
Temple Emanuel Ethics Code



This values-based code of ethics sets forth the principles and standards of conduct for our clergy, congregants, staff, visitors, and guests, when participating in a Temple Emanuel activity regardless of the location (e.g., in the building, online, or offsite) or communicating on behalf of Temple Emanuel whether in person, in writing, or on a Temple Emanuel social media site.

Introduction

- Temple Emanuel believes in maintaining a caring, inclusive community based on Jewish values and principle, encouraging Tikun Olam (repair of the world).
 - We believe in promoting Jewish learning as a lifelong process for ourselves, our families, and our children.
 - We believe in strengthening our Jewish faith, commitment, and observance.
 - We believe in fostering the love of Judaism and the preservation of Judaism and the Jewish people.
 - As a Reform Jewish congregation affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), we believe in adherence to the concepts of God, Torah, and Israel.

Values

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

We promote open and honest communication that allows for addressing differences constructively.

- We make decisions regarding synagogue-related matters with transparency, openness and accountability, unless confidentiality dictates otherwise.
- We protect the confidentiality of sensitive information, either about an individual or the synagogue, and do not disclose it without permission, to the extent practicable.
- We respect the efforts of others and do not take credit for their work. For example, we obey copyright laws.
- Temple Emanuel has adopted a [Policy on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#) in which it has affirmed its commitment to a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment where everyone feels accepted, respected, and valued, and to a nondiscriminatory approach that provides equal opportunity for employment and participation in all of its activities.

- **Honor (Kavod)**

Temple Emanuel values acting with integrity.

- We act solely according to the synagogue's best interest when acting on its behalf.
- We refrain from using our positions in the synagogue for personal advantage or benefit.
- We conduct financial matters related to synagogue involvement with complete honesty as required by the Temple Emanuel Financial Policy.

- Our employment practices and policies are governed by an Employee Manual that ensures Temple Emanuel makes employment-related decisions in an ethical and legal manner.
- We avoid conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflicts of interest. That means we avoid situations in which someone affiliated with the temple has a personal financial interest in a particular matter in which they participate in their temple role, or in which the temple community could reasonably doubt their objectivity, even if it is not related to a financial interest. We ensure that Temple Emanuel receives fair value in all transactions and that no one affiliated with Temple Emanuel receives any unfair benefit.
- In the event of a real or apparent conflict of interest on a matter that could come before them, temple officers, board members, clergy and committee members should disclose the conflict to the board and in most cases should recuse themselves from participation in the matter affected by the conflict. The board may vote to waive a conflict of interest if it determines that doing so, with full information, is in the best interest of Temple Emanuel.

- **Compassion (Rachamim)**

Temple Emanuel 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 and slander, whether in person or on any Temple Emanuel social media.
- We do not tolerate bullying, including any unwanted behavior that degrades, humiliates, or oppresses another.
- We will respect all members' diverse views, and treat each other courteously, with dignity, fairness, and compassion ensuring that disagreement relates only to principles and priorities, not personalities.
- We will support each other as a family, working together to develop a community of leadership to ensure Tikun Olam (repair of the world).
- Respect for others also includes diversity, equity, and inclusion, discussed under the value of exemplifying holiness.

- **Justice (Tzedek)**

Temple Emanuel 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, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, written, or visual conduct of a sexual nature.
- We do not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, age, marital status, genetic information, or disability.
- We do not tolerate acts or behaviors that exploit the vulnerability of another, take advantage of a power imbalance, compromise individuals' 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.

- We protect victims of injustice by intervening to help others in need, offering support, and reporting violations of this Code about which we become aware.

T'shuvah: Responding to Allegations of Unethical Behavior

Should any of us fail, we are obligated by Jewish tradition to perform t'shuvah: that is, to acknowledge the misconduct, ask for forgiveness, make restitution whenever possible, and avoid repetition of misconduct.

- Allegations of unethical behavior should be directed to the President of the Congregation or the Senior Rabbi. If the allegation involves the President or Senior Rabbi, the allegation may be directed to the Chair of the Human Resources Committee. The recipient of the complaint will act as an Ombudsman or refer the complaint to an appropriate person within the Temple leadership to act as Ombudsman.
- The Ombudsman will decide on a process that includes information gathering, deliberation, and resolution based on the particularities of each allegation that is received. All efforts will be made to resolve matters as promptly as possible.
- The Ombudsman may consult with, as appropriate, the President, Clergy, the Executive Director, the Board of Directors, and/or the Human Resources Committee to address the allegation. With the permission of the Board, the Ombudsman may convene a committee to address the issue.
- If an allegation of unethical behavior pertains to a member of a professional organization with its own code of ethics (CCAR, ACC, ARJE, NATA, or URJ), the Ombudsman will determine whether to handle the allegation or refer it to the appropriate organization.
- Confidentiality will be maintained throughout any investigation 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. Any attempted retaliation will be treated as unethical behavior.

Sources

The referenced version of this Ethics Code and the source documents (which are regularly updated) are available from the Temple Emanuel office.

URJ Guide to Creating a Congressional Ethics Code
Temple Emanuel Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy
Temple Emanuel Website at <https://www.templeemanuelmd.org/about/mission-history/>
Temple Emanuel Board of Trustees Brit Avodah: Covenant of Service
Temple Emanuel Financial Policy and Procedures, Appendix C: Conflict of Interest
Kol Ami Code of Ethics

This Code of Ethics was approved by the Temple Emanuel Board of Trustees on March 21, 2024.
10101 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20895
templeemanuelmd.org
301-942-2000