

UUA GA 2023

Policy on Disruptions, Unscheduled Events and Literature Distribution

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) General Assembly (GA) strives to be an inclusive community, affirming our diversity in beliefs, backgrounds and life experiences. When unscheduled events or protests, or disruptive, discriminatory, or harassing behavior compromises the health of this community, our actions as people of faith must reflect an emphasis on safety and security of those assembled. During a multi-platform event, it is especially important that the program is able to follow its plans for inclusion and accessibility of both onsite and online attendees, and its commitments to COVID safety for onsite attendees.

Any person, group, or activity that disrupts General Assembly or endangers the physical or emotional health and/or safety of other attendees, staff, or guests will be asked to meet with our GA Care Teams, cease and desist behaviors or activities, and/or leave GA spaces. The Care Teams include the Covenant, Safety, Accessibility & Inclusion, Chaplain and Systemic Justice Teams. UUA staff and leaders, DLCC staff and event security, and anyone else requested by GA event planners may all be involved as appropriate. Note that firearms and weapons are prohibited within the GA contracted space. Any registered person or activity that violates the GA covenant or this policy may have their registration revoked. Any non-registered person or activity that violates this policy will be addressed by UUA staff and other GA leaders to ensure the safety of registered participants and programs.

Access to the GA program and event spaces (both onsite and online) is restricted to those who are registered for the event. This ensures that all GA program participants are in compliance with the COVID safety policies, and have agreed to the GA Covenant Agreement and Practices for Participation and Discussion (GA Covenant), which is presented at the point of registration. Access to the onsite program is limited to onsite registrants only. Access to online GA program spaces is open to online and onsite registrants, but not business-only delegates (business-only delegates engage through the virtual Delegate Platform). As part of the GA program, scheduled events are led by event organizers or approved program participants and sponsors, and are accountable to the GA event goals and covenant.

Activities at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center

Access to the David L. Lawrence Convention Center (DLCC) is limited to registered attendees, and volunteers will check registration at the door. Within the GA contracted spaces, all attendees must follow this policy. Unscheduled events, such as protests or demonstrations, may not occur inside any privately contracted space for GA that is within the DLCC or other facilities, unless there is prior written permission from the UUA Director of General Assembly and Conference Services.

Unscheduled activities outside of the contracted convention center spaces are limited to areas specified as “free speech zones” by the DLCC (see attachment). This includes the island on 10th Street below the water feature, and the sidewalk on the east side of 10th street up the entry area to the East Lobby. The entry area must remain open to protect egress. In the event of hostile protests from outside groups not affiliated with the UUA, GA leaders and UUA staff will work with DLCC security and other local authorities to address safety and security concerns for GA attendees, and may establish additional security procedures or perimeters.

The GA 2023 Safety Team may provide accompaniment services, as needed, for certain individuals and/or events during GA. The Safety Team will partner with other UUA leaders and staff, DLCC staff and private event security, as needed.

Online Activities

Online GA spaces, such as workshops and chat rooms, are limited to registered GA participants. Disruptions, such as attempting to take over a conversation or spam the chat, are not allowed. Online spaces, including the Whova community section and Zoom chats, are monitored by GA volunteers. If attendees are engaging in behavior that is against the GA covenant or otherwise concerning, volunteers can reach out to the GA Care teams. The GA Care Teams and UUA staff have the ability to pause or remove an attendee's access to online spaces if their behavior violates the GA covenant.

Policy on Literature Distribution

To allow attendees to focus on and participate in the GA program, to support accessibility in shared spaces, to limit the environmental footprint and to maintain appropriate physical distancing onsite, distributed information should be related to the GA program and events. Promotional literature not authorized by GA event leaders may only be distributed in the following ways:

- Exhibitors may distribute printed information and/or marketing materials from within their paid exhibit online or onsite booths at GA.
- Program presenters may distribute handouts and information related to their program, from within their designated meeting room in a manner that does not impede traffic or accessibility, or online through their program venue.

Onsite in Pittsburgh, no information and/or marketing content may be distributed in areas contracted by the UUA for General Assembly. Online registrants may share links to relevant information as long as it is not disruptive to the event or otherwise in violation of the GA covenant or this policy.

Content of literature or other promotional materials distributed inside the DLCC or other contracted GA spaces must follow the GA covenant and support the overall goals of the event.

Attachment – David L. Lawrence Convention Center free speech zone

