

Communication Policy

Congregation Beth HaTephila

For Social Media, Web, E-mail, and Print

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Executive Summary

The Temple has the ability to embrace communication to enhance our participation in the Jewish Community and the Community at large. Communication will be a tool to serve the growth and development of a vibrant and informed Jewish Community, with the opportunity to inform and educate the community at-large about Judaism and the Congregation's current events. While we have the opportunity to gain from communication, we also have the responsibility to protect the privacy of our congregants as well as the reputation of the Temple, which will also reflect the reputation of the overall Jewish Community.

Communication Principles have been developed to help our employees and volunteers feel empowered to engage in the new frontier of communications while removing uncertainty in messaging content, types and control. While this is a policy document for our staff, volunteers and contributors, we are also presenting this to guests that interact with our messaging as expectations of behavior.

The goals of the Temple to achieve sustainable growth online and offline are guided by certain values that we share as a Temple and as individuals:

- LEADERSHIP: The courage to shape a better future
- COLLABORATION: Leveraging our collective genius
- DIVERSITY: Embracing a diversity of life experiences and Jewish journeys
- ACCOUNTABILITY: Recognizing that it won't get done if I don't do it
- HUMILITY: Being open-minded and communicating in an inclusive way
- RESPECT: Being aware of the needs and perspective of others
- TORAH: Embracing and studying teachings of the Torah
- LEARNING: Providing opportunities for Life Long Learning
- COMMUNITY: Fostering a sense of belonging with the Temple community
- OUTREACH: A commitment to acts of tikkun olam
- COMPASSION: Caring for others and fighting for Human Rights
- ETHICAL BEHAVIOR: Acting fairly and justly

Temple Commitments

The Temple adheres strongly to its core Reform Judaism values in the community, and expects the same commitment from all Temple representatives – including Temple employees and volunteers. Any deviation from these commitments may be subject to disciplinary review or other appropriate action.

- Adhere to our core Reform Judaism values
 - Shabbat and Jewish holidays will be honored.
 - Matters of social media and online activity will only be addressed on such dates in cases of emergencies.
- Reflect positively on the Temple and our membership with the URJ.
- Respect the need for information privacy of its members, staff, volunteers and their children and grandchildren.
 - The Temple will NOT be the source of personally identifiable information without specific permissions from those affected or their parents/guardians in the case of minors.

Temple Mission

The Temple has a mission to

- Educate, reinforce, and foster the concepts of Reform Judaism
- Provide an environment that fosters spiritual fulfillment
- Provide continuous learning for youth and adults
- Build a caring, sharing, and engaged Temple community
- Promote inclusivity and open mindedness
- Foster and practice repairing the world - tikkun olam

The Five Guiding Principles of the Temple in the Online Communication Community

1. **Transparency** in every communication engagement. The Temple does not condone manipulating conversations nor changing the perception of another person or organization.
2. **Protection of our members' privacy.** Be conscientious regarding any personally identifiable information that we collect, including how we collect, store, use, or share that information.
3. **Respect of copyrights, trademarks, rights of publicity, and other third-party rights** in the online communication space, including with regard to user-generated content.
4. **Responsibility in our use of technology.** CBHT will not knowingly deploy malicious software.
5. **Utilization of best practices, listening to the online community, and compliance with applicable regulations** to ensure that these Online Communication Principles remain current and reflect the most up- to-date and appropriate standards of behavior.

Employee and Volunteer Online Communication Activities

The Temple respects the rights of its employees and volunteers to use blogs and other communication tools not only as a form of self-expression, but also as a means to promote the Temple. It is important that all employees and volunteers are aware of the implications of engaging in forms of communication and online conversations that reference the Temple and/or the individual's relationship with the Temple and that employees and volunteers recognize when the Temple might be held responsible for their behavior.

Expectations for Employees and Volunteers' Personal Behavior in Online Communication

- 1. Adhere to the Code of Conduct and other applicable policies.** All Temple members, staff, contractors, and volunteers are subject to the Temple's Code of Conduct in every public setting. In addition, other policies of the Temple that govern conduct within the organization are applicable to your personal activities online. These are spelled out in the Employee Policy, which covers volunteers as well.
- 2. You are responsible for your actions.** Anything you communicate that can potentially tarnish the Temple's image will ultimately be your responsibility. You are encouraged to participate in the online communication space, but urged to do so properly, exercising sound judgment and common sense.
- 3. Be a "scout" for compliments and criticism.** Even if you are not an official online spokesperson for the Temple, you are one of its most vital assets for monitoring the communication landscape. If you come across positive or negative remarks about the Temple or our Jewish community, consider sharing them by forwarding them to the Temple President and Rabbi.
- 4. Let the subject matter experts respond to negative posts.** You may come across negative or disparaging communications about the Temple or its members, or see third parties trying to spark negative conversations. Unless you are an official online spokesperson, avoid the temptation to react yourself. Pass the communication(s) along to the Temple's official spokespersons – the Temple President and Rabbi.
- 5. Be conscious when mixing your business and personal lives.** Online, your personal and business personas are likely to intersect. The Temple respects the free speech rights of all of its members, but you must remember that content that is posted online is both potentially public and permanent. Keep this in mind when publishing information online that can be seen by more than friends and family, and know that information originally intended just for friends and family can be forwarded on. Remember NEVER to disclose non-public information of the Temple (including confidential information), and be aware that taking public positions online that are counter to the Temple's interests might cause conflict and must be identified as your personal position.

Roles for Communication and Online Activity

It is not only the media that will need to be reviewed and monitored, but also the strategy of how to work with the online world as it evolves. Forming a core group to handle technical issues as well as overseeing communications and authorizing creation of new online spaces and channels to and from the Temple is important in making sure the Policy is being followed and the Temple is being represented appropriately.

- Roles can be filled individually or collectively within the core group.
- Unless there is an emergency, staff is not expected to fulfill roles on nights, weekends, Shabbat and holidays.
- Vacation relief should be used and reasonable response to online needs will depend on media but should be held to less than 3 days.

Collectively, the aim is to protect and enhance the Temple's image and reputation. Being aware of how our image is being represented externally is an important piece to that. However, there is no need to focus over how often or where we are showing up in external online media.

Roles:

1. **Online Spokespeople** are person(s) authorized to post as, respond from, and/or represent the Temple in an official manner that would suggest an official position of the Temple.
2. **Technical Support** is a person(s) responsible for assisting employees, volunteers, and members of the Temple with technical issues related to online activities.
3. **Archivist** is a person(s) responsible for keeping records of online interactions and official posts for any potential legal issues that may arise from online content.
4. **Moderator** is a person(s) authorized to oversee online discussions and participation. The moderator is tasked with approving and denying members of closed online group as well as approving and/or removing unwanted participants and/or content from communication sites associated with the Temple. In addition the moderator monitors the congregation's online activity and will only monitor our own services unless advised by others of an external item.
5. **Liaison** is a person(s) who choreographs the movements of the core group with the oversight of the Board and/or Rabbi's guidance. The Liaison will also be tasked to communicate with content owners, site coordinators, blog owners, etc. and to coordinate efforts to address content issues, unacceptable posts, policy violations, etc. Liaison is expected to respond within 3 days of being notified of a need to address an issue.
6. **Helper** is a person(s) who volunteers to help monitor communication for the Temple. A helper may be staff or a volunteer. The goal of a helper is just to keep an eye out for online discussions involving the Temple and reporting conversations that could affect the well-being of the Temple to the core group. Staff may post in said discussions, volunteers may post with permission.

Expectations for Online Spokespeople

Just as with traditional media, there is the opportunity – and responsibility – to effectively manage the Temple's reputation online and to selectively engage and participate in the thousands of online conversations that involve our Temple and the Jewish Community at large.

There's a big difference in speaking "on behalf of the Temple" and speaking "about" the Temple. The aforementioned set of 5 principles refers to those personal or unofficial online activities where you might refer

to Congregation Beth HaTephila. The following 10 principles guide how our official, online spokespeople should be representing the Temple in an online, official capacity when they are speaking “on behalf of the Temple:”

1. **Follow our Code of Conduct and all other Temple policies.** Our Code of Conduct provides the foundation for these Online Communication Principles: “As a representative of the Temple, you must act with honesty and integrity in all matters.” This commitment is true for all forms of communication. In addition, several other policies govern your behavior as a Temple spokesperson in the online communication space.
2. **Be mindful that you are representing the Temple.** As a Temple representative, it is important that your posts convey the same positive, optimistic spirit as well as the Reform Judaism values that the Temple instills in all of its communications. Be respectful of all individuals, races, religions and cultures; how you conduct yourself in the online communication space not only reflects on you – it is a direct reflection on the Temple.
3. **Fully disclose your affiliation with the Temple.** The Temple requires all employees who are communicating officially on behalf of the Temple to always disclose their name and their affiliation. It is never acceptable to use aliases or otherwise deceive people. State your relationship with the Temple from the outset, e.g., “Hi, I’m John and I work for Congregation Beth HaTephila....” This disclosure is equally important for anyone agency/vendor/partner/third party who is representing the Temple online.
4. **Keep records.** It is critical that we keep records of our interactions in the online communication space and monitor the activities of those with whom we engage. Because online conversations are often fleeting and immediate, it is important for you to keep track of them when you’re officially representing the Temple. Remember that online statements made on behalf of the Temple can be held to the same legal standards as traditional media communications. Keep records of any online dialogue pertaining to the Temple and send a copy to Julie.
5. **When in doubt, do not post.** Employees are personally responsible for their words and actions, wherever they are. As online spokespeople, you must ensure that your posts are completely accurate and not misleading, and that they do not reveal non-public information of the Temple. Exercise sound judgment and common sense, and if there is any doubt, DO NOT POST IT. In any circumstance in which you are uncertain about how to respond to a post, send the link to Julie. If necessary, seek clarification from the Board and/or Rabbi on theological issues.
6. **Give credit where credit is due and don’t violate others’ rights.** DO NOT claim authorship of something that is not yours. If you are using another party’s content, make certain that they are credited for it in your post and that they approve of you utilizing their content. Do not use the copyrights, trademarks, publicity rights, or other rights of others without the necessary permissions of the rightsholder(s).
7. **Be respectful and humble.** When engaging the online world it is important to remember that your tone of voice does not always come through and sarcasm often falls short. It is important to consider the different ways your words can be read.

8. **Be responsible to your work.** The Temple understands that employees engage in online communication activities at work for legitimate purposes and that these activities may be helpful for Temple affairs. However, the Temple encourages all employees to exercise sound judgment and common sense to prevent online communication sites from becoming a distraction at work.
9. **Remember that your local posts can have global significance.** The way that you answer an online question might be accurate in some parts of the world, but inaccurate (or even illegal) in others. Keep that “world view” in mind when you are participating in online conversations.
10. **Know that the Internet is permanent.** Once information is published online, it is, essentially, part of a permanent record, even if you “remove/delete” it later or attempt to make it anonymous. If your complete thought, along with its context, cannot be squeezed into a character-restricted space (such as Twitter), provide a link to an online space where the message can be expressed completely and accurately.

Three Questions to Ask Before Each Communication

In assuring our core values are being represented, we ask that all communications be predicated by asking these three questions:

1. Does it enhance community?
2. Does it bring honor to others?
3. Does it reflect Jewish values?

Expectations of Sharing Content

With all potential content being considered, there are three categories that any potential media would fall into:

1. Information that does not need to be approved.
 - a. Temple activities and events that are open to the public
 - b. Public Information and Information for URJ/RAC
 - c. Pointers to other sites that enhance message
 - d. Items of historical or cultural interest
 - e. Blogs of staff or URJ
2. Information that needs to be approved.
 - a. Any information about children
 - b. Any pictures of children
 - c. Addresses and contact information
 - d. Issues of social justice not specified by URJ/RAC
 - e. Private or semi-private events
 - f. Blogs or opinions of other congregants
3. Information that should never be shared.
 - a. Internal politics including hiring matters
 - b. Private information
 - c. Financial information

- d. Negative posts about other organizations
- e. Vulgarity, hate speech, threatening or other purposefully inflammatory language

Approach to Responding to Negative Online Experiences

There is an inherent risk in communication management. The Temple will always strive to foster a welcoming, nurturing environment for our congregants, staff, volunteers, and visitors and will respond with our core values at the forefront of our actions. Constructive and open dialogue is welcome, including specific complaints and recommendations. Abusive language and derogatory or insulting characterization of individuals or groups are not welcome, nor are threats (direct or indirect) or argumentative language concerning Jewish beliefs and Temple philosophy allowed. Regardless of whom we are responding to and what situation we find ourselves in, responding with a thoughtful and positive tone is of tremendous importance. The following steps should be followed if you find yourself engaged in a negative online situation.

1. **Remedy** the situation to the best of your ability while adhering to the core values. If you can make a simple correction or change to remedy the situation, do so as soon as possible.
2. **Report** your problem to the Temple should you not know how to respond.
3. **Clarify** any misinformation about your work or issue area. Thank the person for the comment and then respectfully offer accurate information. Use this as an opportunity to improve our online interactions.
4. **Acknowledge** and apologize for a complaint if it is legitimate. Seek clarifying information and use complaints as an opportunity to change and grow.
5. **Distinguish** between honest criticism and misinformation and hate speech. In cases where a communication is derogatory (disparaging language used towards a person(s) or threatening (inferring mental, physical or property damage), delete the communication from online with an explanation that the communication violates policy.
6. **Assume** all questions are legitimate inquiries even if coming from a place of abject ignorance. If someone continues to communicate simply to argue, the communication can be discontinued.

Permissions and Waivers

- Permissions for photos or videos of minors are mandatory.
 - They will be general, signed by their parents or guardians, and remain in effect for 1 year unless revoked by parent/guardian.
 - Revocation is not retroactive to previously permitted photos or videos.
 - If photos or videos of minors contain personally identifiable information, the waiver must be signed on a per instance basis.
- Waiver forms will be separate and distinct documents to ensure they are not missed, contain the correct information, and can be stored differently than other paperwork.

- No public mention of private information is permitted on any media.
 - If it brought to the Temple's attention that inappropriate personally identifiable information has been posted, the core group will have 24 hours to remove the content.
- Online waivers will be used in circumstances that are approved as legally binding by the Temple legal counsel.
- The storage and maintenance of permission waivers will be the responsibility of an accountable, administrative employee.
- The Temple will have disclaimers on its media sites that state that the views of any individual users do NOT necessarily reflect the views of the Temple.

Copyright and Attribution

The Temple will adhere to copyright law.

Contributors should be expected to provide helpful information regarding source data.

It is not permissible that any person(s) pay for content without the written permission of the core group and/or board.

In every case where reposting material, it is necessary to include the source link, credit to the creator of the work and in some instances written and/or emailed permission to repost the work.

When it is Necessary to Get Written Permissions for Content

There are now a multitude of sites that promote reblogging and reposting of material, both with and without copyrights. It is assumed that you would not be responsible to get written permissions from the creator of the content. However, even in these scenarios, it is both professional and in the best interest of the Temple to link and attribute the creator of the content. If there is an image discovered on a reblogging site or any other site that the Temple would want to use as an official image or to post in an official way, written permission would be required. If the content creator requires payment to use the image, the core group liaison would have to seek permission from the Board before securing the rights. For any questions that arise regarding online copyrights that cannot be determined by the general knowledge of the Communications Committee and the Board, the Creative Commons Guidelines will be the standard that we adhere to.

Reference Charts for Specific Guidelines

Respond to Positive and Neutral Comments

On own channels	Not likely at all	Post a quick stock reply	Write a thoughtful reply	Pull other people in for their insight or signoff	Other
Someone you don't know posts...					
A question for you			x	x	
A quick comment about your organization		x	x		
A thoughtful or detailed comment about your organization			x	x	
Other types of content			x	x	Depends on content. Social media is conversation. Response varies according to what is needed
Core supporter posts...					
A question for you			x		
A quick comment about your organization			x		
A thoughtful or detailed comment about your organization			x		
Other types of content			x		Is there really a difference between "core supporter" and unknown person? Response still requires some degree of thoughtfulness.
Anyone else posts...					
A question for you		x	x		
A quick comment about your organization		x			
A thoughtful or detailed comment about your organization		x	x		depends on comment
Other types of content					

What matters is thoughtfulness and tone of response.

Privacy and Permissions

WHEN CAN YOU POST:	Never	With Permission From	In private spaces (e.g. password protected blogs or	Always—This is Not an Issue	Under These Circumstances
Photos or videos where individuals aren't identifiable?				x	
Photos or videos with clearly identifiable members, participants, volunteers, or other people you work with?					No personally identifiable information of minors without specific written waiver per instance
Photos or videos with clearly identifiable staff, supporters, or other partners?				x	
Photos or videos with clearly identifiable members of your general community?				x	
Photos or videos with clearly identifiable children/minors?					No personally identifiable information of minors without specific written waiver per instance
The full names of your staff, supporters, or other community members?		x			
Information, photos, or video about the services you've provided to specific constituents and/or					No personally identifiable information of minors without specific written waiver per instance
Someone's name associated with a photo or video (i.e. "tagging" them)?					Only if person is already in public space. Otherwise generic tagging, e.g. Rabbi, 1st grade students.
A location associated with a photo or video?					Only if public or commercial space. Private space by permission.
Live video streaming of events			Temple Services?	Temple Services?	Other events require permissions dependent on event

Temple documents			Member only documents	General documentation for public as approved by President	
Other					

"Clearly Identifiable" means face views with no tags.

Web pages and emails follow the same permissions.

Additional Areas

Advertising policy

Barter board guidelines

Bulletin board guidelines

Monthly Newsletter

Online commerce