



AAAED EVENTS ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

Statement of Policy

As an association of equal opportunity and diversity professionals, the American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity (“AAAED”) is dedicated to providing a safe and welcoming, harassment-free experience for all participants at AAAED events. AAAED seeks to provide a conference or training environment that fosters courtesy and mutual respect and in which attendees may learn, network and enjoy the company of colleagues in a professional atmosphere. AAAED does not tolerate harassment of attendees in any form. Violators of this Events Anti-Harassment Policy may be expelled from the event (forfeiting any paid registration fees) and barred from future events at the discretion of the AAAED event organizers, board members and/or staff.

Definition of Harassment

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, offensive verbal comments related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, national origin, religion, age, marital status, military status, or any other status protected by law; deliberate intimidation; stalking; following; harassing photography or recording; sustained disruption of talks or other events; and inappropriate physical contact. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to: epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and the display or circulation of written or graphic material in hard copy or online that denigrates or shows hostility towards an individual or group based on a protected characteristic.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments or other generally acceptable social behavior. Sexual harassment refers to verbal, physical, and visual conduct of a sexual nature that is unwelcome and offensive to the recipient. By way of example, sexual harassment may include such conduct as sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; verbal comments or physical actions of a sexual nature; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; an unwelcome display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; sexually explicit jokes; and offensive, unwanted physical contact such as patting, pinching, grabbing, groping, or constant brushing against another’s body. It may also include demanding sexual favors in return for employment conditions; e-mail, voice messages, conduct using social media or similar communications that are persistent and unwelcome and sexual in nature; and lewd suggestive comments regarding a staff member’s, exhibitor’s, speaker’s, attendee’s, service provider’s or other participant’s style of dress, appearance, body, or personal life.

Scope of Policy

This Anti-Harassment Policy applies to all attendees at AAAED events, including participants, volunteers, speakers, sponsors, exhibitors, guests and relatives of participants, members of the AAAED board and staff, members of the media, service providers and contractors. All attendees are expected to comply with this Events Anti-Harassment Policy at all AAAED event venues, including training programs, conferences, meetings, and event-related social events.

Reporting an Incident

If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, subjected to inappropriate behavior or have any other concerns, please contact an AAAED staff member, member of the AAAED Board of Directors or General Counsel immediately. AAAED staff, board members or the General Counsel can be identified by a badge, pin, AAAED logo or other identifying insignia. All complaints will be treated seriously and will be investigated promptly. If you are unsure of whether a person is a member of the AAAED staff, the General Counsel or member of the board of directors, consult the individuals at the registration table or desk. If one or more of the foregoing individuals is named in the complaint of harassment or inappropriate behavior, AAAED's General Counsel, President or Executive Director who is unrelated to or otherwise uninvolved with the complainant or respondent will identify a substitute to be selected from the Board's Executive Committee. That person shall be neutral and not otherwise involved with or related to the complainant or respondent.

In response to a report of harassment or otherwise inappropriate behavior, the AAAED event leadership team or AAAED staff may take any action they deem appropriate. AAAED staff, General Counsel or board members will be happy to help attendees contact venue security or local law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise assist those experiencing harassment to feel safe for the duration of the event. Additional information on reporting an incident at a specific event can be found below.

Investigation of the Complaint

Complaints of harassment do not need to be in writing; however, in order for AAAED to properly investigate the report, it may not be anonymous. It is the policy of AAAED that no reprisal, retaliation, or other adverse action will be taken against any complainant for making a good faith report of harassment, or for assisting in an investigation of harassment.

AAAED will promptly and thoroughly investigate all alleged violations of this policy assuming the allegation is in good faith and made in sufficient detail for AAAED to conduct a confidential but thorough investigation. The investigation will generally consist of an interview with fact witnesses including the complainant and the alleged harasser. Every effort will be made during the course of the investigation to protect the confidentiality of those involved and of the information gained during the investigation; however, information will be disclosed as necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

The investigation will be conducted as promptly and expeditiously as possible. The results of the investigation will be reported to the complainant and the alleged wrongdoer.

Disciplinary Action

AAAED reserves the right to take any necessary and appropriate action against a member or nonmember attendee, exhibitor, guest or relative, contractor, service provider, speaker, sponsor, volunteer or other attendee or participant who engages in any form of harassment or inappropriate behavior in violation of this Policy. Such disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to, removal from the event (without refund of registration fees), prohibition from attendance at future AAAED meetings or events, removal from a committee appointment, expulsion from membership or any other action deemed appropriate by AAAED.

Questions regarding AAAED's Event Anti-Harassment Policy should be emailed to execdir@AAAED.org.

Complaints involving a member of the AAAED Board of Directors will be governed by the nondiscrimination and removal provisions of the AAAED Bylaws and related policies and procedures.

Complaints involving a member of the AAAED staff, including the Executive Director, will be governed by the AAAED Employment Policy on Harassment and related procedures.

The AAAED registration form will require an acknowledgement that the attendee has read and understands this Anti-Harassment policy.

Mandatory Acknowledgement on Registration Form

- ✓ I understand and acknowledge that:
 - I have read and understand AAAED Events Anti-Harassment Policy, and
 - As an attendee at AAAED events, including training programs, conferences, meetings and event-related social events, I agree to abide by the responsibilities, expectations and standards described within this policy.
 - It is my responsibility to seek guidance if I do not understand or have questions regarding any portion of these policies.
 - It is my duty to report any suspected violations of these policies and I know the process for making such a report.

Please be assured that AAAED will not tolerate retaliation against anyone who reports good faith concerns about violations of this policy.

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