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President Andrew Rehfeld  
Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion  
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Dear President Rehfeld,

Pursuant to the HUC-JIR Teshuvah Working Group's mandate to recommend a path of teshuvah and accountability for HUC-JIR, and following our first round of recommendations in February 2023, we are pleased to share with you and the HUC-JIR administration one final recommendation. As the Teshuvah Working Group addressed remaining questions around how to bring continued healing, we developed a recommendation for a process of issuing new certificates, diplomas, and *smicha* documents. We believe that this final recommendation will also move HUC-JIR further on the path to teshuvah, and will center victims and survivors while helping to build a culture of accountability. As we conclude our time together, we are so grateful to the members of the Teshuvah Working Group for their courage, vulnerability, strength, and dedication to this work.

Respectfully,

Rabbi Laura Novak Winer, Ed.D ('94, '95) and Rachel Margolis, RJE ('07)

Co-Chairs, Teshuvah Working Group

*On Behalf of the Teshuvah Working Group*

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Rabbi Meir Bargeron ('20)  
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## *Teshuvah Working Group*

### *Recommendation May 2023*

#### **Certificates, Diplomas, Ordination Documents**

In order to bring continued healing, we recommend that new certificates, diplomas, and ordination documents be offered gratis to all those who would like them, whether because their documents contain signatures of abusers or offenders or because their documents contain gendered language that they would like corrected or changed.

We recommend giving the same options of gendered language to alumni as are offered to current ordines.

We also recommend creating an exception to the policy about returning old documents in order to obtain a new one, such that folks can keep both for historical records.

We recommend that these new documents be created by the Administration with the guidance and direction of the Registrar's Office, and that they be standardized according to the new documents being created by said office.

We recommend creating a ritual (similar, perhaps, to *likeboa mezuzah*) for individuals to use when hanging their new certificate(s), diploma(s), or ordination document.

We also recommend the creation of other rituals to mark such moments as the taking down of old documents, blotting out of names, disposal of certificates, or hanging of additional text as commentary.