

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

*As adopted at the Annual Meeting of the
Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries*

On August 3, 2005 in Denver, Colorado

Revised July 15, 2010 at Annual Meeting in Madison, WI

Revised July 28, 2017 at Annual Meeting in Arlington, VA

Preamble

We, the members of the Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries, do affirm this *Code of Professional Practice* as our standard of commitment to music ministry. This *Code* will be followed by all the members of this Association who are or have been engaged as Professional Musicians* working in UU congregations, and will be supported by all who are joining our membership.

I. Self

1. As a professional musician serving within the Unitarian Universalist Association and Canadian Unitarian congregations, I commit myself to honor the ideals of music as ministry and to actively explore and articulate the underlying values and principles that those ideals express.
2. I will not engage in sexual contact, sexualized behavior, or a sexual relationship with any person over whom I have power and/or authority. I will honor the covenants of my own and other personal relationships. I will observe the legal requirements of my state or province regarding the reporting of physical or sexual misconduct.
3. The recognition of the importance of music ministry by my congregation requires acknowledgement of my worth as a professional musician. Understanding that other music ministry professionals will follow after me, I will work actively with an appropriately designated group within my congregation to help establish up-to-date standards of fair compensation and working conditions that support our professional skills.
4. I will sustain a respect for music ministry. Because my private life is woven into my practice of this ministry, I will refrain from private, as well as public, words or actions which are degrading to this ministry or destructive of congregational life.

II. Colleagues

1. Since I share the welfare of the congregation with other religious professionals, I will seek to be part of mutually cooperative, supportive, open, consultative, and ethical relationships with them as we carry out our shared and separate responsibilities. Should difficulties arise, I will seek help judiciously and express my concerns professionally, keeping in mind the dignity and value of my position.
2. I recognize that in my relationship with religious professionals, I have a responsibility to be supportive in both personal and public situations. I will offer honest and caring responses to them and endeavor to designate appropriate help when called for. Understanding the trust that colleagues place in relationships with each other, I will honor the need for confidentiality, keeping in mind that such confidentiality is not to be used to allow harm to another or to prevent appropriate help from being sought. I accept the responsibility to confront a colleague's misuse of power, or to report concerns about suspected misconduct to an AUUMM Good Officer.
3. A change in music leadership can have a dramatic impact on a congregation. In the event of my departure, I will create space for new work in the congregation by refraining from any actions that might jeopardize the ministry of any who succeed me in leadership, or the health and well-being of the congregation. I will avoid contact, including social media, with the congregation I served until there can be a covenant expressed in a *Letter of Understanding* between myself and those who remain in leadership, including my successor.

This covenant is intended to outline the nature and limits of my involvement with the congregation. Because of the implicit power of my prior position, I will initiate this *Letter of Understanding* and share it with members of the congregation as the minister and Board deem appropriate. I will make my family members aware of the impact their continued presence and involvement may have on the congregation. As a departing music leader, I will be expected to discontinue all contact with the congregation, its members, and staff if:

- my ministry involved established misconduct;
- I have violated the AUUMM *Code of Professional Practice*; or
- I repeatedly violate the terms of my covenant.

If and when I am no longer a member of the Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries, and am no longer bound by the *Code of Professional Practice*, I will not take inappropriate advantage of my previous professional relationship with the people of the congregation. I understand that it is customary for ordained Clergy to leave a congregation when their time of service concludes and this is

acknowledged as a healthy model for leave taking.

In the event that I remain a member in the congregation where I have previously served as a music leader:

- I will refrain from being involved in the process of selecting my successor unless formally requested to do so;
 - I will encourage members of the congregation to speak to their current music professional or other appropriate persons for answers to all current music issues or concerns, and I will bring any of my own concerns directly to my successor;
 - For two years after my professional leadership has been concluded, I will support my successor by refraining from accepting positions on policy-making bodies in the congregation;
 - I will refrain from accepting or volunteering for roles in the music program unless formally requested to do so by my successor; and
 - For two years following my departure from the staff of the congregation, I will refrain from offering opinions on congregational issues in real-time or online interactions with congregants, regardless of my congregational membership status.
4. I will defer accepting requests for any musical services from members of any congregation I am not now serving until I have consulted with the incumbent musician(s) in that congregation. If my colleague asks me to refrain from performing the service, I will comply. Should emergency circumstances make such a consultation impossible, I shall render only limited services and consult with my colleague at the earliest possible opportunity.

III. Congregation

1. I will uphold and honor the liberal religious principles of congregational polity and inclusiveness, within the congregation I serve, knowing that by modeling such principles, I am upholding the experience of free religious life for the entire congregation.
2. I will honor the confidences shared with me by members of the congregation, keeping in mind that such confidentiality should not contribute to personal or professional misuse of power.
3. In the case of planned or forced resignation or significant change in role or responsibility, I will consult with an AUUMM Good Officer for counsel and assistance in executing a well-managed departure or change.

IV. Wider Association

1. As an Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries member, I will

understand my responsibility to educate lay people and religious professionals about the qualifications for and dimensions of professional music leadership, and to enlist their help in according appropriate status to professional church musicians.

2. To promote professional integrity and leadership, I will advocate for the Association's *Code of Professional Practice*.
3. I will support and participate in activities and programs of the Unitarian Universalist Association and Canadian Unitarian churches as applicable, and encourage the participation of others in such events, knowing that wider participation will lead to deeper understanding of our goals as professional church musicians.
4. Recognizing the relationship between liberal religious goals and values and adequate financial resources needed to support their attainment, I will work to support fair and appropriate funding efforts advocated by the Unitarian Universalist Association, the Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries, and associated interests and other organizations of professional church musicians.

V. The Larger Community

1. As a professional church musician, I understand that whenever I participate in the wider community, I represent my particular faith group and will strive to be a model of ethical leadership.
2. As a musician in the larger community, I will respect the work of composers and arrangers and will follow the appropriate copyright laws.

*Professional Musician is defined as those serving in professional music leadership roles, both compensated and uncompensated, in Unitarian Universalist communities.