ELIOT INSTITUTE
Restoring Right Relations Policy
(Approved: 4/20/24)

Eliot is an intentional, covenantal community committed to creating and maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all community members, volunteers, and the Eliot and Seabeck staff. Our [Covenant](#) calls us to bring our best selves to Eliot. At the same time, we recognize that being in community means that conflict will naturally occur. When that happens, our Covenant asks us to make an effort to resolve conflicts and repair relationships constructively and in a direct and caring manner.

While many people in the Eliot community will manage interpersonal conflict directly and independently, some people may request assistance from Eliot leadership to resolve issues, and some conflicts may require a broader, community-based response.

This document sets out a transparent process for restoring right relations between individuals and within the community and supporting personal and community safety.

Restoring Right Relations Guiding Principles

All persons will be treated as individuals of dignity and worth, as outlined in our Unitarian Universalist principles.

To be "in right relations" with others means to hold one another in esteem, with a mutual feeling of goodwill, and to be willing to be accountable for our own behaviors and to make changes as needed for mutual benefit. When we are out of right relations with one another, we may feel uncomfortable, anxious, frustrated, despairing, or any other emotion that signals to us that we are not at ease. We may, then, engage in behaviors such as avoidance, or talking about the person or situation to others to gain allies rather than to repair, or angry exchanges with the other person, or removal of ourselves from the Eliot community. This policy calls us to seek right relations with one another, and to repair when needed.

This policy is grounded in restorative practices which recognize that when one person harms another, there can be injury not only to the individual person, but also to the community of which they are a part. Thus, the process can include discussion and repair at both the individual and community levels. Restorative practices ask us to deeply listen to each others' experiences and make requests of one another for repair. Agreements made through restorative processes are often more specific, appropriate, and long lasting than directives decided by an authority.

The restorative process seeks to help persons who have been harmed feel heard, repair the harm between individuals and/or in the broader community, and facilitate accountability and behavior change where needed. Where restoration is not achieved with individual coaching and facilitated conversations, additional remedies may be agreed upon or imposed by Eliot leadership as described in this document.

Objectives

Promptly repair harm and reestablish individual and community safety and well-being.

Provide a consistent process to follow when behaviors of one or more community members toward each other or toward the community create a rupture in relationships that calls for tending and repair.

Support community members in engaging conflict in a healthy way and consistent with our Covenantal principles.

Support learning, growth and healing for all.

Call community members to be accountable for their behaviors, to be open to learning how their behaviors impact others, and to work to repair ruptures and make behavior changes for collective well-being.

Applicability

All Eliot community members are held in covenant with one another and are

subject to this and all Eliot policies. There are others with whom we interface who are not Eliot community members, including Seabeck staff, theme speakers, locations hosting Board meetings, and the like, and are not bound by the covenant, so are not obliged to engage in right relationship practices. However, Eliot community members are held to engage with such persons and entities consistent with our covenant and right relations principles.

This policy applies any time that conflict arises in connection with an Eliot-sponsored activity, whether incidents occur during or outside of the camp week or at Eliot-sponsored events. For example, an incident might occur at a camp but only be reported after a camp, or an incident might occur at a Eliot-related event (committee meeting, board meeting, at a sponsored social gathering of community members, in a social media exchange on an Eliot-sponsored platform).

Limitations

This process will be conducted by trained volunteers in our intentional, covenantal community. The Team members may or may not have professional roles in related fields, but they are all trained in the principles of right relations and in our process.

Behaviors which are otherwise punishable by law may be addressed in another forum.

Interactions between Elioteers that occur outside of an Eliot Institute-sponsored event but affect someone's ability to participate fully in the community will be considered on a case by case basis.

This policy and procedure is not adjudicatory, meaning it is not designed to determine legal guilt or innocence. This policy is not meant to replace or divert from law enforcement or legal proceedings. For situations in which involving law enforcement may be considered, the UUA offers some helpful thoughts: Alternatives to Calling the Police - UUA

Reaching the Right Relations Team

There will be at least one member of the Right Relations Team designated to support each camp, named as such in the roster and announced at the All-Camp Meeting. Whenever feasible, this person will be physically in attendance at the

camp. The name of the Team Chair is listed on the Eliot website. Contact information for the Chair of the Team is available via the Board Chair, Registrar or Executive Secretary.

Steps of the Process

Step 1: Self-Help/Personal Reflection: If a community member experiences a rupture in right relations, they may first engage in self-reflective work to see how they might come back to right relations on their own. The Right Relations Team can offer some helpful materials for this purpose.

If this is not sufficient or possible, then the community member may reach out to the Right Relations Team for assistance with support and coaching. If the community member shares their concern with Deans or Board members or any other member of the community, that person shall ask them if they have reached out to the Right Relations Team.

Step 2: **Support and Coaching**: If a community member experiences a rupture in right relations, they may reach out to the Right Relations Team for assistance. The team member should meet with them as soon as practically possible to provide reflective listening and offer guidance that can point the way toward reconciliation. The focus is on self-reflection on that person's role in the conflict, and on empathy for the other person(s) and their perspective(s). The RR Team member will listen deeply to their concerns, ask clarifying questions, and share ideas that may help the person to resolve the situation themselves, which may include their having a direct (unfacilitated) conversation with the other person(s).
If support and coaching is not enough to resolve the situation, the person may move to the next step in the process, a facilitated conversation.

Step 3: Facilitated Conversation: A team of at least two Right Relations Team members will meet together with each involved person individually, and then will meet with them together for a facilitated conversation. The Right Relations Team will support the participants in openly sharing their experience with the other(s), listen deeply to understand the other, make requests of each other for repair and for moving forward in a healthy way, and then to make commitments to one another that will restore them to right relationship. The focus is not on fault-finding but on problem-solving and restoration of right relations. The Right Relations Team member will record any agreements made. The facilitated conversation may

involve direct conversation between the persons, or it may involve the Right Relations Team going back and forth between them in "shuttle style" or use other adaptations to try to work toward a mutually acceptable set of agreements. The Right Relations Team will maintain a written copy of the agreements reached by the participants.

If a facilitated conversation is not possible, or does not resolve the conflict, Person A, Person B or the Right Relations Team may move the matter to Step 4.

Step 4: **Safe Community Team Response:** When there is an issue of substantial individual or community safety, as determined by the Deans at camp or by the Executive Committee between camps an ad hoc team of three people, a "Safe Community Team", will be assembled.

For issues that need to be addressed at camp, the camp Deans and the Board Representative will request formation of a team of three. The Safe Community Team will consist of
  (1) one Dean or co-Dean,
  (2) the Board Representative,
  (3) and one member of the Right Relations Team, or a person selected by the first two, preferably a current Board member if practicable, or a former Board member if practicable, or a respected Eliot community member with knowledge of right relations processes and/or conflict resolution skills and of sound judgment for the situation. If the two forming team members cannot agree on the selection of the third person, the Dean's choice controls.

Before the Safe Community Team at camp is formed, the Dean may delegate their participation on the Safe Community Team to a current board member that they recruit.

For issues that need to be addressed between camps and that relate to Eliot work or activities, the Safe Community Team will form at the request of the Board President, or President-elect if the President is not available. It will consist of one member of the Right Relations Team, the Board President, and a third person who is a current member of the Board selected by the first two as helpful for the matter at hand. If the two forming team members cannot agree on the selection of the third person, the President's choice controls.

The Safe Community Team will conduct an independent review of the issue, meaning that they will together speak to each involved person, hear what they each need by way of resolution, and come to consensus as a team as to any further action.

Safe Community Teams are responsible for setting limits for community safety. Remedies may be unique to a particular situation. They may include the development of limited access agreements and/or removal of a person from the community. Limited access agreements and removal from community are remedies to be used only in situations where remedies short of that have failed, or if a person has engaged in behavior that is severe or has caused significant harm, and that person does not agree to make changes in their behavior and act consistent with those promises.

When the Safe Community Team has spoken with the person(s) alleging harm and is considering imposing a remedy, prior to doing so they must first share the allegations of specific behaviors and resulting harm with the person(s) named to have engaged in those behaviors, and give them the opportunity to share their experience and perspective. The Safety Community Team will not impose any remedies until the person(s) have been given an opportunity to speak with them. In the event that a person does not make themselves available to the Safe Community Team in a reasonable time frame, the Safe Community Team will exercise their best judgment in imposing a remedy.

To aid in evaluating the situation and determining the appropriate response, the Safe Community Team will consider:

- Credibility & Certainty: Did a person admit the alleged behavior? If not, has the Safe Community Team reached a reasonable certainty that the behaviors alleged were more likely than not to have occurred?
- Dangerousness: Did the behavior involve a threat of or physical harm to persons or property?
- History: What is the history of this behavior from this individual in the past? How frequently did the behavior occur? Has the behavior been formally addressed previously with this person?
- Disruptiveness: Did the behavior disrupt Eliot functioning? If the behavior were to recur, to what degree is it likely to disrupt Eliot functioning? Are there valid reasons behind the disruption that mitigate or excuse the

behavior, or that a person under consideration of a remedy may reasonably have considered valid?

- Organization Integrity: Was the behavior out of alignment with Eliot's core value as a welcoming, inclusive community? Did the behavior dissuade others from participation in Eliot activities? If the behavior recurs, how likely is it that existing or prospective community members will be dissuaded from participation in Eliot functions because of the behavior?
- Causes: Why is the behavior occurring? Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the organization? Is it due to personal distress? Is it due to a medical or mental health condition?
- Mitigation: What if any steps were taken to reduce the adverse impact of the behavior?
- Probability of Change: How likely is it that the behavior will continue, exacerbate, diminish or cease in the future?
- Age of camper: Does the age of the camper require special consideration?
- Impact: Even though intent to harm may not have been present, was the impact of the behavior such that a remedy should be imposed?

Remedies may include, but are not limited to:

A written agreement between the Safe Community Team and the person(s) involved regarding specific behavioral expectations for participation in Eliot activities.

If a person in question refuses to negotiate such an agreement, or refuses to abide by an agreement that was made, or is engaging in behavior of sufficient severity, the person may be excluded from the organization for a specified period of time, with reasons for such action, and conditions for return, clearly communicated and documented;

If behavior cannot be resolved using a contract or is deemed extremely severe and likely to continue, the person in question may be excluded from the organization and its premises for an indefinite time until reinstatement, or permanently, with steps taken as needed to enforce the integrity of this decision.

The Safe Community Team will share its proposed plan with the Executive Committee of the Board for feedback before finalization. Once finalized, the plan will be shared with the Executive Committee of the Board, as well as the Registrar.

The participant(s) may seek the support of the Right Relations Team for any remaining repair and right relations work needed.

Confidentiality

Conversations with members of the Right Relations Team in Steps 1-3 are confidential, and identifying details will not be shared beyond the Right Relations Team without the explicit permission of the person(s) involved in the conversation.

Exceptions to this confidentiality would be made in cases which might involve criminal activity, including abuse or maltreatment of a child or other vulnerable person, or serious threats to life, bodily harm, or serious property damage.

The Right Relations Team will submit written reports to the Board for each Board meeting, (and to the Eliot community as needed) concerning the number of matters they have handled, stage at which matters were resolved, and general themes, and where the participants agree, the specific outcome of the matter.

The Safe Community Team will submit a written report to the board at the conclusion of each matter.

Conversations with the Safe Community Team are not confidential with respect to any information that must be shared with the Executive Committee and/or the Board as a whole.