

The Troth Conflict Escalation and Resolution Procedure

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Procedure is to provide The Troth with a fair, structured, and community-centered process for addressing serious, non-misconduct interpersonal conflict between two Troth members when that conflict has escalated to the point that it threatens the peace, stability, general order, or functioning of The Troth as a religious organization. This Procedure exists to preserve community where possible, reduce harm to the wider body, and provide a credible path toward de-escalation, mediated resolution, or, where necessary, organizational action.

This Procedure is not intended to resolve every disagreement in Heathenry, nor every dispute between members. It exists for a narrower class of conflict: **disputes between two Troth members that have become sufficiently serious, irreconcilable, and disruptive that allowing them to continue unresolved would place the broader community at risk.**

This Procedure shall not be used to bury misconduct, suppress good-faith reporting, or force reconciliation where safety, dignity, justice, or proper accountability require a different response.

Section 2. Guiding Principles

2.1 Service to the community

This Procedure shall be administered for the good of The Troth as a whole, not for the vindication, humiliation, or defeat of either party. Conflict resolution within The Troth is meant to serve the well-being of the community and not become a contest in which one person “wins” by destroying the other.

2.2 Due process and fairness

The Troth recognizes that genuine accountability requires fair process, agreed rules, and a refusal to scapegoat either party. All persons involved in a matter under this Procedure shall be treated with dignity and shall be entitled to a process grounded in articulated concerns, appropriate review, and good-faith decision-making.

2.3 Coexistence rather than forced agreement

The purpose of this Procedure is not to force ideological agreement or to litigate every underlying dispute. The purpose is to help the parties reach a common understanding of the conflict and determine whether, and under what conditions, they can remain in the religious community together without continued harm to The Troth.

2.4 Early de-escalation

The Troth favors resolving conflict at the lowest appropriate level before it spreads further. De-escalation should begin when conflict stops being a good-faith effort at understanding and begins turning into defensiveness, faction-building, dogpiling, righteousness-seeking, or a struggle to “be right” rather than to resolve the issue.

2.5 Good-faith participation

This Procedure depends on the willingness of the parties to engage in good faith, to respect the process, and to value continued membership in The Troth enough to abide by a resolution if one is reached.

2.6 Context matters

Not every conflict belongs in a resolution process. Some situations call for self-protection, conduct enforcement, immediate safety response, or referral outside The Troth rather than mediation. The appropriate strategy depends on the nature of the conduct and the context in which it occurs.

2.7 Need-to-know confidentiality and accountable governance

This Procedure shall be handled with appropriate confidentiality, documentation, recusal, and need-to-know sharing, consistent with The Troth’s Leadership Code of Conduct and clergy obligations.

Section 3. Scope

This Procedure applies only to serious interpersonal conflict meeting all of the following conditions:

- a. the conflict is primarily between two individual persons at the center of the dispute;
- b. both central parties are current members of The Troth;
- c. the matter is a true interpersonal conflict rather than primarily an allegation of misconduct, policy violation, abuse of office, or criminal conduct; and
- d. the conflict has escalated to the point that it threatens the stability, general order, peace, well-being, or functioning of The Troth as an organization or religious community.

This Procedure may be used where the conflict originated inside or outside a Troth space, provided that the conflict is now materially affecting The Troth, Troth spaces, Troth leadership, Troth ministry, or the ability of members to remain in community together. This Procedure may inform pastoral response by Troth clergy in conflicts encountered through clergy work, but formal invocation of this Procedure is reserved to matters where The Troth has a legitimate organizational interest and actual authority to act.

Section 4. Matters Excluded from This Procedure

This Procedure shall not be used to address matters that primarily involve:

- a. criminal conduct;

- b. harassment, threats, intimidation, discrimination, bigotry, hate speech, or material disruption;
- c. false factual allegations made with reckless disregard for truth;
- d. misuse of The Troth's name, logo, platforms, or apparent authority;
- e. privacy or confidentiality violations that expose members to harm;
- f. retaliation for good-faith reporting;
- g. abuse of power, officer misconduct, institutional bullying, selective enforcement, or misuse of moderation or disciplinary authority;
- h. any matter governed primarily by the Members' General Code of Conduct, the Leadership Code of Conduct, safeguarding rules, disciplinary procedures, or applicable law.

Where a reported matter includes allegations of misconduct or Code of Conduct violations, the matter shall be referred to the Troth Conduct Investigation Procedures.

If a matter initially presented as interpersonal conflict is later found to include substantial allegations of misconduct, abuse of power, retaliation, or Code of Conduct violation, the Board or other receiving authority may pause or terminate this Procedure and redirect the matter to the appropriate process.

Section 5. Definitions

5.1 Interpersonal Conflict

"Interpersonal conflict" means a serious dispute between two Troth members in which the central issue is the deterioration of their ability to relate, communicate, cooperate, or remain in community together, and which has escalated beyond ordinary disagreement to the point that it threatens harm to the wider Troth community or the functioning of the organization. An interpersonal conflict under this Procedure does not primarily consist of allegations of crime, misconduct, abuse of power, or Code of Conduct violation.

5.2 Serious, irreconcilable, and articulable

A matter is "serious, irreconcilable, and articulable" when the issue can be described clearly, has resisted ordinary efforts at resolution, and has grown beyond a passing disagreement such that continued inaction would likely damage the peace, order, or functioning of The Troth.

5.3 Good-faith participation

"Good-faith participation" means participation that is honest, respectful of the process, oriented toward resolution or workable coexistence, and not aimed primarily at humiliation, delay, spectacle, or engineering a pretext for expulsion or further conflict.

5.4 De-escalation

"De-escalation" means intervention intended to reduce emotional flooding, defensiveness, dogpiling, faction-building, or performative conflict so that the underlying issue can be

addressed without further harm to the parties or the community. De-escalation may include pauses, moderator action, cooling-off periods, or referral to clergy or leadership.

5.5 Mediation

“Mediation” means a structured process facilitated by a neutral third party whose role is to keep the parties on track, prevent endless litigation, clarify the actual disagreement, and assist the parties in reaching an agreement or workable path forward for continued coexistence within The Troth.

5.6 Executive Session

“Executive session” means a confidential session of the Board or a duly authorized Board process used to consider a qualifying conflict matter and, where appropriate, to create a protected space in which the parties may speak candidly without unnecessary public pressure or performance.

5.7 Manifest bad faith

“Manifest bad faith” means conduct during the process that clearly shows an unwillingness to participate sincerely in resolution, including deliberate sabotage of the process, refusal to respect agreed boundaries, using the process solely to produce spectacle or punishment, or seeking to manipulate the outcome so that the organization cannot function.

5.8 Conflict with The Troth

“Conflict with The Troth” means a matter that is not merely interpersonal, but involves alleged Code of Conduct violations, abuse of power, officer misconduct, or similar conduct directed against the standards, governance, or institutional integrity of The Troth. Such matters are outside this Procedure.

Section 6. Reporting of Conflict Concerns

Any current member of The Troth may report a qualifying interpersonal conflict when that member reasonably believes the conflict has escalated beyond ordinary disagreement and now threatens the peace, stability, general order, or functioning of The Troth. Reports may be made by one of the central parties to the conflict or by another member who has directly observed the conflict’s effect on the organization.

Reports under this Procedure shall be made to the Board of Directors, or to an officer designated by the Board to receive conflict reports. If a report is initially made to a Steward, Moderator, or member of the Clergy, that person may assist the reporting party in determining whether the matter appears to fall within this Procedure and, if appropriate, may refer the matter onward to the Board or designated officer.

A report should include, to the extent reasonably possible:

- a. the names of the two central parties to the conflict;
- b. a concise description of the issue in dispute;

- c. the reasons the reporting party believes the issue is serious, irreconcilable, and articulable;
- d. the reasons the reporting party believes the matter now threatens the peace, order, or functioning of The Troth;
- e. any relevant Troth spaces, events, ministries, or leadership functions affected by the conflict;
- f. any steps already taken to resolve or de-escalate the matter; and
- g. whether the reporting party is aware of allegations that may instead require referral to the Members' Code, Leadership Code, disciplinary procedures, safeguarding procedures, or civil authorities.

A report need not prove the matter in full in order to be received. Its purpose is to trigger triage, not to prejudge the outcome.

No person shall be penalized merely for making a report in good faith, even if the matter is later found not to fall within this Procedure. The Members' Code and Leadership Code both protect good-faith complaints and reporting.

Section 7. Initial Review and Triage

Upon receipt of a report, the Board or designated receiving authority shall conduct an initial review to determine whether the matter:

- a. falls within this Procedure as a serious interpersonal conflict;
- b. should first be addressed through informal de-escalation or pastoral intervention;
- c. should be referred to mediation at a later stage if lower-level intervention fails; or
- d. must instead be diverted to a different Troth process, including but not limited to the Members' General Code of Conduct, the Leadership Code of Conduct, disciplinary procedures, safeguarding procedures, or any process required by law or by the bylaws.

In conducting triage, the receiving authority shall ask at minimum:

- 1. What is at issue? The issue must be serious, irreconcilable, and articulable.
- 2. Who is involved? The central conflict must be between two current Troth members.
- 3. What is at stake? The conflict must threaten the stability, general order, peace, or functioning of The Troth as an organization or religious community.

If the receiving authority determines that the matter primarily involves alleged criminal conduct, harassment, intimidation, discrimination, hate speech, material disruption, false factual allegations, privacy/confidentiality violations, retaliation, abuse of power, misuse of Troth authority, institutional bullying, selective enforcement, misuse of moderation powers, or other Code of Conduct issues, the matter shall not proceed under this Procedure and shall instead be referred to the appropriate Troth process. The conflict-resolution track shall not be used to dilute, delay, or displace proper accountability under the Troth's existing codes and companion procedures.

If a matter contains both interpersonal conflict and possible misconduct, the Board or designated authority may separate the issues, pause this Procedure, or direct the matter first into the applicable conduct or disciplinary process. Where necessary to protect members or the organization, conduct-related concerns shall take priority over mediation.

Section 8. Early Warning Signs and Threshold for Intervention

The Troth recognizes that debate, disagreement, and strong differences of opinion are normal within a diverse religious community. Conflict resolution under this Procedure should not begin merely because two people disagree, speak sharply, or hold opposing views.

Intervention becomes appropriate when a conflict begins to show signs that it is no longer functioning as ordinary disagreement and is instead becoming destabilizing to the parties or to the community. Warning signs may include, but are not limited to:

- a. additional members becoming drawn into the dispute;
- b. battle lines, camps, or factionalism forming around the parties;
- c. dogpiling, pile-ons, or spectator escalation in Troth spaces;
- d. the discussion shifting from mutual understanding to efforts to “win,” shame, recruit, convert, or prove righteousness;
- e. increasing defensiveness, emotional flooding, or inability to pause productively;
- f. repeated attempts to “talk it out” that only worsen the conflict;
- g. spillover into multiple Troth spaces, ministries, or public-facing environments;
- h. visible interference with Troth work, volunteer collaboration, ministry, or member well-being; or
- i. conduct suggesting that unresolved continuation of the conflict will place the broader Troth community at risk.

The threshold for formal use of this Procedure is reached when the conflict has risen to the level that it must be addressed because leaving it unresolved would threaten the stability, peace, general order, or functioning of The Troth.

Section 9. Informal Resolution and Early De-Escalation

Before the formal mediation stage is invoked, The Troth shall, where appropriate, favor lower-level and less adversarial means of reducing harm and restoring workable communication. The purpose of early de-escalation is not to force premature reconciliation, but to prevent further damage while determining whether the matter can be resolved without formal Board action.

Informal resolution and de-escalation measures may include:

- a. encouraging the parties to pause direct engagement for a defined period;
- b. requesting that the parties refrain from continuing the conflict in Troth spaces;
- c. directing moderators to slow, pause, or close channels or threads in Troth-controlled spaces in order to interrupt dogpiling and emotional escalation;

- d. encouraging the parties to restate the issue more clearly and identify what is actually in dispute;
- e. referring one or both parties to a Steward, Moderator, or member of the Clergy for support in de-escalation;
- f. identifying a temporary communication boundary pending further review; and
- g. recommending training, coaching, or facilitated conversation where appropriate.

When de-escalation is attempted, the parties may be instructed not to use the pause as an opportunity to continue inflaming the matter elsewhere in a way that predictably spills back into Troth life.

Nothing in this Section prevents a person from taking reasonable steps for self-protection or from declining informal engagement where self-protection, safety, or dignity requires stronger boundaries.

Section 10. Escalation Path

The Troth adopts a layered escalation path for serious interpersonal conflict. The expected order of intervention is:

Members / Stewards / Moderators → Clergy → Board → Mediator

This path reflects the principle that conflict should be addressed at the lowest appropriate level first, while preserving the Board's authority to intervene sooner when the seriousness of the matter requires it.

10.1 Member-level resolution

Members are encouraged to address ordinary conflict directly, respectfully, and early when doing so is reasonably safe and appropriate. The Troth should support members by providing basic conflict-resolution education so that fewer disagreements escalate into organizational crises.

10.2 Steward and Moderator intervention

Stewards and Moderators may assist in identifying when conflict has crossed from ordinary disagreement into destabilizing escalation. In Troth-controlled spaces, they may use ordinary moderation and stewardship tools to interrupt dogpiling, slow harmful exchanges, create cooling-off periods, and refer the matter onward when needed.

Stewards and Moderators are not final adjudicators under this Procedure unless separately authorized by policy. Their role is early intervention, containment, referral, and support.

10.3 Clergy pastoral intervention

Where lower-level intervention is insufficient or where the matter would benefit from pastoral care, Troth clergy may provide conflict support within the scope of their training and ministerial role. Clergy may help the parties clarify what is at stake, frame the issue in a way both can understand, and explore whether a path toward coexistence remains available. Clergy intervention under this Procedure is pastoral rather than investigative,

adjudicative, or clinical. The Clergy Manual states that Troth clergy provide ethical and values-based guidance, are not a substitute for professional therapy, must know their limits, and must make appropriate referrals when a person's needs exceed what the clergy member can competently provide.

A member of the clergy may recommend to the Board that executive session or formal mediation be invoked. If the clergy member successfully helps resolve the issue, no further report is required beyond what Troth policy otherwise mandates. When recommending advanced mediation, the clergy member need not disclose confidential details beyond what is already otherwise properly before the Board. Penitent privilege, pastoral confidentiality, and any applicable legal limits shall be respected consistent with Troth policy and applicable law.

10.4 Board review

The Board of Directors, or a Board-authorized process, is the body that determines whether a reported conflict warrants formal organizational intervention under this Procedure. The Board may:

- a. decline to invoke the Procedure;
- b. direct further informal de-escalation;
- c. refer the matter to clergy or another lower-level intervention;
- d. invoke executive session for confidential review;
- e. determine that mediation should be pursued; or
- f. divert the matter to the Members' Code, Leadership Code, safeguarding, or disciplinary procedures where appropriate.

10.5 Mediation

Mediation is the advanced conflict-resolution stage and should be used only when the matter falls within this Procedure, lower-level intervention has not been sufficient, and the Board determines that formal mediation offers a meaningful possibility of restoring workable coexistence or at minimum producing a clear record and recommendation for next steps.

Section 11. Recusal, Conflicts of Interest, and Impartial Process

Any Board member, officer, clergy member, steward, moderator, or other participant in the administration of this Procedure shall disclose any personal, financial, romantic, organizational, factional, or other conflict of interest relevant to the matter consistent with the Conflict of Interest Policy.

Any such person shall recuse from decisions, recommendations, mediation, or confidential review where that person's impartiality could reasonably be questioned. This includes, but is not limited to, situations where the person:

- a. is one of the central parties;
- b. has a close personal or adversarial relationship with one of the parties;
- c. has already publicly taken sides in a manner inconsistent with neutrality;

- d. has a leadership role that is itself part of the dispute; or
- e. may be a witness to conduct that belongs in another Troth process.

Section 12. Executive Session and Invocation of Formal Process

When the Board determines that a reported conflict may qualify for formal intervention, the Board may convene in executive session or direct that a confidential Board-governed process be used for preliminary review. The purpose of the executive session is to create a protected setting in which the matter can be considered seriously, candidly, and without unnecessary performance pressure on the parties.

The Board may invoke the formal process under this Procedure only when it determines that:

- a. the matter falls within the defined scope of serious interpersonal conflict;
- b. the issue is serious, irreconcilable, and articulable;
- c. the central parties are two current Troth members; and
- d. the conflict threatens the stability, peace, general order, or functioning of The Troth.

Upon invoking the formal process, the Board may direct the next appropriate step, including mediated resolution, protective interim measures consistent with Troth policy, or any other measure authorized by the bylaws and companion policies.

Section 13. Selection and Appointment of Mediator

When the Board determines that formal mediation is appropriate, it shall appoint or approve a neutral mediator. The Board may use a trained volunteer, an outside professional, or another qualified person, provided that the mediator is credible, impartial, and capable of conducting the process with seriousness and fairness. The mediator should, to the greatest extent reasonably possible, possess the following qualities:

- a. good listening skills;
- b. good communication skills;
- c. integrity and impartiality;
- d. patience;
- e. credibility in the eyes of both the parties and the organization;
- f. ability to maintain neutrality and control personal bias;
- g. tact, empathy, and respect for opposing views;
- h. awareness of cultural, social, economic, and gender differences;
- i. ability to keep parties on track and prevent endless relitigation; and
- j. ability to discern issues that are not properly mediable.

Where reasonably possible, the mediator should also understand Heathenry well enough to grasp uniquely Heathen grievances, religious context, and the communal stakes of the dispute.

No person may serve as mediator if that person's impartiality could reasonably be questioned.

Section 14. Preparation for Mediation

Before mediation begins, the Board or designated process administrator shall ensure that:

- a. the matter has been confirmed to fall within this Procedure;
- b. excluded matters have been diverted as needed to the Members' Code, Leadership Code, disciplinary, safeguarding, or legal processes;
- c. the parties have been informed of the nature and purpose of mediation;
- d. any needed temporary boundaries or moderation measures have been set;
- e. the mediator has been selected and accepted; and
- f. the parties understand that the purpose of mediation is not victory, spectacle, or public bloodletting, but a workable path to coexistence if one is still possible.

The Board may require the parties to acknowledge, in writing if appropriate, the basic expectations of the process, including confidentiality expectations, behavioral boundaries, and good-faith participation.

Section 15. Interim Protective and Stabilizing Measures

At any point after receipt of a qualifying report, and before final resolution, the Board or a properly authorized Troth authority may impose temporary measures reasonably necessary to protect Troth spaces, Troth work, the parties, witnesses, or the wider community.

Such measures may include:

- a. directing the parties to pause direct engagement in Troth spaces;
- b. limiting interaction in specified channels, meetings, or teams;
- c. temporary moderation restrictions in official Troth platforms;
- d. closing or slowing channels, threads, or other Troth-controlled venues where escalation is occurring;
- e. temporary communication boundaries;
- f. suspension from a particular volunteer role pending review, where necessary to preserve neutrality or stability; or
- g. other temporary boundaries consistent with Troth policy and bylaws.

These measures are not findings of guilt. They are temporary steps meant to interrupt dogpiling, emotional flooding, factional escalation, or institutional paralysis while the matter is being reviewed.

Where a leader is subject to temporary restrictions, those restrictions shall be applied consistently with the Leadership Code's commitments to fairness, transparency, documentation, and non-retaliation.

Section 16. Mediation Process

The mediation process shall be structured, focused, and directed toward whether the two parties can remain in the religious community together without continued harm to The Troth.

The point of mediation is not to litigate every past event, determine cosmic innocence, or force personal or ideological agreement. The point is to reach a common understanding of the disagreement and determine whether, and under what conditions, the parties can coexist in The Troth in a way that no longer tears the community apart.

At a minimum, the mediator should guide the parties through the following steps:

- a. Clarification of positions. Each party shall be asked to describe the other party's position in terms that the other party recognizes as substantially fair.
- b. Identification of misunderstanding. The mediator shall help determine whether the conflict rests in whole or in part on misunderstanding, escalation patterns, shame reactions, or drift away from the original issue.
- c. Clarification of stakes. The mediator shall help the parties understand what is at stake for each of them and for The Troth.
- d. Conditions for coexistence. The mediator shall help the parties answer questions such as: "What do I need to see, hear, or feel from this person in order to remain in community with them?" "How can we exist peacefully?" "What are you willing to do?"
- e. Path forward. The mediator shall seek a practical path forward, not endless revisiting of who was right or wrong.

The mediator may meet jointly or separately with the parties as appropriate, provided the process remains fair.

Section 17. Good-Faith Participation Requirements

All parties participating in mediation under this Procedure are expected to participate in good faith.

Good-faith participation includes:

- a. sincere engagement with the process;
- b. willingness to hear and restate the other party's position fairly;
- c. respect for agreed process boundaries;
- d. refraining from attempts to inflame the matter in Troth spaces while mediation is pending;
- e. refraining from retaliation, intimidation, or misuse of Troth authority; and
- f. willingness to work toward a stable and enforceable path forward if one can be reached.

Manifest bad faith may include:

- a. using the process solely to humiliate or punish;
- b. refusing all sincere engagement while pretending to participate;
- c. deliberately continuing public escalation or dogpiling during the process;
- d. attempting to manipulate the process so that both parties are removed rather than resolved; or

- e. exploiting leadership power, factional support, or procedural loopholes to sabotage the process.

Where the party is a Troth leader, good-faith participation also includes compliance with the Leadership Code's prohibitions on institutional bullying, retaliatory conduct, selective enforcement, misuse of office, and weaponizing frith to suppress justified concerns.

Section 18. Written Resolution, Memorandum, or Coexistence Agreement

If mediation produces a workable resolution, the mediator shall prepare a written summary of the outcome for the Board or designated Troth authority. That summary should identify:

- a. the agreements reached;
- b. the responsibilities assumed by each party;
- c. any communication boundaries, behavioral expectations, or role limitations agreed to;
- d. any follow-up check-ins, timelines, or review points; and
- e. any policy recommendations revealed by the process for future Troth consideration.

The written outcome may take the form of a mediation report, a memorandum of understanding, or a coexistence agreement, depending on the needs of the case and the level of formality appropriate.

No resolution under this Procedure may excuse, conceal, or nullify conduct that must instead be addressed under the Members' Code, Leadership Code, safeguarding procedures, or the law.

Section 19. Failure of Mediation and Recommendations to the Board

If mediation fails to produce a workable path to coexistence, the mediator shall submit a written report to the Board or designated authority identifying, as appropriate:

- a. whether mediation occurred and whether the parties participated;
- b. whether any agreement was reached in full or in part;
- c. whether one or both parties engaged in manifest bad faith;
- d. whether the mediator believes coexistence in The Troth remains realistically possible; and
- e. any recommended next steps.

The Board shall then determine what organizational action, if any, is required under the bylaws and companion Troth policies. If the Board determines that the continued participation of one or both parties would materially impair the peace, stability, general order, or functioning of The Troth, the Board may impose appropriate remedies authorized by the bylaws and applicable policies, including restrictions, removal from roles, suspension, or removal from membership, as applicable.

Section 20. Confidentiality and Handling of Sensitive Information

Matters under this Procedure shall be handled as confidentially as reasonably possible, consistent with fairness, safety, law, and the legitimate needs of Troth governance.

Sensitive reports, personal information, private communications, and mediation materials shall be shared only on a need-to-know basis with persons responsible for triage, clergy care, mediation, governance, safety response, or legal compliance.

Participants in this Procedure shall not publicly disclose private communications, identifying details, or confidential materials from the process except as reasonably necessary for good-faith reporting, safety response, legal compliance, or civil-authority involvement where required.

Clergy communications shall be handled in accordance with pastoral confidentiality, penitent privilege where recognized, and applicable law. Confidentiality is not absolute. It does not bar sharing what is reasonably necessary for good-faith reporting, safety response, legal compliance, or referral into the proper Troth process where misconduct or criminal concerns are present.

All formal records generated under this Procedure shall be maintained by the Secretary of The Troth, or by a Board-designated alternate where the Secretary is recused or unavailable.

Section 21. Anti-Retaliation

No member or leader may retaliate against any person for:

- a. making a good-faith report under this Procedure;
- b. making a good-faith complaint under the Members' Code or Leadership Code;
- c. participating in mediation or review;
- d. serving as a witness or providing information in good faith;
- e. asking questions about the process; or
- f. participating in governance related to the matter.

Retaliation includes overt punishment, informal pressure, misuse of office, selective enforcement, exclusion from ordinary participation, intimidation, smear efforts, or the use of status to chill dissent or reporting.

Any retaliation occurring in connection with this Procedure shall be treated as a separate matter and may be referred to the Members' Code, Leadership Code, or disciplinary process as appropriate.

Section 22. Recordkeeping

The Secretary of The Troth shall serve as the designated record keeper for matters handled under this Procedure, unless the Secretary is recused or otherwise unable to serve in a given matter. If the Secretary is recused or unavailable, the Board shall designate an alternate record keeper for that matter.

The Secretary, or designated alternate, shall maintain appropriate records of matters handled under this Procedure. Such records should include, as applicable:

- a. the initial report;
- b. the triage determination;
- c. any interim measures imposed;
- d. any clergy recommendation or referral;
- e. the invocation of executive session or formal mediation;
- f. the appointment of the mediator;
- g. the outcome of mediation;
- h. any Board determination and resulting action; and
- i. any follow-up steps or compliance review.

Records shall be handled in a manner consistent with privacy, need-to-know restrictions, and responsible stewardship of sensitive information. The purpose of recordkeeping is not to build gossip archives. It is to preserve institutional memory, support consistent handling, demonstrate fairness, and prevent repeated reinvention of process.

Section 23. Training and Prevention

The Troth shall invest in conflict literacy and prevention at multiple levels of the organization so that fewer conflicts rise to the level of formal intervention.

23.1 Members

The Troth should make basic conflict-resolution education available to members, including training in listening, de-escalation, avoiding dogpiling, and recognizing when a matter belongs in proper reporting channels rather than public escalation.

23.2 Stewards and Moderators

Stewards and Moderators should receive additional training in recognizing escalation, intervening early, slowing harmful exchanges, protecting Troth spaces, and referring matters onward without overreaching into discipline or adjudication.

23.3 Clergy

Troth clergy should receive more advanced training in conflict resolution as part of pastoral care and clergy formation.

23.4 Leaders

Troth leaders should be trained not only in conflict handling, but in the specific leadership risks identified in the Leadership Code: misuse of authority, retaliatory behavior, selective enforcement, poor handling of sensitive information, failure to recuse, and weaponizing frith to suppress justified concerns.

23.5 Mediator capacity

The Troth may retain an outside mediator, train a qualified internal volunteer, or pursue both paths over time, but any mediator used under this Procedure should meet the standards set

forth in Section 13. The working group discussed both professional mediation and the possibility of developing internal capacity.

Section 24. Relationship to Other Troth Policies

This Procedure shall be read together with:

- The Troth Members' General Code of Conduct;
- The Troth Leadership Code of Conduct;
- the Troth Clergy Manual and clergy ethics provisions where clergy are involved;
- any Troth safeguarding procedures;
- any Board disciplinary procedures;
- the bylaws; and
- any office-specific or program-specific rules adopted by The Troth.

Where those documents conflict, the interpretation that best protects safety, fairness, lawful conduct, and the organization's ability to function shall govern, unless the bylaws require otherwise.

This Procedure does not replace the Members' Code or Leadership Code. It exists alongside them and is meant for a narrower category of serious interpersonal conflict that is not primarily misconduct.

Section 25. Statement on Frith, Hospitality, and Accountability

The Troth affirms frith, hospitality, community harmony, and restoration where restoration is truly possible.

Accordingly, this Procedure shall never be used to:

- bury misconduct,
- pressure people to endure abuse,
- silence justified complaints,
- force reconciliation where safety or dignity requires distance, or
- create a false appearance of harmony at the expense of truth and accountability.

Section 26. Effective Administration

The Board of Directors shall be responsible for ensuring that this Procedure is administered consistently with The Troth's bylaws, companion conduct policies, and governance obligations. Leaders and clergy involved in this Procedure shall remain within the limits of their roles, disclose conflicts where required, respect confidentiality and reporting limits, and avoid any misuse of office or pastoral trust.