

Complaint/Conflict Resolution Policy Overview

Background

Eliot Unitarian Chapel is a covenantal religious community wherein part of our congregational covenant calls us to communicate with one another directly in a spirit of kindness and openness, and to disagree responsibly and respectfully.

Between Congregants and Friends of Eliot Chapel

Eliot Chapel members and friends are each responsible for maintaining an atmosphere where both safety and openness thrive. A church member or friend who has a complaint about or a disagreement with another church member is encouraged to speak directly to the person involved. If one or both persons are uncomfortable talking alone or are unable to resolve their difference after doing so, they can approach the ourEliot Team as a resource, either in Adams Hall on Sunday mornings or by email at ourEliot@eliotchapel.org. An ourEliot team member can serve as a listening resource and suggest a course of action.

Any congregant may bring a suspected serious covenant breach to the attention of the lead minister or, if not available, the minister of pastoral care, who will follow the Serious Covenant Breach Policy.

If a conflict between congregants escalates to disruptive, then the Disruptive Behavior Policy should be followed.

Between Congregants and Visitors/Guests

Every person deserves respect, whether on Eliot property or at an off-site UU-sponsored event. If there is a conflict with a visitor/guest, the congregant shall attempt to resolve the issue using covenantal principles. If a conflict between congregants escalates to disruptive, follow the Disruptive Behavior Policy.

With a Member of the Staff or Minister of Pastoral Care

Eliot Chapel is a covenantal church and its staff have agreed to abide by the principles of the congregational covenant. In addition, our personnel policies offer clear guidelines for professional and courteous treatment of our congregation. A church member who has a complaint about an individual staff member or minister of pastoral care is encouraged to speak directly with that staff member. If the issue is not resolved through such

direct communications, the church member may then request to speak with the employee's immediate supervisor. If none of these discussions lead to a resolution satisfactory to the complainant, he or she should present the complaint to the lead minister. A congregant may also approach the ourEliot Team as a resource, either in Adams Hall on Sunday mornings or by email at ourEliot@eliotchapel.org.

With the Lead Minister

A church member who has a complaint about the lead minister is encouraged to speak directly with her/him. If the issue is not resolved through such direct communications, [board policy 4.1](#) must be followed. Per this policy, only complaints involving potential violations of a board policy can be taken to the board and must be made in writing. Please specify which part of the policy is in question. Board policies are available on the church website at <http://www.eliotchapel.org/policiesandbylaws> . A congregant may also approach ourEliot as a resource, in Adams Hall on Sunday mornings or by email at ourEliot@eliotchapel.org.

ourEliot Process Description

On a weekly basis, the ourEliot team will forward all concerns to the appropriate person(s), as well as to the lead minister. The congregant will receive a note from the ourEliot team thanking them for their input, as well as a response from the person(s) concerned. On a monthly basis, the board will receive a monitoring report, summarizing the concerns and suggestions received through this process and their outcomes. You may learn more about the ourEliot process and see who is on the team at <http://www.eliotchapel.org/oureliot>.