

Operational Guide for Implementing the Code of Conduct

Adopted as a companion document to the Bolton Street Synagogue Code of Conduct

1. Purpose and Scope

This Operational Guide provides procedures and governance structures to support consistent implementation of the Bolton Street Synagogue (BSS) Code of Conduct to:

- Translate values and expectations into operational practices
- Support fair, timely, and confidential handling of concerns
- Clarify leadership roles and decision-making processes
- Promote community education, accountability, and reconciliation

This guide applies to all individuals covered under the Code of Conduct, including congregants, clergy, staff, lay leaders, contractors, vendors, and participants in synagogue-sponsored activities.

2. Governance and Roles

Board Leadership

The Board provides oversight of Code implementation and ensures that procedures align with congregational values and legal obligations.

Responsibilities include:

- Board President nominating the Ethics Committee membership to be approved by the Board
- Supporting the Ethics Committee
- Ensuring annual review of policies and training needs
- Promoting transparency and accessibility of reporting pathways

Rabbi and BSS Staff

Rabbi and BSS Staff reinforce the Code through pastoral care, leadership, and modeling respectful engagement consistent with synagogue values.

Key functions:

- Serve as trusted intake points for concerns
- Support reconciliation and healing-centered responses when appropriate
- Collaborate with Board leadership and the Ethics Committee as needed

Ethics Committee

The Ethics Committee is a standing committee responsible for investigating and addressing serious violations of the Code. The Ethics Committee consists of one Board member serving as Ethics Committee chair and two members-at-large, nominated by the Board President and approved by the Board for two-year terms.

Appointments should reflect:

- Commitment to fairness and inclusion
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and respond promptly to concerns

Appointment Process

- Potential candidates identified through consultation with clergy, leadership, and community members and approached by Board President.
- Candidates disclose potential conflicts of interest prior to appointment.
- Formal appointments are made by majority Board vote.

Ethics Committee Orientation and Training

- Confidentiality and ethical decision-making
- Trauma-informed and restorative approaches
- Reporting and documentation procedures

Committee Initiation and Subsequent Management

- *Initial committee.* Ethics Committee Chair 3-year initial term, 1 member for 2-year term, 1 member for 3-year term to stagger for future 2-year membership; all future Chair and members for 2-year terms.
- Annual reflection meetings should review lessons learned and future training needs.

3. Communication, Education, and Community Awareness

All members of the BSS community share responsibility for fostering a respectful environment which requires ongoing communication, including:

- Posting a plain-language summary of the Code on the synagogue website
- Including the Code in all membership initiation and renewals and religious school registration
- Reviewing the Code and integrating expectations into orientations for: Board and Committee leadership orientations, religious school staff orientations, religious school student and parent orientations on an annual basis.
- Providing periodic reminders during events and programs

4. Reports and Responding to Potential Violations

The Code provides multiple safe reporting pathways through clergy, Board leadership, and the Ethics Committee. When a concern is raised, the guiding principles should be:

Listen and acknowledge the individual without judgment.

Assess urgency and safety

- Minor vs Serious (see sections 4a and 4b)
- Any legal reporting obligations

Document the concern in a secure and confidential record

- Use ID system to support ability to identify potential recurring patterns

Documentation should include:

- Date and location
- Individuals involved
- Description of behavior or incident (from as many perspectives as available)
- Initial response steps

4a. Response to Minor Violations

Minor concerns, such as disrespectful language or disruptive behavior, should be addressed promptly and constructively.

- Name the behavior respectfully and encourage self-correction
- Focus on repairing harm and restoring community relationships

4b. Response to Serious Violations

Serious violations may include harassment, discrimination, abuse, fraud, or breaches of confidentiality.

Investigation Process

- Interim measures as identified by the Ethics Committee Chair may be implemented to protect safety.
- The Ethics Committee Chair initiates review with committee.
 - Information gathering includes confidential interviews and documentation review.
 - Findings and recommendations are determined by committee vote.

Recommendations should:

- Uphold community values
- Prioritize healing and reconciliation
- Ensure accountability and fairness
- Possible outcomes may include restrictions on participation, termination of membership, or other actions deemed appropriate. If membership is terminated, tuition and /or dues will not be refunded.

5. Confidentiality

All complaints and investigations will be handled with the highest level of confidentiality possible while ensuring a fair process.

- Information will be shared only on a need-to-know basis.
- Information will be retained by the Ethics Committee Chair, unless a complaint is addressed towards an Ethics Committee Chair, in which case information will be retained by the Executive Director.
- Information will be retained electronically for at least seven years.
- Retaliation against individuals who report concerns in good faith is prohibited.
- Leaders should monitor community relationships following a report and offer support when needed.

6. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- The Board and Ethics Committee will conduct an annual review of implementation practices – including reporting on minor and major violations and resolutions.
- Training needs and procedural updates will be identified based on experience and feedback.
- Anonymous community input may be solicited to assess accessibility and trust in the process.