



AAOE Anti-Harassment Policy

Approved: September 17, 2025

Purpose:

The American Alliance of Orthopaedic Executives (AAOE) aims to be inclusive to the largest number of contributors, with the most varied and diverse backgrounds possible. As such, we are committed to providing a friendly, safe, and welcoming environment for all, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ability, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and religion.

This Anti-Harassment Policy outlines our expectations for all those who participate in AAOE events, as well as the consequences for unacceptable behavior.

We expect all participants in AAOE events to create safe and positive experiences for everyone.

“Participant” in this policy refers to anyone present at such an activity, including members, non-members, attendees, guests, vendors, exhibitors, sponsors, contractors, and staff.

“AAOE event” in this policy refers to all AAOE in-person and virtual events including the AAOE Annual Conference, committee and planning meetings, as well as other interactions with or on behalf of AAOE.

Expected Behavior:

We expect all participants to abide by this Anti-Harassment Policy in all venues at AAOE events, including ancillary events and at official as well as unofficial social gatherings.

- Exercise consideration and respect in your speech and actions.
- Refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech.
- Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants.
- Alert community leaders if you notice a dangerous situation, someone in distress, or violations of this Anti-Harassment Policy, even if they seem inconsequential.

Unacceptable Behavior:

Unacceptable behaviors include:

- Intimidating, harassing, abusive, discriminatory, derogatory, or demeaning speech or actions by any participant in AAOE events, at all related events, and in one-on-one communications. The AAOE event venues may be shared with members of the public; please be respectful to all patrons of these locations.
- Harmful or prejudicial verbal or written comments or visual images related to gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability.

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Unacceptable behaviors include *(continued)*:

- Inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces (including presentation slides).
- Deliberate intimidation, stalking or following.
- Harassing photography or recording
- Sustained disruption of talks or other events.
- Unwelcome and uninvited attention or contact.
- Physical assault (including unwelcome touch or groping).
- Real or implied threat of physical harm.
- Real or implied threat of professional or financial damage or harm.

Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior:

Unacceptable behavior from any participant at an AAOE event will not be tolerated.

Anyone asked to stop unacceptable behavior is expected to comply immediately.

Exhibitors in the exhibit hall, sponsors, and vendors are also subject to the Anti-Harassment Policy. In particular, exhibitors should not use sexualized images, activities, or other material.

Booth staff (including volunteers) should not use sexualized clothing, uniforms, or costumes, or otherwise create a sexualized environment.

Be careful in the words you choose. Remember that sexist, racist, and other exclusionary jokes can be offensive to those around you. Excessive swearing and offensive jokes are not appropriate for AAOE events.

If a participant engages in unacceptable behavior, the AAOE may take any action they deem appropriate, including removal (without refund) from the AAOE event at which the harassment occurred, and a permanent ban on participation in the future.

If You Witness or Are Subject to Unacceptable Behavior:

If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have any other concerns, please contact a member of the AAOE staff immediately. Staff can be located at the conference registration desk and may be identified by name tags.

Reports will be treated respectfully and kept as confidentially as possible.

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If You Witness or Are Subject to Unacceptable Behavior *(continued)*:

If possible, provide the following information, preferably in writing:

- Identifying information (name, appearance) of the participant doing the harassing.
- The behavior that was in violation.
- The approximate time of the behavior (if different than the time the report was made).
- The circumstances surrounding the incident.
- Other people involved in or witnessing the incident.

The AAOE staff are trained on how to deal with the incident and how to further proceed with the situation.

If needed or requested, staff will help participants contact venue security or local law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise assist those experiencing harassment to feel safe for the duration of the AAOE event.

Addressing Grievances:

If you feel you have been falsely or unfairly accused of violating this Anti-Harassment Policy, you should notify the AAOE Ethics Committee with a concise description of your grievance. Your grievance will be handled in accordance with our existing governance policies. Visit the [Member Code of Ethics](#) webpage for details of the procedure and to submit a grievance.

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