

# SRE Network Standards for Creating Safe, Respectful and Equitable Jewish Workplaces and Communal Spaces

~~Preamble: The SRE Safety Respect Equity Network has developed the following standards<sup>1</sup> to prevent and address gender discrimination and sexual harassment in Jewish workplaces and communal spaces. These standards, first released in 2018 with a focus on gender-based discrimination and harassment, were re-released in July 2021 as a practical tool for creating safe, respectful and equitable workplaces and communal spaces - for all. This is aligned with the SRE Network's mission to serve as a Jewish network committed to creating safe, respectful, equitable workplaces and communal spaces - for all; and to address gender-based harassment, discrimination and inequity, using an intersectional lens of gender justice.~~

The standards are built upon the universal and Jewish value of *kavod ha bri'ut*, the inherent worth and dignity of each and every person. To live out this value, our standards have been updated to more fully encompass the multiple forms of discrimination and harassment that occur<sup>1</sup>, including intersectional discrimination and harassment in which an individual is targeted due to their multiple intersecting identities (such as race *and* gender)<sup>2</sup>.

~~Jewish tradition recognizes that every person is created in the Divine image and should be treated as such, and the Jewish values of repairing the world, mutual responsibility, and not standing idly by while others are being harmed are fundamental to the creation, implementation, and upholding of these standards. In recognizing our moral and ethical obligations to one another, we urge Jewish workplaces and communal spaces to take active steps to prevent and address the many other, often intersecting, forms of discrimination and harassment.~~

The standards are not intended to, and do not constitute a contract or impose any legal obligation on any SRE member. The purpose of these standards instead is to ground, guide and inspire organizations in their journey to creating optimal workplaces and communal spaces.

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<sup>1</sup> Discrimination and harassment can occur on the basis of sex (including pregnancy and sexual harassment), race (including hair texture, skin color, facial features, or marriage/association to a person of color) and color, perceived or actual national origin (including accents), ethnicity, religion, religious expression, gender identity (including transgender or non-binary status), gender expression, perceived or actual LGBTQ+ identity, age, citizenship, and disability.

<sup>2</sup> See EEOC, EEOC Enforcement Guidance on National Origin Discrimination, Notice 915.005 (Nov. 18, 2016), available at [https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/national-origin-guidance.cfm#\\_Toc451518804](https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/national-origin-guidance.cfm#_Toc451518804) ("Title VII also prohibits 'intersectional' discrimination, which occurs when someone is discriminated against because of the combination of two or more protected bases")

~~The standards outlined below are designed to help ensure that an organization's workplace is free of harassment and discrimination. The standards emphasize prevention, intervention, and compliance. They focus specifically on the role executive and lay leadership plays in creating a positive work culture; the adoption of sound policies and guidelines including, but not limited to, harassment policies with clear reporting and response procedures; and education and training. The standards are not intended to, and do not constitute a contract or impose any legal obligation on any SRE member.~~

To join the SRE Network, SRE Network Members commit to adopting and proactively implementing the following standards in their organizations over time: ~~Network members mutually commit to taking proactive measures to prevent and address gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual misconduct and to adopting the following standards across their institutions:~~

## 1. Leadership and Accountability

~~Jewish-All~~ **All organizational and communal leaders, including senior management (paid and non-paid), clergy, and boards, are obligated to take reasonable steps to prevent and address discrimination and harassment.** This includes communicating the importance of a diverse and inclusive workplace that is free of discrimination and harassment and modeling the behavior they are expecting of employees. Leaders will also allocate time, money, and other resources to prioritize diversity and inclusion as well as harassment prevention. Leaders ~~must~~ also ~~be~~ **are** aware of and **comply with the** relevant **federal, state, and local** laws regarding discrimination and harassment and seek expert advice as necessary.

## 2. Policies and Guidelines

Clear and written ~~anti~~ **non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies will be are** created, distributed, and applied to all employees across all levels of the workplace, including the **executive leadership**. They ~~will~~ empower employees (whether targets or witnesses) to report discrimination or harassment and ~~should~~ encourage, but not require, bystanders to intervene by speaking up and by supporting targets of these behaviors. They ~~will also~~ prohibit retaliation against any individual who in good faith reports harassing or discriminatory behavior or who attempts to intervene to stop the behavior or support a target of the behavior.

~~Non-Anti-discrimination policies will prohibit gender~~ **Non-Anti-discrimination policies will prohibit gender discrimination regarding the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, including hiring, promotion, pay, benefits, evaluations, and work conditions.** They ~~will also~~ prohibit limiting or segregating applicants or employees on the basis of ~~gender~~ **of any protected characteristic** that would deprive them of equal employment opportunities.

Anti-harassment policies ~~will~~ prohibit ~~sexual~~ harassment (**including, but not limited**

**to, sexual harassment) by or of an employee that occurs within a work context, whether on or off the workplace site, and through any means of communication including, but not limited to, social media and electronic communications such as email and texts.** This includes harassment by co-workers, management, congregants, donors, volunteers, and others with whom employees regularly interact. Policies ~~will~~ clearly outline prohibited conduct that is not limited to legally actionable behavior and include examples. Policies prohibit romantic relationships between supervisors and their subordinates. If such a relationship does develop, steps are taken so that the two individuals are no longer in the same supervisory chain.

**Parental Caregiving Leave:** Parental caregiving leave is provided equally to all parents, regardless of gender, LGBTQ+ status, or marital status or whether the child is biological, adopted, or being fostered. Medical leave related to pregnancy, delivery, and recovery is provided to birth parents in addition to parental caregiving leave.

**Disability:** Reasonable accommodations are provided to employees with disabilities who need them unless doing so poses an undue hardship.

### 3. Reporting and Response

~~Jewish workplaces will treat all~~ **All complaints are treated seriously, respectfully, and with urgency and will establish utilizing impartial procedures for reporting, tracking, and responding to complaints of discrimination and harassment with proportionate corrective action.** The procedures for victims/targets or witnesses to report complaints, as well as the process for responding to, investigating, and resolving these complaints, ~~are~~ **is will be** communicated to all employees, both orally and in writing. ~~These procedures are~~ **should be** well disseminated at regular intervals, and ~~are~~ **should be** easily accessible (e.g., in handbooks, on websites, etc.). Reporting and investigation protocols ~~will~~ also specify that all individuals ~~will be~~ **are** protected from retaliation or reprisal for lodging a good faith complaint or for participating in investigations.

**A. Reporting:** Reporting procedures ~~will~~ include multiple and accessible avenues for reporting and outline and describe the general steps and approximate timeframes ~~the organization follows in which the organization will follow~~ when responding to a report. Complainants and alleged perpetrators will be advised of the policy against retaliation and complainants ~~are~~ **should be** encouraged to report any future incidents or acts of perceived retaliation during the pendency of the investigation. Reporting protocols ~~will~~ specify that it is a violation to file a malicious or groundless complaint. Complainants ~~are not~~ **will not be** prevented from pursuing legal remedies, contacting legal authorities, or retaining legal representation at any time.

**B. Investigations:** Investigations ~~are~~ **will be** conducted by individuals who are impartial and trained in handling ~~gender~~ discrimination and ~~sexual~~ harassment cases. Third party investigators may be utilized. Investigation procedures should authorize certain non-executive personnel to retain third party investigators when complaints are made against executive level personnel or at other times as may be described. Management ~~is~~ **will be** prohibited from interfering in or impeding the investigation process. Findings of the investigation ~~are~~ **will be**

documented.

**C. Response:** Complainants and alleged perpetrators ~~are will be~~ informed of the findings of the investigation. When harassment or discrimination has been found to have occurred, perpetrators ~~are will be~~ disciplined in a meaningful, appropriate, and ~~proportionate proportional~~ manner. Consequences ~~are will be~~ documented and can range from ~~receiving~~ coaching (e.g., following the making of an inappropriate joke) to termination (e.g., following sexual assault). Furthermore, corrective measures ~~are will be~~ implemented at the organizational level when necessary. Response mechanisms will ensure that the protective measures that are put in place during or following an investigation do not have the unintended consequence of harming a good faith complainant professionally or personally. Finally, to the extent that supports and resources are available to complainants who have had their discrimination or harassment complaints validated, such supports and resources ~~are will be~~ outlined for complainants and information on how to access them ~~is will be~~ provided.

## 4. Education and Training

~~Jewish workplaces will commit T~~time, energy, resources, and staff ~~are committed to to~~ educating and training ~~employees across all levels of the organization regarding the many forms that gender discrimination and sexual harassment can take, including intersectional discrimination and harassment. Training also focuses on and about the actions staff they should take to prevent, respond, and intervene when such discrimination and harassment arise.~~ This includes training on all organizational policies including ~~anti non~~-discrimination and anti-harassment policies as well as training on the mechanisms for reporting and investigating complaints. Training sessions on unconscious or implicit bias, bystander intervention, and respectful workplaces are also ~~considered.~~ recommended. Training ~~is will be~~ mandated for all employees as well as new hires and ~~is should be~~ comprehensive, interactive, properly resourced and performed on a regular basis by qualified trainers. Training ~~is will be~~ tailored to meet the needs of specific workplaces and various employee cohorts, ~~and the content covers more than as well as go beyond~~ legal liability. Organizational leaders, supervisors, and managers ~~will~~ receive training about their unique legal obligations and responsibilities in upholding these standards.

## 5. Additional Standards to Consider ¶

~~In addition to complying with the above expectations, the Jewish workplaces may wish to implement the following standards to be a model employer. These standards address other forms of discrimination and harassment on other protected bases, financial donations, parental leave, workplace romances, disclosure of corrective action, and risk factors for harassment and discrimination. ¶~~

~~**Other Forms of Discrimination and Harassment:** While gender discrimination and sexual harassment are the central issues that these standards are designed to combat, best practices require attention to combatting all forms of illegal discrimination and harassment including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, pregnancy.~~

~~Furthermore, non-discrimination policies should prohibit limiting or segregating applicants or employees on the basis of a protected class that would deprive them of equal employment opportunities. ¶~~

~~**Accepting and Granting Funds:** Jewish workplaces should commit to neither accept nor grant funds to/from individuals who have been found to have engaged in discrimination, harassment, or assault. ¶~~

~~**Parental Leave:** Jewish workplaces should provide parental leave equally to all parents, regardless of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or marital status and to those fostering or adopting. Medical leave related to pregnancy, delivery, and recovery should be provided to mothers in addition to parental leave. ¶~~

~~**Romantic Relationships:** Jewish workplaces should have a policy that addresses romantic relationships and abuses of power. ¶~~

~~**Sharing of Information:** Targets of harassment or discrimination in Jewish workplaces should be informed of the disciplinary measures taken against perpetrators. Jewish workplaces should have a process for protecting other workplaces when providing referrals for employees who are found to have discriminated, harassed, or engaged in prohibited behaviors. They should also compile annual data on the findings of discrimination and harassment and make them publicly available in an anonymous aggregated report. ¶~~

~~**Training:** Leaders in Jewish workplaces should be trained in identifying, assessing, and responding to risk factors in their workplace that may make discrimination and harassment more likely to occur. ¶~~

The ~~SafetyRespectEquity Coalition~~ **SRE Network** Standards are meant to help provide guidance to organizations who wish to establish safe, respectful and equitable **workplaces work places** and communal spaces. They do not guarantee safety, respect or equity. Any use thereof should be based on the user's own evaluation and consultation with legal counsel and is at the sole risk of the user. ~~The~~ **SafetyRespectEquity Coalition** **SRE Network** and its members are not responsible for any harm that may result from any such use.

~~<sup>1</sup>These standards were developed by reviewing existing standards and codes of conduct in other organizations and in consultation with Jewish professionals and experts in the field of on discrimination and harassment.~~

~~Existing standards that have been reviewed include: The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL CIO) Code of Conduct, Branning and Allen 'A Preview of Proposed EEOC Enforcement Guidance and Effects of #MeToo' 2018, Department of Justice's New Initiative to Combat Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, EEOC's Select Task Force On The Study Of Harassment In The Workplace, Facebook's Policy on Sexual~~

~~Harassment and Unconscious Bias Video Modules and References, Fair Foods Council Code of Conduct, InterAction's Pledge On Preventing Sexual Abuse, Exploitation, And Harassment By And Of NGO Staff, Press Forward's Rules of Engagement, SAG-AFTRA Code of Conduct on Sexual Harassment, Society for Human Resource Management's (SHRM) Anti-harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure, and the Tofurky Company's Charitable Giving Program Policy on Gender Discrimination and Harassment. ¶~~

~~The Coalition is grateful for the input of the following experts and professionals into the development of these standards: Guila Benchimol, Gali Cooke, Sharon Masling, Mordy Walfish and Sharon Weiss Greenberg.~~