameda in August 2014, and adapted from a policy used by First Unitarian Church of Honolulu.