

Meeting Code of Conduct

I. Purpose

This policy outlines the expectations for professional behavior at ES activities and events, the process for evaluating complaints and the consequences for unacceptable behavior. The Endocrine Society (ES) is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, ethnicity, cultural background, socioeconomic status, and religion. Meeting environments should foster open dialogue and the exchange of scientific ideas, promote equal opportunities and treatment for all participants, and be free of any form of harassment and discrimination. All participants are expected to treat others with respect and consideration, follow venue rules, demonstrate professional conduct, and alert staff or security of any dangerous or inappropriate situations or if anyone is in distress. Speakers are expected to uphold standards of scientific integrity as well as medical and professional ethics.

II. Definitions

A. Expected Behavior

Participants will show respectful and considerate speech and actions that are free from bias or inflammatory language, be mindful of their surroundings and of other participants, and alert ES staff or security if they notice a situation deemed to be inappropriate, intimidating, dangerous, someone in distress, or violations of this policy.

B. Improper Behavior

Improper behavior violates the principles embodied in expected behavior, above. It is not possible to list all forms of behavior that are unacceptable in a professional environment. Therefore, the examples of improper behaviors below are not exhaustive:

- Intimidating, harassing, abusive, discriminatory, derogatory or demeaning speech or actions including the taking of photos or recording conversations.
- Harmful or prejudicial verbal or written comments or visual images related to gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability, age, appearance or other personal characteristics. This includes jokes that are sexist, racist, bigoted or otherwise exclusionary, which can offend participants.
- Sustained disruption of talks or other events.
- Unwelcome and uninvited attention, behavior, language, or contact.
- Physical assault (including unwelcome touch or groping).
- Real or implied threat of physical or psychological harm.
- Real or implied threat of professional or financial damage or harm.
- Use of sexualization, including images or activities, to promote a product or concept. For example, sexualized comments, clothing, uniforms or costumes, should be avoided in booths and exhibits.



- Retaliation directed to victims or witnesses who report harassment.
- Intentional or reckless false reporting of harassment.

C. Society Meeting

Any meeting or event sponsored by the society, including but not limited to those open to the public (e.g. the annual meeting (ENDO) and Clinical Endocrinology Update), including ancillary events and official and unofficial social gatherings, as well as “internal” meetings of members and/or staff (e.g. working group meetings, Council meetings).

D. Participants

Anyone present at an ES meeting including attendees, speakers, exhibitors, sponsors, ES staff, contractors, volunteers, venue staff, and guests.

E. Sexualization:

Sexualization occurs when:

1. a person’s value comes only from his or her sexual appeal or behavior, to the exclusion of other characteristics;
2. a person is held to a standard that equates physical attractiveness (narrowly defined) with being sexy;
3. a person is sexually objectified—that is, made into a thing for others’ sexual use, rather than seen as a person with the capacity for independent action and decision making; and/or
4. sexuality is inappropriately imposed upon a person.

(American Psychological Association, 2007)

Self-motivated sexual exploration, and age-appropriate exposure to information about sexuality, are not sexualization by this definition, nor is discussion of sexualization in the context of a scientific presentation.

III. How to Report Improper Behavior

Participants are encouraged to formally report improper behavior, whether self-experienced or witnessed, by speaking with a member of the Society staff immediately. Staff can be identified by Endocrine Society shirts or name badges.

Staff will decide whether the behavior is incontrovertibly inappropriate and may act to remove the offending participant(s) from the venue without requiring additional information. For example, venue security staff may be called to remove a participant who disrupts a presentation.

Staff will follow the Society Response and Investigation of Meeting Code of Conduct Complaint process(Appendix 1). In most cases, complainants will be asked to complete a Meeting Code of Conduct_Complaint Form(Appendix 2), which includes information about the participant(s)



with improper behavior, the date, time, and location of the event, the behavior that occurred, other circumstances surrounding the incident and the names of other people involved in or witnessing the incident.

IV. Immediate Response

Participants concerned that their safety is threatened should contact venue security. Staff will assist participants to contact venue security, ES security staff or local law enforcement. Staff will assist participants who require medical assessment/treatment following venue protocols. Staff will assist in obtaining an escort from the venue to hotel if requested.

Participants displaying improper public behavior that is observed by multiple individuals may be asked to leave the venue without further consideration, as noted in **III** above.

V. Subsequent Investigation of Complaints

All complaints will be treated seriously and responded to promptly. Reports will be handled confidentially and disclosed by the Society only to persons who have a need to know their contents for purposes of investigation and disciplinary action (or if mandated by any legal process).

Persons reporting improper behavior may request that their identity not be disclosed in connection with an investigation and disciplinary action, and the Society will respect such requests. However, the complainant will be told that this may inhibit complete investigation of the complaint.

Within 24 hours of the complaint, staff will contact the alleged offender to apprise him/her of the complaint and arrange a private meeting to discuss the matter. Meeting participants will include a member-leader and a staff-leader, as outlined in Society Response and Investigation of Meeting Code of Conduct Complaint(Appendix 1). After that meeting, the alleged offender will be asked to complete the Harassment Form: Respondent(Appendix 4).

For egregious or time-sensitive issues, the CEO and Secretary-Treasurer (or designees) will determine if immediate action (e.g. leaving the venue) is needed. If this is not needed, any witnesses will be asked to complete the Harassment Form: Witness(Appendix 3), and the respondent will be given an opportunity to respond to the body of information about the event. When accounts are conflicting, the Society may engage an investigator or interview witnesses. At the completion of the investigation, the findings will be presented to the Executive Committee with recommendations for any further action.

VI. Society actions in response to improper behavior



ES reserves the right to take any action ES deems appropriate in its response to improper behavior. Because the scope, severity and duration of improper behavior may vary considerably, these actions will also vary, and may include:

- removal of the individual(s) from the meeting or event, without warning or refund
- prohibiting an individual(s) from attendance at future ES meetings
- suspension of membership
- forfeit of future participation in ES programming
- verbal cautioning
- written judgement retained in ES files

V. Appeals process

If the complainant or the responder is dissatisfied with the result of the investigation, he or she may appeal to the President of the Society who may present to Council for final decision.

VI. Staff who may be contacted with questions about this policy

For any questions please contact Krista Kirk, Chief Human Resources and Talent Management Officer at kkirk@endocrine.org or 202-971-3641