

## MONITORING REPORT – 2.2.1

---

*Submitted to Boardpaq on September 30, 2016.*

### 2.2.1.

**Policy:** The president shall not fail to provide a process for dealing with congregational complaints.

**Operational definition:** We interpret this policy to be focused on a three kinds of congregational complaints:

1. a charge of misconduct on the part of one of our credentialed religious professionals;
2. a complaint against a UUA staff person or volunteer serving on a UUA committee;
3. or a more general complaint.

The policy creates an expectation that there are specific, written, and published processes to register and deal with such complaints that are easily accessible to a complainant.

A report will be provided to the board every three years summarizing:

1. The UUA Office of Ethics and Safety process for logging complaints;
2. The UUA's independent "whistle blower" process;
3. An explanation of the process for general complaints to be addressed by UUA staff;
4. A report of how many people used the independent whistle blower process for logging complaints;
5. A report of how many complaints against credentialed religious professionals were logged by the UUA Intake Person, how many cases were adjudicated by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) and the Religious Education Credentialing Committee (RECC), and how many religious professionals either resigned pending review or were removed from fellowship.

**Rationale:** One role of the UUA is to provide support to its member congregations. It does not govern them. In our tradition of congregational polity, each member congregation has the power to ordain, call/hire, supervise and dismiss ministers and other staff and to do so independently of the UUA. It is the congregation, not the Association, that takes responsibility for regulation of its own policies and staff.

However, the UUA takes seriously its responsibility to provide clear, compassionate

## MONITORING REPORT – 2.2.1

---

avenues to register and address complaints of misconduct on the part of religious professionals, UUA staff and volunteer leaders, and to support congregations in working through internal conflicts. UUA staff also acknowledge its responsibility to maintain accurate records of claims or reports submitted to staff of unethical or inappropriate behavior.

### **Supporting Data:**

1. The UUA Office of Ethics and Safety, in addition to broad support for safe congregations and right relations, provides a system for response to complaints of professional misconduct that is grounded in principles of restorative justice and reconciliation.

Details regarding this process can be found at: <http://www.uua.org/safe/misconduct>

Of note: The UUA worked with Marie Fortune of the Faith Trust Institute to audit all internal policies and bring them up to date in terms of best practices, including adding a trained cadre of advocates to assist complainants. In addition the UUA website was audited and is in the process of being upgraded to use consistent, compassionate and clear language to explain our processes.

2. The objectives of the UUA's Whistleblower Policy are to:
  - prevent or detect and correct improper activities
  - encourage each UUA trustee, employee, volunteer, vendor, or other person (a "Reporting Individual") to report what he or she in good faith believes to be a serious violation of law or policy or a material accounting irregularity (a "Concern")
  - ensure the receipt, documentation, and resolution of reports received under this policy
  - protect Reporting Individuals from retaliation.

The whistleblower policy is explained in great detail in an appendix to the UUA Governance Manual (2.f):

<http://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/manual/limits/appendices/183780.shtml>

Ethics Point is the company used to log Whistleblower complaints. More can be found about this service here: <http://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/manual/192847.shtml>

3. More general complaints by congregants and congregations can be registered in several ways. Congregational Life staff members are available for consultation and congregational trainings and interventions when necessary. The Intake person for Ethics and Safety in Congregational Life is available to direct calls that come into the UUA to appropriate personnel in the field, or to resources for a wide variety of safety related issues in congregations (disruptive persons, registered sex offenders, etc.) The Right Relations team models healthy ways of managing interpersonal or other kinds of complaints at each General Assembly, and models for covenants of right relations are available through the Safe Congregations website. Responsible staffing resources are

## MONITORING REPORT – 2.2.1

---

also readily available on line and through consultation with UUA staff. Extensive on line resources are available through uua.org: <http://www.uua.org/safe>

4. In fiscal years 2014, 2015, and 2016, *no one* logged a complaint with Ethics Point;

5. The administration keeps a record of allegations of professional misconduct and their final adjudication. In fiscal years 2014, 2015, and 2016:

- 125 complaints were logged by the UUA Intake Person
- 105 of the 125 were of the nature that is typically handled by field staff or referred back to the congregation. Examples include complaints about the quality of the ministers sermons, an incompetent board, concerns about a bylaw not being followed, or some other matter of congregational leadership or governance.
- 15 of the 125 were deemed worthy of investigation by the independent consultant with whom the UUA contracts
- 7 of the 15 cases investigated were referred to the MFC for adjudication. 0 were referred to the RECC.
- 4 of the 7 ministers either resigned pending review or were removed from fellowship. (OF NOTE: only one of these cases involved sexual misconduct)
- 3 of the 7 were put on probation or otherwise disciplined by the MFC.

**I therefore report compliance.**