

Safe Congregation Policy

Approved by the Board of Trustees, June 15, 2025

Our commitment, as Unitarian Universalists, to the inherent worth and dignity of every person and to justice and compassion, compels us to create a safe and nurturing environment that protects children and adults from harm and promotes their spiritual growth while part of our community. Additionally, we affirm our commitment to maintain an environment free of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, physical ability, gender, or sexual/affectional orientation. We pledge to conduct ourselves in a manner that conveys mutual respect and consideration.

As a caring community, we must ensure that everyone who comes here feels valued, safe, and secure. This congregation accepts responsibility to educate ourselves and our children about sexual misconduct, abuse, molestation, harassment, and exploitation. We pledge to do our best to protect and support those who come to us either at risk or in crisis. A variety of potential dangers are inherent in operating a congregation. These include physical site (including buildings and grounds), operation of the Religious Education (RE) program, transportation and supervision of children offsite, and instances of disruptive behavior involving members, friends, and/or staff of the congregation.

Congregations are carefully and intentionally putting into place policies around all kinds of safety issues. Openness to a wide variety of individuals is one of the prime values held by our congregation and expressed in our denomination's purposes and principles. However, when any person's physical, sexual, emotional wellbeing, or freedom to safely express personal beliefs or opinions is threatened, the source of this threat must be addressed firmly and promptly.

All Souls New York: A Unitarian Universalist Congregation (ASNY) is a place where practices and procedures serve to ensure that all members, friends, adults, children, and youth are treated with respect and can participate safely

This policy will be periodically reviewed by the Professional Religious Educator and Executive Team. It will be posted on the All-Souls website as a reference and will be easily accessible to all members, visitors, and friends. Our policies are comprehensive and cover a large range of issues related to all aspects of safety. The Safe Congregations policy will be made readily available to members of the congregation through the website as well as on Realm (All Souls Communications Platform)

We strive to make all those who are in relationship with All Souls; whether members, friends, visitors, renters, guests and more to find here a safe and welcoming environment.

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Section I: Religious Education Program Safety

A copy of this section is also part of the Nursery and Children & Youth Handbooks.

Staff and Volunteers

A. Selection and Screening of Staff and Volunteers

1. The religious educator is responsible for the recruitment, training, and supervision of all leaders and helpers within the Religious Education Program for Children and Youth at All Souls Church. The religious educator will recruit and carefully screen all applicants for paid and volunteer positions. All Souls Church will use screening documents which applicants for paid positions must complete, sign, and submit as a condition of employment or appointment, both for initial hire and ongoing work. All volunteers must sign the Code of Ethics (see Appendix A). In addition, all volunteers must agree to the Religious Education for Children and Youth covenant.
2. Paid or volunteer staff known to have criminal charges pending or who have been convicted of or who have pled guilty to any sexual or physical abuse or assault charge will not be allowed to work with children or youth.
3. Paid or volunteer staff who break the Code of Ethics or Covenant will be invited into conversation and commitment to repair. Action to dismiss the volunteer or staff person from leadership may be taken immediately or at a later time.
4. Senior High Youth Group Leaders must be at least 25 years of age, unless a special exception is made by the religious educator.

B. Screening Process and Documentation

1. All paid or volunteer staff over age 18 must have a background check. The religious educator or designee shall be responsible for overseeing completion of the appropriate paperwork and for checking references online through a third-party system. For all RE-related positions, excluding one-time workshop leaders, including leader and helpers, youth group advisors, and worship leaders who lead a children only worship service, the applicant shall have been a congregant for at least six months, or have been a member of another Unitarian Universalist congregation and be able to supply references if asked. One time workshop leaders are not to be left alone with children in the RE program for any reason. Youth group advisors/coordinators are hired through mutual agreement, references upon request,

and a background check.

2. The records of the screenings and related forms will be kept on the third-party platform's web-based server. When criminal records checks are performed, they will be reviewed and kept confidential. Access to such information will be limited to the Executive Team and Religious Educator as necessary.

C. Training and Supervision of Staff and Volunteers

1. The nature of how we inform, and train volunteers changes with time to ensure that best practices are applied. The religious educator will offer occasional trainings, share videos and other resources, offer books/articles to read and require other trainings so that volunteers and paid RE Staff are able to be confident in their work as leaders.
2. Parents and families also need to be oriented to the religious education program. The religious educator will include access to this policy as well as the Religious Education for Children and Youth Policies, Procedures and Behavioral Guidelines to families and volunteers and answer any questions or concerns as they may arise.
3. Staff and volunteers working with children and youth shall be oriented to the Safe Congregations policy annually preferably in the fall at the beginning of the year.
4. The Safe Congregations policy will be made readily available to members of the congregation.

Supervision of Children and Youth

A. General Guidelines

1. Religious education sessions occur most Sundays. Religious Education for Children and Youth will not be held on Sundays just before a Federal Holiday such as President's Day. These dates will be shared widely by the Religious Educator. All sessions will be observed by the religious educator or designee. Each session and group must have at least two non-related adults or an adult and a youth helper always present in the room. All groups are open for visitors and observation at any point. The religious educator and/or designee will visit each group at least once if possible each Sunday unless the religious educator is leading a group themselves.
2. Parents/caregivers are expected to pick up their children from the child's RE group at the designated ending time. Upon retrieval or dismissal from the group Parents/caregivers resume supervision responsibility for their children until they leave the grounds. No child under the age of 10 will be dismissed from religious education without an appropriate parent or guardian. If a child is being pick up by a different adult than usual or a different adult than the one who brought them that day their primary caregiver must inform the Religious Educator or designee as soon as possible. Children and youth 6th grade and up may be dismissed on their own. If the parents or caregivers of a child 6th grade or older do not want their child dismissed on their own, they must inform the religious educator or designee. They must then pick up their child or youth.
3. The supervision of children and youth while on church grounds and during church functions is a very important aspect of maintaining a safe congregation. Parents or guardians of children and youth are responsible for their children at all functions and field trips, unless specifically left in the care of a childcare volunteer or staff member.

B. Nursery

1. Nursery staff/volunteer to child ratio is one adult per three children under two years of age. If this ratio is exceeded, a parent must stay in the room for the duration of nursery care. Because we don't know how many children will be present any given Sunday the parent that stays will be the last one to sign in their child.
2. Children must be freshly diapered/ toileted and fed when entering the nursery program. This ensures the safety of all children by making sure the adult leaders don't have to leave the room. Snacks and bottles may of course be left for children if needed.
3. Only the adult who signs a child into the nursery may sign them out. Upon arrival the adult will sign their child into the nursery including their cell number in case they are needed by their child.
4. Please see the Nursery Care Procedure Manual for all measures taken to ensure the

safety of children in our Nursery Care Program.

C. Offsite and Field Trips

For church-related field trips and offsite functions, the laws of the state and the rules of the Unitarian Universalist Association must be adhered to including:

1. Every driver must have a valid driver's license and an actively insured car.
2. A permission form that includes transport and medical information must be completed and signed.
3. Any trip where the child's parent/caregiver is present means that their adult is responsible for their own child for the duration of the trip.
4. If the trip is with Staff and Volunteer Leaders, they are responsible for the safety and well-being of the children on the trip. This means they must have the contact list and medical information of the children with them for the duration of the trip in case of emergency.

D. Church Lock-Ins and Sleepovers

Due to ever changing safety and liability All Souls does not allow lock-ins or sleepovers unless coordinated by the Director of Faith Formation.

E. Physical Safety of Children, Youth, and Adults

Proper attention to and management of physical safety concerns is another important aspect of maintaining a safe congregation. In addition to taking action on immediate safety issues that arise, the following steps will be implemented to routinely monitor physical safety:

1. An annual fire drill will occur each year to ensure a plan for Religious Education safety. Leaders are aware of fire procedures. (*Buildings and classrooms will be observed by the religious educator and/or designee for safety and cleanliness.)
2. Children and Youth will be instructed on safe practices while on site such as no running in the building, no entry into undesignated rooms and spaces etc.

Reporting Child Abuse

It is not the function of the Ministers, Director of Faith Formation or the President of the Board of Trustees to investigate accusations of child abuse. Rather it is both New York law and the policy of All Souls to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the NYC Children's Administrative Services. Although leaders and helpers as well as Staff are not considered mandated reporters according to NY state law, we take the safety of children and youth very seriously at All Souls NYC. In case of imminent danger, the call should be made immediately. When in doubt, please discuss your concerns with the Senior Minister, Assistant Minister

and/or Director of Faith Formation.

1. Call the NY State Central Register (SCR)
Child Abuse & Maltreatment Hotline 24/7
 - General Public: [1\(800\) 342-3720](tel:18003423720)
 - Mandated Reporters: [1\(800\) 635-1522](tel:18006351522)
 - Deaf/Hard of Hearing: [1\(800\) 638-5163](tel:18006385163)
 - You can also call [311](tel:311) in NYC.
 - [How to make a report](#)

Individuals should report to a Minister and/or Director of Religious Education when there is a situation in which there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been, or is likely to be, abused or neglected. The person who suspects abuse or neglect will make the call in the presence of the above-named persons when at all possible.

2. Once a report is made to the appropriate authorities, the church will rely on the decisions of those authorities as to the validity of the complaint. It is also the church's responsibility under these guidelines to develop an appropriate plan of response to the allegations. This plan will include the Minister, the Assistant Minister, the Religious Educator and the response team members. Each plan is developed on a case-by-case basis and handled with care and discretion for all involved.
3. In all cases, the Senior Minister will also notify the President of the Board and the UUA, and seek their advice and counsel. Additionally, the Minister will notify the Church's insurance company.
4. In the event the accused abuser is the Senior Minister, reports will be filed by and the notifications referenced above will be the responsibility of the Assistant Minister. If the accused abuser is the Assistant Minister or other members of staff, the Senior Minister and the President of the Board of Trustees will be notified.

Section II: Personal Safety

Prevention of Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation

In the Case of Convicted or Unresolved Sexual Abuse or Offense:

1. Keeping our Unitarian Universalist values in mind, we must set boundaries for participation with persons who have a history of sexual abuse or offense with children, youth, or adults.
2. If it is determined through a background check that a potential volunteer or potential congregational staff person has an unresolved accusation of abuse or offense, or has been convicted of a sexual abuse/ offense, the person shall not be hired or be able to volunteer in our Children and Youth program or any program where children may be present
3. In the case of a member or friend of the congregation who has such a history, the first response shall be for the person to meet with the Senior Minister or Assistant Minister to establish boundaries for participation. We encourage any member or friend who has such a history to disclose this information to the Senior Minister or Assistant Minister as it aligns with our shared values and complete a Limited Access Agreement. See Appendix H.
4. In the case of a new allegation of sexual harassment or sexual abuse brought against a staff member, the Senior Minister and the Assistant Minister will consult the employee handbook and be in communication with legal counsel. If the staff person is the Senior or Assistant Minister, the Board President must be included in the conversation with legal counsel.
5. In coordination with the person and the team of staff and lay leadership, a Limited Access Agreement (Appendix D) shall be put in place. This tool will be used to welcome the person to only certain specified church functions, and only under specified conditions. The Limited Access Agreement must be signed by the person prior to being admitted into All Souls Church. Refusal to sign allows All Souls Church the right to refuse admittance of the person to all church services, functions, and activities.
6. The congregation will take seriously all allegations and reports of mistreatment, misconduct, or any other incident deemed unsafe.

Destructive Behavior Policy

Although the congregation of All Souls believes in civility and tolerance, we recognize the need to address the potential for behavior that may challenge our sense of individual and communal safety and wellbeing. Examples of destructive behavior include but are not limited to the following:

- Perceived threats to the safety of an adult or child.
- The disruption of church activities whether in person or during on-line events.
- Actions that diminish the reputation and appeal of the congregation to existing members, potential members, donors, the UUA and/or the general public.
- Repeated unwarranted verbal or written attacks, aggression, offensive behavior, and/or repeated spreading of misinformation publicly or in private

Therefore, the following shall be the policy of the church if, and when, such a challenge may arise:

1. Situations involving destructive behavior will be brought to the attention of the Executive Team, the President of the Board of Trustees, and staff as deemed necessary. In this case, the Executive Team is composed of the Senior Minister, the Assistant Minister and the Director of Operations.
2. If an immediate response is required, this will be undertaken by a member of the Executive Team onsite and/or the leader of the group involved. This may include asking the offending 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. Any time any of these actions are undertaken without a member of the Executive Team being present, the President of the Board of Trustees must be notified. All plans for follow-up steps will be determined by the Executive Team or the Board.
3. Persons identified as being destructive will be responded to as individuals of inherent dignity and worthiness.
4. Information concerning the alleged incident(s) that led to concern will be collected from the concerned parties by delegated Exec Team and documented before any action is taken. This documentation should include an incident report.
5. The Executive Team will meet to assess the findings and decide on a course of action, with the following actions of response recommended to them.

Step One: Initial Contact and Investigation

1. Contacts the individual (s) who felt harmed by another's behavior and documents the nature of the concern.
2. Contacts the person named as the source of the destructive behavior and informs him/her/them of the nature of the concern.
3. The Exec Team will then meet to assess the situation and will proceed to the next steps.
4. The Exec Team contacts both the individual harmed and the person who caused the alleged harm with a date by which they will be contacted concerning the issue of concern.

Step Two: To aid in evaluating the problem and determining the appropriate response, the following points will be used in assessing the nature and severity of referred problems.

- a. **Dangerousness:** Is the individual a source of threat or harm to persons or property?
- b. **Destructiveness:** What is the extent of behavior to church functions?
- c. **Congregational Integrity:** How likely is it that existing or prospective church members will be driven away by the alleged behavior?
- d. **Causes:** Why is the destruction occurring? Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the church? Is it due to a professionally diagnosed condition of mental illness?
- e. **Probability of Change:** How likely is it that the problem behavior will be eliminated in the future?
- f. **History:** What has been the frequency and the degree of destruction caused by the individual in the past?

Step Three: Contract: If the basis of the original concern is determined to be valid, this finding will be clearly communicated to the person in question and a behavioral contract (sometimes referred to as a "covenant") for clearly defined behavior change will be negotiated. Such communication and contract will be documented.

Contract Refusal: *If the person in question refuses to negotiate a contract, refuses to abide by a contract, or engages in behavior of sufficient severity, he or she may be excluded from the church for a specified period, with reasons for such action and conditions for return clearly communicated and documented.*

Step Four: Exclusion or Expulsion from the church.

The hope is to work towards a mutual understanding whereby persons are restored to a healthy relationship with others in the church and with the church as an institution. However, should it be determined that exclusion or expulsion from the church is necessary, the Executive Team will consult the Board of Trustees prior to this action being taken. The minutes of the Board of Trustees shall record the name of any person permanently excluded from the church.

If appropriate, the Exec/Response Team may offer referrals for professional services.

All documentation developed while investigating and resolving allegations of destructive behavior will be kept confidential. The Executive Team will be responsible for determining access to such documentation and for ensuring its security.

Approved by The Board of Trustees on May 18th, 2025

Active Threat or Shooter Procedure

Houses of worship should be a safe place for all, yet we also know that within the last decade or more, people have brought weapons into houses of worship with the intent to inflict harm. This is the beginning of an active threat or shooter procedure. The church should develop clear guidelines on congregational response to an active threat and practice that response as we do fire drills and other safety procedures.

For the purpose of this document, we are primarily concerned with two spaces: The Sanctuary during Corporate worship or large public gatherings on Sunday Morning; and the Religious Education area.

All Souls employs a security guard every Sunday to monitor the entrances to the sanctuary and to be present during Coffee/Tea Hour in Riedy Friendship Hall after the service.

An Active Threat who appears in the sanctuary during worship.

If you see something – say something: If there is any evidence of guns or other weapons, call 911 from a cell phone or 9-911 from the nearest church telephone, and alert another person to the situation, then...

1. ALERT a staff member or usher
2. SEND someone to alert RE staff and all adults on lower level to stay in rooms and lock doors.
3. IF the service is underway, HEAD PURPOSEFULLY toward the pulpit to alert the service leader.

If the Security Guard on site/on premise during Sunday AM Worship

If the preacher/worship leader notices the assailant coming into the space, they will immediately issue the command: **“DOWN”** from the pulpit. Congregants are expected to shield themselves in place in the pews. The reason for this is because we employ a security guard, they will have a clear shot to remove the threat of further harm by using their own firearm. If parishioners are standing up and/or running away, there is a greater likelihood of an innocent bystander being harmed.

If the security guard is not present and/or has been injured, the recommendation is to:

RUN – attempt to remove yourself and others from the source of the threat as quickly as possible;

HIDE – if removing yourself from the premises is not possible, then hiding under a pew behind a door or the pulpit; using anything as a shield

FIGHT – if options 1 & 2 are not possible, then fight, using any weapons you can lay your hands on; chairs, hymnals, shoes, anything to distract the intruder from their intent to harm.

Religious Education Response

1. Should an adult volunteer or staff person be notified that there is an intruder with a weapon in the building, the first course of action will be to lock down the rooms and move out of sight of small windows in the door if there is one. Any groups in Reidy must move to Minot Simmons or Mary Ella Holst Room or the Kitchen (whichever room is closest).
2. At this point in time, all rooms must be locked if possible. Once an alert is sounded, RE Staff/facilities members will lock room doors.
3. Adults in the nursery should lock their own doors immediately.
4. All children and adults should move into the far corner of the room by the curtains, out of sight if possible.
5. There will always need to be some discretion on the part of the adults in the room as to what response is best. Staff and Volunteers should be made aware of all potential exits from the lower level. Do NOT leave the room if you hear commotion or shooting!
6. Wait for the ALL CLEAR and further instruction from Police/Staff.

ANY other time outside of a Sunday Morning

RUN:

- Evacuate if Possible. If there is considerable distance between you and the gunfire/armed person, quickly move away from the sound of the gunfire/armed person.
- If the gunfire/armed person is in your building and it is safe to do so, run out of the building and move far away until you are in a secure place to hide.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Keep your hands visible to law enforcement.
- Take others with you, but do not stay behind because others will not go.
- Call 911. Do not assume that someone else has reported the incident. The information that you are able to provide law enforcement may be critical, e.g. number of aggressors, physical description and identification, number and type(s) of weapons, and location of the aggressor.

HIDE:

- Conceal Yourself in a Silent and Safe Space.
- If the aggressor is in close proximity and you cannot evacuate safely, hide in an area out of the armed person's view. C
- Choose a hiding place with thicker walls and fewer windows, if possible.
- Lock doors and barricade with furniture, if possible. Turn off lights. Silence phones and turn off other electronics.
- Close windows, shades and blinds, and avoid being seen from outside the room, if possible. Remain in place until you receive an "all clear" signal from law enforcement.
- FIGHT: Take Action to Disrupt or Incapacitate the Aggressor. If you cannot evacuate or

hide safely and only when your life is in imminent danger, take action. Attempt to incapacitate or disrupt the actions of the aggressor. Act with physical aggression toward the aggressor. Use items in your area such as fire extinguishers, chairs, books. Throw items at the aggressor if possible. Call 911 when it is safe to do so.

POLICE Response: Wait for law enforcement to assist you out of the building. Display empty hands with open palms. Remain calm and follow instructions. Emergency personnel will care for the injured as soon as possible. Police officers may secure all witnesses until identified and questioned. After the incident is under control, gather in the garden or Reidy Hall dependent upon police instruction.

Immigration and Safety Protection Policy

The purpose of this policy is to serve as a guide to Staff, Renters, Board of Trustees, Members and Friends of All Souls Church.

All Souls Church is committed to providing a safe and welcoming space for all individuals, regardless of immigration status. This policy establishes guidelines for interactions with immigration enforcement officers to ensure the protection of our community members and uphold our values.

In January of 2025, the Trump Administration rescinded a Biden-era policy that protected certain areas—such as churches, schools, and hospitals—from immigration enforcement. The first step in preparing for protecting immigrants who might seek sanctuary within our building, is to designate certain spaces as private, using signs that say: Private, access limited for the religious purposes of All Souls Church. Federal Agents, such as ICE, are not legally allowed to search private areas of the building.

This policy addresses access to the second floor of Wiggin House at All Souls Church, which is used as church office space and is not open to the public. In other words, the second floor of Wiggin House is a private space.

1. Non-Consent to Entry

- Immigration enforcement officers, including but not limited to agents of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and/or any law enforcement officer conducting law enforcement activity related to immigration, do not have All Souls Church's consent to enter any part of our property—
- unless they provide proper legal authorization.

2. Required Documentation for Entry

- The only paperwork All Souls Church acknowledges as providing proper legal authorization is a properly executed judicial warrant signed by a judge.
- An administrative warrant (e.g., ICE Form I-200 or I-205) does not grant lawful authority to enter the property without consent.
- Even when presented with a judicial warrant, a designated individual (such as legal counsel) will be the only authorized person to review and accept it.

3. Response to Immigration Officers

If an immigration officer (including any officer conducting immigration enforcement activities) arrives at All Souls Church, staff or community leaders should:

1. Immediately contact a Senior Minister or a member of the Executive Team
2. Politely ask the officer(s) to remain outside while verifying their documentation.
3. Request to see a judicial warrant and decline to acknowledge any administrative warrants.

4. Respond with a rote statement, such as: "I am not authorized to accept this document, and I'm going to have to ask you to leave this property."
5. Document the interaction, including names, badge numbers, time of arrival, and details of the request.
6. Film the interaction for documentation and legal purposes.
7. If law enforcement agents attempt to enter a private space, staff and/or community leaders should not prevent entry, but rather should state that All Souls does not consent to their entry into the private space
8. If law enforcement agents instruct individuals to refrain from filming, staff or community leaders can state that they have the right to film law enforcement activities such as this. However, if staff or community leaders feel unsafe, they should not feel obligated to film such activities.

4. Public Events

Immigration officers, like any other individuals, may enter All Souls Church property during public events. However, while All Souls vents are open to the public, any officer entering the event in order to conduct law enforcement activity may not enter or speak with attendees without the authorization of a designated individual.

Our Position on Immigration. Although All Souls as a congregation has not formally created a policy position on immigration, our response is guided by the resolutions passed at seven General Assemblies (1961, 1963, 1980, 1984, 1985, 1986, 2017) which include support for immigration reform, endorsing sanctuary for refugees, and resisting the criminalization of immigrant communities. Undocumented persons are living in the community; they are our friends, neighbors, co-workers, and fellow tax payers. We resist any unlawful attempt to remove them from the premises of All Souls.

Houses of Worship all over the country are preparing for the possibility that ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) may come to their doors, seeking undocumented persons. The purpose of this memo is to provide All Souls staff, renters, the All Schools school our position on how to respond should ICE agents request entry. The Q & A's which follow are drawn from the UUA's web page: [ICE and Immigration Reform](#)

Can ICE agents enter our sanctuaries or worship spaces?

Yes. From a legal perspective, if you understand your worship to be a public event, to which public persons are welcome and invited, ICE agents could theoretically be present in the worship space without a warrant. This is not different than the legal status of worship spaces before the Trump Administration's Executive Order went into place.

Does ICE need a warrant to enter previously protected areas including our private congregational spaces?

Yes, but only for places within those areas that are considered private, since the Fourth Amendment protects areas where people have a “reasonable expectation of privacy.” In the context of protected areas, areas open to the public such as lobbies, waiting areas and parking lots are considered public, while interior areas and those marked “private” with a sign are considered private. For immigration enforcement to search or enter a private area within a formerly protected area, the Fourth Amendment requires a valid judicial warrant signed by a federal judge unless staff at those areas consent to the search. Do not offer such consent.

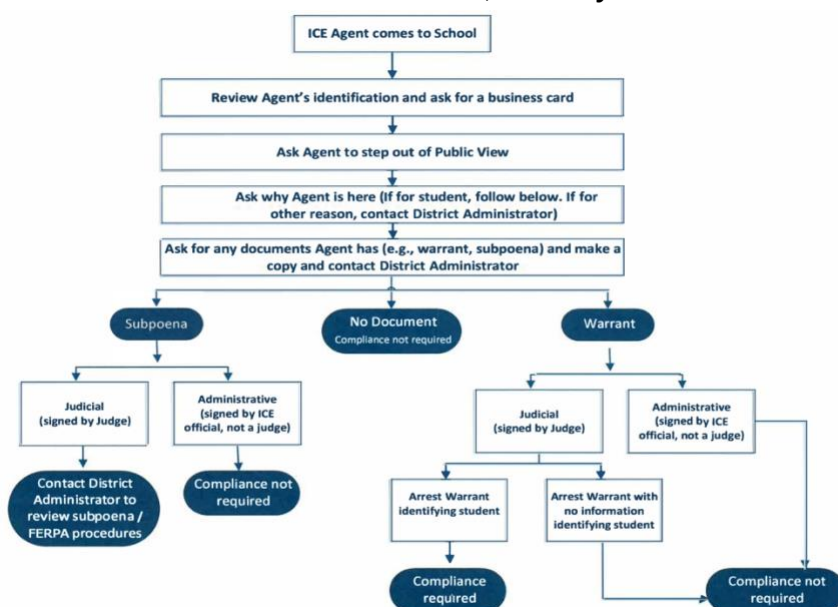
What if ICE shows a judicial warrant to enter private spaces of our church/community?

ICE must have a judicial warrant to enter private spaces of a church. You may ask to see the warrant before allowing ICE in. A judicial warrant is issued by a court and signed by a judge and describes the location than can be entered with the warrant.

It is different from administrative warrants that may be issued by ICE or another federal agency with the name of an individual to be arrested. No one at your church is required to talk to ICE, give ICE agents any information, or say anything about anyone’s immigration status.

I am an All Souls volunteer. What am I supposed to do if ICE shows up at the building demanding entry?

Below is sheet which was shared with the Executive Team of All Souls by Jennifer M. Vest, Director of the All Souls School. Although it was designed to address ICE entering a school, the protocols response is the same. You may also contact the Senior Minister (number here) which goes directly to the Minister’s cell phone for more advice and/or support. **The Chart Below is a Guide to Interactions with ICE, used by the All Souls School**



Alcohol Policy

It is the policy of the church that the responsible consumption of alcohol by adults at church events is acceptable. If alcohol is to be served at church events, equally attractive alternative beverages should also be provided. Alcohol will be served in a separate area from food and other drinks.

1. Alcohol should not be served at events where children or youth will be present. Alcoholic beverages may not be served by or to anyone under 21. On rare occasions, there may be special events at which alcohol is served to adults and to which some children will attend with their parents. All parents will be responsible for close supervision of their children at these events. All Souls will not be held liable.
2. Alcohol brought in for non-church events will be self-monitored by the group to ensure the policy is followed. If alcohol is brought in prior to the event and unpersoned it must be kept in a locked refrigerator or cabinet. All containers of alcohol brought in shall be removed by representatives of the non-church event or disposed of by the custodial staff.
3. Because it would undermine the purpose of maintaining control over alcohol on the premises, no one may bring a personal container of alcohol onto the church premises or consume alcohol on the premises. Any person who appears to be intoxicated to the point of being disruptive or posing a danger to anyone shall be brought to the attention of a staff member or custodian onsite who shall take appropriate action, including, if necessary, requiring the violator to leave the premises. The police can and will be called if the situation demands such action.

The events manager will ensure that all those using church space and serving alcohol receive a copy of the alcohol policy and that they understand it.

Service Animal Policy

Animals are not permitted on the premises of All Souls, as a general policy, although exceptions may be made in consultation with the Executive Team.

1. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), All Souls Church defines service animals as “dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person’s disability. Dogs whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.”
2. A service animal will be identified by its uniform and will be allowed on the premises of All Souls with its handler.
3. Service animals must remain with their handlers.
4. Service animals shall not sit on church furniture.
5. Service animals must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal’s work or unless the individual’s disability prevents using these devices. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.
6. Service animals shall not obstruct an area used for emergency evacuation.

Emotional Support Animal (ESA) Policy

1. All Souls Church defines an emotional support animal (ESA) as an animal (typically a dog or cat) that provides a therapeutic benefit to its owner through companionship and is not specifically trained or certified to perform tasks for a person who suffers from emotional, psychiatric, or mental health-related disabilities. Under the law, an ESA does not qualify as a service animal and, thus, is not granted legal access to places of public accommodation by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Therefore, requests made by persons who wish to access All Souls with their ESA are treated as a unique situation, which may be considered as an exception to the service animal policy.
2. Approval of an ESA is made strictly on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Team. Those requesting an ESA should have current documentation from a licensed mental health professional or physician treating their mental health-related disability stating

that the person has a mental health-related disability and that the animal accompanying the congregant is necessary to their mental health or treatment along with the mental health professional's license number (or type, issue date, and state in which the license was issued).

3. Unless granted approval, an ESA is not permitted on the grounds of All Souls for Sunday services, other classes, and events. or programs.
4. Approved ESAs must comply with all the expectations listed under the animal service policy. In addition, ESAs are encouraged to find seating away from ADA-approved service animals. Any animals granted approval to accompany their owners on All Souls' property will be asked to relocate or remove their animal if it triggers an allergic or emotionally traumatic reaction in another member of the All-Souls community.

Online Communications/ Social Media Policy

Electronic Communications Policy Guidelines for those working with the children and youth of our community in either the Religious Education program or an event where children or youth are assisting.

The vast numbers of communication possibilities and the speed of technology require that adults working with youth be aware of the need to maintain appropriate relational boundaries regardless of the communication medium. The spirit of this approach requires the adult to think of all communications as if they are happening in person (face to face) and to apply the same standards applied to face-to-face meetings to exchanges through electronic media. No child or youth should be alone in an on-line room together. Adults should be mindful of topics of conversation with children and youth so that they are appropriate.

Group communications through email, social media platforms and text messaging, etc. are appropriate for our youth to communicate with each other and is encouraged.

The ONLY appropriate interaction between youth and adults on email or social media must be as a group or with no less than three people. There will be no one-on-one communications allowed; this includes email, texts, Instagram, messaging services, Snapchat, etc. Ideally if an adult leader needs to communicate with just youth their parent or guardian should be the third person. In the case of conducting youth group business, discussions of logistics, church event planning, or something more related to one person, including the other youth advisors or the religious educator in the communication loop is the best procedure

Inappropriate actions include but are not limited to: initiating and engaging youth in personal/private conversations exploring youths' social media pages as peers – i.e., commenting on personal photos, following or friending.

Adult advisors need to remind youth that the specific covenant youth group members have agreed to abide by during group time at the Church also applies to online communications and communities set up specifically for the group, i.e. a group text that includes or does not include the youth advisors

Adults must recognize the public nature of social networking sites and see themselves as representatives of All Souls Church (volunteer or paid.) Thus, advisors agree not to post any material that could be deemed inappropriate or explicit on their personal social media. So doing is cause for dismissal, which can be undertaken at the Religious Educator's discretion at any point.

If an adult advisor is in doubt about the appropriateness of any ongoing or new forms for communication, she/he should consult with the Religious Educator, and/or the Executive Team.

No person that participates in any offering at All Souls should be taking photos of community members without their consent and posting them on social media. No community member should be taking any photos that include children.

Any photos that include children or youth that are to be used in any way for communications or marketing of All Souls must first be cleared with the Religious Educator and that child's parent or guardian. This permission can be withdrawn by the parent or guardian at any time for any reason.

B. General Guidelines for All Social Media

These guidelines are for anyone who posts to any “social media”: i.e., any channel for online publication and commentary, including but not limited to blogs, wikis, social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr, etc. The tone of any All-Souls text, audio, or video should reflect the values of this congregation, whether it is original content being posted or a comment on content created by someone else.

All Souls Church welcomes contributions to conversations about All Souls on social media and content directly related to All Souls and to Unitarian Universalism. Wall posts, comments, photos, and other content posted on social media should be relevant to these areas of interest, respectful of the people involved, and mindful of the UUA’s Shared Values | Principles and Purposes.

All Souls has the right to delete any inappropriate content from their social media outlets, including but not limited to: irrelevant content, redundant content, hateful content, malicious content, uncivil or disrespectful content, attacks or complaints against an individual, financial solicitations, endorsements of a political candidate or party, and content that violates the platform’s terms of use, code of conduct, or other policies. Consult communications staff if setting up an All Souls related activity or group social media account or website. At least one All Souls staff person shall be an administrator on any All Souls-related social media accounts or website.

Observe copyright rules. Always credit others for their work; and make sure you have permission to use material before you do so. “Fair use” requirements dictate that you should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else’s work without explicit permission; always attribute work to its original author or source. Where possible, link to others’ content rather than copy it.

Those who manage and produce content for the congregation’s media tools should agree to:

- Consistently and fairly enforce stated policies.
- Prioritize Confidentiality: Do not post photos of children without written consent of their parents or guardian. (see above for more information) If an event is being filmed or photographed, tell people in advance and at the event and provide an opt-out option.
- Back up all content.

Surveillance Footage

When theft, injuries, and other incidents occur at church, surveillance footage can provide an account of what happened. Surveillance cameras can help gather useful information, but there are limits to where cameras should be placed. Surveillance efforts should balance ministry security with individual privacy.

Notification. A sign shall be posted at the receptionist area or building entrance announcing that surveillance cameras are in use.

Privacy. Cameras shall be placed in public areas only such as the sanctuary, vestibule, or

hallways—where an individual can expect to be seen by others is generally acceptable. However, restrooms, and other private spaces should be off-limits for cameras.

Recording and storing video content. Video footage can be helpful evidence if an incident occurs on church property. In the case of an incident of a crime such as robbery, assault, or murder, the video content will be made available to the NYPD at its request. If the video content is requested by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), a warrant must be provided at the time of the request and will be provided only at the decision of the Senior Minister in collaboration with the Associate Minister and Executive Director.

Recorded video is only kept for 7 days. Recorded video cannot be viewed by any staff except those authorized by the Executive Team. Video footage shall be kept secure.

Media

1. Spokespersons - Only authorized All Souls staff speakers may communicate directly with members of the media on behalf of All Souls. Other staff should check with those authorized first before speaking to the media. It is in the best interest of All Souls to maintain relations with the media in an open, pragmatic manner, and to respond promptly to their legitimate interests.
2. All media requests should be recorded accurately and passed on to the Executive Team.
3. Media requests include inquiries for interviews, commentary, and information, and include all media – TV/radio, newspapers, magazines, local/national media, vlogs, podcasts, social media for other outlets and internet sites.
4. Authorized All Souls spokespersons will respond on behalf of the church or will assist in identifying the appropriate person from staff to handle the response.
5. Receptionists and Facilities staff are not authorized to speak to reporters without advanced knowledge and coordination with the appropriate staff spokesperson or communications personnel.
6. Volunteers who are approached by the media should be instructed to direct all media calls to the appropriate staff spokespersons or communications personnel.
7. All media calls are to be reported to the communications staff for follow-up and archiving. Provide the reporter's name, media outlet, media telephone number or email, the anticipated publication date, and the subject of the story.

B. Crisis Communication

Communication from All Souls regarding unexpected events or serious incidents must be approved by the Executive Team. Written communication regarding such an incident as such will be prepared in collaboration with the staff members and the Board of Trustees. In the event of a crisis, the situation will be shared with our UUA regional contact and a plan of action determined.

C. Press Releases

Press releases are written by or coordinated by the communications staff. Press releases may also be written by a paid freelance writer. Staff members are responsible for proofreading and

returning releases written on their behalf to the writer in a timely manner to meet publisher deadlines.

Livestream Video During Sunday Worship

1. Video Shots of the entire congregation are to be from behind only. Any close-up shots are to be kept to Choir members and worship leaders.
2. Under no circumstances are there to be video close-up shots of minors. If there is a question of a person's age, we shall refrain from a close-up view.
3. Congregants should be told via the Sunday order of Service that livestream video and recording of the livestream is happening. If they don't want to be seen by the camera from behind, they should have a seat in the last three rows.

Section III: Building Safety

Emergency Evacuation of the Buildings

The emergency evacuation plan is designed to provide the safest exit strategy for attendees of church and RE programs in the event of an emergency. It seeks to evacuate the church in a minimum amount of time by assigning exit paths to evacuees based on their location in the building, thus minimizing congestion at any one exit.

1. Directions will be provided by “Monitors.” Monitors are staff, worship associates, ushers, greeters, and RE leaders and assistants. Directions provided by the monitors should be obeyed without hesitation. The monitors’ primary goal is to protect attendees from physical harm and secondarily to minimize psychological trauma created by an emergency.
2. Maps of the building with egress routes will be posted in hallways, elevators, stairwells, and every room used by All Souls congregants and non-church groups.
3. Procedures for emergency evacuation will be kept in the church office and at the desk of the receptionist. These procedures will be given to every staff member, RE volunteers, and the ushers/greeters. They will be included in the information given to new staff. They will be included in the Board of Trustees Handbook. They will be reviewed two times a year at staff meetings.
4. All church emergency evacuations drills will be scheduled accordingly.
5. Emergency staff, the Executive team and board president phone numbers will be accessible at the receptionist desk and in the church office.

First Aid Policy and Equipment

1. Comprehensive first aid kits will be kept in the reception area and in the kitchen. First Aid kits may be located in other various sites throughout the All-Souls building including RE spaces
2. First aid kits will be monitored and resupplied by facilities staff in coordination with the Facilities Manager.

Automated External Defibrillator (AED)

Two AED units will be maintained in the building:

- a. Location 1 is in the kitchen, inside the door on the Minot Simons side.
Location 2 is in the sanctuary vestibule (narthex), in the stairwell on the 80th Street side.

The Facilities Manager will inspect the AED devices to ensure they are functional. If for any reason an AED is found to be non-operational all staff should be informed in case of an emergency and the machine should be brought up to working order as soon as possible by the

Facilities Manager.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)/AED Training/First Aid Training

The Religious Educator in collaboration with Head of Staff will schedule certification/recertifications at least once a year for nursery care workers, Children & Youth staff and All Souls staff. The people that should be trained among staff and volunteers is at the discretion of the Executive Team for what makes sense for our scheduled events and staffing during those events. There should always be at least one trained staff person in the building in case of an emergency.

Inclement Weather

In case of inclement weather that would cause the building to close or cancel an event including Sunday service/ religious education programming all available channels will be used to broadcast the closure.

For inclement weather that doesn't cause closure but requires safety precautions such as shoveling of snow or placement of additional mats/rugs please see the Facilities policies.

Appendix A: Code of Ethics for People Working with Children or Youth

Those who lead our children and youth play a key role in fostering the spiritual formation of our children and youth. It is therefore especially important that those in leadership positions provide the special nurture, care, and support that will enable our children and youth to develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence and responsibility.

Therefore, those who lead and/or help our children/youth will:

- Provide nurturing care and support to all children/youth.
- Work to help children/youth develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence.
- Respect the selfhood of each young person, including the absolute right to privacy of his or her own mind and body.
- Not engage in any behavior with young people, which constitutes verbal, emotional, or physical abuse, in person or online.
- Not engage in behavior or language, which is personally threatening or demeaning. · Not engage in any sexually harassing behavior, nor any other sexual, seductive, or erotic behavior with children/youth.
- Not encourage or condone any sort of illegal or unethical activity on the part of children/youth.

_____ I agree my electronic communications with children and youth will not be one-on-one but always in the context of a group.

_____ I will not befriend a child or youth on any social media platform without the explicit authorization of the parent and the Religious Educator and only if it is deemed necessary for engagement in a course, activity or group affiliated with All Souls and its mission

_____ I understand volunteering with children/youth requires a background check by a third party and that I will be asked to update that in accordance to state and federal laws when asked.

I have read the above Code of Ethics and understand that these guidelines govern expected behavior of those working with children and youth at The Unitarian Church of All Souls.

Name Printed _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Leaders shall be informed of the Code of Ethics and agree to it before assuming their role. In cases of violation of this code, appropriate action will be taken.

Appendix B: Field Trip Chaperone with Children Form

_____ on

_____ (name of event) (date of event)

I understand that this event is coordinated by

_____ (name of person, persons, or committee)

I understand my behavior will affect the youth community of The Unitarian Church of All Souls. While attending this event:

- I will act in ways that encourage the wellbeing, safety, and the best interests of everyone attending this event.
- I will follow all federal, state, and local laws.
- I will work out a system of communication with my sponsor during this event.
- I understand that I am encouraged to express myself in healthy ways and to respect boundaries set by others.
- I understand that behavior that breaks down the community, including sexual activity and sexual harassment, is inappropriate and therefore, not permitted in this setting.
- I will not consume any alcohol or illegal drugs.
- I understand that my sponsor has also agreed to refrain from any use of alcohol or illegal drugs during this event.

I, _____, have read and understand the Youth Code of Ethics. I agree to abide by these guidelines for the duration of the event. I understand that if I break this agreement, my parents/guardians will be contacted and that I may be prohibited from attending any future events sponsored by All Souls.

Appendix C: Child Permission Slip

Child's Name _____ Birthdate _____
Address _____ Home phone _____
City, State, ZIP _____
Name of Parent/Guardian _____
In an emergency, parent/guardian can be reached at: (____) ____ - ____ or (____) ____ - ____
If unable to reach this person, please contact: Name _____
Relationship to youth: _____ Phone (____) ____ - ____
Youth's known medical conditions _____
Known allergies _____
Current medications _____
Health Insurance Co. _____ Policy Number _____
Physician's name _____ Physician's phone _____
I hereby grant permission for my child/ward, _____, to attend the following ALL SOULS NYC-sponsored activity: _____

This box will be checked and I will initial here _____ if this event is attended by me and understand that while on this trip, I am my child's primary guardian.

I understand that neither All Souls NYC Unitarian Universalist Church, its staff, nor its volunteers, assume any legal liability for the welfare of my child/ward, and I hereby release them of such liability. In the event that an emergency should occur while my child/ward is participating in activities sponsored by the Church, I hereby grant my permission to the person(s) in charge of the activity to do whatever is deemed necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of my child/ward if I am not present in the moment, and I hereby in advance authorize whatever medical care said person(s) may deem necessary.

I agree to assume all responsibility for any such medical expenses.

This agreement shall remain in effect for the duration of the activity.

This consent may be photocopied, and photocopies shall be as binding as the original.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date signed

Appendix D: Limited Access Agreement

The Unitarian Church of All Souls affirms the dignity and worth of all persons. We are committed to being a religious community open to those who are in need of worshipping (being among us)

with us, especially in times of serious personal troubles. However, based on your background, we have concerns about your contact with children and youth in our congregation. The following guidelines are designed to reduce the risk to both you and them of an incident or accusation.

We welcome you to our congregation and our membership, but your participation will be limited to ensure the safety of our children and youth and to assure that you will not be subject to future accusations.

Within these guidelines, the congregation welcomes your participation in adult worship services, coffee hour, committee meetings, adult education, all adult social events, and well-supervised intergenerational events. You are to avoid all contact with children and youth on congregation property or congregation-sponsored events. This includes the following:

- i. Do not talk with children.
- ii. Do not volunteer or agree to lead, chaperone, or participate in events for children and youth.
- iii. Remain in the presence of an adult who knows your situation at all times when children are present; this includes coffee hour.
- iv. If a child in the congregation approaches you, either at church or in a community place, politely and immediately excuse yourself from the situation.
- v. Refrain from being in the building unsupervised when activities involving children or youth are in session, such as nursery school or youth group.

I accept that the following people will be told of my circumstances in order for them to protect the children/young people for whom they care:

I have reviewed this covenant and agree to abide by its provisions. I understand and agree that if I violate this agreement, I will be denied access to future church functions and church property. I understand that this contract will be reviewed regularly every six months and will remain for an indefinite period.

Signature_____Date_____

Witness_____Date_____

Minister_____Date_____

Religious Educator_____Date_____

Board Chair_____Date_____

Appendix E: Anti-Sexual Harassment Form

New York State Labor Law requires all employers to adopt a sexual harassment prevention policy that includes a complaint form to report alleged incidents of sexual harassment.

If you believe that you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you are encouraged to complete this form and submit it to Executive Team (Senior Minister, Associate Minister, Director of Operations) by email or by mail to: The Unitarian Church of All Souls, 1157 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10075; or in person. 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: _____

Instructions for Employers

If you receive a complaint about alleged sexual harassment, follow your sexual harassment prevention policy.

An investigation involves:

- Speaking with the employee
- Speaking with the alleged harasser
- Interviewing witnesses
- Collecting and reviewing any related documents

While the process may vary from case to case, all allegations should be investigated promptly and resolved as quickly as possible. The investigation should be kept confidential to the extent possible.

Document the findings of the investigation and basis for your decision along with any corrective actions taken and notify the employee and the individual(s) against whom the complaint was made. This may be done via email.

Appendix F: Incident Report

TBD

Appendix G: Destructive Person's Behavioral Contract/Covenant

TBD

Appendix H: Limited Access Agreement

TBD