



Rules of Professional Conduct Policy and Procedure

The American Planning Association Washington Chapter (APA WA) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment free of discrimination and harassment in any form for everyone. To that end, APA WA is issuing these Rules of Professional Conduct (Rules) for all in-person and virtual APA WA events and functions.

A. Scope

The Rules apply to all participants (APA members and non-members) at all APA WA events and functions.

APA WA participants include:

- All APA WA members, including officers, board members, and committee members
- APA WA Office staff; and
- Non-members, such as vendors, sponsors, corporate partners, volunteers, speakers, guests, or other attendees at any official APA WA event or function.

APA WA events and functions include but are not limited to:

- In-person or virtual meetings, retreats, social events, conference calls, and any other communications of the APA WA Board of Directors, Committees, Sections, and Office;
- APA WA virtual discussion boards and social media groups;
- APA WA conferences, including breakout sessions, tours, and social events
- **All other in-person or virtual trainings, seminars, and other events for members and non-members that are sponsored by APA WA, including by its Sections and Committees.**

B. Prohibited Conduct

To nurture a welcoming APA WA environment, some behaviors are expressly prohibited. Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

1. Harassment or discrimination based on sex, gender expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, medical condition, physical appearance, ethnicity, race, religion, nationality, or any other group identity or basis protected by federal or state law;
2. Sexual harassment or intimidation that is physical or virtual, including unwelcome sexual attention, stalking, demeaning gender-based comments, or unwelcome physical contact;
3. Harassment or discrimination based upon any position of influence;

4. Abusive, discriminatory, derogatory, ridiculing, lewd, or demeaning language, conduct, or presentation materials, whether visual or auditory;
5. Bullying or displaying a pattern of repeatedly and deliberately harming and humiliating another person;
6. Yelling despite being asked to stop, offensive ridiculing, or verbal or physical threats;
7. Physical violence or threat of violence;
8. Retaliation aimed at a complainant or anyone who reports an incident or who aids in a complaint investigation; and
9. Drug/alcohol overconsumption that results in creating an unsafe environment to oneself and/or others.

C. Observation or Report of Discrimination of Harassment at an APA WA Event or Function

At the start of events or functions hosted by APA WA, the APA WA Chapter or Section President, Committee Chair, or other appropriate leader (event or function host/facilitator) is expected to provide a verbal or written (e.g., in an event or function agenda or notice) reminder of the expectations. They should consider using the following language:

*“APA WA is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all attendees. We expect this space to be free from bullying and harassment as part of our commitment to the **AICP Code of Ethics**. Please behave accordingly.”*

If the APA WA Chapter or Section President, Committee Chair, or other appropriate leader (event or function host/facilitator) witnesses prohibited conduct during an event or function, they are expected to issue a verbal warning to the individual(s) engaging in the behavior and ask them to stop any prohibited conduct. The individual(s) will be expected to comply immediately.

APA WA reserves the right to take immediate action deemed necessary and appropriate, including contacting law enforcement for assistance and removal from the meeting/event without warning or refund in response to any incident or unacceptable behavior, and APA WA reserves the right to prohibit the individual's attendance at any future meeting.

The person who takes action in response to a breach of the Rules of Conduct as outlined above shall report the incident(s) to the APA WA Executive Director or President as soon as possible following the incident.

If an APA WA member or non-member experiences, witnesses, hears, or is accused of harassment or discrimination at an APA WA event or function, APA WA asks that they contact the Executive Director or APA WA President as soon as possible, so that the situation may be investigated and appropriate action can be taken.

Incidents may be confidentially reported to the APA WA Executive Director, Chapter President and/or pertinent Section President. Their contact information can be found at the APA WA webpage (<https://www.washington-apa.org/>), or incidents may be reported to the APA WA office: office@washington-apa.org.

If an APA WA member or non-member experiences, witnesses, or is accused of harassment or discrimination at their own or another institution, such as a place of work, research facility, or virtual setting, but not in a context addressed in Sections A and B above, APA WA will not become involved. We encourage members to contact the appropriate officer/official(s) who handles such issues at that location or institution.

D. Complaint Review and Enforcement Process

Complaints and Enforcement Involving Conduct of Members

Upon receipt of a complaint involving a member, the APA WA Executive Director (Executive Director) shall convene a confidential Rules of Conduct Review Committee ("Review Committee") composed of members of the Executive Committee of the APA WA Board of Directors. If the complaint involves the Executive Director or the Executive Director is otherwise unable to address the complaint, the Chapter President will serve in this capacity.

Allegations of a breach in the Rules of Conduct will be investigated by the Executive Director and Chapter President. Members are expected to respond promptly, truthfully, and fully to any request for information by, and cooperate fully with any investigation related to the Rules of Conduct.

The Executive Director and Chapter President, in investigating the facts of the complaint, shall:

1. Review the complaint;
2. Acknowledge receipt of the complaint and follow up with the complainant(s)/ victim(s) and person(s) alleged to have violated the Rules of Conduct;
3. Interview the complainant(s)/victim(s);
4. Interview the person(s) alleged to have violated the Rules of Conduct and any other parties involved;
5. Interview any witnesses; and
6. Consult with legal counsel or APA's Welcoming Environment Committee (part of APA National) as needed.

The Executive Director and Chapter President will then present their findings to the Review Committee at a special meeting.

The Review Committee, after considering any and all relevant facts, shall determine the severity of the violation and make a determination as to specific consequences and action to be taken. If the conduct described in the complaint is found to be consistent with the Rules of Conduct, the complaint shall be dismissed. The Review Committee and Executive Director shall have the authority to implement any and all consequences determined following review of the alleged conduct.

Because violations may vary in severity, the Review Committee shall have discretion when determining appropriate consequences. Consequences for violation of the Rules of Conduct may include but are not limited to: verbal or written warning directed to the member; revocation of leadership position (including elected) or committee membership; prohibition on attendance at APA WA sponsored events including conferences, meetings, trainings or social events, whether online or in person; and recommendation to APA National to suspend or terminate the individual's APA membership.

The decision by the Conduct Review Committee shall be made in writing and sent to the member and complainant within five (5) calendar days of the meeting at which the decision is made.

If APA WA takes disciplinary action against a member based on these Rules, APA WA shall advise APA's Welcoming Environment Committee of that action and may elevate the matter to the AICP Ethics Officer or law enforcement if necessary.

Appeal by Member of Conduct Review Committee Decision

Any member who is the subject of a complaint may appeal the decision of the Review Committee. Such appeal must be in writing and submitted to the Executive Director within fifteen (15) calendar days after the member's receipt of the Review Committee's written decision. The appeal should be addressed to the Executive Director, who shall bring the appeal for discussion at a special meeting of the full APA WA Board of Directors. Following a discussion of all relevant facts, the full APA WA Board of Directors shall vote on the appeal. The APA WA Board of Directors' decision on the appeal may not be appealed by any party.

Complaints and Enforcement Involving Conduct of Non-Members

Upon receipt of a complaint involving a vendor, sponsor, corporate partner, volunteer, speaker, other attendee, or guest, the Executive Director shall convene a confidential Review Committee composed of members of the Executive Committee of the APA WA Board of Directors. Procedures for investigating such complaints and determining consequences will be the same as the process for complaints involving conduct of members, as discussed in Section D.

The Review Committee and Executive Director shall have the authority to implement any and all consequences determined following review of the alleged conduct.

Decisions of the Review Committee involving non-members are not subject to appeal.

Adopted by the APA WA Board of Directors on **July 11, 2025**