

Appendix A

Overview of Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee Complaint Review Processes

Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee

The Va'ad Hakavod/Ethics Committee is the Rabbinical Assembly (RA) committee charged with the responsibility of safeguarding individuals and communities served by the rabbis of the RA, and to uphold the sanctity and integrity of the rabbinate.

The Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee is a standing committee of the RA formed to support compliance with the Code of Conduct and to ensure that measures of accountability are put in place when RA members do not live up to the established standards. Made up of a minimum of fifteen (15) RA members, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee is tasked to review and act on complaints reporting violations of the RA Code of Professional Conduct (Code or Code of Conduct). Complaints of Code violations are first received by the RA Ethics Intake Coordinator (EIC).

Role of Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee

The Va'ad HaKavod is empowered to carry out this responsibility by:

- Reviewing complaints reporting breaches of the RA Code of Conduct by individual rabbis
- Following a fact finding process, making determinations, recommending and implementing short-and-long-term interventions, and requiring an Action Plan when a Code violation is found to have occurred
- Establishing/outlining processes that facilitate the reporting and fact finding of ethics complaints
- Providing guidance to the Rabbinical Assembly and partner organizations about education and other resources needed to support members' understanding of ethical requirements
- Serving as a resource to RA members and individuals who have questions about the standards outlined in the Code of Conduct

RA Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct sets forth the standards and procedures used by the Va'ad HaKavod to hold the members of the Rabbinical Assembly accountable to our high expectation of ethical conduct, and is the basis by which the Va'ad HaKavod addresses complaints. The RA Code of Conduct guides members of the RA to fulfill their obligations individually and collectively to safeguard individuals and communities served by RA rabbis as well as to uphold the sanctity of the rabbinate by articulating clear standards of ethical practice that promote safety, trust, and integrity.

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The Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee Complaint Review process consists of the following¹:

Initial Intake

Making a Complaint

A complainant brings an ethical complaint against a member of the RA by contacting the RA Ethics Intake Coordinator and Case Manager (EIC). A complainant is any person who files a formal complaint with the Vaad HaKavod/Ethics Committee regarding a harm that is the result of behavior by a member of the Rabbinical Assembly. The individual who brings the complaint forward does not need to be the person directly harmed. To reach the EIC you can email vaad@rabbinical assembly.org. Or call at 212-270-5831.

While it is preferable for complaints to be shared in writing so that the complainant provides the account in their own voice, oral complaints are also accepted. Oral complaint(s) are documented by the EIC in a written memorandum which is provided to the complainant for review. Upon the written consent of the complainant, the complaint is sent to the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee, and is used as the basis for informing the rabbi who is the subject of the complaint.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

- To the highest degree possible, confidentiality of initial contact will be honored until the complainant gives permission to share the account. However, in cases of possible immediate harm to self or others, mandated reporting as per the RA Code of Conduct will be required.
- Anonymous complaints will be accepted by the EIC with the understanding that sufficient information is necessary to investigate complaints and that vague or broad statements of misconduct may compromise the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee/Ethics Committee's ability to investigate.

The role of the EIC During the Intake Process is to

- serve as the complainant's primary contact prior to the start of the complaint review process
- answer questions a complainant or others may have about a report of rabbinic harm
- describe the role of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee; namely that it is an internal body charged with reviewing complaints and taking action as deemed necessary by a body of peers with the advice of expert consultants, and explain

¹ Note: Definitions for all technical terms are found at the end of this document in the glossary.

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the difference between an ethical review by a body of peers, and other third party, civil, or criminal investigations

- use a trauma-informed approach to gather information, set expectations, and explain the process of submitting a complaint
- encourage complainants to seek mental health resources for support during the process, and refer to applicable resources as deemed appropriate
- provide written follow up to the initial contact with the complainant including a projected timeline of next steps
- assess next steps to be taken in consultation with the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee chair
- provide updates to complainants and respondents throughout the complaint review process (schedule determined in consultation with complainants and respondents)

Special Circumstances: Media Reports and Concurrent Investigations

When ethical code violations by RA members are reported in the media, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee/Ethics Committee has the discretion to initiate a Va'ad HaKavod complaint process. In cases of a criminal, civil or third party investigation, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee will have the discretion to recommend provisional suspension of the RA member to the Executive Council for approval. It will also have the discretion to conduct its own concurrent inquiry, or to wait until the external investigation or litigation has concluded and then to proceed with its inquiry. The EIC will track and monitor these external investigations. In response to media requests, the Rabbinical Assembly does not comment as the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee complaint review process is held in confidence.

Initiating Action

Filing a Complaint

Step 1: The complainant decides to submit their complaint to the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee by confirming in writing that they are advancing their complaint from the EIC to the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee, and grants permission for the EIC to share their name and complaint with the rabbi named in the complaint (respondent).

Step 2: The EIC informs the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee Chair that a new complaint has been filed and that there is a potential Code violation within the complaint.

Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee Complaint Review

Step 3: The full Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee meets to discuss the complaint.

- A. Any member of the committee who has a conflict of interest with any party in the matter will refrain from participating in the discussion and refrain from voting. (See recusal policy below.)
- B. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee will vote on the complaint. If a majority of the members present vote that the allegations in the complaint, if true, would constitute a violation of the code, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee will initiate a complaint review process. If the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee determines that the complaint describes a potential Code violation, three members of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee will form a panel and be assigned to review the complaint.

Note: the chairperson of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee does not vote on any matter. The chairperson is tasked with impartially advancing the case with care and precision, rather than making a determination of outcome.

Recusal Policy

Members of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee who have a close personal or professional relationship with the complainant or respondent will recuse themselves from the panel. [<Decision Making Matrix forthcoming>](#) All recusals will be noted in the case file, and recused individuals will not be present at Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee deliberations or discussions about the case. In instances when the recused individual holds information relevant to the complaint, they should be included in the formal interview process like any other witness. The same recusal policy applies to the Executive Council (EC) when they are asked to vote on the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee recommendations. Members of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee who also serve on the EC should recuse themselves from the voting and discussion. Any member of the EC under Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee investigation should recuse themselves from any votes related to the policies, procedures, or recommendations of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee.

Step 4 Complainant: Following the decision of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee, the EIC speaks with the complainant to inform the complainant of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee decision.

- A. If the complaint is advanced to a review panel because a potential Code violation exists, the complainant is informed of the next steps in the process and is given the opportunity to provide the names of approximately three people who can help provide insight into the matters outlined in their complaint

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- B. If the complaint is not advanced to a review panel because a potential Code violation does not exist, the EIC will provide resources and information about other avenues of assistance and support to the complainant.

Step 4 Respondent: Following the decision of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee to move forward with a complaint review process, the EIC meets with the respondent to inform the respondent of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee review.

- A. If the complaint is advanced to a review panel because a potential Code violation exists, the respondent is informed of these next steps in the process:
- a. The Respondent signs the participation agreements for the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee process including the non-retaliation² and cooperation³ requirements. Failure to sign these agreements is in itself considered non-cooperation and will lead to immediate expulsion.
 - b. The complaint is shared - the name of the complainant and the area/s of the Code of Conduct in question are provided, except in cases of extenuating circumstances (e.g. an anonymous complaint or a safety concern).
 - i. The Respondent is provided the opportunity to respond within 10 days in writing or to waive this opportunity and wait to speak with the panel directly.
 - ii. The Respondent is invited to provide the names of approximately three people who can help provide insight into the matters outlined in the complaint.
 - c. The EIC shares support resources available including offering a Mashgiach Ruchani throughout the process
 - d. An immediate and automatic prohibition on job search commences for up to 30 days. After that time, the panel will have the discretion, depending on the nature of the complaint, to continue the hold on job search pending the decision of the panel.
 - e. An immediate and automatic recusal from participation in RA leadership positions commences for up to 30 days. After that time, the panel will have the discretion, depending on the nature of the complaint, to continue the hold on RA leadership and participation pending the decision of the panel.

² Retaliation is defined as the imposition of negative consequences on an individual or institution who has reported, assisted in the investigation of, or otherwise taken action to identify or address prohibited behavior. This is either in response to the reporting of a Code violation to the VHK or their workplace, participating in a VHK process or a Human Resources ("HR") process at their workplace, or working to deter someone from reporting a possible Code violation in the future.

³ Cooperation requirements can include limitations on job search or participation in RA programs or leadership among other requirements

Panel Complaint Review Process

Panel Formation

The Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee chair reaches out to three Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee committee members to ask if they will be on the complaint review panel and appoints a chairperson.

- A. The recusal policy is reviewed again with panel members.
- B. In rare instances, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee may ask that a colleague not currently serving on the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee, be appointed to a panel hearing a particular matter
- C. The EIC and the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee Chair meet to determine which experts are needed to proceed with the inquiry.
- D. The panel will designate one member to be the panel chair, and one to act in the role of note taker who will make notes sufficient to describe the content of the conversations

Information Gathering Process

Step I: Initial Panel Meeting. The panel:

- A. is joined by EIC, Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee Chair, RA Staff Liaison and relevant experts for the initial panel meeting.
- B. reviews the complaint and specifically documents the potential Code of Conduct violations which are raised in the complaint
 - a. In cases of addiction; see the [Addiction Protocol](#)
- C. The panel will make a decision about informing third parties (i.e. employers, family members). In all cases, respondents are encouraged to tell employers and family members from the start of the process. Mandated reporting obligations are in place for every report of a violation.
- D. agrees to hold a regular meeting time for panel meetings (to be used as needed)
- E. develops an initial complaint review plan and timeline
- F. prepares for the opening complainant and respondent meetings to review the complaint

Step II: Panel Meetings with Complainant and Respondent (Separately). During the initial panel meeting the panel will:

- 1. Explain the role of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee
- 2. Describe the complaint review process
 - a. If the complainant is choosing to remain anonymous, explain how this may impact the inquiry
 - b. Review participation agreements

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3. Review the complaint and ask clarifying questions to confirm the panel's understanding of the report and the circumstances surrounding them.
4. Share the potential Code of Conduct violation/s and the potential outcomes of the complaint review process
5. Review names of witnesses shared with EIC who can help provide insight into the matters outlined in the complaint
6. For respondents, review non-retaliation and cooperation responsibilities as well as job search hold and any other limitations on membership during the review process (i.e. attendance at programs, convention, leadership position limitations)
7. Note: Complainants and Respondents will have the right to have a support person present throughout their meetings with the panel. The support person is required to sign a participation agreement⁴. That person is present to provide a supportive presence, and does not serve in an advocacy or counseling role. No third-party attorneys are permitted to be present.

Step III: Panel Meeting to Revise Inquiry Plan and Timeline

1. Identify questions at the heart of the inquiry that are needed in order to determine if a violation of the Code of Conduct has occurred
2. Revise the initial inquiry plan and timeline based on the conversations with the complainant and respondent
3. Schedule psychological assessments and consultations with outside experts if such procedures have been deemed appropriate
4. Establish dates for meeting with those witnesses named by the complainant and respondent for interviews.
5. The panel will designate one member to be the note taker and will make notes sufficient to describe the content of the conversation at each stage.
6. Inform the EIC of the revised inquiry plan and timeline so that it can be shared with complainant/s and respondent/s
7. Expanded Resources: The panel may decide that, based on the complexity or nature of the report, the case inquiry process will exceed the normal resources. In these cases, the panel will make a recommendation to the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee, and if approved, will seek additional resources as appropriate. In such cases, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee will make a

⁴ In this context, participation by the supportive person includes asking for a break when the complainant requires it, or offering a break when they notice the potential need, as opposed to providing any coaching connected to the sharing of the account. The support person will not share their own views, but rather provide emotional support to the individual who is telling their own account. If the support person takes on an advocacy role, they will be asked to cease doing so, and if the pattern is repeated, the complainant or respondent may be asked to choose a different support person. In the event that the support person wants to provide information related to the account, a different place and time can be designated for that purpose.

recommendation to the RA President (or their designee) and RA CEO (or their designee).

8. In extenuating circumstances, such as when new information arises during the course of an inquiry, the timeline may be revised and all parties will be informed and updated by the EIC or a member of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee.

Determination and Recommendations

Panel Review

Following the information gathering process, the panel will meet to review what they have learned and proceed with two decisions and two recommendations that will then be voted on by the full Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee:

1. Decisions
 1. Decision One - Based on the available information, the panel will decide if there is a preponderance of information supporting whether the incident or omission occurred.
 2. Decision Two - Based on the available information, the panel will decide if the incident or omission constitutes a violation of the Code of Conduct.
2. Recommendation Considerations; in deciding the appropriate determination the panel considers the:
 1. explicit nature of the violation
 2. severity of the violation
 3. likelihood of repetition
 4. injury
 5. whether correction is deemed possible with the input of appropriate outside experts
3. Recommendation One - Status (the panel will select one)
 1. No Finding/No Violation either because
 - i. **No Finding**: No further action required.
 - ii. **No Violation**: No further action required.
 2. No Change in Membership Status with an Action Plan (Censure or Probation):
 - i. **Censure**: Action Plan recommended and not mandated. RA maintains a record of the complaint and finding.
 - ii. **Probation**: Action Plan is mandated. Failure to complete the mandated Action Plan requirements is grounds for suspension or expulsion.
 3. Change in Membership Status with Action Plan:

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- i. **Suspension:** Action Plan is mandated and the explicit and egregious nature of the violation is such that it requires public warning and knowledge before resuming the role of rabbi and full membership status. During the course of the Action Plan, RA membership is suspended and the rabbi is not eligible for rabbinic work or participation in RA member offerings. Suspensions are only lifted after the credible completion of the Action Plan process and a recommendation by the full Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee approved by the Executive Council.
 - ii. **Expulsion:** Expulsion from RA membership results from a Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee determination that the respondent should no longer serve in the position of rabbi. Expulsions from membership are posted on the RA public facing website.
4. Recommendation Two - Action Plan
 1. The panel will make a recommendation for
 - i. interventions
 - ii. timeframe for completion
 - iii. definitive benchmarks for completion if the status recommendation is censure, probation or suspension.
 2. Interventions may include but are not limited to the following:
 - i. Working on an area of identified vulnerability with a professional coach or therapist
 - ii. Participating in professional development seminar/training to increase capacity in an identified area of weakness
 - iii. Processing the learning from professionals or seminars through the lens of rabbinic work with a *Mashgiach/Mashgichah Ruchani/t*
 3. The Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee will hold the respondent accountable for complying with all steps of the Action Plan

Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee Determination

The full Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee will be presented with the complaint review findings and will vote on the following questions:

1. Did the incident/omission occur?
2. Did a violation of the Code of Conduct occur?
3. Does the full Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee support the status recommendation of the panel?
 - a. If not, does the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee support a different status recommendation?

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4. If the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee has supported the status recommendation, and it includes an Action Plan, does the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee support the Action Plan as outlined by the panel?
 - a. If a majority cannot be reached on the entirety of the Action Plan, each recommendation will be voted on separately
5. When the status of censure or probation is approved by the full Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee, the outcome is final pending any appeal by the respondent rabbi.
6. If the full Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee votes to recommend suspension or expulsion, those recommendations are enacted by means of a vote of the Executive Council. In such a case the respondent is informed of the impending vote via email and is informed that they may send an appeal to the President.
7. Appeals: Respondents are invited to appear before the Executive Council and appeal the recommendation of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee at the time that the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee makes its recommendation, or to submit an appeal in writing to be read to the Executive Council. All determinations of the Executive Council are final.

Executive Council Final Determination on Suspension and Expulsion

If the Executive Council approves the Change in Status the following will occur:

1. A Rabbi who is **expelled** will:
 - a. be ineligible for all member benefits
 - b. have their name listed on the ethics violation section of the RA public and member facing website, and in the RA Newsletter noting the area of code they violated and noting the date of the expulsion.
 - c. Current employers, the RA regional representative, and other affiliated organizations will be notified of the expulsion.
2. A Rabbi on **suspension** will:
 - a. have their name listed on the RA public and member facing websites, and in the RA Newsletter noting the area of code they violated, and that their current status is suspended, and noting the date of the start of the suspension.
 - b. be ineligible for career services through either through the Joint Placement Commission or any other public or privately published employment opportunities for rabbinic or rabbinic adjacent work.
 - c. be unable to serve in leadership positions or on committees within the Rabbinical Assembly

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- d. be ineligible to participate in conventions or conferences, or other RA programs
 - e. Other affiliated agencies will be notified
3. Suspensions will be issued in one to two year increments but can only be lifted upon the recommendation of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee and a vote of the Executive Council.
 - a. For a suspension to be lifted, the Action Plan must have been fulfilled including any rehabilitative measures that were outlined upon initiation of the suspension.
 - b. Non-cooperation with the Action Plan that is required as a result of suspension will be considered grounds for expulsion.
4. Both Suspension and Expulsion may be appealed to the Administrative Committee or the Executive Council. (see above for appeals process)

Resolution

After the Executive Council has voted or if no change in membership status is recommended, the following will occur:

1. A summary of the finding is shared in writing with the complainant.
2. A finding letter is sent and signed by the respondent agreeing to any Action Plan requirements which will be outlined in the finding letter.
3. The panel will meet with the complainant to discuss the findings if the complainant so chooses.
4. The panel will meet with the respondent to discuss the finding as well as next steps, if appropriate.

End of Probation

A finding of probation may be lifted upon fulfillment of requirements of probation as determined by the panel and approved by majority vote of the full Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee.

1. In the case of a recommendation to lift a probation, the panel will attest that the respondent has
 - a. unequivocally acknowledged responsibility for harm done
 - b. expressed remorse
 - c. resolved never to repeat any offense of this nature
 - d. fulfilled all of the requirements of the Action Plan
2. If a respondent fails to fulfill the requirements of the probation, the panel will recommend
 - a. a finding of non-cooperation to result in expulsion which needs an approval vote of the majority of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee and then a majority vote of the Executive Council

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- b. the need for further work towards repair
3. The original complainant will be notified at the end of the probationary period

End of Suspension

A suspension may be lifted following approval of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee and by majority vote of the Executive Council, following the successful fulfillment of the requirements of the Action Plan.

1. In the case of a recommendation to lift a suspension, the panel will attest that the respondent has
 - a. Received positive evaluation from independent evaluator or other outside expert involved in the development of the Action Plan
 - b. unequivocally acknowledged responsibility for harm done
 - c. expressed remorse
 - d. resolved never to repeat any offense of this nature
 - e. fulfilled all of the requirements of the Action Plan
2. If a respondent fails to fulfill the requirements of the suspension, the panel will recommend either a continuation of the suspension pending further progress in the process of repair, or expulsion which needs an approval vote of the majority of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee, and then a majority vote of the Executive Council.
3. When reinstatement occurs, the respondent's name will be removed from the ethics violation section of the RA public and member facing website, and the respondent's employer (if applicable) will be informed. Notification of actions taken by the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee shall be sent to the appropriate arms and organizations of our movement. For example, recommendations affecting placement shall be sent to the Placement Commission and to USCJ, or those affecting an educator, to the Jewish Educators Assembly or other appropriate bodies or organizations.
4. The original complainant will be notified of the status change.

Exceptional Circumstances: Application To Lift Expulsion

1. Expulsion is intended and designed to be permanent.
2. The Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee may recommend at the time of expulsion that a person is permanently ineligible for readmission into the membership of the Rabbinical Assembly. This determination must be affirmed by the Executive Council.
3. In exceptional cases there may be the possibility of application for readmission.
4. A member expelled by the Executive Council may be reinstated by a two-thirds vote of approval from the Executive Council, following a positive recommendation

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from the Va'ad HaKavod, and submission of an application to the Membership Committee no earlier than five years from the date of expulsion.

5. Prior to rendering its recommendation, the Membership Committee must receive a report from the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee attesting that the expelled rabbi has unequivocally acknowledged responsibility for behavior which led to the expulsion and, if required, indicating that the rabbi has undergone an appropriate course of therapy or counseling, and/or other action, and has received positive reviews from a mentor or monitor assigned by the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee.
6. Every possible effort is taken to notify the original complainant of the status change.

GLOSSARY

Participants in the Ethics Process:

- **Complainant:** A person who files a formal complaint with the Vaad HaKavod regarding a harm that is the result of behavior by a member of the Rabbinical Assembly that is a violation of the Code. The individual who brings the complaint forward does not need to be the person directly harmed.
- **Ethics Intake Coordinator & Case Manager (EIC):** An employee of the Rabbinical Assembly who is not a rabbi and serves as a first point of contact for the Complainant and provides administrative and organizational support to the Panel during the Ethics process.
- **Executive Council:** The Executive Council of the Rabbinical Assembly are elected trustees of the Rabbinical Assembly. Determinations of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee (see below) which change the status of the Respondent's membership in the Rabbinical Assembly can only be imposed by a vote of the Executive Council.
- **Panel Chair:** The member of the panel who is tasked with leading the complaint review process, and who, with the Ethic Intake Coordinator & Case Manager, will be accountable for the timely unfolding of the process.
- **Respondent :** The member of the Rabbinical Assembly who is named in the complaint and alleged to have breached the Code.
- **Spiritual Mentor (Mashigiach/ah Ruchani/t):** Member of the Rabbinical Assembly who is not a member of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee who can provide spiritual and professional guidance and support to the Respondent during an Ethics Process.
- **Support Person:** A designated person chosen by the any party (complainant or respondent) who is present during discussions and investigation to provide the

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party with emotional support during the investigation of a complaint. A Support Person may not be a third party attorney.

- **Trauma Informed Process:** A complaint review process guided by research based practices that take into account the trauma of both complainants and respondents throughout the complaint review process.
- **Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee - Full Committee:** The Va'ad Hakavod/Ethics Committee is the Rabbinical Assembly (RA) committee charged with the responsibility of safeguarding individuals and communities served by the rabbis of the RA, and to uphold the sanctity and integrity of the rabbinate. The Full Committee is the meeting of the entire Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee to discuss ongoing investigations and other necessary administrative issues.
- **Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee - Panel:** When the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee determines that the actions alleged in a Complaint would constitute a violation of the Code if they occurred as described, a panel will be formed to inquire into the underlying facts in the complaint. A panel is usually constituted of three members of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee. In extraordinary circumstances, a member of the Rabbinical Assembly who is not a member of the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee may be asked to sit on a panel.

Definitions of Steps in the Ethics Process:

- **Complaint:** The written or oral allegation of harm caused by a member Rabbi which is received by the Ethics Intake Coordinator.
- **Complaint Review:** The Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee formal process of fact finding that is used to determine whether or not an act or acts took place and are in violation of the Code of Conduct. This process begins after a complainant, in consultation with the Ethics Intake Coordinator, elects to file a formal complaint with the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee.
- **Determination:** At the conclusion of the Complaint Review Process, the panel will recommend a determination and Action Plan if warranted to the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee as a whole. A determination must be agreed upon by a vote of the entire Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee. Determinations that affect a respondent's membership status in the Rabbinical Assembly are imposed by a vote of the Executive Committee.

Determinations that May Be Reached at the End of the Ethics Process:

- **Action Plan:** The Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee may require the Respondent to take clearly defined steps that are directly related to the findings of an inquiry. Action Plans may include but are not limited to professional coaching,

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professional development trainings/seminars, psychological evaluation, psychotherapy, substance abuse treatment, and spiritual mentoring.

- **No Finding:** A determination reached through a Panel's complaint review process and ratified by a vote of the entire Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee that the Panel has not been able to confirm the facts that establish that a violation of the Code of Conduct has taken place.
- **No Violation:** A determination reached through a Panel's complaint review process and ratified by a vote of the entire Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee that the Panel has confirmed facts that establish that no violation of the Code of Conduct has taken place.
- **Professional Guidance:** After either a determination of No Finding or No Violation, if the Panel has determined that the Respondent has exhibited judgment or behavior that may adversely affect the Respondent's professional conduct in the future, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee may meet with the Respondent and offer professional guidance and may offer the Respondent the support of a Spiritual Mentor (Mashgiach/chah Ruchan/it) to provide spiritual guidance and professional mentorship.
- **Censure:** After the Panel's complaint review process, and a vote of the entire Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee determines that a violation has taken place that does not require publication or restrictions from participation in Rabbinical Assembly services or programs, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee informs the respondent and recommends an Action Plan and maintains a record of the complaint and finding.
- **Probation:** After the Panel's complaint review process, and a vote of the entire Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee affirms that a violation has taken place that does not require publication and requires restrictions from participation in Rabbinical Assembly services or programs, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee informs the Respondent, mandates an Action Plan and specifies the professional consequences that are appropriate.
- **Suspension:** After the Panel's complaint review process and a vote of the entire Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee affirms that a violation has taken place that requires publication and restrictions from participation in Rabbinical Assembly services or programs, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee recommends to the Executive Council that Suspension be imposed on the Respondent. If the Executive Council imposes Suspension, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee informs the Respondent, the Respondent's employers and other concerned branches of the Movement and the suspension is published on the Rabbinical Assembly website. An action plan is put in place and must be successfully completed in order for a suspension to be lifted.

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- **Expulsion:** After the Panel's complaint review process and a vote of the entire Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee affirms that a violation has taken place that requires publication and termination of the Respondent's membership in the Rabbinical Assembly, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee recommends to the Executive Council that Expulsion be imposed on the Respondent. If the Executive Council imposes Expulsion, the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee informs the Respondent, the Respondent's employers and other concerned branches of the Movement and the Expulsion is published on the Rabbinical Assembly website. Expulsion bars Respondents from any access to Rabbinical Assembly resources or programs. Respondents may petition to reverse the Expulsion after a defined period of time and through a process that will be defined by the Va'ad HaKavod/Ethics Committee.