

Anti-Harassment, Dignity at Work, and Community Behaviour Policy

Applies to: All staff, volunteers, trustees, contractors, and service users

Approved by Trustees on 17 May 2025

1) Purpose and Commitment

Masorti Judaism is committed to providing a safe, respectful environment for our people and the communities we serve. We do not tolerate harassment, bullying, abuse, or discriminatory conduct from anyone, including members of the public using our services. Our approach aligns with the Equality Act 2010 (including the legal definition of harassment) and good practice set out by ACAS and the Charity Commission.

We recognise that some individuals may experience mental health difficulties, neurodivergence, disability, trauma or periods of distress. We will make reasonable adjustments and use trauma-informed, supportive responses, wherever possible. However, the charity must prioritise the safety and wellbeing of staff and volunteers and abusive or harassing behaviour is not acceptable. (Charities have duties not to discriminate or harass in employment and service provision.)

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees, contractors and service users at any such time as:

- they are representing Masorti Judaism or could reasonably be expected to be representing Masorti Judaism;
- they are participating in Masorti Judaism programming;
- they are physically present in Masorti Judaism's offices or virtually present in Masorti Judaism's online spaces; or
- they are interacting with anyone representing Masorti Judaism in a volunteer or professional capacity.

2) Definitions

- **Harassment:** As defined in the Equality Act 2010. Examples include verbal abuse, offensive messages, threats, intimidation, stalking, sexual comments, unwanted touching or the display/sending of offensive images. A single serious incident or repeated behaviour can constitute harassment.
- **Protected Characteristics:** Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

- **Bullying:** Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, often repeated, that can undermine, humiliate, or injure. Bullying can also be harassment if it meets the legal test.

3) Expected Standards of Behaviour (All Parties)

All staff, volunteers, trustees, contractors and service users must:

1. Treat others with dignity and respect at all times.
2. Use appropriate language and tone; avoid abusive, threatening, discriminatory or sexualised language or imagery.
3. Follow the Communication & Boundaries rules in Section 4.

4) Communication & Boundaries (Including Out-of-Hours and Platform Use)

To protect the wellbeing of staff and trustees and ensure fair access to our services, the following rules apply to all communications with Masorti Judaism, including Noam:

4.1 Official Channels

- Approved channels: Our published phone lines, email addresses, and (where applicable) official organisational social media accounts. Staff are under no obligation to respond to contact made via their personal accounts/numbers for service enquiries.
- Confidentiality: Do not share sensitive information over non-approved channels.

4.2 Contact Times

- Core hours: Except in an emergency with an immediate risk to safety, Masorti Judaism's core hours are 09:00–17:00, Monday–Thursday; 09:00–one hour before Shabbat on a Friday (excluding bank holidays). Messages received outside these hours will be handled on the next working day. We are closed for all key Jewish holidays and will respond after them.

4.3 Frequency and Volume

- Please allow a reasonable time for responses (eg. two working days) before following up.
- Excessive contact (eg. repeated calls/messages after a response has been given, or contacting multiple staff simultaneously about the same issue) is not permitted.

4.4 Prohibited Platforms and Methods

The following are not appropriate for contacting staff or trustees about organisational matters:

- Personal social media (eg. staff's private Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn DMs), personal phone numbers, or personal email addresses.
- Persistent messaging apps (eg. WhatsApp) to staff or trustees's personal accounts; use only our official numbers/accounts unless explicitly permitted otherwise.

- Contacting staff or trustees at unreasonable times (e.g., late night/early morning) unless there is a genuine emergency.
- Communications to excess, including: unnecessarily long emails or documents, mass-tagging staff, sequential calls to different staff to bypass a decision, repeated voicemails/messages after a boundary has been set, or contacting staff or trustee's family/friends.

Unwanted or excessive contact, contact via inappropriate platforms, or contact at unreasonable times may amount to harassment, particularly where it creates a hostile or intimidating environment for staff or trustees. The charity has a duty to prevent harassment and protect employees.

4.5 Managing Boundaries

Where boundaries are crossed, we may:

- Issue a Boundary Reminder clarifying acceptable channels/times.
- Implement a Communication Plan (eg. one named contact, set call windows, limited frequency).
- Mute or block messages on inappropriate platforms and signpost to official channels.
- Restrict access to certain events or activities if behaviour persists.

5) Supporting People with Mental-Health Challenges

We understand that distress can drive behaviour. Our approach is to:

- Offer reasonable adjustments (e.g., quiet space, alternative time slots, a single point of contact, written rather than phone communications) where feasible.
- Provide signposting to clinical or crisis support where appropriate.
- Respond compassionately and make reasonable adjustments where appropriate whilst prioritizing protecting our staff from abusive, threatening or harassing behaviour. This behaviour is never acceptable, regardless of the cause.

6) Reporting and Responding to Incidents

6.1 How Staff and Volunteers Report

- Report concerns as soon as possible to your line manager. Include dates, times, channels, witnesses, and any saved messages.
- If there is immediate risk, withdraw to safety.
- If relevant, follow the grievance procedure set out in the employee handbook

6.2 Management Response

Managers will:

1. Acknowledge receipt and assess risk.
2. Preserve evidence (screenshots, call logs).

3. Decide actions using the tiered framework in Section 7.
4. Consider reasonable adjustments and a Communication Plan if appropriate.
5. Record actions and outcomes.

7) Tiered Response to Misconduct by Service Users

Level 1 – Boundary Breach / Low Risk

Examples: contacting via personal social media; calling outside hours; repeated follow-ups after response time; disrespectful language.

Actions: Boundary Reminder; signpost to official channel; optional short-term Communication Plan.

Level 2 – Abusive or Persistent Behaviour

Examples: continued excessive contact after warnings; offensive language; attempts to contact staff's family; recording/photographing staff without consent outside of a professional setting; discriminatory remarks.

Actions: Formal Written Warning; Behaviour Agreement; time-limited restrictions (e.g., contact only via email, single contact window per week). Consider safeguarding referral where relevant.

Level 3 – Threatening / Dangerous / Hate or Sexual Harassment

Examples: threats of harm; stalking; sexualised comments/touching; hate speech; physical intimidation.

Actions: Immediate suspension or exclusion from attending events or activities; security/police involvement; safeguarding referrals; trustee notification and consideration of serious incident reporting. (Employers must take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and protect staff.)

8) Sanctions for Staff/Volunteers (Internal)

Staff and volunteers must also follow this policy. Alleged breaches by staff or volunteers will be handled under our grievance process, as outlined in the Employee Handbook, which is in line with employment law and Charity Commission expectations.

9) Appeal (External)

Any appeals to actions carried out under this policy by non-staff should follow Masorti Judaism's Complaints Procedure, which can be found [here](#).