



## Code of Ethics

### Introduction

Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation (“IHC”) is an inclusive Jewish community where all congregants matter, are inspired to action through Jewish values, and experience Judaism in a meaningful way. Ours is a vibrant, multi-generational congregation, guided by tradition, grounded in the modern world, and infused with the sacred values of our faith.

IHC is an inclusive congregation that demonstrates respect for the needs of all. Through worship, learning, and a concern for social justice, we strive to better ourselves, our community, and the world at large.

Our Jewish values embody the teaching that every human being is created in the image of God (*b’tzelem Elohim*). We therefore strive to hold ourselves to the highest standards of personal integrity, social responsibility, and human decency. When we behave ethically and hold ourselves accountable, IHC is a safe, welcoming, and sacred environment.

This values-based code of ethics sets forth the principles and expectations for adherence to standards of conduct for our clergy, congregants, volunteers, staff, visitors, and guests, whether participating in a IHC activity that is in the building, online, or offsite.

## Principles

### **Exemplify Holiness (*K'dushah*)**

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

- ✧ We embrace everyone without regard to religious background, age, ability, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, or socioeconomic 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.

### **Honesty (*Yosher*)**

IHC expects all who engage in our community to conduct themselves in an honest and accurate manner.

- ✧ We promote open and honest communication that allows for addressing differences constructively.
- ✧ We protect the confidentiality of privileged information, either about an individual or the Temple, and do not disclose it without permission. For example, 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.
- ✧ We respect the efforts of others and do not take credit for their work.
- ✧ We recognize, respect, and protect the intellectual property rights of our Temple and others. We obey copyright laws governing the use and distribution of published materials.
- ✧ We make decisions regarding Temple-related matters with transparency, openness, and accountability, unless confidentiality dictates otherwise. For example, it is especially important that we protect inadvertent and premature release of names of candidates for employment.

### **Honor (*Kavod*)**

IHC values acting with integrity.

- ✧ We act solely according to the Temple's best interest when acting on its behalf.
- ✧ We refrain from using one's Temple 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 Temple involvement with complete honesty. For example, we refrain from financial impropriety in decisions regarding restricted, committed, and discretionary funds.
- ✧ We are bound by sacred obligation to uphold financial agreements made with the Temple. If a change in personal circumstances occurs, we will inform those charged with managing Temple finances and make appropriate arrangements.

- ✧ We conduct employment practices and related decision-making in an ethical and legal manner. We establish and enforce the appropriate policies and procedures to protect the employees of the congregation.

### **Compassion (*Rachamim*)**

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

- ✧ We treat others with respect, dignity, fairness, and compassion.
- ✧ We refrain from derogatory speech, negative talk, gossip, and slander, whether in person or on social media.
- ✧ We oppose bullying, including any unwanted behavior that degrades, humiliates, or oppresses another. Verbal, physical, and cyber bullying are never acceptable.

### **Justice (*Tzedek*)**

IHC 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.

- ✧ We do not tolerate sexual harassment, including unwelcome sexual advances, 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 strive to protect those who appear to be the victims of abuse or neglect, including spousal abuse, child abuse, verbal abuse, physical abuse, and other types of domestic violence.

Procedures for Addressing Allegations of Unethical Behavior are available on request from IHC's main office.

## Addressing Allegations of Unethical Behavior

The IHC Ethics Code will be made available to all congregants, staff, and clergy. Visitors and guests will be able to see the Code on request from the IHC main office. The Code will also be published on the IHC website. The Code, and Addressing Allegations of Unethical Behavior document, will be updated as appropriate. Examples contained in the Code are not all-inclusive.

***The following procedures delineate how allegations of unethical behavior based on the IHC Ethics Code will be addressed.***

- ✧ The Ethics Committee shall be comprised of five (5) members. The Temple President will appoint a congregant to chair the Ethics Committee for receiving and addressing allegations of the violation of the Ethics Code. The Temple President will also appoint a member of the Temple Board of Directors to serve on the Ethics Committee. The Chairman of the Ethics Committee will appoint a member of IHC, not currently serving on the Temple Board of Directors. The remaining members of the Ethics Committee shall be the Executive Director and the Senior Rabbi. In the event any proposed member of the Ethics Committee cannot serve or must recuse themselves from service on the Committee, the Senior Rabbi, Executive Director and Temple President shall jointly choose their replacement. The choice of the committee members shall be based on the following qualities: integrity, leadership, independence, and ability to handle challenging situations. The Temple President shall be an ex-officio member of the Ethics Committee.
- ✧ The parties making such appointments shall not appoint themselves to the Committee. Members of the Ethics Committee must recuse themselves if an allegation pertains to them in any way or if it involves a direct report.
- ✧ An allegation of unethical behavior should be directed to the Temple President, Senior Rabbi or Executive Director. The person who received the allegation will share the information with the other two. If the allegation pertains to any one of the three, that person must recuse themselves.
- ✧ If an allegation of unethical behavior pertains to a member of a professional organization with its own code of ethics such as the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), American Conference of Cantors (ACC), Association of Reform Jewish Educators (ARJE), National Association for Temple Administration (NATA), or Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), the Ethics Committee may refer the complaint to the appropriate organization.
- ✧ When an allegation of unethical behavior is made, the Executive Director, Senior Rabbi and Temple President will decide whether they should consult independent legal counsel representing the Temple.
- ✧ Where an allegation raises the possibility of imminent and substantial harm to a person, legal obligations will take precedence and supersede any procedures otherwise delineated by this document. The Executive Director, Senior Rabbi and Temple President, in consultation with the Ethics Committee chair, may take such action as deemed appropriate.

- ✧ The Ethics Committee will decide on a process that includes information gathering, deliberation, and resolution based on the particularities of each allegation that is received. If a complaint has been filed against a party, the Ethics Committee must hear from both sides of the complaint. All efforts will be made to resolve matters as promptly as possible.
- ✧ Everyone involved in an Ethics Committee process is expected to comply with all Ethics Committee requests to assist in information gathering. The Ethics Committee will maintain appropriate records of any complaints brought before it and all actions taken by the Committee.
- ✧ Confidentiality will be maintained throughout any Ethics Committee process to the extent practicable and consistent with thorough assessment and resolution of the matter.
- ✧ All attempts will be made to protect those who make an allegation of unethical behavior from retaliation. Retaliation, in and of itself, will be considered a violation of IHC's Code of Ethics, and will result in the initiation of this process. Ethics Committee processes will balance the Jewish principles of judgment (*din*) and compassion (*rachamim*).
- ✧ All allegations will be responded to with sensitivity and compassion. Judgment will be withheld pending completion of a full evaluation. During information gathering and/or consideration of a resolution for an ethics violation, the committee shall bear in mind that, as a sacred community, healing and reconciliation are important goals to achieve.
- ✧ While there is no time limit to making an allegation of unethical behavior, the time that has elapsed since the alleged violation will be one of many factors in the totality of circumstances considered by the Ethics Committee.
- ✧ Violation of the Ethics Code could result in recommendation: (i) to the Board of Directors of (a) loss of membership in the Temple, or (b) removal from the board of directors and/or volunteer committees; or (ii) to an employee's supervisor of loss of employment with IHC.
- ✧ This document does not limit a person's ability to proceed with other avenues of redress.