



THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Aug 19, 2022

Bylaws and Rules Committee of the SRS
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The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

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Bylaws and Rules Committee (BLRC 2022-2024)
(Sikh Religious Society)

Preface

The Sikh Religious Society (SRS) Code of Conduct and Ethics ('the code') is one of the ways we put values of Sikh Religious Society (SRS) into practice. It is built around the recognition that everything we do in connection with our work at SRS should be and will be, measured against the standards of ethical conduct based on Sikhi. We set the bar that high for practical as well as aspirational reasons: Our commitment to these standards is to further the aims and objectives of the SRS and that of Sikhi.

1) Code of Conduct – What, Why, and How?

a) Code of Conduct - **WHAT**

- i) This Code of conduct is a set of rules for good governance of SRS, to assure ethical leadership and management through ethical conduct of individuals, managing or acting on behalf of SRS or otherwise associated or interacting with SRS to further the aims and objectives of SRS.
- ii) This code provides expectations principles and the values by which our organization operates. It provides a framework of conduct for roles, responsibilities, practices, processes, and procedures to assure, continuously measure and improve good governance. Aspects not covered by this code of conduct must follow similar standards and measures.
- iii) Foundation of this Code is wholistic view of 'Granth and Panth' based on:
 - (1) **Gurmat** (the teachings of the Sikh Gurus, Shri Guru Granth Sahib, and basic tenets of Sikhi),
 - (2) **Sikh Rehat Maryada** – The code of Sikh Conduct & Conventions – Dharam Parchar Committe Shiromini Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC). This Rehat Maryada was adopted by SGPC through its resolution 97 in a meeting on Feb 3, 1945; after long deliberations considering the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib, tradition and practice (based on history and Rehatnamas and Hukumnamas etc.) herein after referred to as 'Sikh Rehat Maryada', 'Rehat Maryada' or 'Rehat'),
 - (3) Authentic Sikh History and Heritage (Reference: Sikh Rehat Maryada),
 - (4) **SRS Constitution** (specifically the Article IX, 1, b) and its aims and objectives;
 - (5) And, the **applicable law** of the land.
 - (6) The code of conduct is subservient to the constitution of SRS, and follows the framework of Gurmat, Rehat Maryada, and the law of the land.
- iv) The aims and objectives of SRS and the Provisions of Rehat Maryada will be considered part of this Code of Conduct. In case of confusion Rehat Maryada will be used as reference for religious aspects and Constitution and applicable law will be referred to for organizational and legal aspects.
- v) This code, along with the constitution, will act as a set of instructions, a central guide and a reference for functioning, ethical conduct and interaction in all affairs of the organization. Board and Committees formed under SRS constitution must follow these instructions to run the affairs of SRS; to fulfill its aims and objectives as the core part of their responsibility.

b) Code of Conduct - **WHY**

- i) The code of conduct is a requirement of the SRS constitution under its article IX.1.j.iv.
- ii) It is required to assure good governance through ethical management and leadership.
- iii) It is key to achieving the aims and objectives of SRS by avoiding distractions and conflicts seen in the past.

c) Code of Conduct – **HOW**

- i) According to the 'first adoption' process defined in the constitution, this will be 'the' code of conduct in effect and will be read along with the constitution and or bylaws. All other practices or procedures not already part of the constitution or otherwise not duly approved based on the procedure defined by the constitution or based on the applicable law, will be inapplicable and superseded by this code.
- ii) Accepting any role in SRS's management, committees, office, or otherwise taking part in SRS's affairs or acting for or on its behalf, imply acceptance of the standards of conduct outlined in this code. The Board of trustees or anyone authorized to act for or on behalf of SRS must assure communicating these provisions to whoever they engage or cause to be engaged in affairs of SRS.
- iii) Filing any form or application with SRS (to become a member, take part in its affairs, conduct programs or activities for or on its behalf, utilizing its resources including use of its premises, engaging its

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

employees, board of trustees, members of committees or authorized delegates in their official capacity; will imply acceptance of this Code of Conduct.

- iv) SRS may also require all individuals, including members and non-members associated with it, acting for or on its behalf, or otherwise participating in its programs, to expressly acknowledge that they have read and understand the SRS constitution and this Code of Conduct and Ethics.
- v) The board will create a ***'Code of Conduct and Ethics Committee'***, to help the CIC in implementing this code of conduct.
 - (a) This committee will have 5 members **qualified** to comprehend, interpret and implement this code of conduct and ethics and help in performance assessment of all functions based on this code.
 - (b) Minimum qualification includes professional level written and verbal linguistic proficiency in English and Punjabi. Management, teaching or legal experience is a plus and highly preferred.
 - (c) Members of this committee must be selected by lottery from the pool of **qualified** volunteers taken from the volunteer pool. Every new board may form this committee afresh. It is recommended to let the existing willing members continue when possible.
 - (d) Failure to constitute this committee will shift all the responsibilities outlined for this committee on to the CIC as CIC is ultimately responsible for implementation of the constitution and this code.
- vi) Executive board or its official delegates must publish this code of conduct through various electronic and physical means (booklets, displays, electronic communication, web links etc.).
- vii) Every 12 months, the Code of Conduct and Ethics Committee (with help of CIC, proactively supported and assisted by the President and the Executive Board), must assure compliance training whereby all the Board members, committee members and employees responsible for good governance of the affairs of SRS will review and acknowledge the aims and objectives and this code. The Code of conduct and Ethics committee will prepare the training materials based on the standards defined and referred to in this code.
- viii) SRS may hire or engage individuals based on religious preferences to further its religious cause. As a religious employer, SRS requires the employees to expressly acknowledge its aims and objectives and code of conduct as one of the conditions of employment. It may also require prospective applicants to sign a statement indicating that he/she has read and understood the rules, agrees with all of them, and will abide by them. In the event of a dispute, this will serve as an evidence of the organization's commitment to its religious doctrine and will show the employee's agreement to adhere to it.
- ix) As a faith-based organization SRS can only accept members, (including board and committee members), employees or volunteers who share and support its Sikhi related religious beliefs without conflict. Beyond that, the organization may not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, or gender.
- x) SRS must assure uniformity in applying the religious or spiritual tenets on those who serve a non-religious function.

2) Scope of The Code of Conduct

- a) This code of conduct and ethics applies to all functional aspects of the SRS. Anything that may be unclear will be clarified within the preview of this code and its foundations defined above.

3) Language and Medium:

- a) Official languages of SRS are Punjabi (Gurmukhi Script) and English.
- b) Internal communication (that will become a matter of record) should be in both Punjabi and English.
- c) All board decisions, policies and communication with members should be in Punjabi and English.
- d) All important documents going into the record should be both in English and Punjabi.
- e) Translations must be approved by the president and the Executive Secretary of the Board for correctness in spirit.

4) Support for SRS Aims and Objectives

- i) Activities to promote interest in Sikhi, disseminate information on Sikhi, discourses on Gurbani, Sikh history, and Sikh culture must adhere to Rehat Maryada and standards defined and referred to in this code of conduct.

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- ii) SRS library must carry only authentic literature of true educational and spiritual value based on the standards defined and referred to in this code of conduct. Misleading, false, and or derogatory materials must not be stored or distributed. Any attempts to add, store, or distribute such materials must be prevented, investigated, and documented for record. All procured and donated materials must be reviewed by the members of the RHWEC and the designated librarian to meet these standards and be approved by the Executive Secretary and the President to keep in the library. The review process can be delegated to the librarian or other qualified individuals duly authorized by the board.
- iii) All SRS publications (print or media) should meet the language requirements and standards defined or referred to in this code of conduct.
- iv) Social and cultural gatherings to celebrate Sikh occasions must follow the standards defined and referred to in this code of conduct.
- v) All content and materials for Sikhi related religious education by SRS must follow the standards defined or referred to in this code of conduct.
- vi) Interfaith activities, while remaining respectful of the participants of other faiths, must uphold the Sikh standards of respect and Rehat Maryada. Programs that may lead to situations where the required standards may not be met should be conducted outside of Congregation or Darbar Sahib/Diwan Hall or off premises. All such programs should be carefully planned by the REHWC with involvement of Religious Secretary and the Head Granthi.

5) Board of Trustees & Committee members

- a) Titles and Hierarchy
 - i) In general, in hierarchy, the head Granthi or 'Bhai Sahib' is the highest title at SRS, being the Sevadar of Holy Sri Guru Granth Sahib, also referred to as caretaker or custodian (per SRS constitution).
 - ii) All board members and committee members are volunteer servants of SRS. Board and Committees (through the board) are all answerable to members of the SRS and Sangat or Congregation in general.
 - iii) Also, in general terms, all board members are hierarchically at the same level within the board. The board members at the executive positions are directly responsible and accountable for day to day management.
 - iv) The titles of the board of trustees are reflective of service, not position of privilege or pride. Therefore, the use of titles in any such manner and or special treatment of these management volunteers (or any such demand by them) is against the spirit and the standards established or referred to in this code of conduct; and hence, must be strongly discouraged.
- b) Qualifications & Prerequisites
 - i) Article IX.I.b of SRS constitution requires all the board members of the society to be Sikhs. (*A Sikh is a person who believes in the ten Sikh Gurus, Shri Guru Granth Sahib, basic tenets, and teachings of the Sikhi*) interpretation of a Sikh has been clarified in the Sikh Rehat Maryada, which is an integral part of this code of conduct.
 - ii) Individuals seeking nominations to serve on the board as trustees must not be involved in activities, trades, or otherwise exhibit behaviors against the Gurmat, Sikhi and Rehat Maryada in their personal, professional, or social life. This is required to raise the moral and ethical standards of leadership to model Sikh values as role models for Sikh community. The argument of business and or personal rights to circumvent these standards is a derogatory approach and is not allowed. Board members must act as role models for the SRS membership and Sikh community and must be able to represent Sikh values through their conduct, interaction and behavior in the society in general.
 - iii) Conflicts of interest that will prevent anyone seeking to be a Board member or member of the Religious Education, Health, and Welfare committee to work on religious aspects:
 - (1) Violation of IX.I.b of SRS as defined in (i) above.
 - (2) Activities, trades, or conduct against the Gurmat, Sikhi and Rehat Maryada
 - (3) Running for or holding office in other organization(s) preventing the individual to effectively devote time to serve SRS
 - (4) Holding a political office

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- (5) Affiliation of any kind with the organizations, groups, factions or individuals who are known for anti Sikhi propaganda, activities, and or otherwise known to act in derogatory manner
- (6) Criminal conviction (Can be relaxed after 5 years if otherwise allowed by the law and the individual has successfully reformed themselves and have since maintained good moral character)
- iv) Commitment to this code of conduct is a requirement of acceptance of any role, responsibility, or association with the SRS.
- v) In addition to the roles and responsibilities defined by the constitution, additional roles can be defined and assigned by enacting bylaws as needed to assure proper functioning of the SRS to support its aims and objectives.
- vi) Accepting to serve or act on behalf of the SRS is a commitment to fulfill the responsibilities already defined or those that may be defined in the future based on the needs of the SRS, polices, constitution, and this code of conduct and ethics.
- c) Public Representation
 - i) Board and committee members and volunteers serving SRS may represent SRS only in line with the aims and objectives of SRS and the standards and process defined in this code.
 - ii) The SRS board and committee members, volunteers, or designated representatives will not officially support or endorse any political party, group, or individual(s) on behalf of SRS or its membership.
 - iii) No one will represent or give an impression to represent SRS or its members politically.
 - iv) Board and committee members and volunteers serving SRS while engaging in appropriate political activities that do not conflict with the provisions and standards of this code of conduct must do so in their individual capacity in their own time and at their own expense. While engaging in such activities (participating in gatherings, conferences parties, programs, etc., and speaking or acting in any manner in such situations) they must make it very clear that they are doing it on their own behalf as individuals and not as SRS representatives.
 - v) If for any reason, it is necessary to issue a statement and or take a stance in any political situation or on any political matter, it will be done so by the board through the official decision-making process and it must be done only to safeguard the interests of SRS, and its members in line with the aims and objectives of SRS and other standards defined in this code, then.
- d) Preparation and maintaining a Volunteer Pool
 - i) The board must extend open invitation to all interested volunteers, if they otherwise qualify for such roles based on the standards defined or referred to in this code of conduct, to apply and register for the pool of volunteers to serve on volunteer positions of SRS, including Board and Committees.
 - ii) Eligible and qualifying applications should be categorized (for suitable services or areas of need) based on the experience, qualifications and intent of the applicant.
 - iii) Encourage youth participation in the affairs of SRS for positive outcomes for youth, families, and communities.
 - iv) The Board may delegate above tasks to an existing committee or create an ad hoc community engagement committee to develop surveys, questionnaires, training materials, forms etc., based on standards defined and referred to in this code of conduct.
 - v) Shortlisted selected individuals must be attached with the committees for hands-on training.
- e) Selection or Election
 - i) According to article X (1) of the constitution, all efforts must be made to fill the vacancies, if possible, without elections. The primary intent of this article is to select Sikhs to serve the organization based on merit, with harmony, to avoid shallow competition based on narrow social or political agendas.
 - ii) Criteria for nominating qualified Sikhs for board of trustees
 - (1) Nominators should nominate qualified and deserving Sikhs based on article X(1) and standards defined and referred to in this code of conduct.
 - (2) Nominators, to best of their knowledge, must certify that the nominee in his/her personal or professional life, is not engaged in activities, trade, profession, or behaviors contradicting teachings of the ten Sikh Gurus, Shri Guru Granth Sahib, basic tenets of Sikhi, Gurmat, and Rehat Maryada.

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- (3) Nominators (to best of their knowledge) and the nominee must certify that the nominee has read and understands the Constitution, the code of conduct, and will abide by standards defined in them if they get the chance to serve.
 - (4) Nomination will be rejected if at any point during the process the nominee is found to have misrepresented or has a conflict of interest.
- iii) To satisfy the requirement of X (1), the board and the candidates must engage with the Sangat to assure that all efforts are done for selection to avoid elections.
 - iv) Active participation from the volunteer pool must be encouraged according to merit based on the knowledge, experience, skills, and proven constructive service to Sikh Community
 - v) Only the names of qualifying candidates will be included in the selection process.
- f) Roles, Responsibilities and Performance
- i) Board members should accept roles based on qualification, experience, interest, and relevant knowledge
 - ii) Committee nominees should be nominated based on qualification, experience, interest, and relevant knowledge
 - iii) All board (and the committee) members must undergo training sessions to understand 'How the non-Profits work', 'The SRS constitution' and this 'Code of Conduct' within 60 days of the formation of the new board. It will be the responsibility of the President of the board to initiate, schedule and assure this training has been attended by all the board and the committee members. This training will be repeated every 12 months. This is required to assure effective and ethical management and leadership to serve the aims and objectives of the SRS by adhering to the standards referred to in this code.
 - iv) Performance failures should be addressed as follows:
 - (1) If the board, by its own cognizance or based on concerns raised by the membership, loses confidence in a board member's ability to hold an executive position defined by the constitution, the board can with at least two weeks of prior notification of such intent, pass a no-confidence motion with 6/9 majority to remove that board member from that executive position. (This does not affect their position on the board). The No-Confidence process defined in the SRS constitution should be followed to remove any elected member from the board.
 - (a) Abstinance or absence will be counted as a vote against such motion.
 - (b) A successful no-confidence vote will remove such board member from only their executive position.
 - (c) The vacated executive position should be filled using the constitutional procedure, that is designated to assign these roles, when the board is freshly formed. This process should be completed in the same meeting in which no-confidence motion is passed and approved with 6/9 majority. Failure to do so will require this exercise to be repeated such that removal and new appointment are done in the same meeting.
 - (2) Similarly, if the board and or committee members lose confidence in a committee member's ability to work effectively, the board members and the members of that committee can collectively pass a no-confidence motion with a collective simple majority of the members of that committee and the board.
 - (a) Abstinance or absence will be counted as a vote against such motion.
 - (b) A successful no-confidence motion will remove such a committee member from the committee.
 - (c) This process does not apply to the members of CIC as they are elected members. * No-Confidence process defined in the Article XVIII of the SRS constitution will be followed to remove a CIC member from the committee.
 - (d) The vacated position should be filled in the same meeting in which the no-confidence motion is approved.
- v) **The president**
- (1) The president has the overall responsibility of the affairs of the SRS. To serve its aims and objectives based on the standards referred to and defined in this code, in addition to the responsibilities defined in the constitution, the president must:

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- (a) Assure effective and ethical management and leadership to properly govern the affairs of SRS
 - (b) Assure proper planning, assignment and assessment of essential tasks. All unassigned tasks will become the responsibility of the president to do or to delegate.
 - (c) Set the goals for self and for the board and committees and review status of all assigned roles and responsibilities and present the results during the official board meetings.
 - (d) Engage Sangat, directly or through delegates, to gather feedback about the management of SRS affairs. This can be done through frequent surveys and quarterly townhall meetings.
 - (e) initiate 12 monthly assessment of executive and other board members.
 - (f) Initiate, review and provide feedback performance self-assessment to seek feedback for improvements.
 - (g) The president must initiate 12 monthly committee performance assessment, format of which can be decided by the president in collaboration with the board and committee chair persons. The assessment of each committee must be presented to the board by the president for evaluation, feedback and recognition.
- (2) Overall performance report must be published for Sangat as a special report or as a part of the newsletter. The criteria for reporting should simply state what goals were set by the board and committees and what actions were undertaken and to what extent were those actions successful. The reason for the failures and future corrective actions.
 - (3) The final performance report must be sent to records committee for record keeping.

vi) Executive Secretary

- (1) Executive secretary has the most crucial role of assisting the president in the overall management of the affairs of SRS. Person in this role must be proactive, capable of using all the tools and technologies for efficient management, collaboration, record keeping and communication.
- (2) Executive Secretary must assure availability of a physical or electronic copy of records on site, accessible to the board, committees. Members may request in writing, information they are authorized to.
- (3) Executive Secretary must maintain schedule and assure scheduled inspections, filings, contract renewals, and other timed activities (file/adjust for the non-profit changes with IRS & SOS etc.)
- (4) It is the responsibility of the executive secretary to assure all communications and information shared at SRS premises or anywhere on behalf of SRS complies with the standards defined in the constitution and this code of conduct. This means the, communication (written or verbal) distribution of literature, pamphlets or audiovisual materials or any other infographic or otherwise formulated materials, in whatever shape or form, intended for sharing at SRS premises or anywhere on behalf of SRS, with SRS membership, general Sangat or public at large must be expressly approved and authorized by the executive secretary after making sure such information is in compliance with the standards mentioned in the SRS constitution, this code of conduct and any bylaws under them. Executive secretary may seek advice of the President and or the board, or relevant advisory or ad hoc committee on sensitive or otherwise important matters; in writing in a meeting (minutes of which will be logged in record); to assure compliance.

vii) The Treasurer/Finance Secretary

- (1) Within 60 days of accepting the role, the treasurer is expected to prepare the financial report and budget. This may require the person in this role to seek help from the SRS members proficient in financial matters to build an assisting team to support this role.
- (2) Treasurer must evaluate all projected expenses based on 'want', 'need' and 'must have' approach and flag and recommend to cut unnecessary expenses to assure proper budget planning.
- (3) Treasurer, with the help of the president and the executive secretary, must dispose of and or convert non-cash gifts of no practical use into cash within 12 months of receiving such gifts.
- (4) Such non-cash donations must be discouraged explaining the asset management constraints.
- (5) All donations must be marked under donation categories intended by the donor. The donation report should clearly identify the amount obtained under each such category.

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- (6) Donation money should be used for purpose intended by the donors only. Under compelling circumstances, with the prior approval of the board with simple majority of the quorum, funds from certain categories expected to incur least expenses can be used for other more important causes after satisfying the budget for that category has enough amount to support active projects outlined under it unless the board approves the de-prioritization of cancelling of such projects under such category for at least 12 months.
- (7) Treasurer must maintain schedule for financial filings and keep all on schedule
- (8) All financial data should be kept up to date (up to last 60 days) in electronic and any additional backup format and available for review of any board member or SRS member on demand.

viii) The Religious Secretary

- (1) Religious Secretary is responsible to assure all religious care-taking (*Seva Sambhal*) responsibilities
- (2) Religious Secretary must always assure adherence to Rehat Maryada at the SRS premises, in Congregation/Diwan Hall and during any programs conducted by or on behalf of SRS, where applicable.
- (3) Religious Secretary (or a delegate) must always assure full control of the religious stage with the help of Head Granthi and other religious workers, during SRS or private programs.
 - (a) Individual or a representative of organizations, whose activities involve consumption or promotion of intoxicants, and lecherous activities or their promotion, will NOT be allowed to address from the SRS Stage.
 - (b) Individuals or representatives of organizations known for anti Sikhi propaganda, activities, and or conduct derogatory to Sikhi will NOT be allowed on SRS Stage.
- (4) Religious Secretary must assure all program schedules are prepared, circulated, displayed, and observed. REHWC should be engaged on need basis to plan, coordinate, and conduct such programs including interfaith activities.
- (5) Religious secretary will facilitate discourse on Sangat's questions about programs, presentations, Katha & Kirtan etc.
- (6) Religious secretary (or a delegate) must make visiting Jathas, Katha Vachaks or Presenters etc., aware of the guidelines under which they can perform and conduct discussions, and answer Sangat's questions; and evaluate their performance for future reference.
- (7) All the board and committee members must support Religious Secretary in above activities.

ix) Langar In-charge

- (1) Board, at its very first meeting, must designate one of the board members as a Langar In-charge to:
 - (a) work with all board and committee members to prepare a langar volunteers pool
 - (b) prepare a process to manage langar activities and inventory in a timely and efficient manner.
 - (c) assure the code applicable to langar activities is followed as intended.

x) Facilities in-charge

- (1) The board at its first meeting must designate one of the board members as a facilities in-charge.
- (2) Facilities in-charge should plan, lead, and supervise all facilities related projects directly or through official committee delegates.
- (3) Facilities in-charge must make sure that all projects are approved by the board before commencement.
- (4) The facilities in-charge must assure that the approval outlines cost, timeframe, and responsibility.
- (5) Facilities in-charge must assure that all projects requiring technical expertise should be done by qualified/certified volunteers or paid certified contractors. Non-qualified individuals must not be allowed to undertake such tasks.
- (6) For any experienced volunteers to conduct such maintenance, repairs, changes, updates etc., such activity should be approved by the President; unless such task requires a certified technician based on the local code requirement.
- (7) Facilities in-charge must monitor project progress and provide continuous updates to the board until completion.
- (8) Facilities in-charge must assure contingency plans for incomplete projects are identified in advance.

xi) Community Engagement

- (1) Board must designate one of the board members for community engagement.
- (2) All community engagement calls must be in the name of SRS.
- (3) Community engagement activities must be approved by the board in advance.
- (4) Community engagement designee will be responsible for planning and facilitating townhall meetings, surveys or other means for continuous bidirectional communication between the serving board and the Sangat.

xii) Media relations – advertisements etc.

- (1) President will be responsible for overseeing all media relations and related activities. Being an important aspect of the performance and outlook of SRS, it is recommended that the President, with the help of the board, establishes an ad hoc (media advisory) committee by nominating 3 qualified Sikh volunteers from the membership or willing current board or committee members with qualification and or experience in media relations.
- (2) All advertisements, news, appeals or calls for action in the name of or using resources of SRS, must be approved by the board in advance. Approval by the board members for such decisions through (SRS's) electronic communication is enough where holding a meeting may not be possible or necessary as long as there is an official record.
- (3) All credit highlights must be in the name of the SRS, through official designation, not in the name of individual(s).
- (4) Recognition:
 - (a) Recognitions by presenting awards and 'Siropas' by or on behalf of SRS must be approved by the board in advance, without exception.
 - (b) 'Siropa' will be presented only to deserving individuals who have done acts of exemplary Seva within the preview of Sikhi. Other individuals requiring recognition in general should be presented with the SRS shield or certificates of recognition.
 - (c) Decision of such recognition by the board will be in writing and final. Such decisions will become part of the SRS record.
 - (d) Approval of board members for such recognitions can be obtained through official SRS communication after providing detailed account for such recognition; where meeting is not possible due to time or other circumstances.

g) Religious Education Health and Welfare Committee (REHWC)

- i) Qualified Sikhs with relevant experience or skills in religious, education, health and welfare must be selected as members of REHWC.
- ii) Selection of the REHWC member responsible for religious aspects is subject to article 5 (a) of this code.
- iii) REHWC may divide its efforts to focus on Religious education and health and welfare by adding into it 3 ad hoc-committees (based on the process to form ad hoc committees) to support the amount of work this committee is tasked with:
 - (1) Religious sub-committee – A 5-member sub-committee formed by the REHWC member responsible for religious affairs by inviting two additional SRS members in good standing subject to provisions of article 5(a) of this code one member selected by lotto and one nominated by the board. These members should be well versed with Gurmat, Sikhi and Rehat Maryada. REHWC must involve the Head Granthi and other qualified SRS religious workers in all decisions of matters of Sikhi and aims and objectives set forth in the SRS constitution. Religious Secretary will be the ex-officio member of this sub-committee. REHWC members who are Qualified Sikhs may manage religious affairs by themselves as long as other functions of the committee are equally served well.
 - (2) Education sub-committee – A three-member committee formed by the REHWC member responsible for education by inviting two additional SRS members in good standing (one by lotto and one nominated by the board). These members should be well versed with the subject matter of Gurmat, Sikhi and Rehat. This committee must involve School and the library in-charge in all their education and literature related decisions. In addition to general education, REHWC in general and this committee specifically should also develop or arrange Parenting Education for Sikh parents in

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

general covering the Sikhi aspect of parenting so that the children get a chance at home to learn and understand Sikhi.

- (3) Health and welfare sub-committee – A three-member committee formed by the remaining REHWC member to perform the health and welfare tasks. This sub-committee must involve qualified health professionals in all decisions regarding health and welfare.

h) The By-Laws and Rules Committee

- (1) Qualified Sikhs with skills, education and experience, professional level linguistic proficiency in English, Punjabi and Gurbani, to use reasonable care, while drafting new documents and comprehend existing documents.
- (2) BLRC will support the board to make any updates, additions, revisions etc. that will be maintained at central location and accessible to the board and membership in general.

i) Internal Audits, Records, and Legal Affairs Committee (IARLC)

- (1) Qualified Sikhs with skills, knowledge and experience in related fields must be selected to be members of this committee. Experts should be engaged for matters needing expert skills.
- (2) This committee must assure to secure storage (water, fireproof etc.) of physical and electronic records for the length of time required by law or as defined in the record retention policy of SRS defined by the Board, whichever is greater. Records of historical importance will be maintained forever. All board and committee members and supporting volunteers should support maintaining records in sound, efficient and accurate manner. Maintaining accurate books and records is vital to conduct business in a sound and efficient manner. As an ethical work space, we never alter omit or conceal or enter false information in any document or system.
- (3) All information related to policies, decisions, or other important matters must be retained for minimum of five years or as determined by the board from time to time and or as required by law, whichever term is longer.
- (4) This committee must perform quarterly audit and update records, physical and electronic, meeting all requirements of communication and translation.
- (5) This committee will be responsible for advising the board to secure professional help when needed.
- (6) IARLC should develop a process to make the records easily available when needed
- (7) IARLC will work with '*Code of Conduct and Ethics Committee*' and CIC to help in auditing the effectiveness of ethical management and development needs.
- (8) All policies should be documented and maintained in the form of a policy handbook at a central location and accessible to the board and membership in general for references and consulting when new policies are formed, existing policies are updated or revised and maintained.

a) Budget and Finance Committee

- (1) Qualified individuals with skills, education and experience must be encouraged to join this committee
- (2) The committee must assist in proper communication of the financial status
- (3) The committee should work with the Long-Term Strategic Planning committee to perform long term financial planning to make the SRS financially strong

b) Long Term Strategic Planning Committee

- (1) Qualified individuals with skills, education and experience to gauge the future needs of the community must be encouraged to join this committee
- (2) The committee should assist in proper future planning by engaging SRS members and members of the board and other committees for feedback.
- (3) The committee should leverage community engagement tools for assistance in their goals.

c) *Code of Conduct and Ethics Committee* will assist CIC in all manners of implementation of this *Code of Conduct and Ethics*.

- i) It must prepare or procure training materials to assure understanding of the code and facilitating ethical management and leadership.
- ii) It will assist the CIC in performance assessment

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- iii) It will conduct yearly audit of effectiveness of ethical management and identify development needs specifically to further the culture of Sikhi and Seva and submit its findings to the CIC.
 - iv) It will review the code violations brought to it through the board or committee members and provide recommendation to the CIC for corrective measures
 - v) Suggested corrective action to CIC leading to 'Tankhah' must be in accordance with Sikh tradition defined in Rehat Maryada and other standards defined or referred to in this code of conduct. 'Tankhah' must be decided, based on the extent, impact and recurrence, ideally self-imposed by the violator(s)
 - vi) Suggested corrective action must not be used as an instrument of insult or vengeance. It must be focused on helping and improving the conduct and performance.
 - vii) This committee will also devise methods to communicate to and make the membership aware of the Standards defined or referred to in this code of conduct through brochures and pamphlets.
- d) **Other Supporting Functions:** With changing circumstances, SRS will require volunteers for additional supporting functions (IT, Library, Gurmat School, Security). The board may from time to time define need, purpose and structure for such functions and constitute ad-hoc committees and or appoint qualified individuals directly to serve such functions. The ultimate responsibility, accountability, control in all such cases will reside with the board. All qualified appointments will have a limited maximum term of two years or less. The term can be extended based on evaluation of performance and need by the board.

2) Meetings

- i) Each official board meeting, hereinafter referred to as a 'board meeting'; must begin with the quorum as defined in the constitution
- ii) Meeting members must start the meeting pledging to hold the meeting and make decisions in good faith and in the interest of aims and objectives defined in the SRS constitution
- iii) Robert's rules of order will be followed in general and must be considered part of this code of conduct for running the meetings
- iv) Board members must abide by the standards defined and or referred to in the code of conduct while meeting and making decisions.
- v) Agenda must be clear written & conveyed in advance
- vi) Matters not listed in agenda can be taken up at the end of the meeting if all the quorum agrees.
- vii) Announcing the time allowed for the non-board members to present their concerns or questions at the end of the board meeting to address them or announcing upfront if any matter needs an input of a non-board member for decision making of the board.
- viii) While anyone can attend the board meetings, no one will interfere, interrupt or otherwise disrupt the board meetings. If such interruption is extremely important permission must be sought in advance or during the meeting by raising hand and only proceed if expressly allowed by the President or Executive Secretary, who will evaluate the importance and allow such interruption during the meeting or set aside time at the end of the meeting to address relevant concerns
- ix) In case of disruption, verbal or physical (that blocks proceedings according to agenda), the president can ask the disrupters to leave. If the disrupters are board members forming quorum, the meeting may be cancelled citing disruption for record.
- x) No one will attempt to influence the independent decision making in, during or outside of the board meetings, leveraging divisive politics, with the intention of interfering with proceedings or functioning of SRS.
- xi) Members must make themselves fully aware of these rules of conduct by themselves or by seeking help from the ***Code of Conduct and Ethics Committee***.
- xii) Normally the board (and committee) meetings are held in person. But they may be held purely online in special circumstances (i.e. Government declared emergencies or when premises are otherwise inaccessible). However, the member(s) joining online must secure effective audio-visual communication as if they were in the room to assure effective presence and participation.
- xiii) Online attendees unable to maintain clear communication will be marked absent, and meeting will be cancelled if the quorum is disrupted.

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- xiv) Board or committee meetings may be recorded with consent of all essential or required attendees. The legitimate authority to decide if a recording of the meetings will be allowed rests with the Board or committee through its chairperson, president, and or the executive secretary or a pro tempore delegate, as the case may be. The recording will be allowed only if it is practically beneficial and not open to abuse. Furthermore:
- (1) The board will designate one of the essential attendees as a recorder.
 - (2) The recorder will clearly state the date, time, purpose, and scope of the recording and clearly state that the consent of all present essential and required attendees has been obtained.
 - (3) If someone objects at any time and or asks to pause or stop the recording at any time, even if they had consented to the recording earlier, the details of such interruption will also be recorded by the recorder and the recording will be stopped without argument.
 - (4) If the reason for the recording is to capture meeting minutes, as a policy, the recordings must be deleted after approval of the meeting minutes.
 - (5) If any recording is allowed to be saved beyond the purpose of meeting minutes, it must then be included in the records of the SRS. Such recordings will also be given to other board members or attendees of that meeting. SRS may also be required to allow any SRS members to listen to these recordings if they request.
 - (6) Recordings will not be distributed, published, or posted in part or in full, in any form, through any medium. Any such attempt will be considered a legal violation and can invite procedural action.
 - (7) Executive sessions (defined in Robert's Rules 9:24 – 9:27) of the board are subject to a clear expectation of confidentiality and no recording will be allowed in such sessions. Surreptitious taping/recording of such meetings will be a clear violation.
 - (8) The board does not need the permission of non-essential attendees if it decides to record or allow recording. The reverse is not true. Such attendees will not record without permission.
 - (9) To control Unruly Attendee(s) the Board may choose to record disruptions due to denial of permission to record by unruly attendees. Disruptions resulting in legal violation(s) may need to be reported.
 - (10) The board, by a majority decision, can censure disruptors and issue written warnings; which will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and become part of the SRS record and will be available for the membership to review.
 - (11) All board members should consider it their moral and ethical duty to express disapproval of disrupting behavior and support censuring and warning. They may propose the initiation of removal proceedings to remove such board or committee members from the office or even the board or committee.
 - (12) A sign must be displayed at the door and the table indicating recording in progress.
 - (13) The board may decide to stream the meetings live for SRS membership. If the recording must be turned on for the stream, the recording rules will apply to the live stream as well.
- xv) Violations will result in appropriate corrective action.
- xvi) All committees should be invited to all board meetings.

3) Membership

SRS is a Sikh Organization, and its members will be Sikhs. A Sikh is a person who believes in the ten Sikh Gurus, Shri Guru Granth Sahib, basic tenets, and teachings of the Sikhi (Art IX 1 b). The test of being a Sikh is clarified in Sikh Rehat Maryada which is drawn based on the teachings in the Guru Granth Sahib, tradition, and practice based on history and Rehatnamas and Hukumnamas.

- i) Applicants must affirm they are Sikh and that they **do not practice or believe in any other faith**. Membership obtained using false information and or misrepresentation will be cancelled upon discovery.
- ii) Applicants who adopted Sikhi through practice based on relationship or otherwise, but it is not yet evident from their name (Singh and Kaur), should furnish written verification from the relative (if applicable) or two existing members in good standing, confirming that he/she is in fact a Sikh by practice

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

and does not believe in any other faith or religion. Upon verification, such person may be given one time only provisional membership, giving them a chance and time to update their particulars (to reflect Singh or Kaur) to allow them to renew the membership.

- iii) A unique membership number should be assigned to each member and ascribed on the membership form and the payment receipt. Membership records should be maintained against this unique number associated with the name address of the member. E-mail and Phone number are optional. The name of the member should match the ID used for verification.
- iv) SRS will not ask for, complete DOB, SSN, ITN or similar Personally Identifiable Information (PII) for membership purposes. Only year of birth can be verified for the purposes age qualification for accepting any role at SRS.
- v) Only verified members in good standing based on the membership list (See **Art VIII (7) of the constitution read with Section 7.xvii of this code of conduct and Ethics**) will be allowed to vote. Board must assure to receive, correct, update, and confirm all membership within the designated timeframe per SRS constitution.
- vi) Membership may also be accepted online but will become effective only after verifications in person
 - (1) Only state recognized documents will be accepted for verification. SRS will not ask for SSN or ITNs for membership purposes.
 - (2) Except as required by law, personal information or documents must not be copied or stored in any form or manner.
 - (3) Personal information must not be shared without consent of members and should be handled in accordance with applicable Data Security laws.
- vii) The Treasurer, executive secretary or the President will accept membership forms. President may delegate this task to any of the board members. If delegated, at least one from treasurer, president, or executive secretary must be present with the delegates to assure the membership is accepted properly.
- viii) Any new membership forms accepted before monthly board meeting will be presented for review and approval by the board to assure all applicants meet the conditions of membership as defined in 7(1) above.
- ix) Access to membership information should not be open to anyone other than the board. Contact information of members can be shared with nominees for election canvassing only if the members opted into have their information shared to be contacted
- x) All protected personal information (DOB, Phone, Address except town etc.) should be removed from the list made publicly available.
- xi) **What is 'Current Year' in Art. VIII (2)?** Year in which the membership is paid. Membership forms for the upcoming membership year are usually available in advance and can be submitted starting January of that year to become members of the upcoming membership year (see definition of the membership year). Although the membership is open throughout the current year (January to December), anyone paying the fee late, after the cutoff date, that is 4:00 PM of the first Sunday of that current year, are becoming part-year members for that membership year. Such members must again renew their membership by the cutoff date that is by 4:00 PM of the first Sunday of the following year.
- xii) **What is the 'Membership Year'?** Membership year is 4:00 PM of the first Sunday of April of **the current** year to 4:00 PM of the first Sunday of the April of the following year.
- xiii) **What does 'At least one year prior to the elections' mean in Art VIII(3)?** 12 months immediately preceding the reference date (that is the date of elections, the first Sunday of the following year when elections are held).
- xiv) **Who is a new member:** Members enrolling for the first time. Those who enroll after the cutoff date even if they were members previously (because they failed to renew their membership by cutoff date) will be treated as a new member for the purpose of membership. Members enrolling for the first time whose record does not exist at SRS will be required to show the proof of address.
- xv) **When can new members enroll?** New membership is open all year Starting January. Members can enroll even after the cutoff date. But those who become members after the cutoff date will not have voting rights if there is an election in the following year. The membership year for the new members is decided

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

by the 'Current year'. For example, if they paid their fee in Jan 2021, they are members for full membership year 2021 which will start at 4:00 PM first Sunday of April of 2021 and end at 4:00 PM of the first Sunday of April of 2022 (see definition of the membership year). However, if they pay their fee any time between (after) the cutoff date and December 31st, they will be part-year members of the Membership year 2021 (in which the fee is paid) which ends at 4:00 PM of the first Sunday of April of 2022. Such part-year members will not be eligible for voting in April 2022 if the elections are held. (See the definition of the membership year).

xvi) **What is a member in good standing?** Member for at least one year prior to the elections in which they seek to vote. Members who enrolled or renewed their membership by the cutoff date. Members who are not in violation of any other conditions that may bar them from the membership.

xvii) **The purpose of the membership list referred to in Art VIII (7) of the constitution:**

- (1) The membership list prepared by the first Sunday of June is the list of all members who have renewed or gotten their membership by the cutoff date of 4:00 PM first Sunday of that **current year**.
- (2) The sole **constitutional significance** of this list is to validate members who will vote if there are elections in the following year.
- (3) The board may be referring to it as 'The List' to verify the membership as a practice but that is NOT the purpose of this list because members who made the payment after the cutoff date will still be members but will not be included in any such list.
- (4) Because the membership is open the whole year starting January of any year, the board should maintain, review and update a complete membership list as and when the new members enroll.
- (5) Keeping in mind the concept of the current year, it is wrong to assume that any member paying the fee after the cutoff date in the current year will be automatically enrolled as a member for the following year. The membership completed after the cutoff date of the current year still needs to be renewed before the following cutoff date. Yes, that means those members who paid their fee late in the current year will be members for a shorter period. The board should inform the members of this fact when accepting the forms and fee after the cutoff date.

4) Performance measurement and documentation:

- a) **Code of Conduct and Ethics Committee'** will assist the CIC and the president in regular assessment of performance and effectiveness of all roles and evaluation of achieved goals by considering the feedback from peers and Sangat.
- b) Dealing with lack of performance: *Lack of performance is to be challenged without delay in the following manner.*
 - i) *Help in the form of training, general and moral support should be provided to the under performers by the fellow board and committee members as long as they are willing to make an effort*
 - ii) *Request to leave/vacate role or position: In case the underperforming members do not try to improve their performance and or no performance improvement is observed within 3 months, the member must be asked to vacate the position/role to make room for those who can perform better*
 - iii) *Invoke constitutional provisions to remove them from there board or committee (CIC) membership when needed.*
- c) All final performance related documentation must become part of permanent record of SRS.

5) Conflict Resolution

- a) Organizational Process
 - i) Intermediation/arbitration methods must be developed under guidance of CIC by the **Code of Conduct and Ethics Committee** to support CIC in conflict resolution to avoid escalation or litigation:
 - (1) An arbitration pool of qualified Sikhs (who understand, have experience or are otherwise experts in the field and value the process of conflict resolution through arbitration based on the standards defined and referred to in this document and legal aspects) must be maintained through the same process as referred to earlier in section 5.2 for preparing pool of volunteers.

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- (2) To resolve any conflict, panel of 5 members selected at random (through lotto) from that qualified pool will be asked to review the situation, work with the SRS management (Board and CIC), and the parties to help resolve the situation through arbitration.
 - (3) Depending upon the number of individuals in the arbitration pool, for dealing with any subsequent situation, next arbitration panel selection should exclude the members working on or who have already worked the panel to maintain impartiality, until all members have participated at least once.
 - ii) All efforts to resolve through arbitration will be documented as evidence and future reference and will go on record.
- b) Legal Process
- i) All efforts must be made to avoid litigation by exhausting all options using bipartisan and minimally divisive approach including the process defined in the SRS constitution and section 5(a) above.
 - ii) Individual(s) found to be at fault for causing unnecessary conflicts and losses, will indemnify SRS.

6) Paid Employees, Contractors, visiting Jathas

- a) All persons responsible for SRS routines (usually not served by volunteers) must be qualified contractors or employees hired based on evaluation of their qualifications and experience; *which must align with and further the aims and objectives of SRS and this code. Best overall qualifications and experience is preferred. All such final decisions will require approval of the board.*
- b) All employees or contractors serving the faith-based duties, must adhere to and uphold the code and Rehat Maryada
- c) A formally accepted written employment agreement must state:
 - i) The title, the duration, probationary period, Job Duties, and Hours, vacation and sick leave
 - ii) Weekly, monthly, yearly compensation, deductions, salary adjustments
 - iii) Benefits (for example: Boarding & lodging, health and life, allowances, Medical and Dental etc.)
 - iv) Treatment of additional income from Akhand Paath, Ardaas, functions and specially sponsored programs held within or outside of the Gurdwara premises.
 - v) performance based assessment, termination and severance terms, including travel support if applicable.
- d) Employee performance evaluation must be conducted regularly every 12 months.
 - i) Lack of performance must be documented as soon as it is noticed.
 - ii) Non-performing employees must be guided and given a chance to improve the performance
 - iii) Continuous lack of performance may result in initiation of termination process.
- e) Salary
 - i) Full time employees must be paid competent wages.
 - ii) Reasonable boarding and lodging costs may be deducted from the salary based on the actual costs if applicable.
- f) Religious workers or Faith Based Employees
 - i) Head Granthi; The principal religious official of the SRS, the Custodian of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Rehat Maryada and Dharam Parchar; not a "priest", but equivalent for reference only.
 - (1) Minimum Qualification, basic education and Training includes:
 - (a) (i) Bachelor's degree or equivalent in religion or similar with religion as part of the study and training in Gurbani Santhya, Katha, Kirtan in Ragas, Sikh history with 4 years of working experience
 - (ii) or High School/12th Grade and training in Gurbani Santhya, Katha and Kirtan in Ragas and Sikh History with 5 years of working experience
 - (iii) or 10 years of experience and training in Gurbani Santhya, Katha, Kirtan in Ragas and Sikh History
 - (iv) Thorough understanding of Gurmat & Rehat Maryada
 - (b) Communication skills: Proficient in verbal and written communication in Punjabi and English
 - (2) Job Duties:
 - (a) Responsible for conducting services as per Sikh Rehat Maryada
 - (b) Recitation of Bani and Ardaas. Perform Katha and or lead Kirtan in Ragas as needed
 - (c) Conduct and facilitate Gurmat, Gurbani, and Kirtan classes.

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- (d) Conduct Diwans. (Prayer Meetings). And Conduct and perform Katha discourse
 - (e) Conduct Sanskars (Birth Ceremonies, Engagement Prayers, Wedding Ceremonies, Funerals, Ardaas, etc.).
 - (f) Additional appropriate duties related to the core duties can be assigned as needed and work with Sangat and committees to follow the work schedule provided by the management.
 - (3) Hiring: President must initiate the selection by constituting a selection committee consisting of at least 5 qualified practicing Gursikhs, the President, Executive Secretary, and Religious secretary. Outgoing Head Granthi may be included in evaluation process.
 - ii) Assistant Granthi /Jr. religious official of SRS. Not a "priest", but equivalent for reference only.
 - (1) Minimum Qualification, Basic education, and Training:
 - (a) (i) degree or equivalent in religion or similar with religion as part of the study and training in Gurbani Santhya, Katha Kirtan in Ragas and Sikh History with 2 years of relevant experience
 - (ii) or High School Diploma and training in Gurbani Santhya, Katha and Kirtan in Ragas and Sikh History with 3 years of relevant experience
 - (iii) or 5 years of relevant experience and demonstrable training in Gurbani Santhya, Katha, Kirtan in Ragas and Sikh History
 - (iv) Thorough understanding of Gurmat and Rehat Maryada
 - (b) Communication skills: Proficient in verbal and written communication in Punjabi and English
 - (c) Experience: Demonstrated experience of at least 3 years in performing Katha, Kirtan in Ragas and as a Patth
 - (2) Job Duties:
 - (a) Assist Head Granthi in all his duties, and services as per Sikh Rehat Maryada.
 - (b) Recitation of Bani and Ardaas. Perform Katha and or lead Kirtan in Ragas as needed
 - (c) Participate in conducting Gurbani and Kirtan classes.
 - (d) Additional appropriate duties related to the core duties can be assigned as needed
 - (3) Hiring Process: President must initiate selection by constituting a selection committee that will include Head Granthi, 4 of Practicing Gursikhs, the President, Executive Secretary, and the Religious Secretary.
 - (4) Poor performance may result in termination.
- iii) Kirtanyas: To perform Shabad Kirtan in Ragas based on Gurmat and Rehat Maryada.
 - (a) Minimum Qualification, Basic education and Training:
 - (i) Bachelor's degree or equivalent in music or similar with religion as part of the study and training in Gurbani Santhya, Kirtan in Ragas and Sikh History with 2 years of relevant experience performing Kirtan in Ragas
 - (ii) or High School Diploma and training in music, Gurbani Santhya, Kirtan in Ragas and Sikh History with 3 years of relevant experience performing Kirtan in Ragas
 - (iii) or traditional training in music with 5 years of relevant experience performing kirtan and demonstrable training in Gurbani Santhya, Katha Kirtan in Ragas and Sikh History
 - (iv) Thorough understanding of Rehat Maryada
 - (b) Communication skills: Proficient in verbal and written communication in Punjabi and English
 - (c) Demonstrated experience of at least 3 years in performing Katha, Kirtan in Ragas and as a Patthi
- (2) Job Duties:
 - (a) Perform Kirtan in Ragas (explaining the Shabad) using Harmonium, Tanti Saaj, Tabla or Jori
 - (b) Assist Head Granthi in ceremonial morning services and closing with the evening services.
 - (c) Recitation of Bani and Ardaas as needed.
 - (d) Conduct Kirtan classes.
 - (e) Assist Head Granthi in Conducting Diwans, Katha discourse and Sanskars
 - (f) Additional appropriate duties related to the core duties can be assigned as needed
- (3) Hiring Process:

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- (a) President must initiate the selection by constituting a selection committee consisting of at least the Head Granthi, 4 Practicing Gursikhs, the President, Executive Secretary, and the Religious Secretary.
 - iv) Laangri (Kitchen Manager)
 - (1) Manage, support and participate in the preparation of Langar in the kitchen according to Maryada.
 - (2) Preferred high School Diploma/12th Grade or equivalent. Good communication skills in Punjabi and preferably English too.
 - (3) 3 years of experience preparing and managing langar at Gurdwara sahib.
 - (4) Thorough understanding of Rehat Maryada
 - (5) Hiring: One person from the executive board (i.e. Executive Secretary) and Langar in-charge board member must be part of the selection process. Special committee may be created to assess the skills to prepare and manage simple basic langar menu items (Kadah Parshaad, Dal, Parshaada etc.) according to Langar Maryada.
 - v) Office Assistant
 - (1) Qualification: High school Diploma, computer skills and experience using office applications and communication tools.
 - (2) Proficiency in English and Punjabi is must.
 - (3) Job Duties:
 - (a) Assist and support the board and committees in all official work and manage the office.
 - (b) Maintain program booking calendar (Langar, Kirtan, Wedding etc.)
 - (c) Managing basic accounting activities around program dues etc.
 - (d) Help in official tasks around facilities management
 - (e) Assist in procuring supplies etc.
 - (f) Additional appropriate duties related to the core duties can be assigned as needed
 - (4) Hiring Process: President along with the executive board will evaluate the applicants.
 - (5) Failure to hire an assistant will shift all the responsibilities to the Executive secretary and the president.
 - g) Jathas, Katha Vachaks, Sikh Scholars must be qualified, experienced, and known to support Gurmat and Maryada. Preference should be given to those already visiting locally. People creating false controversies should be avoided. Invitees may be paid travel expenses.
 - (1) All jatha members should be Amritdhari practicing Sikhs with full subject matter knowledge and understanding of Sikh Rehat Maryada referred to in this code of conduct, to be able to perform within the preview of Rehat Maryada.
 - (2) They should have demonstrated experience and skills in Gurbani Kirtan in Ragas, Katha, Parchaar and knowledgeable about Gurbani and Gurmat.
 - (3) Kirtanya Jathas should have demonstrable knowledge and experience about music and performing kirtan in Ragas.
 - (4) They will strictly adhere to the program schedule and guidelines provided by SRS.
 - (5) If specially invited by SRS, they should not schedule programs in SRS time without consulting with the management.
 - (6) They will not narrate illogical and irrational references or made up saakhees beyond what is prescribed in Sikh Rehat Maryada referred to in this code of conduct.
 - (7) Metaphorical references be focused on the Bhaav Arth of the Shabad instead of adding fantasy and fascination.
 - (8) It is the responsibility of the Religious Secretary that these guidelines are conveyed and adhered to.
 - h) Trainees: SRS may hire trainees with aspirations, skill, and experience to assist any of the above roles.
- 7) Programs, Events and Ceremonies**
- a) All programs, events and ceremonies by or on behalf of the SRS, including programs of Sangat at or off the SRS premises will be conducted according to Sikh Rehat Maryada and other standards defined or referred to in this code of conduct and will be officiated by the official Gurdwara staff or designated delegates in case

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

the staff is not available for any reason. In case of confusion, refer to Sikh Rehat Maryada. Following rules must be followed in general (refer to Rehat Maryada for clarity):

- i) The starting program sequence at Gurdwara Sahib usually will be as follows: Ceremonial opening of Guru Granth Sahib (Prakash), recitation of 5 Banis, Aasa-ki-Vaar, Kirtan, Katha discourse, Anand Sahib, Ardaas, '*Jo Bole So Nihal Sat Sri Akal*' Jaikara, '*Wahe Guru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh*' and Hukamnama. In the evening, conclusion of the day after Rehras, Kirtan, Kirtan Sohila and Ardaas, Guru Granth Sahib should be ceremonially closed
- ii) Gurbani impacts deeply in the Sangat. It is important for a Sikh to visit Gurdwara and join the Sangat, partake of the benefits that the studying of the holy scriptures bestows. Instead of wasting time gossiping around at the premises one should come sit in the Sangat.
- iii) Parkash and Sukh-Asan of the Guru Granth Sahib must be ceremonially done in the Gurduwara every day without fail. Except for special exigencies, when there is need to keep the Guru Granth Sahib open during the night. Thereafter, it should be ceremonially closed to avoid any disrespect.
- iv) Activities other than the afore-mentioned reverential ceremonies as defined in Rehat Maryada are contrary to Gurmat. However reasonable perfuming, use of flowers, incense and scent is not barred. Congregation hall must be appropriately lit.
- v) No other book must be installed like and at par with the Guru Granth Sahib. Such practices and Idol worship are activities against the Gurmat and Rehat Maryada and are prohibited.
- vi) Celebration of festivals of other faiths or beliefs are not allowed inside the Gurdwara. Occasion or gathering must be used only for the promotion of the Gurmat.
- vii) Pressing the legs of the cot on which the Guru Granth Sahib is installed, rubbing nose against walls and on platforms held sacred, or massaging them, placing water below the Guru Granth Sahib's seat, making or installing and worshipping statues or idols inside the Gurduwara or at SRS premises, bowing before the picture of the Sikh Gurus or elders are self-willed egotism contrary to Gurmat and strictly prohibited.
- viii) For taking Saroop of Guru Granth Sahib from one place to another 5 Gursikhs must be present and the Ardaas must be performed before starting. Person holding Guru Granth Sahib on their head should walk barefoot, unless wearing of shoes is a necessity in which case no superstitions be entertained. At the destination, Guru Granth Sahib should be ceremonially opened (if needed) and Ardaas be performed. A hymn should be read from the Guru Granth Sahib after opening.
- ix) Whenever the Guru Granth is brought, irrespective of whether another Saroop of the Guru Granth had already been installed at the concerned place, every Sikh should stand up to show respect.
- x) While going into the Gurduwara, one should take off the shoes or footwear at a designated place and clean oneself up. Dirty or soiled feet must be washed with water. One should circumambulate (Parkarma) with the Guru Granth Sahib or the Gurduwara on one's right.
- xi) No person, is debarred from entering the Gurduwara for darshan as long as they are respectful, and are not carrying anything prohibited, such as tobacco or other intoxicants, which are tabooed by the Sikh faith; and or are not otherwise under influence, intoxicated or been smoking.
- xii) Upon entering the Gurduwara, a Sikh should first do obeisance before the Guru Granth Sahib. Thereafter, have a glimpse of the congregation and bid in a low, quiet voice, "*Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fateh.*"
- xiii) In the congregation, there must be no differentiation or discrimination between Sikh and non-Sikh, persons traditionally regarded as touchable and untouchable, the so called high and low caste persons etc.
- xiv) Sitting on a cushion, a distinctive seat, a chair, a stool, a cot etc. or in any distinctive position or distinctive manner providing prominence to a person or persons in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib or within the congregation is contrary to Gurmat and is prohibited. This includes decorations or conduct specifically focused on distinguishing an individual or a group.
- xv) Head must be always covered in the presence of the Guru Granth Sahib and at Gurdwara. For Sikh women joining the congregation with their persons uncomfortably draped and with veil drawn over their face is contrary to Gurmat.

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- xvi) Only a Sikh may perform Kirtan in a congregation. Kirtan must be only be of Gurbani (Guru Granth's or Guru Gobind Singh's hymns) and, for its elaboration, of the compositions of Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Nand Lal.
 - xvii) Shabads or Hymns must not be sung to rhythmic folk tunes or to traditional musical measures or to induct into them improvised and extraneous refrains (Dhaarna). Only a line from the hymn should be made a refrain.
 - xviii) In a congregation, only a Sikh may read out from the Guru Granth for others and explain. However, even a non-Sikh may read from it for himself/herself, following proper Maryada.
 - xix) Exposition can only be of Gurbani and teachings of 10 Gurus, writings of Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Nand Lal, or accepted Panthic book or of books of history (which are in agreement with the Guru's tenets), but not of a book of any other faith. However, references can be made to teachings or books of holy person for purposes of illustrations.
 - xx) Discourses against the Gurmat are prohibited.
 - xxi) Doing obeisance to the Guru Granth Sahib, respectfully, taking a glimpse of the congregation, an embodiment of the Guru's person, and reading Guru Granth Sahib and taking the command (Hukum); together constitute the view of the Satguru. Raising the Rumala on Guru Granth Sahib and merely looking at or making others take a look at the exposed page, without reading the prescribed hymn is contrary to Gurmat. This must be discouraged with explanation.
 - xxii) During the congregational sessions, only one thing should be done at a time: for example, performing of kirtan, delivering of discourse, interpretative elaboration of the scriptures, or reading of the scriptures
 - xxiii) Only a Sikh is entitled to be in attendance of the Guru Granth Sahib during the congregational session.
 - xxiv) At the end of the congregational session, or Bhog, Ardaas should be performed followed by Hukum.
 - xxv) During the congregational session, it is the responsibility of the parents to prevent the children from running around and making noise. Parents may be requested to take such children out to avoid interference. Children of appropriate age must be motivated and guided to sit and listen instead of letting them run around.
- b) Personal programs of Sangat will also be conducted based on Sikh Rehat Maryada.
- i) Sehaj/Sadharan or Akhand Patth
 - (1) Sangat should be motivated to participate by listening or reciting Gurbani themselves so that the host is able to benefit from listening to Gurbani. Head Granthi will play a vital role in such education and motivation.
 - (2) At least one person from the host family must be present from start to finish.
 - (3) Encourage the host family to provide volunteers to participate.
 - (4) Sadharan or Akhand Patth must be conducted in accordance with Gurmat and Rehat Maryada.
 - (5) Patthis should be punctual and knowledgeable about Shudh Uchharan.
 - ii) Wedding & Marriage - Anand Ceremony
 - (1) Anand ceremony must be performed per Gurmat and Rehat Maryada. The ceremony will be officiated by the official Gurdwara staff or designated delegates in case the staff is not available for any reason. Both families must be explained the Maryada and process of Anand Ceremony by the Head Granthi.
 - (2) Anand Ceremony is a prescribed method of wedding of a Sikh Man and a Sikh Woman into a marriage. It should be performed in the AM and completed before noon.
 - (3) Those who do not believe in Sikhi (in the ten Sikh Gurus, Shri Guru Granth Sahib, basic tenets, and teachings of the Sikhism) cannot get married by Anand ceremony. Anand ceremony is not a mere ritual. It is a direction of the Guru to the Sikh. To undergo Anand ceremony, it is important to understand and follow.
 - (4) Sikh faith is proponent of procreation and family life. Anand Ceremony only prescribes a marriage between a man and a woman. This ceremony cannot and must not be performed for any other union including same sex union.

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- (5) A non-Sikh wishing to get married to a Sikh accepting Anand Ceremony must be educated (by The Head Granthi along with Religious Secretary) about the process, its importance and role in Sikh faith.
 - (6) Sikhs who are (distracted from the Sikh standards in their personal and social life and are) planning to get married via Anand ceremony must be made aware of their faith and heritage by the parents, & The head Granthi and Religious Secretary. Arguments or excuses to customize the ceremonies to their liking are not allowed.
 - (7) It is the responsibility of the management to assure required information is provided to the individuals or families submitting forms to reserve the date for the Anand ceremony.
 - (8) SRS will arrange short educational courses for families undergoing such ceremonies.
- c) For all programs, of SRS or Personal, Kadah Parshaad must be prepared and distributed in Sangat per Rehat Maryada. Personalized versions of preparation or recipes are not allowed. The general procedure for preparation is as follows:
- i) In a clean vessel, the three contents (wheat flour, pure sugar and clarified butter) are added in equal quantities and cooked and prepared on the steady heat reciting the Scriptures. Then covered with a clean piece of cloth, it should be placed on a clean table or pedestal in front of the Guru Granth Sahib. Thereafter, in the holy presence of Guru Granth Sahib, the first five and the last stanza of the Anand Sahib should be recited aloud (so that the congregation can hear), the Ardaas, offered and the pudding tucked with the sacred Kirpan (*Kripan Bhet*) for acceptance. If more quantity is brought in after the recitation of the Anand, it is not necessary to repeat the recitation of the Anand Sahib. Simple Kripan Bhet is sufficient.
 - ii) Before the distribution, the share of Panj Piarey should be set apart and distributed to five Sikhs, commencing the general distribution thereafter. The share of the person in attendance of the Guru Granth Sahib' should be put in a small bowl or vessel and handed over. Kadah Parshaad must be distributed among the congregation without any discrimination on the basis of personal regard or spite and equally to the Sikh, the non-Sikh without regard for high or low caste or status.
 - iii) This section only refers to general preparation and distribution. For details, refer to Rehat Maryada.
- 8) General conduct while at SRS premises and or its religious programs:** Good conduct, courtesy, and respect are expected of all at SRS premises or while participating in SRS programs.
- a) Behaviors that are insulting, discriminatory, harassing, or otherwise illegal or antisocial are strictly prohibited
 - b) SRS premises is purely vegetarian and intoxicant free area. Non-Veg products and intoxicants are strictly prohibited.
 - c) Smoking and drinking is strictly prohibited at SRS premises.
 - d) Intoxicated people or those who have been smoking (tobacco or other stuff) are not allowed at the premises.
 - e) Firearms are not allowed at the SRS premises. Police or other security officials on official duty are an exception.
 - f) Propagating unfounded misleading unvetted views (verbally or through any medium, at or on behalf of SRS), that may mislead congregation, especially the youth, is strictly prohibited. Installing or worshipping Idols is prohibited at SRS premises or in SRS programs. SRS board must take serious note of such activities and alert the Sangat. SRS will not approve fund collections or literature distribution based on such misleading views.
 - g) Proper decent (unrevealing and undistracting) attire appropriate for a religious place is required.
 - h) Everyone must remove their shoes in the designated area upon entering the building and keep their head covered while at the premises.
 - i) It is customary to wash your hands and feet before entering the congregation hall or Langar hall. Everyone is expected to maintain hygiene and cleanliness. Avoid frequenting areas with shoes on, where shoes are not allowed.
 - j) Visitors coming in groups must inform the office at least a week before with their mission and needs.
 - k) Proper permission is required to distribute any literature at the premises.
 - l) Proper permission is required for photography or videography (See Section 20).
 - m) Report safety concerns, injuries or emergencies to the Gurudwara staff or Management.
 - n) Report damages to property or equipment to the management office
 - o) Report lost and found to the management office.

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- p) Contact management office to request express permissions before planning any activities
- q) Facilities designated for physically challenged are only for such individuals. Others must not use such facilities.
- r) Question concerns or complaints must be brought to the notice of management contact person. Do not try to fix things without involvement or approval of the management as this may result in injury.
- s) Concerns about employees of the SRS or designated volunteers must be brought to the attention of the management/board. Arguing with or intimidating employees or volunteers will not be tolerated.
- t) Kadah Parshaad must only be prepared by the designated persons at the designated SRS Langar Kitchen as explained in Section 11.c Bringing Kadah Parshaad prepared from outside is not permitted. It is man-mat to bring Kadah Parshaad from your home.
- u) Do not prepare or bring and serve unhealthy food. Only the food items approved by the board based on the Sikhi practice of Langer will be prepared and or brought and served in Langar. Ingredients of all such items must be displayed clearly.
- v) Things brought from home to be taken away by the Sangat must be put only at the designated places, with clearly marked ingredients.
- w) Rumalas brought to Gurudwara must be handed over to the Head Granthi, Assistant Granthi or Kirtanyas in service. Religious Secretary must be contacted if other staff is busy.
- x) Decorations:
 - i) SRS premises is decently managed. Extra decorations or arrangements are usually not required and discouraged. Please check with the management for approval before asking or making any changes to any setup at SRS premises.
 - ii) Only reasonable changes to the setup, mics and or adding reasonable permissible permanent decorations that are meaningful and worthy of being left on the premises can be allowed.
 - iii) Extravagant decorations, temporary decorations for special personal occasions, and other activities (like arranging or throwing flowers around or on bride and groom etc.) specifically focused on distinguishing individuals in presence of Guru Granth Sahib are violation (of 11.a.xiv of this code) of conduct and are prohibited. Images and Idols will not be installed in Diwan Hall.
 - iv) Cleaning after personal programs is the responsibility of the person/family responsible for the program.
- y) In the langar hall
 - i) Sit quietly on the floor with your legs crossed while langar is served. If limited by age or physical ability one can use the dining table/chairs provided in the langar hall
 - ii) Ask the Sevadaar to only serve the quantity of food that you can finish, to avoid wastage.
 - iii) Be considerate of others waiting to be seated, clean up and empty your seat promptly once you are finished
 - iv) Do not train cameras on people without their express permission. Photography is not allowed without permission of people directly in the focus of the frame facing the camera.
- z) Violations, aggressive behavior, violence and indecent language is strictly prohibited.
 - i) The violators will be asked to stop the violation and may be asked to leave at once. Violations may be reported.
 - ii) Violation of the code of conduct, (including Anti Sikhi activities or association with Anti Sikhi Organizations, or otherwise found to be involved in illegal activities) in general may lead to removal, reporting, cancellation of membership
 - iii) Above Violations by the board or committee members or employees may lead to initiation of proceedings for removal from the board or committees and termination of employment.

9) Approval of Activities on SRS premises:

- a) All activities on premises of or on behalf of SRS will require express approval of the board, under the signature of President or Executive Secretary of the board, only after approved in a board meeting.
- b) All communications in any form (verbal, media activities, posters, bill boards, wall boards) by or on behalf of SRS or by anyone otherwise at SRS premises should be pre-approved by the SRS board. Proper attention will be paid during the approval process that such activities do not violate the standards defined and or referred to in this code of Conduct. If such communication involves audio, video, posters or other forms of depictions,

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

they will be reviewed by the board to assure the conform to the standards defined in this code. In general, avoid displaying or printing photos of the Gurus, specifically side by side with anyone or irrelevant content.

- c) All distribution materials, approved by the board should have designated location decided by the board. This applies to the Newspapers or other periodicals which should be allotted dedicated space for them to install their dispensers or boxes sat their own cost.
- d) All requests for fund collection activities must be approved by the SRS after evaluation of the cause and the end use of the funds.
 - i) SRS will prepare a special form to be filled and filed by the official representative of the fund-raising agency listing name(s) of the collector(s) with the board for approval It will be the responsibility of the collector to inform the Treasurer about the total collection of the day on SRS premises. Such report should be made same day or at the most within one week or by the following Sunday (whichever is earlier) of conclusion of collection. All such details along with the name(s) of the collector(s) will be saved as part of SRS records according to the record retention policy and can be used to validate the cause of the collection with the organization in whose name the collection was done.
 - ii) Failure to report will debar such organization to conduct activities in future. The treasurer will note these details in the newsletter.
 - iii) SRS will not approve collections or any other activities on SRS premises or during SRS programs by any person or organizations whose activities involve consumption or promotion of intoxicants, and lecherous activities or their promotion.
 - iv) SRS will not support or approve any activities by any person or organization on SRS premises or during its programs who are affiliated with the organizations, groups, factions or individuals known for anti Sikhi propaganda, activities, and or conduct derogatory to Sikhi.
- e) SRS board or committee members will not communicate on behalf of individuals or organizations referred to above in article 13 (c, iii & iv) from the stage or via official SRS communication mediums.
- f) SRS, its board and committee members, officials and volunteers will not promote or endorse in any form or manner (verbal or written and express or implied) any activities other than related with the Gurdwara Sahib, Gurmat and Sikhi, and or activities related to aims and objectives of the SRS. This includes promotions and endorsements from stage or in publications, including newsletters and or news and or social media.

10) Interaction with Members and Congregation

- a) For continuous interaction and feedback from Sangat, frequent surveys and quarterly townhall meetings must be conducted. This can be achieved through an ad hoc community engagement committee.
- b) Newsletter should be used in an effective manner to covey routine and special schedules.
- c) Information materials and wall communication:
 - i) Management must designate communication spaces for specific purposes.
 - ii) Self-guiding, well organized, value-oriented wall communication must be used for Sangat and visitors.
 - iii) Precise accurate information materials for visitors must be available online and in form of posters, brochures, flyers and wall displays approved by the board and bear the signatures or stamp of SRS.
 - iv) No person should distribute or display any materials on walls or other places at the SRS premises on their own. All materials must be submitted to SRS board for approval based on standards defined and referred to in this code of conduct. All approved materials must be displayed by SRS management or delegates in designated areas only.
- d) Electronic communication
 - i) Electronic displays or information kiosks
 - (1) for basic introduction to Sikhi and references to learning material.
 - (2) Information about SRS programs, Donations, Education, Events
 - (3) Option to subscribe to more information
 - ii) Article a Week, month or quarter for digital delivery must be made available on Gurmat and Sikh History topics.
 - iii) Summarized communication of world news relevant to Sikh community

- iv) Important general or safety alerts, or information in situations important to Sikh Community of incidents in Chicago land area and safety measures etc.

11) Langar & The Gurdwara Kitchen

- a) Langar is available at all times. But peak hours schedule (Preparation to wrap up) must be posted in Langar hall and other places in the building
- b) Langar in-charge should plan for adequate number of volunteers to serve during above time slots.
- c) Attire: In addition to dressing up appropriately for attending Gurdwara, safe attire for working inside the kitchen is necessary to assure safety. Hand and foot coverings if needed while working in the kitchen, to avoid sharp objects or otherwise, should remain within the designated kitchen or work area and should not be brought to the langar hall or taken outside of the kitchen from the backdoors.
- d) Food materials
 - i) All food materials will be stored securely and cared for to avoid pests and any other contamination
 - ii) Official items in Langar should be limited to Daal, Sabji, and Parshadaa. Kheer or other traditional items can be added to menu on special occasions.
 - iii) Unhealthy foods like deep fried foods (Pakorras, Samosas etc.), soft drinks and other processed foods including non-seasonal foods be avoided.
 - iv) Food ingredients of items on the routine official menu must be permanently displayed in Langar hall.
- e) Preparation
 - i) Recitation of Bani or Gur Mantar while preparing the food is a desired practice.
 - ii) Only simple and healthy food must be prepared.
- f) Serving
 - i) Performing brief Ardaas in the Kitchen before Serving the langar is a desired practice.
 - ii) Serving of Langar starts with Jaap of '*Satnam Waheguru*' and a Jaikara of '*Wahe Gur Ji Ka Khalsa Wahe Guru Ji Ki Fateh*' is customary after distribution to the first Pangat (line).
 - iii) Guru's Langar is free for all and everyone should be treated equally and with respect and courtesy without differentiation or discrimination based on cast creed, religion, or social status.
 - iv) Langar hall should always be kept clean, before, during and after the langar distribution. Adequate number of volunteers, materials and staff for Cleanliness must be arranged in advance.
 - v) People should be properly seated on the floor in rows for the langar to be served. Chairs are only for physically challenged people.
- g) Consistency in menu and quantity
 - i) Langar should be same for all, all day, consistently. No special dishes for certain groups or at certain times will be prepared.
 - ii) Quantity should be based on assessed congregation size. Preparation should be initiated to keep up with the consumption.
- h) Langar in-charge must assure that carry outs are announced only at the closing to assure enough quantity is available for Sangat.
- i) Family sponsored Langar
 - i) Host will fill out form for personal kitchen use and pay the kitchen use fee.
 - ii) Host will bring their own grocery and prepare langar themselves. If grocery is used from Gurdwara stock, the host will pay for all such grocery items.
 - iii) Laangri may be requested to prepare Langar for the host as long as it does not intervene with Laangri's duty to attend to needs of Gurdwara Langar. Host will compensate Laangri appropriately for service and inform BOT designated Langar-in charge or BOT.
 - iv) Laangri must report non-compliance to BOT Langar-in charge or BOT in writing within time stipulated by the board. Failure to report can result in disciplinary action. Host will be barred from using Gurdwara kitchen for personal use after two warnings of this policy non-compliance.
 - v) Food to be prepared and delivered to and distributed at Gurudwara must be strictly vegetarian.
 - vi) Langar in charge must have the list of food to be prepared at premises along with to be delivered.
 - vii) Langar in-charge is responsible to assure thorough cleanliness.
 - viii) Food items brought in from outside to be cleared on the same day.

The Code of Conduct of the Sikh Religious Society

- ix) Ask Langar in charge or an authorized person before taking cooked food home after conclusion of Langar.
 - x) During the duty hours, employees must not ask for money to perform any task in Langar. Any such activity after hours must be approved by Langar In-charge.
- Outside help/expert for private programs must provide evidence of being fully insured and bonded. Such permission must be approved by the Langar in-charge. Such activity must not interfere with routine Langar operation

12) SRS Assets and Resources

- a) SRS assets and resources will only be used for SRS related purposes in line with its aims and objectives of SRS and standards defined in this code of conduct. Personal use or use for any other purpose other than that for the approved activities of SRS is strictly prohibited.
- b) SRS assets include but are not limited to all tangible and intangible assets and data.
 - i) Tangible assets include but are not limited to current (cash, cash equivalents, marketable securities, and accounts receivable) and long-term (real estate properties, equipment, vehicles, furniture, utensils, computers, office supplies, literature and any other general or artefacts of faith, etc.) assets.
 - ii) Intangible assets include but are not limited to non-physical assets like copyrights, trademarks, patents, licenses, brand value, publications (physical or electronic), logos, domain names etc.
 - iii) Data (physical or electronic, internal information, official SRS communications, e-mail and phone lists, member information, audio visual recordings, banners, logos, web content, and publications etc.)

13) SRS School and Library

- a) The core purpose of the SRS School is to provide basic skills in Gurmukhi and Gurmat, to enable students to read and understand Gurbani. Other subjects can be part of the curriculum as long the main purpose is served.
- b) The curriculum and classes will be organized based on the proficiency of the students.
- c) Parents must be involved in the learning process
- d) SRS should involve the capable youth for teaching children, as part of improving youth involvement.
- e) Teachers must be selected based on qualification, proficiency in Punjabi and English, passion to teach Gurmukhi and Gurbani.
- f) Syllabus should focus on educating the students about Sikh History, Heritage, and Culture. In terms of language, it must be focused on enabling the students to proficiently read Gurmukhi and Gurbani and write clearly conveying the meanings. It must be divided into the learning paths as follows:
 - i) Learning paths
 - (1) Gurmukhi Punjabi Basics
 - (2) Sikh History
 - (a) Guru Sahiban de Jeevan
 - (b) Sri Harmandir Sahib di Usaari
 - (c) Guru Granth Sahib di Rachna
 - (d) Guru Sahiban de samey de Sikh Shaheed
 - (e) Khalsee de Saajna and events leading to and after formation of Khalsa
 - (f) Saaka Chamkaur, Saka Sirhind & Baba Banda Singh Bahadur
 - (g) Attacks by invaders (Bahri Hamle) and Sikh Mislana
 - (h) Sikh Victory and Control over Delhi (Singha Da Dilli te Kabja) and making of historic Gurdwaras
 - (i) Sikh Empire - Khalsa Raj - Maharaja Ranjit Singh – Rise, Expansion and Fall
 - (j) Sikhs in British India and World war
 - (3) Contribution of Sikhs to India's independence
 - (a) Gadar lehar and other independence movements by Sikhs (Kartar Singh Sarabha, Udham Singh Bhagat Singh and others)
 - (b) Division of India and Impact to the Sikhs and Sikhi
 - (c) Leading Sikhs Active during independence of India – Chief Khalsa Diwan, Baba Kharak Singh, Sirdar Kapur Singh, Baldev Singh, Master Tara Singh etc.

- (4) Post-Independence
 - (a) SGPC
 - (b) Panj Takht
 - (c) History of Punjab and Sikhs after independence
 - (d) Sikhs worldwide
 - (e) 1984 attack on Harmandir Sahib and Sikh Genocide
 - (f) Relevant Current affairs of importance

ii) Computer

- (1) Computer education in addition to other aspects should focus on use of Punjabi language on computer to enable students to communicate and compose materials in Punjabi.

iii) Other education:

- (1) Other educational programs to expose the students to latest world trends and improving multilingual capabilities should be planned as needed.

g) The Library is the source of literature and materials important for the Sikhs

- i) Reviewed relevant literature serving the school syllabus should be available in the library. The students should be able to get the reading materials relevant to their syllabus from the library

14) Photography, Videography Etc.

- a) Do not photograph individuals without their permission at SRS premises and or SRS Programs.
- b) SRS premises is not a public place and photography is not allowed as it would generally be on a public place. Everyone is expected to honor the privacy and personality rights of the SRS members and other people at SRS premises and or SRS programs in general.
- c) In Diwan hall, Cameras only be focused on the stage, not on the congregation. SRS management will *Display 'NO PHOTOGRAPHY'* in the direction of congregation in Diwan hall.
- d) Management/Religious secretary must display 'Photography/Videography in progress/allowed' at the entrance on such days when Photography is allowed in general for specific reasons clearly identified in advance.
- e) These restrictions do not apply to private programs if the photographed individuals are only the invitees to that program. However, Maryada needs to be followed in all situations. Finding a good angle for the camera is not an excuse to violate the requirements of respectful conduct. Religious Secretary and or Head Granthi or other SRS person in-charge of supporting such program must assure the respect is maintained.
- f) Photo, video or any other recordings done at SRS premises or at programs arranged by or on behalf of SRS must not be used for profit or for any type of news, specifically with political or social spin to call out any person(s) or group(s). Any such use will be a direct violation of privacy and or personality rights of SRS members and or individuals in attendance at SRS Premises.
- g) SRS may on occasions expressly declare a gathering as public and or otherwise allow open audio visual or other recordings with a limited scope for special purpose. Such recordings must be focused on the participants of that event only.
- h) These rules do not apply to situations of public emergency or other legally exempt situations.
- i) SRS premises are under 24x7 surveillance. The surveillance recordings are for SRS records only. Individual can request to review and obtain a copy of such surveillance in certain situations where those individuals are involved or to report or help investigate a situation. Surveillance recordings must not be distributed or shared in general or posted on social media under any circumstances. Violators will be reported and can be legally pursued.

15) Continuous development and modernization

- a) Information kiosks must be established to provide precise information to Sangat, subscribe to newsletter or submit suggestions or complaints etc.
- b) Secure area for children
- c) Special subscription for basic to advanced level short online courses about Sikhi
- d) Option for electronic contributions – one time or recurring.

16) **Security**

- a) Executive Secretary, with the help of other board members should assure proper physical security on premises
- b) During any SRS programs enough volunteers should be requested for inside and outside vigilance on the premises.
- c) High-resolution video surveillance should be in place at all locations inside and outside at the SRS premises
- d) Security system with panic alarm option should be maintained at key places.

17) **Terms, Abbreviations, and AKAs**

- a) SRS: Sikh Religious Society, The Organization
- b) Constitution: Constitution of Sikh Religious Society
- c) Sikh Rehat Maryada (Adopted by Shiromini Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee via its resolution 97 passed at its meeting on Feb 3, 1945) – Rehat Maryada, Rehat, Maryada, Sikh Code of Conduct
- d) Code of Conduct - Code of Conduct and Ethics – The code prepared under article IX.1.j.iv of the constitution of SRS
- e) ***Code of Conduct and Ethics Committee*** – Committee to support CIC in implementation of this code
- f) Gurmat: Teachings of the Sikh Gurus, Shri Guru Granth Sahib, basic tenets of Sikhi
- g) Executive Board: President, Executive Secretary, Religious Secretary and Treasurer
- h) Executive session: Sessions (defined in Robert's Rules 9:24 – 9:27) which require privacy and involvement

Approved by the majority of the Board of Trustees and the Constitution Implementation Committee