

Constitution of Agudas Achim

Article I: Name

The name of the Congregation is Congregation Agudas Achim Anshe Sfarad, commonly known as Congregation Agudas Achim.

Article II: Mission Statement

Congregation Agudas Achim, a member of the Union of Orthodox Congregations of America, is committed to the religious, ethical, and communal principles and practices of Orthodox Judaism. Combining this with an openness to all members of the Jewish community, it is the purpose of the Synagogue to enrich spiritually and culturally the lives of its congregants through religious, educational, and social services and programs, and through fostering ties and support for the State of Israel. The Synagogue aims also to strengthen links with both the Greater Hartford Jewish community and the American Jewish community and to foster and support programs that benefit the community at large.

Article III: Membership

1. Any Jewish person is eligible to become a member of the Synagogue. Applications for membership shall be approved by the Membership Committee of the Board of Directors.
2. For purposes of establishing membership, family memberships, single memberships, and associate memberships shall be available. Family memberships shall include husband and wife — each counting as a Synagogue member — and children until the age of 18 or fully dependent children until the age of 21. Single membership shall include one head of household as a Synagogue member and any children until the age of 18 or fully dependent children until the age of 21. Associate membership shall be available, without voting privileges and as either family or single affiliation, to anyone otherwise eligible for Synagogue membership.

Subject to any other conditions set by the membership, full Synagogue members are entitled to participate in the religious, educational, and social activities of the Synagogue, including tickets for themselves and dependents for the High Holidays; to vote on matters brought before the general membership; to serve — after a year's membership--as officers of the Synagogue and members of the Board of Directors, to enroll children in the Synagogue Hebrew School; to use of Synagogue facilities for life-cycle occasions; and to burial rights in Agudas Achim cemetery grounds.

3. Membership dues, special assessments, and fees for special or on-going services shall be recommended and presented by the Board of Directors for approval by vote of the general membership. Such other fees shall include, for members and (as deemed appropriate, differentially) Associate members and non-members, those for the Brener Hebrew School, use of Synagogue facilities, and cemetery plots. Members whose dues or assessments are more than a year in arrears shall lose their voting privileges on Synagogue matters, may not serve on the Board of Directors or as

Synagogue officers, and are required to purchase High Holiday tickets. If the payment of dues is more than two years in arrears, the family or single or associate membership in question shall be suspended until the dues owed are paid.

4. Requests for exceptions to the amounts or dates set for payment of dues, fees, or other assessments may be made to the Treasurer, who together with the First Vice-President will act on these requests in accordance with procedures to be established by the Board of Directors.

Article IV: Officers of the Synagogue and Membership of the Board of Directors

1. The officers of the Synagogue shall be: President(s), two Vice-Presidents (First and Second), Treasurer, and Secretary. These officers shall be elected bi-annually at a general meeting of the Synagogue membership from a slate proposed by the Nominating Committee of the Board of Directors or by nomination made from the floor at the General Meeting called for Synagogue elections. The officers of the Synagogue shall serve for a period of two years. Officers shall serve no more than two consecutive terms in any one office. In the event of a vacancy among Synagogue officers before the term of office is completed, the Executive Committee shall name a replacement who shall serve pro tem until the next general membership meeting at which time a regular replacement will be elected
2. The Board of Directors of the Synagogue shall consist of nine members of the Synagogue other than those members serving as officers, plus the immediate past full term president(s) *ex officio* who shall sit on the Board in that capacity for one term of two years after leaving office. Members of the Board shall be elected at the annual General Meeting from a slate of nominations proposed by the Nominating Committee or by nomination from the floor of the General Meeting called for Synagogue elections. Board members shall be elected for three-year terms, with three new-term Board members to be elected each year. Board members may be re-elected to a maximum of two three-year terms, and may not be elected again to the Board until after a one-year break in service. The staggered rotation of Board members shall begin with the first Board election after the adoption of the present Constitution; at the time of that election, one-, two-, and three-year terms (three each) shall be assigned by lottery to the nine Board members then elected.
3. Responsibilities of the Synagogue Officers:
 - (i) The President(s): It shall be the responsibility of the President(s) to oversee the administrative and financial affairs of the Synagogue; to bring before the Board of Directors issues related to these matters and to see that the Board's decisions are implemented, to call and chair meetings of the general membership and of the Board of Directors; to appoint members of the Standing Committees and any ad hoc committees that are set up; annually to appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of two Board members and one Synagogue member who is not an officer or member of the Board, that Committee charged with presenting to the Synagogue membership thirty days before the annual election a slate of prospective Synagogue officers and a Board of Directors; and to represent the Synagogue in all matters other than those specifically within the purview of the Rabbi. In the case of

emergencies, the President(s) is/are empowered to authorize expenditures from the Synagogue treasury up to an amount to be set by the Board of Directors and subject to change by the Board.

Expenditures above that amount require the approval, in the case of emergencies, of the Executive Committee, and under normal circumstances, of the Board of Directors.

- (ii) The Vice-Presidents: The Vice-Presidents shall assist the President(s) in the discharge of presidential duties as their assistance is requested. In the absence of the President(s) at official Synagogue meetings or on other occasions at which the President(s) would normally represent the Synagogue, the First Vice-President shall assume the duties of that office; in the event of his or her absence, the Second Vice-President shall assume those duties. Each Vice-President shall be the Chair of a standing Committee, the particular appointment to be determined in consultation with the President(s).
- (iii) Treasurer: The Treasurer shall serve as Chair of the Finance and House Committee. S/he shall receive and account for all monies for the use of the Congregation, and shall pay all financial obligations incurred by the Congregation. The treasurer shall be responsible for the preparation and circulation of the annual report of the financial condition of the Synagogue; this report shall be made available to all members of the Congregation. The Treasurer shall also present quarterly reports of the Synagogue's financial affairs at regular meetings of the Board of Directors.
- (iv) Secretary: The Secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of Board Meetings and General Meetings of the Congregation. S/he shall circulate notices of those meetings to the Board for Board meetings and to the Congregation for General Meetings, together with the relevant Minutes and Agendas.
- (v) Board of Directors: Meetings of the Board of Directors shall normally be held not less than seven times annually or, beyond that, as called by the President(s). The Board shall have the responsibility of decision-making on all matters related to Synagogue affairs other than those reserved for the Rabbi or for the general membership. A quorum for meetings of the Board of Directors requires a majority of the combined number of Board members and Synagogue officers (8 or 9). Meetings of the Board shall normally include, in addition to Minutes of the previous meeting, a report by the Rabbi, either in person or as written, a financial report by the Treasurer (quarterly), and reports from the Standing and ad hoc Committees.

The President(s) shall appoint five Standing Committees that shall meet regularly and whose membership (other than the Chairs who shall be Vice-Presidents or Board members) may be drawn from the Board of Directors or the Synagogue membership at large. The Synagogue President(s) shall be members ex officio of all standing Committees. Chairs of the Standing Committees other than the Committees chaired by the Vice-Presidents shall be appointed from among members of the Board of Directors; all Board

members are expected to serve on one or more of the Synagogue Committees. The Standing Committees shall meet regularly and report on their meetings, recommendations, and decisions to the Board of Directors. The Standing Committees shall be:

- Ritual and Cemetery Committee
- Membership and Publicity Committee
- Financial and House Committee
- Education and Programming Committee
- Hospitality and Social Action Committee

Other Standing Committees may be established by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors without requiring amendment to the Constitution; Ad hoc Committees may be appointed at any time by the President(s) or by the Board of Directors.

The President(s) shall work with an Executive Committee composed of the Synagogue officers. The Executive Committee may meet at times and on occasions determined by the President(s). Minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee shall be kept by the Board Secretary. Except in cases of extraordinary urgency, decisions recommended by the Executive Committee shall be submitted for approval to the Board of Directors, preferably in open meeting or, if necessary, by polling. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for initiating reviews of the Synagogue staff and for responding to specific staff issues; recommendations on these matters shall also be transmitted to the Board of Directors for approval.

Article V: General Membership Meetings of the Synagogue

1. A General Meeting of the Synagogue membership shall be held at least once a year, no later than June 1st, at a date set by the Board of Directors. In addition to any other items of business placed on the agenda of this General Meeting, it shall be the occasion of the election of Synagogue officers and the Board of Directors. That election shall be based on the slate of nominees presented by the Nominating Committee and of any other nominations that may be made from the floor. Notice of the agenda for this meeting and of the slate of Officers and Board proposed by the Nominating Committee shall be mailed to all Synagogue members at least 15 days in advance of the meeting date.
2. Additional General Meetings of the membership may be called at any time by a vote of two-thirds of the Board of Directors. General Meetings of the Synagogue membership shall otherwise be called by the President(s) only upon the written request for such a meeting by twenty members of the Synagogue.
3. The presence of twenty percent (20%) of the Synagogue membership at any General Meeting is required for a quorum. Meetings of the general membership are required in order to approve the following matters: the hiring, contract renewal, or dismissal of the Rabbi or Cantor; the structure of dues or other financial assessments; the

election of Synagogue officers and members of the Board of Directors; major decisions concerning Synagogue property or other large-scale financial matters; amendments or any other changes in the Synagogue Constitution. Any other matters may be placed on the agenda of any General Meeting by the Board of the Directors or by written request to the President(s) signed by ten Synagogue members in good standing, provided that this request is submitted to the President(s) at least seven days in advance of the scheduled meeting.

Article VI: Role of the Rabbi

The Rabbi is the spiritual leader and Rabbinic authority for the Congregation. He is responsible for all Halakhic decisions related to Synagogue services, practices, and any other matters affecting the conduct of the Congregation. As the spiritual leader of the Congregation, he may also initiate discussions and may be consulted by the Officers and Board of Directors on non-Halakhic matters affecting the well-being of the Synagogue, although final decisions on these other matters rest with the Officers, the Board of Directors and its committees, and the general membership.

Article VII: Procedural Matters

1. On issues of parliamentary procedure in the conduct of meetings of the Synagogue membership, the Board of Directors, and Synagogue Committees, Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed.
2. Amendments or other changes to any of the articles of this Constitution or their parts require approval by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Synagogue members present at the General Meeting at which the Amendments are presented. Proposals for amending the Constitution may be submitted to the Synagogue membership for their approval either by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors or by a request submitted by 20 members of the Synagogue to the President(s). Notice of proposed amendments shall be circulated among the Synagogue membership at least fifteen (15) days prior to the General Meeting called for the vote.
3. Adoption of this revision of the Agudas Achim Constitution that is now in force requires approval by two-thirds (2/3) of the Officers and Board of Directors and by 60% of the Synagogue membership, at a general meeting and/or by mail ballot. If approved in this manner, this Constitution would replace any and all prior versions of the Constitution and By-laws of Agudas Achim.