



Process for Congregational Social Action Decision-Making (Approved by the Oseh Shalom Board Sunday, February 16, 2020)

(See the accompanying list of values which inform Oseh Shalom's Social action work.)

As a non-profit 501.c.3 corporation under the Internal Revenue Service code, Oseh Shalom may not endorse candidates for elected office or otherwise engage in politics in ways that the IRS prohibits. Oseh Shalom may, however, engage in social Action projects or take a position on a public policy or political issue and publicly advocate that position.

I. Oseh shalom is involved in a number of ongoing Social Action projects.

There is no change in process for these ongoing social Action projects.

1. Board and congregation notified.
2. Board approval sought as needed.
3. Congregation kept informed as appropriate

II. The following process is to be used to decide whether Oseh Shalom will engage in (associate its name with) a social action project or advocacy initiative as a congregation. Advocacy could include: signing a petition or position statement or participating in a demonstration as Oseh Shalom, hosting an event that advocates for a particular cause, publicly advocating for or against an issue, putting up a sign for or against an issue, etc.

Any Oseh member, group or staff person can propose a social action or advocacy project.

A. Typical Process (If time is not critical or the issue is not perceived to be controversial):

1. The proposal is brought to the Executive Committee for discussion.
2. Questions that should, ideally, be addressed when the proposal is presented:
 - The nature of the project and the reasons for signing on to it
 - Is the project consistent with other Oseh shalom Social Action projects or advocacy?
 - Is the project consistent with the values of Oseh Shalom and Reconstructing Judaism?
 - Is the project consistent with positions or projects of Reconstructing Judaism??
 - Logistical issues: (financing needed; amount of congregational commitment needed; resources needed; possible legal issues, etc).
3. Executive Committee recommends action to Board
4. Board discusses and votes on recommendation.



5. Those proposing the project are informed.
6. Congregation is informed of the Board's decision

B. If Time is critical (an upcoming rally or demonstration, an emergency legislative advocacy action, etc):

1. Proposal is brought to the president or designee
2. President consults with the Rabbi, Social Action Chair and a subset of the Executive Committee (Admin VP, Education VP, Religious VP, etc)
3. Same questions as above are addressed
4. A decision is made.
5. Those proposing the project are informed.
6. Board is informed at the next Board meeting
7. Congregation is informed of the decision

C. If time is extremely critical, the President can make an ad hoc decision; ideally, they should consult with at least one member of the Executive Committee.

The President, Executive committee, and Board are, of course, free to consult with other Oseh members, as appropriate.

D. In the case of issues which the Board feels may be particularly sensitive or controversial, the Board may decide to reach out to congregation members to gauge feelings on the issue or appoint a person to chair a small, short-term ad hoc taskforce open to the entire congregation.

1. The ad hoc task force would then hold one or meetings, provide educational information to the congregation and develop a proposal to bring back to the Executive Committee and the Board.
2. The Board will then vote on whether or not the Congregation will engage in the proposed Social Action project or advocacy. (Examples: pro-anti-Israel advocacy; BDS; sanctuary congregation, some gun control issues; etc.)
3. Congregation is informed of the Board's decision.