

Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California Code of Conduct and Ethics

1) Introduction

a) Purpose and Intent. The Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California (Association) provides a variety of services, programs, and events for and on behalf of its members and in furtherance of its mission. The Association has prepared and adopted this Code of Conduct and Ethics (Code) to establish the standards of conduct expected of the Association and its staff, officers, members, and others. The purposes of this Code are to (1) promote a work environment of respect and civility free of harassment, bullying, and inappropriate conduct and behavior, (2) set forth the applicable standards of conduct and prohibitions for Association work, events, staff, and members, (3) set forth standards of conduct expected of Members in good standing with the Association, (4) provide a mechanism for the submittal and processing of complaints and reports about misconduct, and (5) lay out the potential discipline and remedial action for a Code violation. The Code also incorporates the Association anti-discrimination and harassment policy.

b) Applicability. This Code applies to the following:

i) Association staff (including all applicable employees of contract service providers) and volunteers

ii) Association members (including corporate members (e.g., member mosquito and vector control districts and entities), associate members, affiliate members, sustaining members, and honorary members) and their respective staffs, employees, officers, and guests

iii) Individuals who attend or participate in an Association event, conference, educational program, meeting, workshop, retreat, social gathering (including an Association-related, after-event social gathering), or online discussion (collectively Event or Events).

iv) Individuals and companies participating in an Event as an exhibitor, speaker, or vendor, and their staffs, employees, officers, and guests.

v) Individuals and companies providing goods or services to the Association (e.g., vendors, service providers) and their staffs, employees, officers, and guests.

vi) Collectively "Covered Parties"

2) The Covered Parties shall comply with this Code in any work or business with the Association or at any Event.

3) Event Standards of Conduct

a) General. The Association is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, hospitable, and productive environment for everyone attending and participating in an Event. All Events therefore shall be conducted in an orderly and respectful manner to allow and accommodate proper and constructive presentations and discussions. The Association prohibits intimidating, threatening, harassing, or other inappropriate conduct or behavior during or at any Event.

b) Expected Behavior. Covered Parties at an Event are expected to:

i) Communicate openly with respect and consideration for others, valuing a diversity of views and opinions.

ii) Avoid personal attacks directed toward other attendees, participants, volunteers, exhibitors, staff, or vendors.

iii) Act in a safe and careful manner, and alert staff if you notice a dangerous situation or someone in distress.

iv) Respect and follow the rules and policies of the Event hotel, convention center, contracted facility, or other venue.

v) Comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

c) Unacceptable Behavior. Association Events will be places where no attendee, participant, staff, or other person is ever belittled, criticized, or made to feel unsafe or unwelcome. The following conduct or behavior therefore will not be tolerated:

i) Harassment or discrimination in violation of the anti-harassment and discrimination policy set forth below.

ii) Physical, written, or verbal abuse of any attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, staff member, service provider, or other meeting guest.

iii) Deliberate intimidation, threats, or bullying behavior.

iv) Harassing or unauthorized photography or recording.

v) Noisy activity or other behavior that disrupts or interferes with a talk or presentation.

vi) Disorderly conduct, including those associated with being heavily impaired.

vii) Actions or conduct that create an unsafe condition.

4) Member Standards of Conduct

a) This section applies to the expected conduct of Association members and their staff, employees, officers, and guests. Members are expected to adhere to the following principles and standards as Members in good standing with the Association:

i) Members will act fairly and be honest in conducting the member's business.

ii) Members will comply with the federal, state, and local laws and requirements that govern the member's work.

iii) Members will strive to ensure all information and data is accurately represented and will not allow or tolerate fraudulent or fabricated information or data.

iv) Members will avoid taking actions that reflect poorly on the Association or the other Association members.

v) Members will not participate in or condone harassment or discrimination on the basis of the race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical

condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, or military and veteran status of any person.

5) Anti-Discrimination and Harassment

a) General Policy and Prohibition

i) It is the policy of the Association to treat all individuals with respect and dignity. The Association is committed to providing and maintaining an environment that is free from discriminatory practices and harassment. Therefore, the Association prohibits (a) harassment, discriminatory insult, or intimidation due to, based on, or because of an individual's race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, or military and veteran status, or other legally protected characteristic, and (b) abusive conduct, which means malicious conduct of a Covered Party in the workplace or at an Event that is hostile, offensive, and unrelated to the Association's business interests (e.g., derogatory remarks, insults, and epithets, verbal or physical conduct that is threatening, intimidating, or humiliating, or the gratuitous sabotage or undermining of a person's work performance). The definitions at California Government Code section 12926 shall apply to this policy.

ii) Sexual harassment is one particular form of harassment prohibited by this policy. Prohibited sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following behavior and conduct: (a) unwelcome sexual flirtations, propositions, advances or invitations; (b) verbal or written abuse or insult of a sexual nature; (c) requests for sexual favors; (d) graphic comments about an individual's body; (e) sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; (f) the display of sexually suggestive or explicit words, objects or pictures; (g) threats or demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of continued employment or to avoid some other loss; (h) offers of employment or other work-related benefits in return for sexual favors; and (i) other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

iii) The Association is an equal employment opportunity employer and committed to complying with all applicable laws relating to nondiscrimination and equal employment. Association policy prohibits unlawful discrimination because of an individual's race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, or military and veteran status, or other legally protected characteristic; provided, however, that the Association may make employment decisions on the basis of bona fide occupational qualifications when permitted by law. Unlawful discrimination also includes the perception that a person has any of the characteristics or traits listed above.

iv) Examples. Prohibited harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following behavior and conduct:

(1) Verbal conduct such as offensive epithets, derogatory jokes, slurs, innuendos, or comments.

(2) Visual conduct such as display of inappropriate, derogatory, or sexual posters, cartoons, drawings, images, objects, photographs, calendars, or gestures.

- (3) Physical conduct, such as assault, unwanted physical contact, blocking normal movement, deliberate stalking, following or intimidation, or interference with another employee's work.
 - (4) Use of computers, including the internet, e-mail, social media, telephones, voice mail, texting, or other media to transmit, communicate or receive threatening, offensive, obscene, harassing or derogatory messages or material, or sexually suggestive, pornographic or sexually explicit pictures, messages or material.
 - (5) Other inappropriate conduct that may contribute to a hostile working environment or hostile and uncomfortable Event environment.
 - (6) Retaliation for reporting harassment, discrimination, or related inappropriate conduct.
 - (7) Unwanted photography or audio recording without an individual's consent that is intimidating or harassing.
 - (8) Disruption of an Event after an initial warning to cease and desist.
 - (9) Advocating for or encouraging any of the behavior prohibited by this policy.
- b) **Applicability.** This policy applies to all Covered Parties involved in the operation of the Association or who are at an Event. Each Covered Party is responsible for fostering civility, for being familiar with this policy, and for refraining from conduct that violates this policy. This policy applies to all terms, conditions, and privileges of work, employment, and Event participation and attendance. This policy protects, and may be asserted by any Covered Party, applicant for employment, or other person harmed by violation of this policy. Any Covered Party who engages in prohibited harassment or discrimination may be subject to discipline or other remedial action as described below.
- c) **Implementation.** The Association will implement this policy as follows:
- i) The Executive Director is responsible for maintaining an Association workplace and Events free of prohibited harassment and discrimination. When appropriate, the Executive Director will discuss this policy with Association staff, officers, and others and assure them that they are not required to endure insulting, degrading, or exploitative treatment or any other form of harassment.
 - ii) The Executive Director will ensure that Association directors and the management staff of Association service providers undertake harassment prevention training in accordance with applicable California law.
 - iii) The Association will post the federal ("Equal Opportunity is the Law") and state ("Harassment or Discrimination in Employment is Prohibited by Law") anti-harassment posters on personnel bulletin boards at the Association office, accessible to Association Members on the Association website, and on Association Event registration sites.
 - iv) The Association shall distribute a copy of this policy and the State Department of Fair Employment and Housing information sheet ("Sexual Harassment is Forbidden by Law") to any new Association staff person and Members.
- 6) **Enforcement, Complaints, and Remedies**
- a) **Reporting and Complaint Procedure**

- i) Anyone experiencing or witnessing behavior that constitutes an immediate or serious threat to public safety at any time should contact local law enforcement (by calling 911) and, if applicable, immediately notifying the Executive Director, and Executive Board Member, Event hotel, convention center, or other venue security staff.
- ii) Individuals are encouraged to timely report misconduct, whether they are targets or witnesses. If an individual believes that he or she has been a target or victim of or suffered as a result of a violation of this Code (including instances of prohibited harassment or discrimination), or if an individual has witnessed any behavior or conduct in violation of this Code, the individual may provide a written or oral complaint or report to the Executive Director, Associate Executive Director, Board President, or Board Vice President as soon as possible after the incident, without fear of reprisal. Complaints and reports will be maintained as confidential to the extent practicable. The Association encourages the reporting of Code violation incidents quickly so that complaints can be resolved promptly and fairly. An individual may submit an anonymous report; however, while the Association will keep track of anonymous reports, the Association generally cannot act on a single anonymous report without further corroboration.
- iii) A complaint or report should include the following information: (a) name of complainant or reporter; (b) name or names of the alleged violator; (c) nature of the Code violation, with explanation and pertinent facts; (d) name or names of any witnesses; (e) supporting documents (if any); and (f) relevant dates and times. All complaints and reports will be treated seriously.
- iv) The Association will work with any associated Member agency, as appropriate, to immediately undertake an effective, thorough, and objective investigation of any complaint or report. The investigation will seek to gather the relevant details and information. It will be conducted confidentially. All interviews of witnesses and parties will be conducted in private. The investigator will attempt to identify and interview the persons involved, including the complainant or reporter, the target (if not the complainant), other relevant witnesses, and the alleged violator. The interviewer will take notes of all interviews. The Association will advise the complainant of the results of the investigation.
- v) Additionally, for any complaint involving a violation of the Association anti-discrimination and harassment policy, the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the state Department of Fair Employment and Housing investigate and prosecute complaints of prohibited harassment in employment. If an individual believes that he or she has been harassed or retaliated against for resisting or complaining about harassment, the individual may file a complaint with the appropriate agency.
- b) Remedial Action. Any Covered Party determined by the Association to have violated this Code (whether based on a complaint/report and investigation, direct observation, or other available and trustworthy information) will be subject to appropriate disciplinary or remedial action as determined by the Association in accordance with the nature and severity of the offense, other relevant circumstances, particular violator and his or her contract or other relationship with the Association or others, and record of prior discipline (if any). The range of disciplinary or remedial action includes the following:
 - i) Demand to cease the offending conduct or behavior. A Covered Party so asked is expected to comply immediately.
 - ii) Verbal or written reprimand, warning, or censure

- iii) For any Association employee – suspension without pay, demotion, probation, discharge from employment.
 - iv) For an employee of an Association contractor, service provider, consultant, or vendor – termination, cancellation, or suspension of the contract, demand that the violator no longer work on the Association contract or account, or demand that the contracting party otherwise discipline or counsel the violator.
 - v) For an Event attendee or participant – demand to leave the Event without refund of fees, report the incident to the violator’s employer, or prohibit the violator from attending future Events for a specified period or time or, if warranted, in perpetuity.
 - vi) For an Association member (including violations by a member’s employee, officer, or staff) – warning, probation, or expulsion from the Association.
 - vii) Association staff also may work with the Event hotel, convention center, or other venue security staff or, if warranted, local law enforcement as may be appropriate to address or remedy a Code violation at an Event.
- 7) Retaliation. The Association will not retaliate against a complainant or reporter for filing a complaint or report and will not tolerate or permit retaliation by any Covered Party against any individual who files a complaint, reports an incident, or participates in an investigation. Retaliation will be considered a violation of this Code and violators will be subject to appropriate disciplinary or remedial action.
- 8) Appeals and Questions. Should any person be dissatisfied and aggrieved with the result of an investigation or disciplinary or remedial action, he or she may appeal the matter in writing to the Association Board of Directors. The Board will consider and decide any appeal. Questions concerning the Code can be directed to the Executive Director or Board President.

I confirm I have read the MVCAC Code of Ethics and will abide by it.

Acknowledged by:

(Name) and district

Signature

Date