

Am Shalom Congregation

Abuse Prevention Protocol for Volunteers and Employees

The following policies and procedures must be read and agreed to be followed by all volunteers and employees at Am Shalom Congregation, 767 Huronia Road, Barrie Ontario.

After reading, please sign and return the Volunteer Pledge to the office.

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Am Shalom Religious school takes place from 10:00am -12:30pm each Saturday while our Shabbat services are happening upstairs. Am Shalom hires a Hebrew language teacher and parents are required to lead the Chai curriculum classes for 2 to 3 classes over the year from September through May. The Chai curriculum is an easy to follow course curriculum consisting of a binder for each of 5 student levels, we use 3 in any given year. The binders contain 27 lesson plans: 9 lessons on each of Torah, Avodah (the work we do to worship) and G'milut Chasadim (Acts of Loving Kindness/Moral teachings).

Religious school class begins upstairs in the main sanctuary with half an hour of group singing/learning with Rabbi Audrey. Parents and congregants are encouraged to attend this as well. The students and teachers then go downstairs to the main room and break into three groups for learning in their designated area.

There must always be at least 2 unrelated adults supervising the students.

Parents are requested to complete registration sheets for each child and these are kept in the office. The sheets include information on learning abilities and special needs as well as emergency contact information, pertinent learning information is shared with the appropriate teacher(s).

Attendance sheets are provided for each group and must be filled in by that day's teacher.

Students are to be released to their parents or designated caregiver and not to leave the building on their own. Students can wait with a teacher or a designated board member in the upstairs lobby (on the couches) to be picked up by their caregivers after class.

At the beginning of the school year the teachers and/or the administrator will review the safety procedures with the students.

Am Shalom Congregation Safety Procedures

The safety and well-being of our congregants and visitors is our top priority.

Please ensure you help your child understand these procedures and feel safe by:

- talking to them about the situations below
- reminding them that emergencies are rare
- telling them it's important to follow staff instructions in these situations

Shelter in place

Shelter in place is used when there is an environmental or weather-related situation, like a chemical spill outside the building, or a major storm. During a shelter in place, activities will continue inside Am Shalom, but participants will not be allowed to leave the building. The ventilation system may be shut off.

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Hold and secure

A hold and secure is initiated when there is a situation in the community that is not related to Am Shalom, like a bank robbery nearby. A hold and secure is usually initiated by police. During a hold and secure, activities continue inside the building, but all exterior doors are locked and no one is allowed to enter or exit.

Lockdown

A lockdown is used when there is a major incident or a threat of violence related to Am Shalom. A lockdown can be initiated by police or Am Shalom board members. During a lockdown, everyone in the Am Shalom building will move to secure areas, away from doors and windows. Interior doors are locked, lights are shut off and blinds are drawn. Everyone is to remain quiet.

Locked doors and arrival/dismissal

Am Shalom Congregation's exterior doors are locked from Sunday through Friday. Visitors must use the intercom system to enter the building. (The windows do not open.)

*On Saturdays the upstairs main doors are unlocked from 9:30am throughout services, which end at approximately 1:00pm. Board members are to act as greeters and welcome people as they enter the lobby of the building. The downstairs doors are to remain locked and are to be used as exits only. (*This will be in effect until our new security system is installed at which time the upstairs doors will remain locked on Saturday as well and a designated board member will be responsible for monitoring/opening the door with their smart phone.)

Fire and evacuation drills

In case of gas leaks, bomb threats or fire incidents which would require everyone to leave the building, all persons are asked to leave by the nearest exit (usually the main entrance door) and meet at the far side of the parking lot – near the Am Shalom entrance sign.

Criminal background checks for staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers that work in the religious school are required to complete a criminal background check with vulnerable sector screening before having contact with students. After a negative criminal background check has been submitted an Offence Declaration may be submitted yearly.

First Aid equipment

At least one board member and teacher are trained in first aid and CPR. Am Shalom has an Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in the upstairs lobby. There are multiple First Aid Kits in the building classrooms and in the office.

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Police Partnership

Am Shalom Congregation works closely with Barrie Police Services to ensure we are doing all we can to keep our members and visitors safe.

If you have any questions about safety procedures, as always, please contact the office or speak to a board member.

AM SHALOM CONGREGATION HARASSMENT POLICY

Introduction

The Board of Am Shalom is committed to providing an environment for both its employees and members that is free from all forms of conduct that may be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, whether of a sexual nature or not.

This policy will be reviewed as often as is necessary, and in any event at least once per year by the Board of Directors.

Definitions and Examples

Harassment includes conduct that is offensive, insulting, intimidating, or hurtful.

Harassment is defined as “A course of vexatious conduct or comment against an individual that is known or reasonably ought to be known to be unwelcome.”

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of conduct which may constitute harassment:

- Unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendoes, propositions, or taunting
- Displaying or circulating offensive material
- Unwelcome, intimidating or offensive gestures or communication
- Practical jokes
- Refusing to speak to or work with someone
- Bullying
- Spreading rumours
- Stalking
- Seductive behavior

Any individual who becomes aware of possible harassment, discrimination, or sexual harassment must immediately advise an executive board member so it can be investigated in a timely and, to the extent possible, confidential manner. Anyone engaging in harassment, discrimination or sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment for cause or membership renounced.

Complaint Procedure

Any individual may register a complaint without fear of reprisal and with the assurance of appropriate action.

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Registering a Complaint

If you believe your rights are being violated, you should:

- Immediately inform the person (verbally or in writing) that the behavior is unwelcome and must stop.
- Make detailed notes describing the behavior, time and date of the incident(s) and names of those involved including any witnesses.
- If you are not able to discuss the problem with the person perceived as violating your rights, report the incident by filing a written complaint with the Spiritual Leader or an Executive Board Member of your choice.

Responses to the Complaint

Upon receiving a harassment complaint, the Spiritual Leader/Executive will promptly address the complaint. Am Shalom will consider the advisability of engaging all concerned parties as part of a mediation process prior to initiating any formal investigation of the incident. Note that reporting suspected child abuse or neglect is legislated in Ontario and any instances of Abuse, Neglect etc. will immediately be reported to the authorities such as CAS (1-800-718-1797) or the Barrie Police (705-725-7025).

The Spiritual Leader/Executive will arrange for an interview with you. The interview and your complaint will be kept as confidential as possible.

If deemed necessary, an investigation will be conducted. For this purpose, Am Shalom will determine whether an external investigator will be retained, or whether an internal investigation will be conducted, depending on the particular circumstances.

Once filed, Am Shalom will determine whether to provide the alleged harasser with a copy of the written complaint or a summary of the facts as alleged in the complaint. In any event, the alleged harasser is entitled to reasonable disclosure of the allegedly harassing behavior.

Investigation and Resolution of the Complaint

Once the investigation begins, the investigator will gather information about the substance of the complaint from the complainant and any relevant witnesses, including the alleged harasser. The interviews will be as confidential as possible. Everyone who is interviewed, including the alleged harasser, may be asked to sign notes of the interview confirming the accuracy of their statements.

Following the investigation, the investigator will propose a resolution to the complaint. A report will be submitted to the Executive, including any recommendations.

The Executive or a designated member of the Executive will review the report and any recommendations of disciplinary or other action. The Executive will then decide on any action to be taken and confirm it in writing. Throughout the complaint procedure, full consideration will be given to the rights of all persons involved.

Any confirmed violation of this policy constitutes grounds for immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination for cause or membership renounced.

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Malicious or Frivolous Complaints

Am Shalom Congregation reserves the right to discipline any individual who is found to have made a frivolous or malicious complaint, up to and including termination for cause or membership renounced.

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Policy on Individual Health & Safety and Zero Tolerance for Abuse and Police Record Checks

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Guidelines for the Supervision of Children

In order to address Health and Safety issues, as well as legal implications, the Honorary Officers of Am Shalom have implemented the following policy to address the wellbeing of children whilst on Synagogue premises.

Whilst we encourage children to come to Synagogue and take part in events, most of our helpers are volunteers, and it is felt too much to expect them to cope with difficult or disruptive children.

Parents are therefore strongly urged to ensure that:

-Your children are under your care or the care of another responsible adult.

-Your children remain within the designated activity.

-You are on-call should a difficulty arise.

Please be aware that any child or children congregating outside the building are a security risk. This is unacceptable, and the child or children will be asked to disperse with immediate effect.

In the best interest of the entire Community, the Honorary Officers trust that members will assist with this policy by being particularly aware of the movements and behaviour of their own children.

We would very much regret having to ask a member to leave the premises. However, we are sure you will understand why our Security Officers are instructed to do so, should anyone be put at risk.

The Honorary Officers, Board of Management, Employees and Voluntary Assistants regret that neither they or the Synagogue will accept liability or responsibility for any event claim or contingency arising as a result of you, your children or anyone else disregarding any of the above conditions.

POLICE CHECKS

All volunteers working in the Religious School or with vulnerable populations are required to obtain a police criminal background check. A volunteer letter from Am Shalom is available for this purpose.

ABUSE - Zero Tolerance

Am Shalom Synagogue is committed to ensuring as far as reasonably practicable, a safe environment that is free from aggression and acts of intimidation and violence.

Am Shalom Synagogue operates a zero tolerance policy. Violent or aggressive behaviour of any type towards members of staff, volunteers or other members of the public will not be tolerated.

This includes but is not limited to any physical assault, threatening behaviour or verbal abusive remarks that are made towards an employee or volunteer, including but not limited to:

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Verbal Abuse: any verbal abuse issued with the intent of creating fear or intimidation to another individual, or group of individuals, or verbal remarks or comments expressed in a loud, harsh or threatening tone of voice.

Physical Abuse: any intentional movement of the body which may include touching, gesturing, pushing, striking, stalking, any unwanted intrusion of "reasonable space" of an employee or volunteer or any intentional use of any object towards an individual.

Sexual Abuse: is abusive sexual behavior by one person upon another. It is often perpetrated using force or by taking advantage of another or taking advantage of victims not able to give consent: for example those with dementia or People with developmental disabilities. The term also covers any behavior by an adult or older adolescent towards a child/minor to stimulate any of the involved sexually. It includes non-consensual direct sexual contact, indecent exposure (of the genitals, female nipples, etc.), asking or pressuring to engage in sexual activities, displaying pornography, or using a child to produce child pornography.

Emotional or Psychological Abuse: is a way to control another person by using emotions to criticize, embarrass, shame, blame, or otherwise manipulate another person. Emotional abuse can involve any of the following: Verbal abuse: yelling at you, insulting you or swearing at you. Rejection: Constantly rejecting your thoughts, ideas and opinions. Gaslighting: making you doubt your own feelings and thoughts, and even your sanity, by manipulating the truth.

Creating a Hostile Environment: any intentional non-physical action that can be considered intimidating or harassing with the intent of creating an environment that has a purpose or affect of unreasonably interfering with an employee, or volunteer carrying out their duties.

Abuse of Property and Resources: any intentional act which results in the damaging of property, building, furniture or infrastructure. Individuals identified as being responsible for losses or breakages will be charged for these items and any further costs arising from reinstatement, repair and /or replacement.

Any incidents will be reported to the Health and Safety Officer or any Honorary Officer of the Synagogue fully investigated and may result in you being asked to leave the premises or being excluded from events in future.

Any Synagogue employee or volunteer who is the subject of, or a witness to, a suspected violation of this standard should report the violation to a supervisor, manager or person in authority who is not involved in the conduct. Any incidents may result in the individual being asked to leave the premises. The incident will be fully investigated and may result in action against the individual such as being excluded from future events.

An employee or volunteer will endeavour to remove him/herself from any situation that may result in violence/abuse. This means that if confronted with a potential situation they must make a serious attempt to retreat from the situation and report the event to management.

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Any manager, or person in authority who receives a report of a suspected violation of this standard shall document the incident, and notify the Chairman.

Any emergency, perceived emergency, or suspected criminal conduct shall be immediately reported to the police.

Complaints Procedure

Am Shalom Synagogue is committed to providing a quality service for its members and working in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all its members.

Therefore, we aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc.;
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

In the first instance, if you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you should write to the member of staff or volunteer who dealt with you, or their manager explaining the details of your complaint. You should get a response and an explanation within 15 working days.

If you are not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint, then you can write to the president (by E-Mail to ----- or by post care of the Synagogue office marked "Private and Confidential") and ask for your complaint and the response to be reviewed. You can expect them to acknowledge your request within 5 working days of receipt and a response within a further 15 workings days.

The synagogue's aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. Consequently, timescales given for handling and responding to complaints are indicative. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

The Synagogue expects all members who have a complaint to comply with this procedure. To ensure fairness Am Shalom Synagogue reserve the right to ignore any complaint which does not comply with this procedure.

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OTHER IMPORTANT VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

All People Are Different

What is important to remember is that we are all different and need to be recognized for that which we are capable of doing, not for what we may require aid to accomplish.

“The best way to help everyone, is for people to learn, understand and respect all people, whether they are the same or different.”

Defining Disability

The term "disability" means: a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities, for example, walking, thinking, seeing, speaking or hearing.

Whether a disability comes about from birth or by accident not all disabilities can be seen with the naked eye.

Some people may feel uneasy being around a person with a disability, however people with disabilities are simply people and need to be treated as such.

Visible vs. Invisible Disabilities

Visible	Invisible
People who are paralyzed and need some type of aid to move around	People with hearing disorders
Severe developmental disability	Speech impediments may not be immediately apparent.
A physical difference	People who are blind can appear to be sighted, if you do not notice the aid they require to move around
Missing limbs	
Motor impairments	A learning disability may be misinterpreted as lack of intelligence or carelessness

Learning Disabilities

A learning disability has to do with the way the brain is wired. People who are LD have normal or above normal intelligence, cannot be cured, but use different ways to learn and function.

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Dyslexia – trouble understanding written words.

Dyscalculia – difficulty solving math problems and grasping concepts.

Dysgraphia – difficulty forming letters or writing within a defined space.

Auditory and Visual Processing Disorder – difficulty understanding language despite normal hearing and vision, short term memory problems.

Non-Verbal Learning Disabilities – a neurological disorder causing problems with visual-spatial, intuitive, organizational, evaluative and holistic processing functions.

ADHD – Difficulty concentrating, cannot tolerate noise or commotion.

Unfortunately, and inaccurately, people with disabilities are often viewed as:

Victims, or objects of pity

Burdens, either on society or on their families and careers

A threat to the comfort and safety of others

Unable, or assumed to be unable, to do things

Having multiple disabilities (such as assuming that a person who uses a wheelchair also has an intellectual disability)

Childlike

"Special"

Such misconceptions are based on insufficient or inaccurate information about people with disabilities and can perpetuate inappropriate interactions.

We may fear what we do not know

Employers and fellow employees may be afraid of the unfamiliar. People who have never had contact with a person with a disability may have numerous questions.

Curiosity is natural, however, you may be afraid to ask those questions for fear of violating the provisions of the ADA, or being rude.

Overcoming those fears

Remember that people with disabilities are people first, who happen to have a disability.

We are all just temporarily abled. You could think, 'I might face a disability someday, and here's a person who could help me live with it!'

People Who Use Aids To Move

Always ask the person who uses a wheelchair if he or she would like assistance before you jump in to help. Your help may not be needed or wanted.

Don't hang or lean on a person's wheelchair.

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Take steps to insure that all office materials that may be needed are within the reach of someone that utilizes a wheelchair.

If your conversation lasts more than a few minutes, consider sitting down, to get yourself on the same eyelevel.

Persons Who Are Hearing Impaired

Always make eye contact with the person you are speaking to.

A gentle tap on the shoulder will help you announce your presence.

Face the person you are speaking to and speak slowly and clearly, do not raise your voice.

If there is a break down in communication put pencil to paper and write down what you are attempting to convey.

Speak to the person not their interpreter if there is one present.

People with Cognitive Disabilities

If the person who you are working with is having trouble understanding you, repeat yourself, using different words, without getting frustrated. Patience is a virtue.

Break up your ideas into small manageable bits that can be easily remembered. "Keep it simple." Be considerate without be patronizing. Keep all conversations at an adult to adult level.

People with Vision Impairments

Always make your presents known. Greet the person who may not know you are there.

Don't pet guide dogs or other service animals while they are working. Ask before interacting with the dog.

Talk directly to a person who is blind, not through their companion. Use the person's name to whom you are speaking so they are aware you are speaking to them.

Pulling or steering a person is awkward and confusing. Avoid grabbing their arm or their dog's harness unless asked for assistance.

People with Speech Impediments

Do not finish their sentences for them. Allow them the time to say everything they wish to say. Once again, patience is a virtue.

Do not mimic them or mock them for their speech.

Never pretend to know what a person is saying. Ask the person to repeat or rephrase, or offer him or her a pen and paper.

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People with Learning Disabilities

Put instructions and important information in writing if the person has auditory and/or short term memory difficulties

Use hands on training

Break down complicated tasks into line items with check boxes

Supply notebooks, file cabinet and other organizing and note taking aids

Provide a quiet work environment

Text to speech software if needed

Remember that this person has normal or above normal intelligence

General Tips

Keep all walkways clear of debris.

Make sure everything that is needed for work related task can be found easily.

Work *with* people with disabilities to discover what needs to be done in your workplace.

Create effective advocacy tools for accessibility in your workplace.

Do not refer to a person's disability unless it is relevant.

Avoid asking personal questions about someone's disability. Let them mention their disability first. If you must ask, be sensitive and show respect.

Avoid negative or sensational descriptions of a person's disability with anyone.

Use "people first" language when addressing a person with a disability. i.e. It is better to say "person with a disability" rather than "a disabled person."

Language

<u>Do's</u>	<u>Don'ts</u>
Person with a disability - has a disability	The disabled, the handicapped, invalids, patients, crippled, deformed, defective
People with disabilities - have disabilities or disabled person	Normal, healthy, able-bodied
People without disabilities typical person	Wheelchair-bound - confined to a wheelchair
Wheelchair user - uses a wheelchair	

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Am Shalom Volunteer Pledge

I vow to review and familiarize myself with the Policies and Procedures of Am Shalom Congregation.

I pledge to speak my mind in a considerate and thoughtful manner even when I disagree with someone else's point of view.

I promise to keep my volunteer hours in check, to keep my spirit and my family first and, **to make sure I ask for help when I start to feel overwhelmed**. I promise to let the board/administrator know when I cannot fulfill a task so that another member can attempt to get it done.

I pledge to accept less than perfect, to always remember I am a volunteer and, to celebrate the joy in making a difference.

I vow not to discuss confidential matters with those outside the board.

I pledge to think before I act at all times and to recognize that the membership of Am Shalom Congregation represents a diverse group of people with various religious beliefs, attitudes, and sexual orientations and to understand that the best way to handle a difficult situation or a crisis is to step back and review the situation before responding.

I vow to compare myself to no one - my time and contributions are my own special gift and, to feel proud that I can do what I do.

I vow to compare no one to myself, to recognize everyone gives their best of their time and abilities, to always remember it is the pieces that make the whole.

Signed by:

Printed Name

Signature

Date: _____