

Deut. 6:4 "Hear, O Israel, Yahweh our Elohim is one"

*No titles of Authority but Responsibility*

UNITY IN DIVERSITY

**Vero Essene Yahad**

TRUTH

DOING TORAH

TOGETHER

NOT DIVERSITY IN CONFLICT

*No Authoritarian, Autocrat or Despotic Ruler*

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**Vero Essene Yahad**  
**LEADERSHIP ASSEMBLY**  
**S.O.P. Manual**

*Policies & Procedures v1.0*



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# Yahad Leadership Assembly S.O.P. Manual v1.0

*Prepared by Bishop Daniel Ben Regesh - October 2017*

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## **Introduction**

This manual is to assist those Elders and Deacons who are to be ordained, to understand their purpose and roles, both in the Yahad Leadership Assembly and in the general Yahad. This document will outline the Vero Essene Yahad's policies applicable to Elders and Ordained Deacons including:

- Leadership Assembly Purpose & Organizational Structure;
- The role & Conduct of an Ordained Leader;
- Leadership Colloquies/Meetings;
- Leave, Disputes and Resignation Policies.

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## **1. Purpose & Organizational Structure**

### **1.1. The purpose of the Yahad Leadership assembly**

The purpose of the Leadership counsel shall be to serve as the legislative arm of the Vero Essene Yahad; to be known as the Yahad Leadership Assembly. Issues and concerns are brought before this body; they are discussed, and acted upon as needed. The Assembly shall hold an Elders colloquy on the third Sunday of every month. The Vero Essene Yahad Leadership Assembly includes the following leaders with full voting rights and privileges:

- i) Mevaqgrim/Bishops/Overseers;
- ii) Zechenim/ Elders;
- iii) Shoterim/Permanent or Ordained Deacons.

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### **1.2. Yahad Polity and Operational Structure**

The Yahad Leadership Assembly will not have a pope, authoritarian, autocrat, or despotic ruler over it. All "power" is equally distributed to all members of the Leadership Assembly. The Yahad Leadership Assembly is Episcopal in nature. Those holding the prime responsibility for peace and progress in the Yahad are "Elected Mevaqgrim/Bishops". The Mevaqgrim/Bishop(s) are surrounded by



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Elders and Ordained Deacons, and in unity will make up this legislative body. The members of the Assembly represent the People (the general body of believers) and will stand in proxy for them before the Mevaqgrim/Bishop(s).

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### **1.2.1. Definitions:**

- i) Polity is a form of government. It is the overseeing structure of the Vero Essene Yahad.
  - ii) The Vero Essene Yahad was conceived to be an organization of either **consecrated** or **ordained** individuals.
    - a. **Consecration**: is a **formal dedication** and **recognition** by one's peers to specific service and worship.
    - b. **Ordination** : is a **formal dedication** by this religious **authority** to full-time ministry.
    - c. **Administering Assembly**: is the group also known as the Yahad Leadership Assembly (YLA), responsible for making anointed decisions for the organization as a whole.
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### **1.2.2. The Yahad Leadership Assembly or The Administering Yahad**

The Vero Essene Yahad, as an organization, is to be overseen by a group of ordained, full-time ministers who will form the Yahad Leadership Assembly (YLA); the official overseeing Administering Assembly which assembles via colloquies online. Ideally in formal assembly/colloquy, there should be twelve ordained, full-time ministers, two or three priests plus the Mevaqqre, who serves as the advisor and Elder or leader in this assembly; bringing the Yahad Leadership Assembly total to approximately to sixteen men and women.

However, because we are a new organization, the Yahad should be allowed to grow and develop; meaning that as the Yahad grows, the Leadership Assembly can continue to expand and reflect the diversity of the people to whom we minister. This will allow ideas and input from varying types of ministry specialties. Therefore, as the Yahad grows, the Leadership Assembly grows.

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### 1.2.3. Colloquies

The Yahad Leadership Assembly (YLA), as in the early Yahad, is responsible for making anointed decisions for the organization. Members of the YLA will be required to meet on the third Sunday of every month, to take up the official business of the Yahad.

There is an agenda prepared before the colloquy by the chairperson, with input from the Mevaqqrim/Overseers. The chairperson is usually a Mevaqqre/Overseer. During the colloquy, the chairperson facilitates and the Assembly Secretary takes minutes, including all decisions of the Assembly. To begin the meeting, the agenda is followed and the first matter is presented thereafter.

All members, if they chose, may speak on a matter; however, it should be done in an orderly manner. While a person is speaking, nobody is to interrupt until he or she is finished. Questions may be asked, but there is to be no argument or indictment of the speaker. Making nasty and disrespectful comments, to or about the speaker in any format during the debate, including those such as texting, or zoom chat will not be tolerated. All speakers are to be both respected and honored as brothers and sisters in Messiah.

When all are finished speaking and a matter is to be decided, the Assembly (YLA) will vote. The majority of votes cast, will decide a matter. Decisions that are made are final, unless there is overwhelming new evidence found to warrant overturning a prior decision. Any such matter would need to be re-presented to the Assembly in the same manner, in order to be considered for overturning.

In very difficult situations, a Bachar makes the decision based on what he or she hears. They are chosen at random at the beginning of every meeting by lot. The Bachar may decide based on the majority opinion, or may vary from the majority. It is assumed the Bachar has prepared for the meeting and is spiritually aware so as to receive the Word of Knowledge. A Bachar may be also impeached by a 2/3 vote (two thirds), however this seldom happens.

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### **1.3. Titles of responsibility and Defintions**

Nobody is 'higher' than his or her fellow in rank. This is not a ranking system, but a working system.

#### **Yahad Ministry Titles**

<b><u>Hebrew Title (&amp; Plural)</u></b>	<b><u>Equivalent</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>
Shamash (Shamashim)	Appointed Deacon	Servant of YHWH and the people.
Shoter (Shoterim)	Ordained Deacon	Organizer of Ministries or Projects.
Zachen (Zachenim)	FT Minister	Ordained, FT minister with managerial responsibilities and authorities.
Sholiach (Sholiachim)	FT Apostle or Missionary	Ordained, FT minister at large.
Mevaqqre (Mevaqqrim)	Bishop, Overseer or Presbyter	Ordained, FT minister or visionary.

#### **Official Ministry Sub-categories**

<b><u>Hebrew Title</u></b>	<b><u>Equivalent</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>
Cohen (Cohenim)	Worship Leader	a leader of worship services, written acts of worship or songs.
Azar (Azarim)	Administrator	ordained, FT minister/organizer or administrator of resources and personnel.
Moreh (Morehim)	Professor/Teacher	a teacher, full- or part-time, ordained or not.
Sofer (Soferim)	Writer	a scribe
Mearah (Mearahim)	Inquisitor	an inspector, one who vets new people for the Yahad.
Choch (Chochim)	Sage	a venerable wise man or woman , in both learning and spirituality.



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## **2. Role & Conduct of an Ordained Leader**

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### **2.1. Rights and Responsibilities as a Leader of the Vero Essene Yahad**

The rights and responsibilities of members of the Yahad leadership assembly (mentioned in this manual ) are **derived from the authority given in ordination**.

The four-fold ministry of Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service and thus serve in the local or greater Yahad in witness and service of Messiah's love and justice. Elders and Permanent Deacons are authorized to preach and teach the Word, to provide strong and true care and counsel, to administer the sacraments, and to order the life of the Yahad for service in mission and ministry as Elders, Superintendents, Ordained Deacons, and Bishops.

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#### **2.1.1. Word and Ecclesial Acts:**

- i) To preach the Word of YHWH, lead in worship, read and teach the Scriptures, and engage the people in study and witness.
- ii) To ensure faithful transmission of the Essene/Nazorean/Ebionite faith.
- iii) To lead people in discipleship and evangelistic outreach that others might come to know Messiah and to follow him.
- iv) To counsel persons with personal, ethical, or spiritual struggles.
- v) To perform the ecclesial acts of marriage and burial.
  - a. To perform the marriage ceremony after due counsel with the parties involved and in accordance with the laws of the state and the rules of the Vero Essene Yahad. The decision to perform the ceremony shall be the right and responsibility of the leader.
  - b. To conduct funeral and memorial services and provide care and grief counseling.
- vi) To visit in the homes of the Yahad and the community, especially



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- among the sick, aged, imprisoned, and others in need.
- vii) To maintain all confidences inviolate, including confessional confidences except in the cases of suspected child abuse or neglect, or in cases where mandatory reporting is required by State, and federal law.
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### **2.1.2. Sacrament:**

- i) **To administer the sacraments** of Tevila (baptism) and the Todah Rabba (communion) according to Messiah's ordinance and the rules of the Vero Essene Yahad.
- ii) **Tevila** (baptism) :
- To prepare the parents and sponsors before baptizing infants or children, and instruct them concerning the significance of baptism and their responsibilities for their Messianic training of the baptized child. (You are not required to execute any baptisms or pædobaptisms if your spirit is not right with them.)
  - To encourage reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant and renewal of baptismal vows at different stages of life.
  - To encourage people baptized in infancy or early childhood to make their profession of faith, after instruction, so that they might become professing members of the Yahad.
- iii) **Todah Rabba** (communion):
- To explain the meaning of the Todah Rabbah and to encourage regular participation as a means of favor to grow in spirituality, favor, confidence and holiness.
  - To select and train Deacons and members to serve the consecrated communion elements.
- iv) To encourage the private and congregational use of the other means of spirituality, sacrament or favor.
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### **2.1.3. Order:**

- i) To be the administrative officer of the local Yahad and to assure that the organizational concerns of the congregation are adequately provided for.



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- a. To give leadership support, guidance and training to the lay leadership thus equipping them to fulfill the ministry to which they are called.
  - b. To give oversight to the educational program of the Yahad and encourage the use of Yahad literature and media, or to create one's own materials.
  - c. To be responsible for organizational faithfulness, goal setting, planning and evaluation.
  - d. To search out and counsel men and women for the ministry of Deacons, Elders, Local Leaders and other Yahad related ministries.
- ii) To administer the temporal affairs of the Yahad.
    - a. To administer the provisions of the Yahad Rule insofar as it is codified.
    - b. To give an account of their leadership ministries to the Mevaqqrim/Overseers/Bishops requiring such reports and confessions.
    - c. To provide leadership for the funding of their personal ministry and that of the Vero Essene Yahad.
    - d. To model and promote faithful financial stewardship and to encourage giving as a spiritual discipline by teaching the biblical principles of giving.
    - e. To lead the local Yahad in the fulfillment of its mission through full and faithful payment of ministerial support, administrative, and benevolent funds.
    - f. To care for all Yahad records and local Yahad financial obligations and to certify the accuracy of all financial, membership and any other reports submitted by the local Yahad to the annual conference for use in apportioning costs back to the Vero Essene Yahad.
  - iii) To participate in Yahad programs and training opportunities.
    - a. To seek out opportunities for cooperative ministries with other like-minded believers and Yahadim.
    - b. To be willing to assume supervisory responsibilities within the growing Yahad connection.
  - iv) To lead the Yahad in racial and ethnic inclusiveness.
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### **2.1.4. Service:**

- i) To embody the teachings of Yahshua in servant ministries and servant leadership.
- ii) To give diligent leadership in ordering the life of the Yahad for discipleship in the world.
- iii) To build the body of Messiah as a caring and giving community, extending the ministry of Messiah to the world.
- iv) To participate in community, ecumenical and inter-religious concerns and to encourage the people to become so involved and to pray and labor for the unity of the Messianic community.

These acts are only granted to ordained Elders and permanent deacons because there are both local and national legal ramifications.

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## **2.2. Code of conduct applicable at all times (within meetings and outside activities)**

The Vero Essene Yahad Leadership Assembly (YLA) is a body of Elders and Ordained Deacons who come from a variety of backgrounds. Every member of the Assembly is fully expected to carry his or herself in a professional manner at all times and in all places. This means in colloquy and in public before the people. As members of the leadership, we all should understand that we represent not only ourselves and the Vero Essene Yahad to people, but we represent the master Yahshua. How they see us, is how they will see him. It is a very fearful thing to fall into the hands of an angry YHWH. Therefore our conduct must line up with the conduct of the master Yahshua, at all times, and in all places.

Matthew 7:12 should be the watch word of every Elder and Ordained Deacon serving in the assembly; to do unto others, as you would have them do unto you. If you have a problem with a fellow Elder or Ordained Deacon you are to use the proscribed method spoken about in Matthew 18:15-17.

The following actions are not representative of the Vero Essene Yahad and will not be tolerated by any member of the Assembly:



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- i) Dishonesty in your dealings, both among your brethren in the assembly and in the community at large;
  - ii) Lying to, or about your fellow Elders and Deacons;
  - iii) Infighting;
  - iv) Reviling;
  - v) Breaking of confidences, pastoral or otherwise;
  - vi) Intentionally causing division and strife within the assembly;
  - vii) Being rude or disrespectful to your fellow Elders and Deacons;
  - viii) Public drunkenness at any time;
  - ix) Using, or passing around any illegal substances;
  - x) Giving or receiving bribes for favors;
  - xi) Loose, or unruly behavior;
  - xii) Physically threatening your fellow Elders and Deacons.
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### **3. Leadership Colloquies / Meetings**

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#### **3.1 Official Vero Essene Yahad Leadership Assembly Attendance policy (YLA)**

- i) Every Elder and Ordained Deacon is required to attend every colloquy/meeting of the Yahad Leadership Assembly (YLA) on the third Sunday of the month, unless there is an emergency, work, or prior ministry obligation.
- ii) Every Elder and Ordained Deacon is allowed no more than three (3) unexcused absences in a calendar year.
- iii) When an Elder and Ordained Deacon is going to miss a meeting for the above reasons, or any other reason, they are responsible for contacting the Assembly Secretary, to let them know, so that the absence can be properly recorded.
- iv) If an Elder and Ordained Deacon misses a meeting, and fails to contact the Assembly Secretary within three days after a scheduled assembly meeting, that absence will count as an unexcused absence.
- v) The Assembly Secretary shall take and record attendance at every Yahad Leadership colloquy/meeting.



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## **3.2 Voting Rights and Standards within Quorums.**

- i) Every member of the Yahad Leadership Assembly (YLA), or the Executive Council (EC), who is in good standing, has one vote per membership. Both quorums operate separately for voting purposes.
- ii) Any member, who is on sabbatical or administrative leave, may not vote in colloquy.
- iii) No member may come off sabbatical leave or administrative sabbatical to vote and then return back to the former state. Either they are on sabbatical leave or administrative sabbatical, or they are off.
- iv) Only present members may vote in colloquy.
- v) Proxy or block voting will not be allowed.
  - a. All business of the Yahad leadership assembly (YLA & EC ) is to be done in the light, not in back rooms and secret colloquies. A secret colloquy is defined as any side meeting that is called without the knowledge of everybody in the Assembly or EC, for block voting or lobbying purposes.
- vi) All meetings of the Leadership Assembly (YLA) and the EC will be governed by Roberts rules of order (newly revised). In very difficult situations or when agreement cannot be reached, a Bachar will be chosen to assist in the YHWH lead decision making of both bodies.
- vii) Couples may no longer serve in any leadership bodies together such as the Yahad Leadership Assembly, or Executive Council, for reasons of block voting and conflicts of interest.

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## **4. Leave, Disputes and Resignation Policies**

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### **4.1 Policies on Sabbatical Leave & Administrative Sabbatical**

#### **4.1.1. Sabbatical Leave**

Sabbatical leave is an approved leave of absence, also known just as a "Sabbatical". It can be as short as a month, or as long as six months without review. For an Elder or Ordained Deacon to be granted sabbatical leave, he or she would need to speak with one of the



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Mevaqqrim/Bishops and they then would need to bring the measure to the Leadership Assembly for final approval. If an Elder or Ordained Deacon comes to a Bishop, that specific Bishop is responsible for bringing the measure and notifying everybody involved by e-mail at the minimum; and also by phone, Zoom or Face book messenger if desired. The Bishop, who places an Elder or Ordained Deacon on either sabbatical leave or administrative sabbatical, must be the one to give the okay for an Elder or Ordained Deacon to be removed from that status. This must also be ratified by the Leadership Assembly (YLA).

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#### **4.1.2. Administrative Sabbatical**

If an Elder or Ordained Deacon has three unexcused absences in a calendar year, without making contact with a Mevaqqre/Bishop, Elder or Assembly Secretary, a Bishop may place that Elder or Ordained Deacon on administrative sabbatical. A Mevaqqre/Bishop should make two attempts by phone, e-mail, or Face book messenger, to contact the Elder or Ordained Deacon in question; however, a minimum of one email must be sent. If contact is not able to be made within two weeks, the Elder or Ordained Deacon in question will be placed on Administrative Sabbatical. They will still be a member of the Yahad, but no longer eligible as a voting member of the Leadership Assembly (YLA). The Mevaqqre/Bishop, who places an Elder or Ordained Deacon on either sabbatical leave or administrative sabbatical, must be the one to give the okay for that Elder or Ordained Deacon to be removed from that status. This must also be ratified by the Leadership Assembly (YLA).

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#### **4.1.3. Rights and responsibilities of Elders or Ordained Deacons on either Sabbatical leave or Administrative leave**

- i) Elders or Ordained Deacons that have requested sabbatical leave may still attend Shabbat services, weekly lectures and other events of the Vero Essene Yahad. However, they will no longer be allowed to attend Yahad Leadership assembly colloquies, nor vote in them. In these cases, they cannot attend, or vote, because they have requested sabbatical from their responsibilities in the Yahad.



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- ii) For Elders or Ordained Deacons that have been placed on administrative sabbatical, they can still attend all Yahad events and functions, with the exception of the Leadership Assemblies (YLA). In these cases, they cannot attend, or vote, because they are not in good standing as a member of the Yahad.
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## **4.2 The Yahad Leadership policy for dealing with disputes via a formal inquiry process**

### **4.2.1. What is an Inquiry?**

It is a means of settling disputes or serious disagreements between members of the Vero Essene Yahad or between an Elder or Ordained Deacon.

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### **4.2.2. Who can call for an Inquiry?**

Anyone who has a dispute with the Vero Essene Yahad proper, or an Elder or Ordained Deacon may call an Inquiry. However, the Executive Council must approve the action by a majority vote. The one initiating the Inquiry, be it an Elder or Ordained Deacon, is to be known as the Inquirer. The other party is the Inquiree. The terminology used here is very important as this is not a legal matter or a trial, and it is not to be conducted as such.

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### **4.2.3. How does one proceed?**

“**Inquiry**” is the name for two sessions of both the Executive Council (EC) and Yahad Leadership Assembly (YLA) set apart to hear disagreements and disputes. The first session is for a hearing of the matters from the Inquirer (and any witnesses) and the Executive Council. The second session is for a hearing of the Inquiree (and any witnesses) and the Leadership Assembly (YLA).

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#### **4.2.4. What may the Inquirer do?**

The Inquirer may ask the Executive Council to set a date for the first of two Inquiry sessions. If the Council decides to grant the Inquirer an Inquiry, the Council may do so if it considers the gravity of the matter serious enough to devote the time. If the Executive Council denies the Inquirer, the matter is closed. The Inquiry then is conducted with the Council and the Inquirer present. The Inquirer may bring two or three witnesses to speak on their behalf. Some matters do not always have a witness, such as sexual harassment, spousal abuse or demeaning behavior. The Inquiree does not attend this meeting.

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#### **4.2.5. What may the Inquiree do?**

Once the first session is completed and a short time has passed, the second session may commence. The Inquiree meets with the Yahad Leadership Assembly (YLA). Here is where the Inquiry proper begins. No names are to be named. A representative of the EC may question the Inquiree of the complaints provided by the Inquirer and his or her witnesses. This should be done honestly without any derision, accusation or emotionalism. Through the questioning, it should be determinable as to whether the matter is serious enough to warrant administrative action by the Yahad Leadership assembly.

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#### **4.2.6. What does the Bachar do?**

The Bachar must be chosen before the EC meets; they are chosen by lot randomly from the pool of active Ordained Elders or Deacons, within the Vero Essene Yahad (outside of the Executive Council). They should know nothing about the Inquiry beforehand, but he or she must attend both sessions of the Inquiry. The Bachar remains silent and in an attitude of spiritual discernment, occupying the throne-room of the Father Yahweh throughout the proceedings, yet listening closely to the proceedings. The Bachar may only serve as such once in every three years.

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#### **4.2.7. What of the decision?**

After the second session is completed (assuming now that the Leadership Assembly determined the matter in question to be serious enough to be pursued), the Bachar is to descend from the throne-room and give whatever word he or she has received to the Leadership Assembly (YLA). The Leadership Assembly should then consider the entire matter before them, taking into serious account what the Bachar has spoken. The Yahad Leadership Assembly may then vote on whether the Inquirer has made his or her case. However, the Bachar will decide the case and may overrule the Leadership Assembly. If the Leadership Assembly is overruled, the Assembly (YLA) may then appeal to the Mevaqqrim/Overseers.

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#### **4.2.8. What then comes of the Inquiry?**

There are many possible outcomes. One must try for a win - win, but this cannot always happen. The Inquiree may be found without fault, may be charged to apologize or repay, may be censored, put on administrative sabbatical or dismissed. The outcome is the decision of the Yahad Leadership Assembly, the Bachar and/or the board of overseers.

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### **4.3 Resignation Policy**

The process is as follows:

- i) If an Elder or Ordained Deacon desires to resign from service from their position within the Vero Essene Yahad, they must submit a written letter of resignation to a Mevaqqre/Overseer/Bishop. The letter must state clearly a desire to resign from service. It should also be signed, and dated.
- ii) That Elder or Ordained Deacon is then responsible for delivering the document to a Mevaqqre/Overseer/Bishop who will then sign it, and take it to the Yahad Leadership Assembly (YLA) for ratification.
- iii) No Elder or Ordained Deacon may resign by mouth alone, all



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resignations must be given in written form. The resignation will take affect at ratification.

- iv) No one may offer a verbal resignation for anyone else.
  - v) If a member of the Yahad Leadership Assembly just disappears without leave or notice, without resigning from their position, they will be subject to the rules of administrative sabbatical in section **4.1.2.** until an inquiry can be held. At that point they will be removed from their position by a majority vote of the Leadership Assembly.
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