

# Temple B'nai Israel Ethics Code

Effective Date: February 28, 2024

## Part 1: Introduction

Temple B'nai Israel is a thriving congregation that actively engages all its members in Reform Jewish cultural, spiritual, and educational growth, individually and as a diverse and welcoming community. Through worship, learning, and a concern for social justice, we seek to better ourselves, our community, and the world at large. We strive to exemplify the value of *tikkun olam*—healing the world—in our everyday lives.

Our Jewish values embody the teaching that every human being is created in the image of God (*b'tzelem Elohim*). We therefore strive to hold ourselves to the highest standards of personal integrity, social responsibility, and human decency. When we behave ethically and hold ourselves accountable, Temple B'nai Israel is a safe, welcoming, and sacred environment.

This values-based code of ethics sets forth the principles and expectations about adherence to standards of conduct that apply to our clergy, congregants, staff, visitors, and guests, whether participating in a Temple B'nai Israel activity that is in the building, online, or offsite.

## Part 2: Code of Ethics

### EXEMPLIFY HOLINESS (*K'DUSHAH*)

Temple B'nai Israel welcomes all individuals who follow our Code of Ethics and wish to engage with our sacred community.

- We embrace and respect everyone in our community without regard to religious background, age, genetic information, familial status, medical condition, ability, disability, race, ethnicity, military or veteran status, national origin, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ancestry, marital status, political affiliation, or socioeconomic status.
- We strive to make all who participate in our community feel a sense of belonging with the expectation that their ideas and concerns can be openly stated and responded to with respect.

### INCLUSIVITY AND RESPECT

We value every individual who enters our holy community. All participants in our community should treat others with respect, dignity, and fairness in accordance with the

Jewish value of *derech erez* (decency and respect). To that end, all participants in our community will

- Conduct themselves with good manners and common courtesy.
- Refrain from *lashon hara* (negative talk, gossip, and slander).
- Refrain from derogatory speech.
- Encourage open discussion while maintaining any confidences.
- Express openness and willingness to engage with all other participants and support one another's work.

## **HONESTY (YOSHER)**

Temple B'nai Israel expects all who engage in our community to conduct themselves in an honest manner.

- In general, we promote open and honest communication that allows for addressing differences constructively.
- We protect the confidentiality of privileged information, either about an individual or the synagogue, and do not disclose it without permission. For example, this includes personal information about an individual's health, financial status, or family matters.
- We respect the efforts of others and do not improperly take credit for their work.
- We recognize, respect, and protect the intellectual property rights of our synagogue and others. We obey copyright laws governing the use and distribution of published materials.
- We make decisions regarding synagogue-related matters with transparency, openness, and accountability, unless confidentiality dictates otherwise.

## **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Synagogue participants should avoid all conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflicts of interest. Temple B'nai Israel Board members are required to sign a conflict-of-interest policy.

## **HONOR (KAVOD)**

Temple B'nai Israel values acting with integrity. Participants' behavior outside the synagogue, which may seem private, could affect not only our own reputations but also the reputation of Temple B'nai Israel. We must gauge our actions accordingly.

- We act solely according to the synagogue's best interest when acting on its behalf.

- We refrain from using a synagogue position for personal advantage or benefit.
- We conduct financial matters related to synagogue involvement with complete honesty.
- We are bound by sacred obligation to uphold financial agreements made with the synagogue.
- We should be mindful about when our personal communications (spoken, e-mailed, written, posted online, etc.) could be misconstrued as representing the views of the synagogue.

### **COMPASSION (RACHAMIM)**

Temple B'nai Israel embraces the fundamental value of performing acts of loving-kindness (*g'milut chasadim*).

- We treat others with respect, dignity, fairness, and compassion.
- We refrain from derogatory speech, negative talk, gossip, and slander, whether in person or on social media.
- We oppose bullying, including any unwanted behavior that degrades, humiliates, or oppresses another person. Verbal abuse, physical attacks, and cyberbullying are never acceptable.

### **JUSTICE (TZEDEK)**

Temple B'nai Israel believes that everyone entering our sacred space has the right to feel safe and respected and that we are morally and ethically responsible for one another (*kol yisrael areivim zeh bazeh*).

- We do not tolerate sexual harassment, including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, written, online, or visual conduct of a sexual nature.
- We do not tolerate acts or behaviors that exploit the vulnerability of another person, take advantage of a power imbalance, compromise one's moral integrity, or create an intimidating, offensive, abusive, or hostile environment.
- We strive to protect those who suffer from abuse or neglect, including spousal abuse, child abuse, verbal abuse, physical abuse, and other types of domestic violence.

Procedures for addressing allegations of unethical behavior are available on the TBI website (<https://www.templebnaiisrael.com/>) and on request from the main office of Temple B'nai Israel (e-mail is [admin@templebnaiisrael.com](mailto:admin@templebnaiisrael.com) and phone is 269-342-9170).