

Oak Spirit Sanctuary Policy and Procedure Manual

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A. PHILOSOPHY AND BELIEFS

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this manual is to set forth the policies and procedures of Oak Spirit Sanctuary in order to assure general understanding and effective coordination of personnel, administrative, committee, and Board activities.

These policies and procedures are not intended to restrict or discourage individual or management initiatives. Rather, they are designed to improve communication and provide a framework for making sound and equitable decisions, as well as to encourage personal responsibility.

These policies are intended as a guide, and do not constitute a legally binding contract. Leadership will strive to follow with the understanding that exceptions may occur, but must be with the expressed and documented purpose of the benefit of the community. We recognize there are limitations to these guidelines, and the need for periodic review and editing is a necessary component to maintaining current and functional guidance.

The Bylaws of Oak Spirit Sanctuary govern all policies contained herein. Any policy in conflict with Oak Spirit Sanctuary's Bylaws shall be superseded by those Bylaws. These policies and their application are intended to comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. This manual supersedes any previous manual and/or written or unwritten policies. The Board of Directors of Oak Spirit Sanctuary reserves the right to establish, administer, change or eliminate policies, guidelines, benefits and procedures at any time.

[Approved 11/7/21]

2. MISSION STATEMENT

Oak Spirit Sanctuary Mission Statement: Oak Spirit Sanctuary is a pagan church and sacred land preserve which provides opportunity for spiritual practice, fellowship, and communion with nature for people with diverse beliefs and a safe environment welcoming to all who would walk in peace.

[Approved 10/3/2021]

3. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

Oak Spirit Sanctuary is a diverse spiritual community. We are non-dogmatic, accepting of a variety of practices and believe in the validity of a multiplicity of paths to religious experience. Our core beliefs are:

- We identify nature as sacred and a manifestation of the Divine
- We believe in incorporeal entities which are present in our lives.
- We believe the Divine can be manifest in many ways, including but not limited to a force of Nature, intuition, and/or can be personified in any gender or no gender at all.

[Approved 10/2/2022]

B. STATE GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS

1. ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

Oak Spirit Sanctuary Articles of Incorporation of a Nonprofit Corporation

[Originally filed and certified 10/31/1997. Amended and amendments filed with the Missouri Secretary of State: February 16, 1999, March 18, 2013, August 15, 2017, and January 12, 2018. All amendments have been incorporated into this document, which was produced August 1, 2021.]

1. The name of the corporation is Oak Spirit Sanctuary^[1]
2. This corporation is a Public Benefit Corporation.
3. The period of duration of the corporation is Perpetual.
4. The name and street address of the [founding] Registered Agent and Registered Office in Missouri is:
ROBERT THOMAS DIXON III
26199 Cumberland Church Road, Boonville, MO 65233
5. The name(s) and address(es) of each [founding] incorporator:
ROBERT THOMAS DIXON III
26199 Cumberland Church Road, Boonville, MO 65233

ROSE WISE
801 Alton Apt B, Columbia, MO 65205

BARBARA CARTER
9 South Greenwood, Columbia, MO 65205
6. Does the corporation have members?: NO^[2]
7. Provisions not inconsistent with law regarding distribution of assets on dissolution:
see Article 12, paragraph 5
8. The corporation is formed for the following purpose(s): see Article 11.
9. The effective date of this document is October 31, 1997.

10. The affairs of the corporation shall be managed by its Board of Directors. The initial Board of Directors shall be three (3) in number, and their names and addresses being as follows:

Tom Dixon, 26199 Cumberland Church Road, Boonville, MO 65233

Rose Wise, 801 Alton Apt B, Columbia, MO 65205

Barbara Carter, 9 South Greenwood, Columbia, MO 65205

The number of successor Directors and the terms of successor Directors may be adjusted from time to time as provided in the Bylaws of the Corporation, provided that there shall not be less than three Directors. Successor Directors of the Corporation shall be elected in the manner provided by the Bylaws.

11. [Purpose] Oak Spirit Sanctuary is organized for religious, educational and charitable purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to be a church offering worship services and religious education classes and to do all things which may be necessary or proper in connection with these purposes. In furtherance of its permitted purposes, the corporation may exercise and, all and every power that a corporation organized under the General Not-for-Profit Law of Missouri may exercise.^[3]

12. The corporation shall not issue stock

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, directors, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Articles 8 & 11 hereof.

Except to the extent permitted by section 501(h) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, (or the corresponding provision of any future tax code), no substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or otherwise intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Articles, the corporation shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)3 of Internal Revenue Service Code of 1986 (as amended) (or the corresponding provision of future federal tax code) or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Service Code of 1986 (as amended) (or the corresponding provision of future federal tax code.)

Upon the dissolution of the corporation and after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the corporation, the Board of Directors shall dispose of all of the assets of the Corporation exclusively for the purposes stated in Articles 8 & 11 hereof. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Circuit Court of Boone County, Missouri, exclusively for the purposes stated in Articles 8 & 11 hereof or such organizations(s) as the Circuit Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

13. (a) To the extent applicable, the provisions of this Article shall be in the nature of a contract between the corporation and each of its Directors and Officers, made in consideration of such person's continued service to the corporation. The protection afforded each Director or Officer by the provisions of this Article shall survive such person's term of office or employment. This article shall not be repealed, nor may the benefits of the Directors and Officers afforded hereby be diminished, except as to liability accruing in respect of acts or omissions occurring after the date of such repeal or modification.

(b) The corporation shall hold harmless and indemnify each Director and Officer to the fullest extent authorized or permitted by the provisions of subsections 1 through 6 and 9 through 11 of section 355.476, RSMO, as amended (which section, in its entirety, is hereafter referred to as the "State Statute") or any other or additional statutory provisions which are hereafter adopted authorizing or permitting such indemnification.

(c) The corporation may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person, as named insured or additional insured, who is or was a director, officer, employee or agent (including volunteers) of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the corporation as a director, officer, employee or agent (including volunteers) of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise (foreign or domestic, for-profit or nonprofit) against any liability asserted against him in any such capacity, or arising out of his status as such, whether or not the corporation has the power to indemnify him against such liability under the provisions of these Articles or by operation of law. Such insurance may include a policy or policies of general comprehensive liability insurance (covering claims arising out of death, illness or injury or arising out of property loss or damage) and directors' and officers' liability insurance (covering claims arising out of wrongful acts or omissions) in respect of liabilities asserted against and/or incurred by it Directors and Officers in either such capacity or otherwise in the performance of their services for the corporation.

(d) In addition to the foregoing, and subject to the exclusions set forth in section (e) of this Article, the corporation may, to the fullest extent authorized or permitted by the provisions of subsection 7 of the State Statute, hold harmless and indemnify each Director and Officer: (i) against any and all expenses (including attorney fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by such Director or Officer in connection with any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative (including an

action by or in the right of the corporation) to which such Director or Officer is, was or at any time became the party, or is threatened to be made a party, by reason of the fact that such Director or Officer is, was or at anytime becomes a Director, Officer, employee, or agent of the corporation, or is or was serving or at any time serves at the request of the corporation as a director, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise; and (iii) otherwise to the fullest extent as may be provided to such Director or Officer by the corporation under the non-exclusive provisions of the State Statute.

(e) No indemnity pursuant to section (d) of this Article shall be paid by the corporation: (i) except to the extent the aggregate of losses to be indemnified thereunder exceeds the amount of such losses for which the Director or Officer in indemnified either pursuant to section (b) of this Article or pursuant to any insurance of the type referred to in section (c) of the Articles purchased and maintained by the corporation; (ii) in respect of remuneration paid to such Director or Officer if it shall be determined by a final decision of a court having jurisdiction in the matter that such remuneration was in violation of the law; (iii) on account of such Director's or Officer's conduct which is finally adjudged by a court having jurisdiction in the matter to have been knowingly fraudulent, deliberately dishonest or willfully misconduct; or (iv) if a final decision by a court having jurisdiction in the matter shall determine that such indemnification is not lawful.

(f) All agreements and obligations of the corporation contained in this Article shall continue during the period the Director or Officer is a Director or Officer of the corporation (or is or was serving at the request of the corporation as a director, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise) and shall continue thereafter so long as the Director or Officer shall be subject to any possible claim or threatened, pending or completed action suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, by reason of the fact that he or she was a Director or Officer of the corporation or was serving in any capacity referred to in this Article.

(g) The corporation may pay, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit or proceeding, all reasonable expenses of the Director or Officer incurred defending any civil or criminal action, suit or proceeding against him or her, provided he or she have agreed to reimburse the corporation if and to the extent that it shall be ultimately determined that he or she is not entitled to be indemnified by the corporation for such expenses

^[1] Revised by Board vote November 3, 2012. Filed with MO SoS March 18, 2013.

^[2] Revised by Board vote January 16, 1999. Filed with MO SoS February 16, 1999.

^[3] Revised by Board vote August 6, 2017 (filed with MO SoS August 15, 2017) & January 12, 2018 (filed with MO SoS January 12, 2018).

[Reviewed August 2021]

1. BYLAWS

Bylaws of Oak Spirit Sanctuary

a Missouri Nonprofit Corporation

[Reviewed and Amended September 5, 2021]

SECTION I: Name and Purpose

A. Name: The name of the organization (CHURCH) is “Oak Spirit Sanctuary”

B. Purpose: Oak Spirit Sanctuary is organized for religious, educational, and charitable purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to be a church offering worship services and religious education and to do all things which may be necessary or proper in connection with these purposes. In furtherance of its permitted purposes, Oak Spirit Sanctuary may exercise any, all, and every power that a corporation under the General Not-For-Profit Law of Missouri may exercise.

SECTION II: Terms and Definitions

A. The following terms and definitions shall be referenced in the present and all future codifications of this document.

1. ARTICLES: the Articles of Incorporation of the Missouri nonprofit corporation Oak Spirit Sanctuary
2. BOARD: the currently elected Board of Directors of the Missouri nonprofit corporation.
3. BYLAWS: this document.
4. CHURCH: the Missouri nonprofit corporation, whose registered address is 26213 Cumberland Church Road, Boonville, MO 65233.
5. PRESIDENT: the President of the Missouri nonprofit corporation.
6. SECRETARY: the Secretary of the Missouri nonprofit corporation.
7. SIMPLE MAJORITY: greater than one half ($\frac{1}{2}$).
8. SUPER MAJORITY: two thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) or greater.

9. TREASURER: the Treasurer of the Missouri nonprofit corporation.

SECTION III: Authority

A. Laws of the Land: The BOARD shall conduct the operations of the CHURCH in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws.

B. Articles of Incorporation:

1. The BYLAWS shall be governed by the ARTICLES.

2. Amendment: The ARTICLES may be amended by a SUPER MAJORITY of the full BOARD.

SECTION IV: Board of Directors

A. Composition: The BOARD shall consist of no less than three (3) persons and may consist of as many as thirteen (13) persons

B. Meetings: All decisions of the BOARD shall be made by the majority vote of BOARD members present at the meeting unless otherwise specified in the BYLAWS.

1. Frequency: The BOARD shall meet a minimum of once a year.

2. Quorum: A quorum of the BOARD to conduct business shall be a SIMPLE MAJORITY of the full BOARD.

3. Medium: The BOARD may meet in person, by teleconference, or by any other means, whether physical or electronic, that is mutually acceptable to officers of the BOARD, and is otherwise in accord with the BYLAWS.

C. Removal: The approval of a SUPER MAJORITY of the full BOARD is required to remove a member of the BOARD from the BOARD.

D. Replacement: The BOARD is empowered to replace absent officers and members of the BOARD, to enlarge the BOARD, or to reelect officers of the BOARD by a SIMPLE MAJORITY of the full BOARD.

E. Annual Meeting: The annual meeting of the BOARD shall be on or as close to Labor Day weekend as is mutually convenient for members of the BOARD.

F. Officers: Members of the BOARD shall fill the following offices: Offices may be combined as allowed by state law.

1. PRESIDENT: The duties of the PRESIDENT are to ensure required reports and papers are filed with the Secretary of the State of Missouri and to set the time and agenda of BOARD meetings.

2. TREASURER: The duties of the TREASURER are to maintain the financial records of the CHURCH.

3. SECRETARY: The duties of the SECRETARY are to maintain the correspondence files and meeting minutes, both paper and electronic, of the CHURCH.

G. Delegation of Duties: It is permissible that the PRESIDENT, TREASURER, and/or SECRETARY delegate their duties to others. The delegation of duties does not absolve the officer of responsibility. It remains the responsibility of the PRESIDENT, TREASURER, and SECRETARY to ensure that the duties of their office are performed.

H. Terms of Office. The members of the BOARD shall serve for a term of three (3) years and may be re-elected. No member of the BOARD, shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. Following two consecutive terms a BOARD member may be reelected after a sabbatical of at least three (3) years. A BOARD member may serve no more than a total of 12 years on the BOARD regardless of position. I. Committees: All committees operate under the auspices and authority of the BOARD, which retains the power to create or dissolve committees as needed. The powers and authority of committees are defined by the BOARD and may be altered at any time by SIMPLE MAJORITY vote.

SECTION V: Land Use

A. The BOARD shall ensure that the land shall be managed and maintained with the Land Stewardship Policy.

B. The BOARD may rent use of the land maintained by the CHURCH to individuals or organizations so long as the purpose is not in conflict with the mission of the CHURCH.

SECTION VI: Amendments

A. Amendments to the BYLAWS require a SIMPLE MAJORITY of the full BOARD

C. GOVERNANCE

1. LEADERSHIP, DUTIES, AND GUIDELINES

A. Board of Directors: Members/Roles

- 1) Executive Board/ Officers: The Roles of the Executive Board Members are defined by the Bylaws ([see C.2 Section IV](#))
- 2) Board Members at Large: Board members who are not on the executive board.
- 3) Board Liaisons: Board members may be assigned the role of liaison to a committee. Board liaison position may include, but are not limited to Board Liaison to the Land Management Committee, Clergy Committee, (Specific) Event Liaison, Fundraising, etc. Board Liaisons are for communication purposes and should not necessarily perform the role of committee chair or lead. The purpose of Liaisons are to make sure the Board is fully aware of the activities and needs of the committees.

B. Board of Director: Guidelines and Duties

- 1) The Board shall consist of at least three and no more than thirteen people, all of whom must be members in good standing in the Church, must be Oak Spirits, and at least twenty-one years of age.
- 2) All Board Members have equal power and one vote each. In extenuating circumstances a number of board members less than a quorum has the authority to make decisions regarding discipline, money management, and emergency handling of situations without prior permission or discussion with the Board. Lacking a quorum an effort should be made to include any available Advisory Board members or other church leadership in the decision. As soon as reasonably possible, the board member(s) will explain the situation to the Executive or full Board with an explanation of action. The full Board can override the actions of the board members.
- 3) Names and titles for all Directors and a method of contacting the Board shall be published.
- 4) A minimum of one Oak Spirit Sanctuary board member will try to be in attendance at every workshop presented at Oak Spirit Sanctuary events.

- 5) Board of Directors members are allowed to attend all Oak Spirit Sanctuary events for free.

C. Duration of Board Membership

- 1) Refer to current Bylaws [[see B.2 section IV.H](#)] for terms and limits

D. Advisory Board

- 1) The role of the Advisory Board (AB) is to assist in the overall management of Oak Spirit Sanctuary , decision making, strategic planning, and other duties of the Church.
- 2) Members of the Advisory Board are not required to be Oak Spirits but may be working toward Oak Spirit status with a minimum of 6 event attendances at events (festival events, lunars and/or workdays).
- 3) AB members do not have official voting power but the Board of Directors is encouraged to consult for any matters regarding church governance and an unofficial vote, poll, or tally of Advisory Board members may be taken to aid in decision making.
- 4) In cases where there may be ethical concerns such as conflicts of interest involving one or more BOD members, especially in cases of a small Board (e.g. a three member Board), matters should be referred to the Advisory Board for a formal binding vote.
- 5) There are no term limits for membership on the advisory board.

E. Expectations for All Oak Spirit Sanctuary Leaders (Board members, Advisory Board members, Clergy, Department Leads)

- 1) Application Process:
 - a) All leaders must fill out an application form and have an interview with the general council (current members of the AB and BOD.)
 - b) The interview is recorded, and absentee council members will be given an opportunity to review the interview and ask additional questions.

- c) After a designated time, the Board of Directors will vote on the applicant.
 - d) If there is any conflict of interest, the Advisory Board will be consulted about the decision.
 - e) Committee coordinators [i.e “Land Manager and Clergy Coordinators”] are de facto members of the Advisory Board, but their department lead position is regarded as separate from position on the Advisory Board. If a department lead resigns their position as a department lead, with notice and in good standing, they may remain on the AB.
- 2) No individual that has been convicted of a violent crime, sexual crime, crime against a child or the elderly, or financial crime such as embezzlement or fraud can serve in any leadership position of Oak Spirit Sanctuary .
 - 3) All people in Oak Spirit Sanctuary leadership positions are volunteers. There is no reimbursement for time, personal or travel expenses associated with fulfilling the required tasks of those in leadership positions.
 - 4) All Oak Spirit Sanctuary leaders are expected to uphold the rules and regulations of Oak Spirit Sanctuary policy and procedures.
 - 5) All leaders must maintain confidentiality for sensitive issues.
 - 6) All leaders are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible, respectful, professional manner that would reflect well on Oak Spirit Sanctuary when in a position as an identifiable leader of the organization.
 - 7) All leaders are expected to facilitate, in whatever manner suits their personality, a welcoming atmosphere on site and in online media spaces. Clear, accurate, and diplomatic communication is expected when questions or concerns arise in the community. If assistance is needed, any leader should direct questions or concerns to those in other areas or departments appropriate to the concern.
 - 8) Attendance:
 - a) Meetings: At minimum 50% of BOD and AB meetings for BOD, 25% of AB meetings for Advisory Board.

- b) Events: At minimum 50% for BOD, 25% for Advisory Board with consideration for proximity to Oak Spirit Sanctuary property and inclement weather.
- c) Meeting attendance should be assessed annually at Harvest Homecoming.

9) Involvement

- a) All Oak Spirit Sanctuary Leaders are expected to be involved in the workflow of the administration of the organization, planning and running events, and property management in various capacities and to varying degrees with consideration for proximity to Oak Spirit Sanctuary property for any onsite tasks.
- b) Duties may be assumed by or assigned to various members of leadership or designated persons according to skill set, area of interest or expertise, and/or availability. These may include but are not limited to: heading committees, supervision of volunteers, administrative duties, spiritual and clergy duties, communication, public relations, management of social media, event management and execution, land and outbuilding maintenance, disciplinary action, representation at vending or information booths at other events.

F. Resignations/Retirements

- 1) An Oak Spirit Sanctuary Leader wishing to resign is encouraged to give advance notice of intent to resign either prior to or at the end of their term, but at minimum, a 30 day notice shall be considered sufficient, with the date of effective resignation declared. If a Board of Director member wishes to resign, it is encouraged they do so at the completion of a term.
- 2) Resignation of any leader shall be in writing, whether sent as a physical letter, an email, or posted in a designated communication channel. A dated resignation notice shall be kept in records.
- 3) The Directors shall decide whether or not to fill the vacant position. If the Board would fall under the minimum of three Board Members by failing to fill the position, then the position must be filled.
- 4) Board member removal or replacement is covered in section {[B.2 Section IV.D](#)} of the Bylaws.

- 5) Board of Directors resignations in which the duration of their term was not completed, and /or a 30 day notice was not given, may render a person disqualified from holding any future Board of Directors positions.
- 6) Resignations “Not in Good Standing”:
 - a) The following applies to members of the Board of Directors, Advisory Board, heads or lead of committees and departments (i.e. Head of Clergy, Head of Land Management, etc.), including all clergy members or any other person in a designated leadership position.
 - b) Resignations from any leadership position performed in the following manner will be designated “not in good standing.” Such resignations may forfeit consideration for any future leadership positions in the organization. These may include but are not limited to:
 - i) Resignations deemed “effective immediately” with no advance notice or acceptable exception communicated to the Board of Directors. Examples for exceptions are: unexpected or emergent circumstances like medical need, family crises, or other such situations.
 - ii) Resignations performed in an acrimonious way.
 - iii) Resignations, whether acrimonious or not, followed by defamatory social media posts against Oak Spirit Sanctuary, leadership, or community on social media whether on Oak Spirit Sanctuary sites or on personal sites.
 - iv) Resignations in which property of Oak Spirit Sanctuary is not returned (keys, documents, digital files, any and all other property belonging to Oak Spirit Sanctuary) within 3 months of resignation.
 - v) Other conditions as determined by the board of directors to be resignations “not in good standing.”

G. Disciplinary Considerations for Board Members [[NOTE: Section D. “Cultural Expectations, Behavioral Standards, Conflict Resolution”13.F\]\]](#)

[Approved 9/4/2022]

2. GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

A. The government of the Church shall be vested in the Board of Directors (referred to hereafter as the Board). The Church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical authority. The Board shall act in overseeing the affairs of the Church.

B. Banking and Financial Accounts, Contractual Authority

The Church shall maintain financial accounts as needed. The Executive Board members (president, secretary, treasurer) shall be established with the Oak Spirit Sanctuary bank as the signatories on the account and may receive and use debit cards, checks, and credit cards for the purposes of the management of Oak Spirit Sanctuary. Any online financial accounts and passwords shall be accessible by the EBOD.

Any contracts or other legally-binding instruments must be signed by the President, or someone designated in writing by the Board of Directors to do so.

C. Administration of Electronic Property

All online accounts, which include current accounts and any established in the future, are the property of Oak Spirit Sanctuary and are under the management of the executive board of directors. All accounts and passwords must be accessible to the executive board, and access may be granted on an as needed basis to designated persons for the management of business and other matters related to Oak Spirit Sanctuary. Permission granted for access of these accounts may be revoked by the executive board. Social media community groups are to adhere to the social media policy.

Electronic property includes but is not limited to the following examples: Email accounts, social media sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram), websites, text messaging apps, electronic document storage drives (online and physical).

D. Administration of Physical Property

The physical property of Oak Spirit Sanctuary which includes the land, retreat center, all outbuildings, sheds, machinery, tools, paper documents and records, and any other items residing at Oak Spirit Sanctuary shall be accessible to all board members with access granted to designated persons for the management of the physical property of Oak Spirit Sanctuary. Permission for access may be revoked by the board and keys or any other access devices are required to be returned.

Any unauthorized access on Oak Spirit Sanctuary by persons known or unknown may be subject to removal by law enforcement and trespass or other legal action taken.

3. COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

- A. Annual Reports: All committees, task forces, and groups within the Church structure shall submit an annual report of activities and accomplishments at the annual church meeting at Harvest Homecoming.
- B. The Directors shall issue a call for annual reports 4-5 weeks prior to the annual Harvest Homecoming meeting. Each committee or group within the Church structure shall assure that a written Annual Report of the committee's activities is filed with the Board prior to the annual meeting.
- C. Each Board-appointed committee or Task Force shall assure that a written Annual Report of activities is filed with the Board Secretary and the Directors prior to the annual meeting.
- D. A review of the work, structure and goals of each committee should be undertaken annually. A review of the membership of the committee and their level of participation should be conducted at this time with an eye to keeping the committees populated with interested and active members.
- E. Committee members must collaborate effectively to ensure the committee's success/ For the committee to function optimally, it is crucial that members work together seamlessly and avoid any actions that could create obstacles or hindrances. Blocking each other is strictly prohibited for committee members, as it would render the committee ineffective.
- F. Working committees, task forces, and individual roles at Oak Spirit Sanctuary may include, but are not limited to:
 - Ritual Arts Committee
 - Event Planning Committees
 - Clergy Committee
 - Land Management Committee
 - Social Media Committee
 - Fundraising Committee

[Revised March 2024]

4. OAK SPIRITS AND SAGE OAK GUARDIANS

A. Oak Spirit

- 1) Oak Spirit Sanctuary does not have "membership" but the designation of "Oak Spirit" is given to persons in the community who have shown involvement in the organization. Thirteen visits to Oak Spirit Sanctuary which include: attendance at any events, volunteering on work days, with no violations in conduct are the minimum requirements to earn the

designation “Oak Spirit.” The designation “Oak Spirit” confers no special status in the organization other than as a requirement to join the Board of Directors.

- 2) The Oak Spirit title is conferred with a special ritual of recognition in which a paper certificate signed by Oak Spirit Sanctuary Board members is given.
- 3) “Oak Spirits” are invited to a facebook group called “Oak Spirit Voices” reserved only for those with Oak Spirit status.

B. Sage Oak Guardian

- 1) The Sage Oak Guardian certificate is bestowed upon a person that has served in leadership positions and/or been a consistently active volunteer at the organization for many years. The certificate is requested by members of the community in recognition of that work. The request is then forwarded to the board for approval and printing of said certificate.
- 2) This certificate bestows no additional rights, but does provide the benefit of free admission to OSS events to the recipient as a recognition of their service to the church.
- 3) The person receiving said certificate should be nominated by their peers (i.e. Oak Spirits). That nomination should be made by at least 3 people. Once the candidate has been proposed, a petition of support will be circulated among the community. The nomination, along with the petition of support is taken to the board for a vote.
- 4) The person should receive the certificate as long as they meet the following requirements:
 - a) They are in good standing with the church.
 - b) They have indeed done many years of active service on the land. i.e. 10 or more years.
 - c) They have been nominated by their peers.
- 5) The certificate can be given out at any time during the year, but should be attempted to be given out at Harvest Homecoming as that is the event made specifically to bring “home” as many of the Oak Spirits as possible.
- 6) The nomination should contain the following information
 - a) The Oak Spirits making the nomination
 - b) The reasons the nominating Oak Spirits believe the candidate should receive the honor
 - c) The approximate number of years the candidate has been involved with Oak Spirit Sanctuary and in what capacity or capacities (include approximate dates if known).
 - c) The names of the community members supporting the nomination.
 - d) A suggestion for the date at which the honor will be bestowed.

[Approved 12/4/2022]

D. CULTURAL EXPECTATION, BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1. OAK SPIRIT SANCTUARY CODE OF ETHICS

A. Introduction

The purpose of the Oak Spirit Sanctuary Code of Ethics is to guide people toward thoughtful and consistent actions for the good of the community, and to protect people, regardless of their relative positions of power and authority, from abuse. It is also to protect the organization as a whole from situations of injustice, unfairness, and abuses of power or the perception thereof.

B. Guiding Principles

- 1) It is the responsibility of all parties to behave ethically regardless of the power differential between themselves and others.
- 2) Those who hold leadership positions have a greater responsibility to be mindful of their ethical responsibilities and obligations.
- 3) As a community Oak Spirit Sanctuary will promote an atmosphere where people feel empowered to raise questions regarding the ethics of a situation and that leadership will do so proactively.

C. Commitment to Ethical Behavior

Oak Spirit Sanctuary is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all who visit the land, our online spaces and/or off-site events hosted or co-sponsored by Oak Spirit Sanctuary.

We will strive to fulfill this commitment by:

- Making the safety, integrity and dignity of all our highest priority.
- Promoting an environment wherein all feel safe in raising ethical questions without fear and in which those questions will be addressed professionally and in good faith.
- Respecting expressions of every person's fundamental identity.
- Providing programs which speak to and serve the full spectrum of those who attend Oak Spirit Sanctuary's events, as well as providing space for people to speak their own truths and be heard and which support respectful, nonviolent communication.

- Supporting efforts to bring about greater justice and equality both in Oak Spirit Sanctuary spaces and in the broader society and world of which we are all part.

It is a fundamental responsibility of the governing Board of Directors to both act ethically at all times and to proactively address any ethical issues that come to light to the best of their ability. Should a question, issue or complaint be brought to any individual member of the Board of Directors, the Advisory Council or the clergy, that individual is obligated to share that question, issue, or complaint with the Board of Directors.

Issues of ethics ought never to be ignored, neglected, or suppressed.

[Approved 4/3/2022]

2. INCLUSIVENESS POLICY

- A. Oak Spirit Sanctuary recognizes and honors the divine nature and essential human dignity of all persons, regardless of their race, ethnicity, national origin, age, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, socio-economic position, physical appearance, body size, marital status, or military status.
- B. Oak Spirit Sanctuary is committed to providing an inclusive and safe environment for our community, staff, ministers, volunteers, event attendees, clients, and all others we meet.

We will do this by:

- Urging the community to respect and honor each person they meet, treating them as the expression of divinity that they are.
- Respecting expressions of every person's fundamental identity, including (but not limited to) ensuring that rituals and workshops that are targeted toward a specific class of person are open to all who self-identify as part of that class.
- Providing programs which speak to and serve the full spectrum of those who attend Oak Spirit Sanctuary's events, as well as providing space for people to speak their own truths and be heard.
- Supporting efforts to bring about greater justice and equality in the broader society and world of which we are all a part.

[Approved 4/3/2022]

3. EXCLUSION POLICY

The safety of all participants at Oak Spirit Sanctuary events is of paramount importance. Oak Spirit Sanctuary does not permit any people to be at Oak Spirit Sanctuary events or on Oak Spirit Sanctuary property who are on the National Sex Offender Registry who have been convicted of crimes defined by The National Guidelines for Sex Offender Registration and Notification as:

- “engaging in a sexual act with another by force or the threat of serious violence;

- or engaging in a sexual act with another by rendering unconscious or involuntarily drugging the victim.”
- or for any sexual crime that involves a minor.

[Approved 8/7/2022]

4. COMMUNICATION & REPORTING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

A. Communication & Reporting Policy

- 1) Oak Spirit Sanctuary has an open-door policy and encourages the community to share their questions, concerns, suggestions and complaints. Oak Spirit Sanctuary recognizes the sometimes delicate balance between the need for transparency and the right to privacy and is committed to being as conscientious as possible regarding the sharing of information.
- 2) Questions, concerns, suggestions and/or complaints can be directed to the Oak Spirit Sanctuary Board of Directors, Advisory Council, or clergy. For reasons of clarity, specificity and documentation the Board may require that the issue be expressed in writing. It is perfectly acceptable for the concerned person to work with a member of the Oak Spirit Sanctuary leadership (e.g. Advisory Council or clergy member) to craft the statement. It is important that the person raising the issue be as specific and clear as possible. In only the rarest of occasions should an ethical complaint be made anonymously.
- 3) Reports will be assessed in light of the behavioral standards as expressed in [Section D](#) to help determine whether or not the situation warrants involvement by the incident review committee, should be referred to mediation by clergy or dismissed.
- 4) Once a report has been submitted, it is the duty of any leader who receives a report to bring it to the attention of the Board of Directors. Failure to bring forward a report by a leader may result in disciplinary measures. The complaint will be reviewed within two weeks and may be referred to an Incident Review Committee (see section [D.13.A “Body of Authority ‘Incident Review Committee’”](#)) for processing. Complaints regarding the actions of the Board must be referred to an independent committee for review (see also [section C.13.A](#)).
- 5) Confidentiality: [see section D.13.H “Confidentiality”](#)

B. Reporting Procedure

- 1) To make a report, provide the following information in written form. This can be emailed to info@oakspiritsancturay.org or submitted to a leader of Oak Spirit Sanctuary (council member, clergy, committee lead)
 - a) Date Report is being written/submitted
 - b) Name of person making the report
 - c) Contact information for person making the report

- d) Date and time of the incident
 - e) People involved in the incident including any witnesses
 - f) Description of incident (please be as objective as possible and report what actions occurred in order)
- 2) An incident reporting form may be used. The form is located in the Appendix section {[Incident Form](#)}

[Approved 4/3/2022]

5. FALSE REPORTING

- A. Every complaint filed will be approached with the presumption the complaint is made in good faith. If found through the investigation process the complaint is deemed vexatious, malicious, or false, the complainant may be found in violation as it is an abuse of this policy and may be subjected to disciplinary action.
- B. A “vexatious complaint” is one that is clearly frivolous and does not have any serious merit or purpose, designed to cause discord, have the effect of harassing an individual(s) or the church, or can easily be seen as obsessive or unreasonable. A complaint may be deemed vexatious if one or more of, but not limited to, following apply:
- Refusing to specify the basis of complaint
 - Refusing to comply with the process and procedures for the management of the complaint.
 - Making groundless complaints against those appointed to handle the issue and seeking to have them replaced.
 - Systematically harassing and bullying those handling complaint
 - Changing the basis of the complaint as the investigation moves forward and/or denying statements made in early stages of investigation.
 - Making excessive demands while a complaint is investigated
 - Sending a high volume of letters, emails and/or phone calls with regards to the complaint.
 - Submitting false documents
 - Registering repeat complaints after the complaint has been fully investigated and completed.
 - Refusing to accept the final decision of a complaint following the completion of the process including any appeal.
 - Refusing to accept a complaint is outside the remit of the complaints procedure.
 - Seeking to cause unnecessary difficulties or problems to the Church rather than looking to resolve a dispute.
 - Refusing to accept that matters are not within the Church’s power to investigate if the matter is the responsibility of another organization or entity (e.g. law enforcement).

C. A “malicious complaint” is one that is baseless and knowingly made with the intention to cause harm. A complaint may be deemed malicious if one or more of, but not limited to, the following apply:

- Deliberately seeking to defame individual(s) and/or the Church.
- Accusations made with the intent to cause unnecessary burdensome stress to an individual(s) physical, mental, and/or spiritual welfare.
- Basing the complaint on gossip or conjecture with the intent to cause harm.

[Approved 6/12/2022]

6. WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

A. Oak Spirit Sanctuary supports a position of no retaliation against anyone who in good faith reports an ethics or legal violation. Any form of retaliation against a person who has raised an ethical issue, whether or not that issue is found to have merit, is itself a very serious ethical violation.

B. Examples of retaliation may include, but are not limited to:

- Denial of services or privileges generally open to all
- The arbitrary removal of the whistleblower from programs, positions of authority or online spaces
- Public shaming or becoming the object of private gossip

C. Anyone who participates in retaliation, regardless of their relative power or authority, may be subject to disciplinary action under this policy.

D. Procedure: See section [D.4 \(Communication & Reporting Policy & Procedure\)](#) and section [D.13. \(Corrective and Disciplinary Measures\)](#)

[Approved 6/12/2022]

7. ANTI-BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

A. Introduction

Bullying and harassment are behaviors that negatively impact the safety and the social, mental, emotional, and spiritual health of people in an organization. It is in the best interest of this organization to identify and address occurrences of bullying and harassment to prevent ongoing harm to individuals involved as well as the well-being and overall functioning of the organization as a whole.

B. Definitions and Descriptions of Terms

Bullying, harassment, and sexual harassment are negative behaviors perpetrated by one or more individuals against another person or people that repeatedly occur and are persistently meant to torment, wear down, frustrate, provoke, frighten, intimidate, or bring discomfort to the victim. These behaviors may be subtle, and individually may seem minor. However, due to the recurrent nature of bullying, it can be classified as a chronic stressor.

Although “bullying” and “harassment” are understood as a cumulation of repetitive negative actions, this does not mean that initial or individual occurrences of negative behavior should not be addressed. Every incident of negative behavior warrants action.

Characteristic to bullying and harassment are the elements of:

- Power and control
- Power difference* or power imbalance between the target and the individual(s) demonstrating the negative behavior.
- Difficulty for the target(s) in defending themselves or stopping the negative actions directed at them.

*Note on power differentials: It should be noted that there is power in numbers. When one person is targeted by two or more people of equal power, the group’s power exceeds that of the targeted individual. Such a dynamic may constitute bullying even though the individuals may be of equal power. Likewise, not all power is formal or institutional. Social capital is a form of power and may be considered when assessing behavior. (work on a definition of social capital)

Kinds of behaviors that are considered as bullying and harassment (including but not limited to):

- Offensive remarks, insults, name-calling
- Humiliation, belittlement, continuous criticism, and demeaning language or actions
- Scapegoating
- Social exclusion
- Slander, gossip, rumors spread to damage a person’s reputation
- Insinuations about a person’s mental health
- Intimidating, aggressive, unwelcome sexual behaviors
- Excessive teasing, tormenting
- Physical, emotional, or spiritual/magical abuse

Behavior not qualifying as bullying or harassment:

Not all negative behavior described above counts as “bullying” if two persons of approximately equal “strength” or position are in conflict or the incident is an isolated event. Disruptive, rude, or uncivil behavior, which can be confused with bullying, is characterized by low-intensity, discourteous behaviors. These behaviors occur occasionally and don’t cause long-term distress. These behaviors may be unintentional and can generally be dealt

with by bringing them to the attention of the perpetrator. Conflict resolution or mediation may be helpful to assist in communication about these kinds of behaviors.

Difference between bullying and harassment:

Harassment is basically the same negative behavior as bullying. However, “harassment” is a legal term that describes unwelcome conduct based on the following:

- Race
- Color
- Religion
- Sex (including sexual orientation, gender identity, or pregnancy)
- Age
- Disability
- Genetic information (including family or medical history)
- National origin

C. Reporting Bullying and Harassment

See section [D.4 \(Communication & Reporting Policy & Procedure\)](#)

D. Remediation of Bullying and Harassment

- 1) It is in the best interest of the organization to resolve issues of bullying, harassment, and other negative behavior as early as possible. It is a community-wide responsibility to create an atmosphere free of bullying and harassment. Community members are encouraged to intervene if they feel safe and comfortable doing so.
- 2) Methods of correcting bullying can be found in [Section D.13 of this manual \(Corrective and Disciplinary Measures\)](#)

[Approved 6/12/2022]

8. SUBSTANCE USE

- A. Oak Spirit Sanctuary does not take a moral position regarding substance use. The purpose of the substance use policy is to help facilitate a social environment that is safe and enjoyable for all and to protect the organization from liability.
- B. The sale or trafficking of illegal substances and prescription drugs is prohibited.
- C. The use of nitrous oxide is prohibited.
- D. The open use of illegal substances is prohibited.
- E. The provision of alcohol or cannabis to minors is prohibited.
- F. The consumption of alcohol or cannabis by minors is prohibited.

- G. The use of substances may be prohibited during certain events, in certain locales on the property (i.e. “sober areas”) or during certain activities (e.g. while operating machinery or during ritual).
- H. Although the use of substances is a personal decision, substances can have a profound impact on a person’s decision-making abilities and behavior. If a person is making decisions that endanger themselves or others and/or behaving in a disruptive manner they may be asked to refrain from substance use while on the grounds of Oak Spirit Sanctuary.
- I. The use of medical marijuana is legal in Missouri. Oak Spirit Sanctuary follows state laws with regard to marijuana use.
- J. Smoking of any kind impacts others in the immediate area. People are encouraged to smoke well away from common areas. Oak Spirit Sanctuary may designate specific areas as non-smoking.

[Approved: 8/7/2022]

9. WEAPONS POLICY

A. Weapons Used On Another Person(s) or Animals

- 1) Weapons are prohibited from being used against another person, or animal, unless in self-defense or to euthanize a terminally ill or injured animal.
- 2) If a weapon is used on a person or animal the Board may involve the authorities, and remove all involved parties from the land until an investigation and review of the incident has been conducted.
- 3) Special use other than what is dictated by this policy must be approved by the Board Of Directors.
- 4) Any use of a weapon against a person or animal must be reported to the Board Of Directors.

B. Gun Policy

- 1) Oak Spirit Sanctuary has an open carry policy during non-events on the land. We recognize that guns can be useful tools.
- 2) Carrying guns is prohibited during OSS events unless otherwise approved by the Board Of Directors.
- 3) During non-event times visitors are allowed to carry a firearm in compliance with Missouri State law.
- 4) If a visitor travels to Oak Spirit Sanctuary property during an event with a firearm, the firearm must remain securely locked in their vehicle during the duration of the event.
- 5) Target practice with guns is not allowed on Oak Spirit Sanctuary property.

C. Other Weapons Policy

- 1) Oak Spirit Sanctuary recognizes that items that may be classified as weapons such as knives, swords, axes, machetes, bows and arrows, atlatls, mace, tasers, etc, can be used in a variety of ways which include but are not limited to, recreational activities, land and house maintenance, ritual garb, and protection. These types of items are allowed on-site at all times.
- 2) Oak Spirit Sanctuary reserves the right to restrict or prohibit these items at any time.

[Approved 6/12/2022]

10. NUDITY

A. Introduction:

While individual beliefs and practices will vary, within pagan culture there is a general understanding that nudity, also termed “sky-clad,” is an accepted way to commune with nature. It allows pagans to reclaim a sense of freedom from cultural messaging that the human body is shameful. Nudity should not be interpreted as inherently sexual or offensive, and should not be regarded as an invitation for sexual contact.

It is the intention of Oak Spirit Sanctuary to provide the opportunity for clothing optional practices since it is difficult to find places in which this option is both accessible and safely expressed. In doing so, Oak Spirit Sanctuary must balance the freedom of clothing optional practices with larger societal and legal concerns with regard to nudity around minors (those under the age of 18). Oak Spirit Sanctuary will comply with Missouri state statutes in this regard, over any regulations of other municipalities.

As such, the following guidelines apply:

For the purposes of the Clothing Optional Policy, Oak Spirit Sanctuary is divided into three “zones” that are also defined on maps with color coding.

Geographically, these are defined as:

Zone 1: (Red) From Gate to “Y” in road

Zone 2: (Yellow) From “Y” in road to Maypole Hill

Zone 3: (Green) Past Maypole Hill and All Private Shrine Areas, Lake Gaia and beach

In terms of clothing options, the Zones are defined in the following manner with regard to the presence of minors.

- Zone 1: (Red) Clothing is worn, covering tops and bottoms, by people of all genders, at all times.
- Zone 2: (Yellow) Toplessness is allowed (with bottoms covered) for all people if no minors are present. If minors should appear in Zone 2 when they previously were not present, any topless person will be given time and opportunity to put on clothing. People of any gender have the option of covering nipples alone but remaining shirtless.
(Missouri State Statute)

- Zone 3: (Green) Clothing optional (full nudity permissible) at all times. Minors (those under the age of 18) are not allowed in Zone 3.

At times when there are no other people in Zone 3, minors may accompany their parents into Zone 3, but must be taken out of the area if others arrive who wish to practice nudity.

B. Code of Conduct:

Any people practicing full or partial nudity at Oak Spirit Sanctuary must not use their bodies in a sexually harassing way toward others, nor may others regard nudity as an invitation for sexual advances. Such incidents should be reported as outlined in Section [D.4 \(Communication & Reporting Policy & Procedure\)](#), and are subject to the policies and procedures outlined in section [D.13 \(Corrective and Disciplinary Measures\)](#)

C. Parents of Minor Children

Any parent(s) who bring minor children are advised to understand the clothing optional policies and areas of Oak Spirit Sanctuary. It is the responsibility of the parent to supervise their children and keep them out of clothing optional areas if they do not wish the children to view nudity.

[Approved 12/4/2022]

11. PHOTOGRAPHY AND RECORDING POLICY

- A. Oak Spirit Sanctuary promotes a culture of consent and endeavors to provide a safe space for all attendees. This extends to photographing and video recording. Some people are very uncomfortable with having their picture taken. Some people are private about their spiritual practice. For these reasons and others, we encourage people to be conscious of and limit their use of cameras especially in community spaces.
- B. People who are taking photos or recording should ensure that they have the consent of all people in the photo, especially if those images will be posted to social media. This includes any people who are identifiable in the background of the photo or recording.
- C. If the photographer did not get consent and cannot attain consent after the fact they should blur, crop or obscure the person from the photo prior to posting to social media or publishing the image or recording.
- D. Parental consent MUST be obtained PRIOR to taking any pictures of minors.
- E. Photography is prohibited in or around the shower house (Frog Bog).
- F. Photography of rituals without advanced permission and notice is prohibited.
- G. Photography may be prohibited at certain events or in certain areas.

H. Information about this policy should be communicated broadly and reinforced at each major event.

I. Individuals that discover images of themselves online, on social media, from photos taken at Oak Spirit Sanctuary events may contact Oak Spirit Sanctuary leadership for assistance in having those images taken down. Oak Spirit Sanctuary leaders will make a good faith effort to remediate the issue, but are not liable if the owner of the image does not comply.

[Approved 2/5/2023]

12. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

A. Policy

Oak Spirit Sanctuary social media spaces are extensions of its physical space; yet have increased immediacy and unique considerations when disruptive episodes occur. Oak Spirit Sanctuary Board Of Directors retains the right to manage online spaces in keeping with the goal of overall community harmony and well-being. While Oak Spirit Sanctuary endeavors to foster an atmosphere of open communication, transparency and individual freedom, it should be noted that Oak Spirit Sanctuary social media spaces are not free speech forums and that Oak Spirit Sanctuary reserves the right to moderate, curate and control its online image.

- 1) If volatile or disruptive posts are witnessed on social media, any member with administrative approval to manage an online group may act on Oak Spirit Sanctuary's behalf.
- 2) Moderators of Oak Spirit Sanctuary social media spaces may implement any of the following at their discretion or under advisement from the board of directors: hide or delete comments, turn off comment threads, notify the member that comments violate Oak Spirit Sanctuary social media standards, or mute the member.
- 3) Types of behavior that may result in corrective action include, but are not limited to: threats, name calling, libelous statements, discussion of illegal activity, comments or threads which may be interpreted as unnecessarily aggressive, combative or antagonistic.
- 4) Prior to removing or hiding a comment, moderators should screenshot the thread for further review.
- 5) Commenters who have their post hidden or removed should be notified by the moderation and an explanation of why the comment was flagged should be given. Moderators may or may choose not to give the commenter an opportunity to re-word their statement and re-post.
- 6) While moderators may be granted the authority to take actions outlined in subsection ii of this policy, the removal of person from Oak Spirit Sanctuary's online spaces requires Board approval.

B. Public Guidelines

The following is the text of the public guidelines posted on the public Oak Spirit Sanctuary Community Facebook page (Approved by Board of Directors: 6/7/2020, reviewed and approved 6/12/2022):

“Oak Spirit Sanctuary is a diverse spiritual community. We experience nature as a manifestation of Deity, and nature spirits as real and present in our lives.

Our mission is to provide access to nature, a safe place for outdoor worship in an earth-centered, earth honoring spiritual context, to promote community among persons with these beliefs and practices, and to further environmentalism and appreciation for all creatures of good intent. Our primary outreach is operating a Pagan Land Sanctuary and Spiritual Retreat Center. Land Management is done from a magickal and spiritual perspective where the nature spirits are respected.

All online social media is regarded as an extension of Oak Spirit Sanctuary and follows the directives of the Natural Laws of Oaks Spirit Sanctuary: “We walk in peace, aggression will not be tolerated, be it physical, verbal or via social media. A diverse group of persons will use this land and all should be treated with dignity and respect. Walk in peace also covers interactions with other Oak Spirits and participants on all Oak Spirit Sanctuary lists and other public and interweb interaction.”

The following guidelines for online interaction apply.

1) Please keep conversations civil. Conversations can sometimes be passionate or heated, but must remain respectful and on topic. Conversations that devolve into personal attacks, name calling, or are personal arguments will be removed.

2) Oak Spirit Sanctuary as a church does not allow its members to post overly political posts such as campaigning for candidates or electoral issues.

Moderators of Oak Spirit Sanctuary social media spaces may implement any the following at their discretion or with advisement from the board of directors: hide or delete comments, turn off comment threads, notify the member that comments violate Oak Spirit Sanctuary social media standards, mute the member, or in certain cases, removal of member from social media pages.”

[Approved 6/12/2022]

13. CORRECTIVE AND DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

A. Body of Authority: “Incident Review Committee”

For the purposes of this document the “Incident Review Committee” (IRC) shall refer to whatever body the Board of Directors (BOD) designates to address a complaint or issue. The IRC may be the BOD or an appointed committee, either *ad hoc* or standing, designated to handle issues requiring corrective or disciplinary measures. This committee may comprise any or all of the following: members of the general council (Board and/or Advisory Board), clergy, and/or other community members with relevant experience. If a conflict of interest presents

itself for a particular committee member, that member may be recused with an option for a replacement person as needed. The number of committee members shall be a minimum of three people, including at least one board member.

B. Guidelines

- 1) In determining whether the BOD itself or an appointed committee (IRC) will address a situation, factors that may be considered include the seriousness and complexity of the situation and whether it involves one or more members of the BOD. For example, a minor infraction involving a straight-forward violation of policy may easily be handled by the BOD. However, a more complicated, more disruptive situation that calls for further investigation may warrant the creation of a committee that includes people with helpful skills, experience or who are well placed in the community to elicit trust in the process. In situations that include sensitive information (e.g. allegations of sexual harassment), especially those in which the alleged victim is hesitant to have their identity widely known, it may be better to have a smaller committee.
- 2) Situations that involve members of the BOD will warrant special consideration. If a complaint is about the behavior of a Board member it may be best to include one or more non-Board members on the review committee in the interest of transparency and accountability. In situations where the conduct of the Board as a whole is in question, it may be beneficial to solicit help from neutral outside mediators to facilitate a resolution.
- 3) The committee will only deal with situations that pertain to behaviors that constitute violations of Oak Spirit Sanctuary policy and/or disruptions to the larger community on The Land or in our online spaces and will not become involved in personal conflicts between members of the community (e.g. dissolution of friendships or romantic relationships, political disagreements, etc.). It is understood, however, that interpersonal conflict may at times lead to behavior that requires corrective action. For example, if Person A and Person B are in a relationship and Person A is accused of being unfaithful to Person B with Person C this may lead to a conflict between all involved parties. This is not a situation that the Oak Spirit Sanctuary BOD or its designees has a role in addressing (see next section). However, if Person B verbally or physically attacks Person C while at an event and/or Person C slanders Person A in an online Oak Spirit Sanctuary forum, those specific behaviors may be subject to corrective action. Oak Spirit Sanctuary leadership does not have the power to police words, actions or behavior outside its jurisdictional authority (i.e. off-property or on personal, non-Oak Spirit Sanctuary social media spaces).
- 4) The BOD or IRC may elect to refer a matter to the Clergy or other community members for counseling or mediation prior to or instead of accepting a formal complaint. Clergy members may choose to assist community members in ways that are beyond the scope of the corrective and disciplinary process (i.e. helping to manage interpersonal conflict) at their own discretion and within their scope of training.
- 5) The BOD or IRC may, when appropriate, conduct an independent, confidential investigation of the matter and may question others regarding any incidents referred to in the complaint. The goal of the investigation is to gain the fullest, most objective understanding of the situation as possible, with the understanding that perspectives may differ. When conducting an investigation all parties involved and all witnesses should be approached and asked to make a

statement. Although parties and witnesses may decline to make a statement, and suffer no consequences for declining, every effort should be made to get as many perspectives as possible.

- 6) The BOD or IRC has the option to choose to issue a statement regarding the matter to the Oak Spirit Sanctuary community as a whole in the spirit of transparency and/or as an attempt to explain the situation, process, the organizational position and/or to quell any rumors.

C. Guidelines for Corrective and/or Disciplinary Measures

Oak Spirit Sanctuary generally implements a progressive process for addressing disruptive behavior of members of our community as follows: verbal discussion/warning or counseling, formal written warning, formal sanctions, revocation of welcome to Oak Spirit Sanctuary. The corrective process may stop or skip one or more levels at any time. There may be some serious instances that require immediate written warning or revocation of welcome including, but not limited to: assault, physical or verbal threats of violence, any act intended to harm another person or property on The Land, theft and the like.

Each situation will be considered individually in terms of how to address it and what level of corrective action is most appropriate (i.e. whether it be a verbal warning, formal written warning, or disciplinary action of one form or another). Considerations that should be taken into account in making this determination include, but are not limited to: whether or not the behavior endangers the health and safety of the offender or others, damages to The Land or Oak Spirit Sanctuary property, if the behavior places Oak Spirit Sanctuary in a situation of legal liability, and may be balanced against the level of community disturbance associated with the behavior.

D. Steps In Corrective and/or Disciplinary Measures

- 1) Verbal Discussion/Counseling or warning
 - a) It may be found suitable to give a verbal warning in following circumstances:
 - The conduct/ policy violation is found to be minor offense in violation of the policies here in.
 - The verbal warning would resolve the issue in a quick and peaceful manner suitable to all parties
 - The subject of the verbal warning is likely to take heed of verbal warning and is found unlikely to need further action.
 - b) At the direction of the IRC two or more members of the IRC will meet with the subject of the complaint to discuss the problem behavior and to express Oak Spirit Sanctuary's behavioral expectations moving forward.
 - c) A brief, dated report of the meeting should be written and recorded for future reference.
- 2) Formal Written Warning
 - a) Written warnings are given in the following circumstances:

- The violation could have potentially lead to endangerment of others or self or could cause legal liability for individual(s) or the church
- The seriousness of the offense and impact on the church cannot be resolved verbally and requires clarification in writing and details future expectations regarding the incident
- If verbal warning(s) was/were already given for the same or related violation.
- b) If following an investigation of a complaint it is determined a written warning is required the IRC will issue a written warning within two weeks.
- c) The document will address the subject of the complaint laying out the seriousness of the behavior in question and its disruptive nature to the community and will outline expectations and standards of behavior.
- d) The subject of the complaint will be provided a copy of the written warning. Oak Spirit Sanctuary will request from the subject of a written warning acknowledgement of receipt.
- e) A brief report of any interaction with the subject resulting from the issuing of the written warning should be written and filed for future reference.

3) Formal Sanctions

- a) The IRC may at this stage set a probationary period of between 30 days and 6 months during which certain conditions must be met in order to remain in good standing with Oak Spirit Sanctuary . These conditions may include, but are not limited to regular meetings with Oak Spirit Sanctuary clergy, additional education, training or counseling, restitution for the cost of property damage or theft, and/or sobriety while on the land.
- b) A document detailing the conditions of the sanctions will be drafted and given to the subject of the sanctions and the IRC will request an acknowledgement of receipt (e.g. their signature on a copy of the letter or an e-mail reply).
- c) A brief report of any interaction with the subject resulting from the issuing of the written warning should be written and filed for future reference.
- d) Following the stated probationary period the IRC should review the situation and move to close the issue, extend the probationary period, or revoke the welcome of the individual.
- e) Failure to satisfactorily meet with the expectations of the IRC as laid out in the written complaint at any point during the probationary period may result in restriction from The Land and/or all Oak Spirit Sanctuary events for a period of up to a year and a day from the point at which it is determined the individual is not in compliance.

4) Revocation of Welcome

- a) Those who have grievously or persistently acted in a disruptive manner may have their welcome to the community revoked for up to a year and a day. This includes visiting The Land, including during otherwise public events or festivals and/or removal from online spaces under the auspices of Oak Spirit Sanctuary.
- b) While the revocation of welcome will be for a stated period of time, additional conditions may be imposed by the IRC for a person to return to good standing. If the

period of time has elapsed, but additional conditions have not been met, the person's revocation of welcome will remain effective.

- c) The revocation of the welcome of an individual requires a 2/3rd majority of the full BOD.

5) Returning to Good Standing

Following the stated period of separation the individual may petition to be welcomed back to the community.

- a) It is the individual's responsibility to contact the IRC or BOD, in writing, to request a return to good standing.
- b) The IRC may require an in-person meeting to discuss return and may impose conditions for a return to good standing.
- c) The IRC may welcome the individual back on a probationary and/or temporary period.
- d) A person who has served a period of probation shall not be eligible to serve in a leadership or honorary capacity for at least a year. The purpose of this is to provide for a period of reintegration and trust-building between the person who was suspended and other community members. "Leadership positions" includes the Board of Directors, the Advisory Board, Clergy Member, a lead of any committee or ritual. Honorary positions include posts such as May Queen or King.
- e) The decision to welcome back a formerly disruptive individuals rests solely with the BOD under advisement from the IRC.
- f) Welcoming a person who has previously had their welcome revoked requires a simple majority of the full BOD.

E. Monetary Debts Owed to Oak Spirit Sanctuary

- 1) People owing money to Oak Spirit Sanctuary must make arrangements to repay debt as a requirement of being "in good standing" with the church. Access to Oak Spirit Sanctuary property for events or personal visits may be restricted until such debts are paid.
- 2) All terms defined for repayment contracts of debt and presence on Oak Spirit Sanctuary property in relation to debt repayment are at the discretion of the Board of Directors or IRC.
- 3) The BoD may require payment in full. The Board of Directors also has the option to establish a payment plan contract with the condition that the debt repayment must be current according to the terms defined in the contract for a person to be able to be on the property.
- 4) If the account becomes delinquent, the person may be suspended again, until the account is brought up to date.

F. Special Considerations for Oak Spirit Sanctuary Leadership:

Oak Spirit Sanctuary recognizes a higher standard of behavior for those with leadership responsibilities due to the fact that their actions represent and reflect directly on the

organization as a whole. It should be noted that a failure of leadership may be that a person is simply not well-suited for the leadership position in which they serve due to their skillset, temperament, or other issues. One may be removed from a leadership position for behavior that would otherwise not subject a community member to corrective action (e.g. a lack of tact, a tendency to gossip, failure to follow through on commitments, etc.). Removal, suspension, or other corrective actions with regard to leadership activity may not impact their standing in the organization in any other way.

- a) Leadership positions include membership on the BOD, the Clergy, the Board of Advisors, serving as a Land Guardian or Steward, Oak Scout Leaders or any other official Oak Spirit Sanctuary designation or committee appointment.
- b) Those in leadership position may be subject to the following additional sanctions: immediate suspension of authority or removal from leadership position(s) for either a stated or undetermined period of time; additional training, education, counseling or mediation; relief of duties with or without removal of titles (i.e. clergy status), etc.
- c) Removing a person from a leadership position (other than the BOD) requires a simple majority of the full BOD. Removal from the BOD is governed by [Article III Section C. of the Oak Spirit Sanctuary Bylaws](#).

G. Record Keeping Regarding Incidents, Corrective Actions, etc.

A detailed, dated record of any incident or disciplinary issue will be kept on file. This will include initial complaints, all statements gathered, evidence of proof (e.g.: screen shots of messages, emails, photographic evidence, etc.) decisions and actions taken by the IRC and or BOD, progress reports, conclusion of issue, and any other information pertinent to record.

H. Confidentiality:

- 1) Because of the sensitive nature of behavioral issues, complaints, or conflicts, confidentiality and privacy of all people involved will be maintained (unless in the case of exceptions named below). Names of involved people will only be shared with members of the IRC who are processing the issue and the BOD.
- 2) Exceptions in confidentiality may include but are not limited to:
 - Reporting incidents to authorities or taking legal action which result in public records.
 - Incidents where privacy of the offender would put other people in harm's way (e.g., making known a ban of a confirmed child predator).
 - The board of directors may choose to issue a public statement regarding an incident or action taken if it is determined it would be beneficial to communicate this to the larger public group (e.g. termination of a person's position, the conclusion of a legal case). Any statement made will strive to address the generalities of the situation while maintaining as much confidentiality as possible.
- 3) Communication of decisions made by the IRC, progress regarding resolution, conclusion of the case, etc. may be communicated with involved parties if it is appropriate to do so.

[Approved 6/12/2022]

E. OPERATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

1. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A. All Oak Spirit Sanctuary participants are expected to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this document. The Board of Directors or established committee will complete a three-year cycle review of this document, and propose necessary edits to be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors in accordance with its Bylaws.
- B. The Board may select certain policies and procedures to review if deemed necessary outside of the regularly scheduled review of the policy manual.
- C. The Board may establish a committee for the review and revision process to ensure those involved with actual procedural tasks have input into their area of expertise.
- D. The date of Board approval of each revision will be recorded as part of the text of the revised section within the policy manual.
- E. A current copy of the Policies and Procedures manual will be available publically, either or both in printed or electronic form. An electronic copy will be stored in official files online and a backup offline copy.
- F. Any person involved with Oak Spirit Sanctuary at any time may request the development of a new policy or a revision. This request shall be submitted in writing through the appropriate committee to the Board. The Board will decide if and when the policy should be approved at any time.

[Approved 12/4/2022]

2. REVIEW OF BYLAWS, POLICIES, AND GOVERNANCE

- A. Procedures for Amendment to the Policy Documents:
Any task force or committee may make recommendations for policy change. Any individual or collective attending the Church may, through the appropriate committee, make recommendations for policy changes.
- B. Each request for policy change must be in writing and include the following information:
 - 1) Policy number and section a change is requested
 - 2) Rationale for the change
 - 3) Changes
 - Suggested wording for changes or additional policy
 - Wording of any policy where deletion is requested
- C. Policy change review process

- 1) Suggested policy revisions will first be reviewed by the Board who may refer the issue to a committee for further discussion.
- 2) Once reviewed in committee they will report the matter to the Advisory Board for further input.
- 3) Any final changes to the policy rest under the authority of the Board as outlined in the [Bylaws \(Section VI.A\)](#)
- 4) Although it is the general practice to refer policy changes to committees to solicit greater community input, it is allowable for the Board to review and revise policy on its own.
- 5) Whenever there is a change to the policy the Board shall make the change publicly known.
- 6) Following Board approval of policy changes, a Board member shall ensure inclusion of the changes in the master copies of the current Policy Documents. The updated policy will be noted in the board meeting minutes.

[Approved 12/4/2022]

3. OFFICIAL RECORDS POLICY

Official records shall be maintained by the Board of Directors and appropriate committees in a timely manner which corresponds with the calendar year, with the exception of the fiscal year, which runs from August 1 - July 31.

A. Official records shall include the following:

- 1) The Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation.
- 2) All minutes of the Board.
- 3) All monthly, quarterly, and yearly financial statements that are prepared and available for inspection, whether audited or unaudited.
- 4) All written and electronic documents, policies and procedures, memoranda or other writing approved by the Board in its official capacity.
- 5) All files related to behavioral or disciplinary matters, conflict mediation, incident reports and/or other confidential documents/correspondence. These are to be maintained in a secure fashion and accessed exclusively by the Board of Directors and committee leads as needed.
- 6) Records related to legal proceedings.
- 7) Contracts with third parties.
- 8) Records pertaining to ministries within the Church structure.
- 9) Oak Spirits roster.
- 10) Event registration lists, event programs, and event reports
- 11) All documents related to land and infrastructure management: equipment manuals, repair invoices, etc.

B. Retention and Destruction of Records

- 1) Members of the Board of Directors, committee members, volunteers, and others contracting with Oak Spirit Sanctuary shall transfer to Oak Spirit Sanctuary -all paper and electronic records of Oak Spirit Sanctuary not already maintained by Oak Spirit Sanctuary.
- 2) No individual shall knowingly destroy an official record (regardless of form).
- 3) Paper records may be converted to electronic form for ease of access and storage, as approved by the Board of Directors.
- 4) Record Backup and Storage
 - a) At least one copy of all official records should be kept in two separate digital locations
 - i) Cloud Storage
 - ii) External hard drive or offline storage device
- 5) Public access to records:
 - a) The Board shall make the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Board meeting minutes and annual financial reports publicly accessible via publication on the official web site.
 - b) Detailed, current financial records will be available upon request.
 - c) Certain documents such as, but not limited to, notes and discussion of behavioral or disciplinary issues and/or material related to pending legal cases or real estate negotiations may be withheld from public access. The final outcome of legal cases and real estate transactions will be made public once concluded. Records related to behavioral or disciplinary issues are not public access records.
- 6) It is forbidden for current or former Board members and others with access to records to retain copies of official Oak Spirit Sanctuary records not otherwise authorized for public release. Confidential or restricted documents are the property of Oak Spirit Sanctuary and the private retention, leaking, or publication of such material may result in actions as outlined in [Section D.13 \(“Corrective and Disciplinary Measures”\)](#) or in civil legal proceedings.
- 7) Unless otherwise directed by state or federal law or regulations or based on statute of limitations and audit periods for specific kinds of activities or records (e.g. grant requirements) records shall be maintained for a period of time as follows:

Annual, monthly and quarterly approved financial statements: Permanent records
Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and previously approved policies: Permanent records
Board of Director Meeting Minutes: Permanent records
Oak Spirit Roster: Permanent Record
Litigation documents: Permanent Record
Incident reports, grievances and disciplinary documents: Permanent Record
Other financial records (e.g. bank statements, deposit records, electronic fund transfer documents, reconciliations): 7 years
Contracts, including those for major repairs: 7 years after termination
Accounts receivable and payable ledgers and schedules: 7 years
All other records may be destroyed after three years.

[Approved 2/5/2023]

4. Land Stewardship Policy

1. Introduction:

Part of the mission of Oak Spirit Sanctuary is to provide access to the Land itself for personal communion with nature through day visits and private camping aside from Oak Spirit Sanctuary events and outside rentals.

While the vast majority of visitors come with good intentions, Oak Spirit Sanctuary must balance the mission of allowing access to a private nature sanctuary with the responsibility to provide a degree of security to maintain the land free from vandalism, littering, hunting, poaching, and/or other unsafe activity that would harm the property and persons on site.

At times, the property may have no one on-site. All visitor guidelines and land use policy apply at all times, whether Oak Spirit Sanctuary personnel are on-site or if property is unsupervised.

2. Guidelines for Land Visits and Camping

- 1) All visits to Oak Spirit Sanctuary are at the visitor's own risk. The land is rustic and the terrain is uneven. There is risk of harmful wild animal encounters and unexpected weather events. Depending on a visitor's mobile phone service provider, reception and service may be poor or unavailable.
- 2) Access to the land is available with a gate code for the lock on the front gate. For private visits with no supervision, the front gate should be locked up after arrival and upon final leaving of the property.
- 3) Wet weather restrictions on vehicular access - In order to protect the integrity of the land and avoid vehicles from getting stuck, Oak Spirit Sanctuary may cancel reservations of campers in large trailers or RVs during times of heavy rain. All vehicular traffic may also be restricted to certain areas depending on the condition of the land and/or road.
- 4) New Visitors/ First-Time Visitors
 - a) Defined as people who have never been to Oak Spirit Sanctuary before. They may or may not personally know any community members known to Oak Spirit Sanctuary.
 - b) New Visitors are encouraged to attend an Oak Spirit Sanctuary event (Lunar, Work day, or Festival weekend) prior to making private day visits or camping.
- 5) Visitor Check-In
 - a) Visitors to Oak Spirit Sanctuary (whether day visits or camping overnight) should alert Oak Spirit Sanctuary personnel of their visit, preferably in advance, although land access may be obtained at the gate through the numbers listed on the sign. If there is Oak Spirit Sanctuary personnel on-site, visitors and campers should check in with that person.
 - b) New/ First-time visitors will be vetted before entry in one or more of the following ways:
 1. Provide names of all persons visiting Oak Spirit Sanctuary, provide a photo of car license plate, and/or provide photo of driver's license.
 2. Provide the name of an established community member known at Oak Spirit Sanctuary who can vouch for you.

3. State the nature and duration of the visit (day visit to hike, camping, etc.) and pay appropriate fees if applicable.

6) Pets

Family-friendly dogs and cats need to be on a leash at all times outside the confines of a tent, vehicle or trailer or in a crate. Non-friendly/aggressive pets should not be brought to Oak Spirit Sanctuary at all. Any other kind of pet brought to Oak Spirit Sanctuary must be under the control of its owner and prevented from causing harm to any people or the land. Incidents of aggressive behavior by a pet will result in the animal being forbidden from returning. All animal waste should be collected and disposed of by the owner. Abandoning animals at Oak Spirit Sanctuary is a violation of behavioral standards and subject to disciplinary action.

7) Day Access

- a) Defined as visiting the land without camping overnight.
- b) Visiting hours are sunrise to sunset year-round. If visit will extend after hours, alert Oak Spirit Sanctuary personnel when arriving.

8) Camping

- a) Campers are encouraged to contact Oak Spirit Sanctuary about proposed dates of camping. This allows Oak Spirit Sanctuary to verify that there are no conflicting events or rentals. Methods of contact are via e-mail, message, or by using the online camping registration form.
- b) Campers are encouraged to pay in advance via the Paypal portal. Alternately, campers may pay in cash using the onsite drop box.
- c) Time Limit: Open camping is allowed for up to 7 consecutive days. Camping for longer than 7 consecutive days in a 30 day period would require a long-term camping contract.
- d) Cost:
 - i. The regular cost of camping is \$5.00 per camping structure (with the exception of large campers) and \$5.00 per every adult camper per day.
 - ii. "Camping Structure" is defined as: tent, tow behind camper, drivable camper, car or truck (if sleeping in vehicle), or hammock.
Examples: One adult tent with two adults: \$15.00 per day.
 - iii. Oversized campers: Over 25 feet, "fifth-wheelers," and Class A motorhomes are charged \$20.00 for the camping vehicle fee in addition to the fee per person for the first day. Following days are charged at the regular camping rate. Visitors with oversized campers are encouraged to limit the use of the road to necessary trips only.
 - iv. Children (under 18) are free. If camping in their own tent, the tent is also free.
- e) RVs and Trailers may be restricted to certain areas.
- f) Campers are prohibited from sharing the gate code. Campers should lock the gate each night.
- h) No unaccompanied minors (under 18 years old) are allowed to camp

9) Trash

Oak Spirit Sanctuary has limited trash removal services that do not have the capacity to accommodate on site trash disposal of personal trash. Personal trash and recycling should be packed out.

10) Littering

Littering on the land is considered a serious violation of Oak Spirit Sanctuary standards of behavior. People should be very mindful of any items. Items should be secured from the wind. Cigarette butts must be contained and not thrown into fire pits or on the ground. People should be mindful of glass containers so they do not break. If broken much care should be taken to clear all shards properly from the ground. Ideally if there is broken glass or dangerous substances on the ground, a small layer of ground should be removed and disposed of. If tools or assistance is needed in such a case contact an OSS lead.

[Approved 12/4/2022]

11) Fruit and Nut Harvest

a. Several species of tree found at Oak Spirit Sanctuary produce edible/harvestable items. With prior approval, these items may be harvested, when mature, for:

- i. Personal consumption during your current visit to OSS
- ii. To process for consumption at OSS events
- iii. To sell for the benefit of OSS
- iv. Harvesting for personal use in moderation, being considerate to leave some produce for others, including local wildlife.

v. Oak Spirit Sanctuary may suspend harvesting at any time due to overharvesting, abuse of the privilege or weather conditions such as drought.

b. Edible/harvestable items

- i. BlackBerry (late May-early July)
- ii. Mulberry (late May-early July)
- iii. Persimmon (Sep-Oct)
- iv. Hickory nut (Sep-Oct)
- v. Walnut (Sep-Oct)
- vi. Pecan (Sep-Oct)
- vii. Chestnut (Sep-Oct)
- viii. Pears (Sept - Nov)
- ix. Mushrooms

Note: mushroom gathering is at your own risk. People need to be knowledgeable about mushroom varieties before gathering mushrooms at OSS.

12) Fishing

Contact Oak Spirit Sanctuary if you wish to fish in Lake Gaia.

1. Only natural bait fishing allowed.
2. No net casting, trolling, trotlines allowed.
3. No chumming allowed
4. Any caught and field stripped fish or innards must be discarded away from any community areas.
5. No explosives allowed for mass fishing.

13) Fireworks

Fireworks, including sparklers and poppers, are not allowed.

14) Fires

While Oak Spirit Sanctuary places importance on each individual attendees safety, we also hold the safety of the land and animals as equally important. As such we have guidelines regarding fires on the property to ensure the safety of the land, animal inhabitants and community.

1. No personal fires shall be made outside of already established fire rings.
2. OSS management may prohibit fires, including fire spinning, at their discretion ei. no fires during droughts, windy weather or during red flag warnings
3. Fires should be attended at all times
4. No burning of trash in fire pits, including but not limited to cigarette butts
5. Fire should be properly extinguished prior to leaving the property or immediate area
6. Ritual fires should only be tended by appointed fire tenders

[Approved 2/5/2023]

5. SHRINES AND SACRED SPACES

1. Creating, changing the focus of, or making significant changes to existing permanent or semi-permanent shrines requires that a proposal be written and approved by the BOD. Adopting a shrine does not give one free reign to make extensive changes without approval. (e.g. removing new sapling would be allowed. Cutting established trees would require approval, adding a firepit would require approval, new plantings would require approval, etc.)
2. If work beyond basic maintenance is needed (e.g. to combat erosion or persistent wet areas or to rebuild a structure) input should be sought from the AB or designated land management lead.
3. Care should be taken not to use environmentally toxic materials in the construction of shrines or left as offerings. While plastic and glass is allowed in the construction or as offerings, natural materials such as wood, stone or heavy duty ceramics are preferred. The concern with plastics is its environmental impact as it degrades. The concern with glass is shards when it breaks.

4. Nailing, screwing or otherwise restricting trees is highly discouraged and would require approval. If items are tied onto tree branches it should be done in such a way so as to be easily removed at a later date.
5. Shrines and sacred spaces should be maintained on a regular basis. While doing so is the responsibility of the person(s) who have “adopted” the shrine (if there is one), basic tidying may be done by anyone at any time.
6. The general public should not remove items that have been left at shrines as offerings. The person responsible for maintenance may at their discretion if something is deteriorating and looking shabby.
7. People who are interested in adopting an existent shrine or sacred space should contact a member of the Advisory Board or BOD.

[Approved 2/5/2023]