

Title: Policy on Public Statements

Revision history on last page

1.0 PURPOSE

To establish the congregational bodies and representatives permitted to make public statements on behalf of the congregation.

2.0 BACKGROUND

In order for USNH to retain its tax-exempt status, it is imperative that ministers, staff, and congregational bodies, including the Board, Management Team, committees, and task forces, refrain from participating in, or intervening in (including the publishing or distributing of statements) any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office. More detailed information may be found on this Internal Revenue Service [webpage](#).

3.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Only the Board of Trustees, through the President or Vice President, and ministers called or hired by the congregation on at least a half-time basis may make public statements **on behalf of the congregation**. This includes written statements on the USNH website, in print publications, on social media or other internet sites, in email or other communications, and verbal statements at any venue. Any person or group wishing to place a sign related to public policy on USNH property must obtain permission of the Board, as described below.

Ministers and trustees are always permitted to express their personal views, provided they do not state or imply that they are speaking for the congregation.

The Social Justice Council and social justice task forces are permitted to weigh in on public policy issues relevant to their purview, providing they identify their statement as that of the social justice organization (Council or task force) **of** the Unitarian Society of New Haven.

4.0 PROCEDURES

The Board should seek to get a super-majority of trustees to agree to a public statement, either at a scheduled Board meeting or by polling the trustees by email, text, and/or phone. If a matter is so urgent that such polling is not possible, the Executive Team may agree unanimously to publish a statement.

In order to keep the staff and key leadership informed, the Social Justice Council and social justice task forces must inform the Board, Management Team, ministers, Coordinator of Congregational Life, and the Congregational Administrator within 48 hours of making a public statement. This notification should include the context and text of the statement in question.

REVISION HISTORY

Rev	By	Date	Changes Made
1	Management Team	1/28/2025	Proposed initial draft.
2	Management Team	3/25/25	Revision based on Board feedback
A	Management Team	4/10/2025	Approved initial release