

**Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple**  
**Code of Ethics**  
**May 7, 2024**

***"Let the honor of your friend be as dear to you as your own."***  
***Rabbi Eliezer, Pirkei Avot 2:10***

The Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple's (AEMT) Code of Ethics is designed to provide a framework for community expectations for the membership, clergy, employees, guests, and visitors in keeping with the spiritual mission of the Temple. These expectations for ethical conduct pertain to all recognized and sponsored activities that fall under the auspices of AEMT at the Temple, off-site, and online.

**AEMT Mission and Vision Statement**

*To build an inclusive community where Torah guides us to engage in lifelong learning, repair our community and the world, embrace our heritage and the rhythms of Reform Jewish life, cherish our relationship with God and affirm our love for the land and people of Israel.*

*Anshe Emeth is a spiritual, vibrant and welcoming community that inspires us to lead a fuller, Jewish life.*

**Values and Expectations**

The ethical standards and conduct for those who work, volunteer, worship, and participate in AEMT's activities are expected to be in keeping with the established values and norms of the AEMT community as enumerated herein.

AEMT welcomes all who wish to engage with our sacred community. We embrace everyone without regard to religious background, age, ability, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, or socioeconomic status. As an inclusive community, we strive to make everyone at AEMT feel a sense of belonging with the expectation that their ideas and concerns can be openly stated and responded to with respect. AEMT embraces the fundamental values of performing acts of lovingkindness (*g'milut chasadim*) and sustaining a community where everyone is treated with respect, dignity, fairness, and compassion.

Personal and professional integrity are benchmark behaviors for members of the AEMT community. We expect interactions to be honest, civil, compassionate, and conducted with the respect and confidentiality necessitated by the topic and situation.

**Conflicts of Interest**

While all clergy, staff, board members, and committee members are required to sign a conflict of interest statement, AEMT also expects that community members strive to recognize when a conflict of interest may arise as a result of membership in multiple communities and/or one's workplace. All AEMT members need to be mindful of both perception and reality when conducting business with or on behalf of AEMT. This includes disclosing any potential material conflict of interest and recusing themselves as part of the decision-making process in which they may have a conflict of interest. AEMT's Conflict of Interest Policy provides guidance for potential situations.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Conflict of Interest Policy can be found on the AEMT website

## **Harassment**

AEMT is dedicated to providing a welcoming environment where all members of the community feel safe and included.

Harassment covers behaviors that demean, humiliate, and intimidate a person, and are socially and morally unacceptable. These behaviors may be disturbing, upsetting or threatening with the effect of nullifying a person's rights or impairing a person from benefiting from their rights.

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination. It may include unwelcome or inappropriate sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, physical, written, or visual conduct of a sexual nature that is severe, pervasive or objectively offensive.

AEMT expects personal boundaries, including those related to romantic and sexual matters, to be always respected. Each of us is responsible for responding appropriately to allegations or discovery of boundary-crossing by others.

Bullying is a form of repetitive harassment that degrades, humiliates, or oppresses another. Whether bullying occurs in-person, on social media or via any means of communication, it will not be tolerated. Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to, derogatory speech, negative talk, gossip, slander, making threats, inappropriate sexual or other comments, taunting, defaming another, spreading rumors, exclusion, and harming a person's body or possessions.

Members of AEMT should never:

- Engage in any act or behavior, even if it appears to be consensual, that exploits the vulnerability of another, takes advantage of a power imbalance, compromises one's moral integrity, or creates an intimidating, offensive, abusive, or hostile environment.
- Use a position of authority to intimidate, bully, or unduly influence others, or allow others to do so.
- Engage in abusive, harassing, or bullying behavior or unlawful discrimination.

Alleged violations of this Code of Ethics will be addressed in accordance with AEMT's policies and the laws of the State of New Jersey.

## **Addressing Allegations of Unethical Behavior**

- The AEMT President will appoint an Ethics Committee Chairperson who will address allegations of unethical behavior. The Ethics Committee shall consist of the Ethics Committee Chair, the Governance Committee Chair, the Immediate Past President, Senior Rabbi, one Board member and two congregants, with legal counsel providing advice and counsel as appropriate. The President shall appoint the members of the Ethics Committee. Members will serve an initial two-year term (or complete an existing term if filling a vacancy) and may be reappointed for up to two additional consecutive two-year terms.
- Ethics Committee members must demonstrate the following qualities: integrity, leadership, discretion, independence, and ability to handle challenging situations. The Ethics Committee shall, to the extent possible, be diverse by gender, age, and other protected classes. Members of the Ethics Committee must recuse themselves if an allegation pertains to them in any way or if the allegations present a possible conflict of interest.

- All matters considered by the Ethics Committee shall be treated with the highest level of confidentiality possible.
- An allegation of unethical behavior should be directed to an Ethics Committee member, either verbally or in writing. The Ethics Committee member who received the allegation will share the information with the Chairperson, who will initiate a confidential Ethics Committee review by convening a meeting of the full committee.
- In response to an allegation of unethical behavior, an Ethics Committee representative(s), designated by the Chairperson, will confer confidentially with all parties involved, gather all the facts, and review documents along with any other relevant materials that will inform further actions.
- Full consideration should be given to the aspirational goals of accountability, healing and reconciliation (*T'shuvah*) in determining how to proceed and what restorative actions should be taken. These considerations are intended to recognize the gravity and the consequences of violating this Code.
- If a complaint is raised regarding a member of a professional organization with its own code of ethics [e.g., Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), American Conference of Cantors (ACC), National Association for Temple Administration (NATA), Association of Reform Jewish Educators (ARJE)] the Ethics Committee should consult with the ethics committee representative of that organization, to coordinate our congregation's process with that of the professional organization, balancing the needs of AEMT and those of the professional body.
- AEMT will take no adverse action or retaliation against anyone making a good faith complaint of a possible violation of the Code of Ethics. Anyone deliberately making a false accusation will be in violation of this Ethics Code and subject to its procedures.
- During an Ethics Committee review, the Ethics Committee may determine it is necessary or prudent to consult or hire external legal counsel or seek confidential guidance from relevant external parties.
- AEMT's Code of Ethics has been and will periodically be reviewed by appropriate legal counsel to ensure it is in accord with all federal, state and local laws addressing nonprofits, employment matters, administrative or law enforcement reporting duties, and other relevant legal requirements.
- While there is no time limit to making an allegation of unethical behavior, the time that has elapsed since the alleged violation may be a factor considered by the Ethics Committee.

***Portions of this document have been adapted from various URJ templates and member congregation resources.***