

Unity Spiritual Center near The Villages

Disruptive Behavior Procedure

Disruptive Behavior Policy

Disruptive behavior can be summarized as one or more of the following:

- **Dangerous:** The individual is a threat or perceived threat to people or property. Includes Active Shooter
- **Disruptive:** Individual's behavior has a significant negative impact on ministry activities and/or significantly interferes with the development of healthy relationships in the spiritual community.
- **Offensive:** Individual's behavior drives members of the community and/or newcomers away.
- **Harassment:** This is the act of systematic and/or unwanted and annoying actions of one party or group towards another person or group, including threats, demands, and coercion. The purposes may vary including prejudice and personal malice.

This policy provides a coherent process for addressing these situations:

1. When disruptive behavior arises, the leadership will respond first with prayer—holding the situation and all those involved in a space of love and wholeness.
2. It is essential that leaders keep accurate and timely records which document observed behavior and actions taken. Written records provide context and continuity should similar issues arise again either involving the same individual or someone different.
3. It is the responsibility of the board of trustees together with the Minister to discern when action needs to be taken on disruptive behavior (using the criteria specified above. To determine the necessary response, all of the following will be considered:
 - a. Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the church?
 - b. Is there a known professionally diagnosed condition of mental illness?
 - c. What is the frequency and degree of disruption caused in the past?
 - d. How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?
4. The board, with prayerful consideration and rational decision-making, will decide upon the necessary response on a case-by-case basis. However, the following three levels of response are recommended:

- a. LEVEL 1: The board being duly and fully informed will assign a team of at least two people to meet with the individual. This team should consist of a board member and/or Minister, and a lay leader within the congregation. This team will clearly articulate concerns and work with the individual to co-create a plan of action which addresses the impact of their behavior on the community and to ensure the behavior doesn't continue.
- b. LEVEL 2: The individual is excluded from the church and/or specific church activities for a limited period of time, with the reasons, timeframe, and conditions of return made clear both verbally and in writing. (See incident report)
- c. LEVEL 3: The individual's membership is revoked, and he/she is permanently excluded from the church premises and all church activities. A letter will be sent to the individual by the board explaining the expulsion and the individual's rights and possible recourse, if any. It is preferable that the letter be presented during a face-to-face conversation, unless safety is a concern.

5. Appeal: Any action taken may be appealed to the board of trustees. (within a three month time frame)

6. If the disruptive behavior presents an immediate danger to anyone in the ministry, an immediate response is required. This includes an Active shooter. In such circumstances, those in the most responsible position should take action to establish safety. Action could include:

- a. Calling the police department immediately.
- b. Asking the individual to leave
- b. Suspending the meeting or activity until such a time as it can safely be resumed.
- c. Behavior requiring any of these actions is extremely disruptive and harmful to the community. If the individual is a member of the congregation, an appeal will not be considered.

Anytime any of these actions are undertaken without a board member or minister(s) being present, the board and minister(s) must be notified by phone within 24 hours and a written report must be submitted promptly within 48 hours.

A follow-up letter detailing what steps must be taken before returning to the activities involved will be sent by the board /minister(s) to the offending party or parties.

Unity Spiritual Center

Incident Report

509 CR 468

Date of Incident _____

Fruitland Park, FL 34731

Name of person filling out report _____

Board Member Y N Minister Y N Congregant Y N

Contact number _____

Who was involved? _____

Describe: What took Place

When did Incident Happen? Date and time

Where did this happen?

Any other pertinent information? _____

Witnesses? Names/number _____

Phone number: Home: _____ Cell: _____

(Please give this report to Senior Minister or designees within 24 hours of incident. All information is confidential)