

Standards of Ethical Conduct

Shorashim Academy

These standards apply to all educational support employees, instructional personnel, and school administrators at Shorashim Academy.

- 1) Our school values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards is the freedom to learn, to teach, and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
- 2) Our primary concern is the student and development of the student's potential. Employees will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
- 3) Concern for the student requires that our instructional personnel shall:
 - Make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
 - Not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
 - Not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
 - Not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
 - Not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
 - Not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
 - Not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.
 - Not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
 - Keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
- 4) Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of colleagues, students, parents, and the community, employees must display the highest degree of ethical conduct.
 - Maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
 - Not deny a colleague professional benefits or advantages on prohibited discriminatory grounds.
 - Not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights.
 - Not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct that creates a hostile or abusive environment.
 - Not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.

Training Requirement

All instructional personnel, educational support employees, and administrators are required as a condition of employment to complete training on these standards of ethical conduct.

Reporting Misconduct by School Personnel

All employees, including educational support employees, instructional personnel, and administrators, have an obligation to report alleged misconduct by educational support employees, instructional personnel, or school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Examples of misconduct include obscene language, drug and alcohol use, disparaging comments, prejudice or bigotry, sexual innuendo, cheating or testing violations, physical aggression, and accepting or offering favors.

Reports must be made promptly to the appropriate contact below. If the allegation concerns the designated reporting administrator, report it to the other administrator listed. An internal report does not replace or delay a required report to the Florida Abuse Hotline.

Reports of Misconduct of Employees

Reports of misconduct of employees should be made to:

Rabbi Isaac Melnick, Executive Director

Email: imelnick@shorashimacademy.org

Phone: (786) 351-0491

Reports of Misconduct Committed by Administrators

Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to:

Dr. Gur Berman, Head of School

Email: gberman@shorashimacademy.org

Phone: (561) 212-2714

Legally Sufficient Allegations

Legally sufficient allegations of misconduct by Florida certified educators will be reported to the Office of Professional Practices Services. Reports required by section 1012.796(1)(e), Florida Statutes, must be filed in writing within 30 days after the school becomes aware of the incident.

Confidentiality Agreements and Employment References

Shorashim Academy and its employees may not enter into confidentiality agreements concerning educational support employees, instructional personnel, or school administrators who are terminated, dismissed, or resign in lieu of termination based in whole or in part on misconduct affecting a student's health, safety, or welfare. When providing employment references or discussing those individuals' performance with prospective employers in another educational setting, the school and its employees must disclose that misconduct. Any agreement or contract provision that has the purpose or effect of concealing such student-welfare misconduct by educational support employees, instructional personnel, or school administrators is void, contrary to public policy, and unenforceable under section 1002.421(1)(n), Florida Statutes.

Penalties for Failure to Report

Educational support employees, instructional personnel, and administrators who fail to report suspected or actual child abuse or alleged misconduct affecting the health, safety, or welfare of a student may be subject to school disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, consistent with applicable law.

A person who knowingly and willfully fails to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the Florida Abuse Hotline, or who knowingly and willfully prevents another person from reporting, commits a third-degree felony under section 39.205(1), Florida Statutes. Florida-certified educators may also face certificate discipline, including suspension or revocation, for a knowing failure to make reports required by section 1012.795(1)(b), Florida Statutes.

Reporting Child Abuse Abandonment or Neglect

All employees and agents have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. A person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse, abandonment, or neglect must report immediately to the Florida Abuse Hotline in accordance with section 39.201, Florida Statutes.

Call 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873). For situations that do not require immediate attention, reports may be made online at <https://reportabuse.myflfamilies.com/>. If a child is in immediate danger, call 911 first and then the Florida Abuse Hotline. Do not use online reporting for emergencies.

School personnel must provide their names when reporting to the hotline. All employees and agents must comply with child protective investigations and applicable law. Do not wait for an internal investigation or approval before making a required report.

Signs of Physical Abuse

The child may have unexplained bruises, welts, cuts, or other injuries, broken bones; or burns. A child experiencing physical abuse may seem withdrawn or depressed, seem afraid to go home or may run away, shy away from physical contact, be aggressive, or wear inappropriate clothing to hide injuries.

Signs of Sexual Abuse

The child may have torn, stained or bloody underwear, trouble walking or sitting, pain or itching in genital area, or a sexually transmitted disease. A child experiencing sexual abuse may have unusual knowledge of sex or act seductively, fear a particular person, seem withdrawn or depressed, gain or lose weight suddenly, shy away from physical contact, or run away from home.

Signs of Neglect

The child may have unattended medical needs, little or no supervision at home, poor hygiene, or appear underweight. A child experiencing neglect may be frequently tired or hungry, steal food, or appear overly needy for adult attention.

Patterns of Abuse

Serious abuse usually involves a combination of factors. While a single sign may not be significant, a pattern of physical or behavioral signs is a serious indicator and should be reported.

A single disclosure or circumstance may be enough to create reasonable cause to suspect abuse. Do not wait for multiple signs or proof before making a required report.

Liability Protections

Any person participating in good faith in reporting child abuse, abandonment, or neglect shall be immune from civil or criminal liability as provided under section 39.203, Florida Statutes. That section also protects employees of facilities serving children from reprisal or discharge for reporting as required by law.

An employer who, upon request of a prospective employer or a former or current employee, discloses information about that employee to the prospective employer is immune from civil liability for the disclosure or its consequences, unless clear and convincing evidence shows that the information was knowingly false or violated a civil right protected under chapter 760, as provided in section 768.095, Florida Statutes.

Policy Availability

The Shorashim Academy Standards of Ethical Conduct policy is located in the Main Office and is available for public inspection during regular school hours. The policy is also available online at <https://shorashimacademy.org/forms/>.