

## **AAEA Anti-Harassment and Code of Conduct Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

The Agricultural & Applied Economics Association (AAEA) is a not-for-profit association serving professional interests of members regardless of their race, gender, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability. As an organization dedicated to the professional development of its members and the dissemination of knowledge from a variety of relevant areas, the AAEA is committed to the fair, ethical treatment of all of its members and all other individuals participating in AAEA activities or activities connected with, or related to, AAEA activities, while providing an atmosphere that promotes a variety of research, teaching and extension/outreach activities.

The AAEA has zero tolerance for, and prohibits any type of, discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment, within the organization, at professional meetings, in the field, or anywhere professional activities are conducted under the aegis of the AAEA.

Violators of this policy will be subject to discipline or other action as AAEA may determine to be appropriate under the circumstances, as described later in this document.

Candidates for elected office and leadership positions and appointees for committee assignments who are found to be in violation of this policy or are under investigation for harassment elsewhere will be barred from holding office and service assignments within the AAEA.

### **Definitions of Harassment**

#### **Harassment**

Harassment is a behavior which causes distress, feelings of a lack of safety, or physical harm to another person based on their actual or perceived race/ethnicity, religion, age, gender expression or identity, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, citizenship status, geography, place of origin, marital status or familial status. Additionally, any kind of sexual harassment against anyone, regardless of the identities of the people involved, is covered by this policy. Harassment does not need to have malicious intent; the impact on the person reporting the harassment must be addressed regardless of the intent. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, insults, insinuations, or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts; denigrating jokes and display or circulation of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility toward any member of the AAEA or any non-member participating in any activity under the aegis of the AAEA.

#### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is the unwelcome presence or suggestion of sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other conduct of sexual nature in the professional setting.

This definition is not intended to include occasional consensual banter or compliments of a socially acceptable nature. AAEA members must use discretion to ensure that their words and actions are communicated with respect to other members of the AAEA and non-members attending AAEA sponsored activities and meetings.

#### **Discrimination**

Discrimination is bias towards a member of the AAEA or a non-member participating in AAEA sponsored activities and meetings that results in denial of professional opportunity or unfair

treatment in their professional activities, on the grounds of demographic characteristics that are irrelevant to a person's competence. Some examples include discrimination based on race, gender, age, national and ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or political belief.

### **Scope of the Policy**

This Policy applies to all attendees at AAEA events, including members, volunteers, students, staff, job market participants (applicants and employers), contractors, exhibitors and guests and invited speakers, who are participating in sessions, social events and tours at any AAEA annual meeting, symposia and other activity, regardless of location.

This Policy also covers online speech or conduct on the AAEA website and discussion boards that operate under the aegis of the AAEA.

This Policy applies to all cases involving allegations of non-sexual harassment, sexual harassment, and discrimination that may occur at any AAEA sponsored, affiliated or other events or on the AAEA website and discussion boards.

The protections in this policy apply regardless of professional status or rank, race, gender, age, national and ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or political belief.

### **Conduct at AAEA Meetings**

AAEA is committed to providing a safe, productive, and welcoming environment for all meeting participants and AAEA staff. All participants, including, but not limited to, attendees, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, AAEA staff, service providers, and others are expected to abide by this policy. This policy applies to all AAEA meeting-related events, including those sponsored by organizations other than AAEA but held in conjunction with AAEA events, in public or private facilities.

### **Responsible Drinking**

It is possible that both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages may be served at a AAEA meeting. AAEA expects participants at our events to drink responsibly. AAEA and event staff have the right to deny service to participants for any reason, and may require a participant to leave the event.

### **Personal Safety and Security**

AAEA works diligently to provide a safe and secure environment at its meetings and events by working with venue staff to make sure meeting participants are safe. We ask that all attendees report any questionable or concerning activity to AAEA staff so that they can take immediate action. No concern is too small--the "if you see something, say something" motto applies, as well as the following additional suggestions:

- Be aware of your surroundings at all times;

- Use the buddy system when walking to and from the event venue, networking event locations during early or late hours;
- Don't wear your meeting badge on the street. Take it off as soon as you leave the building/venue;
- Don't carry a lot of cash or credit cards. Leave in your hotel room safe; and
- Don't leave personal property unattended anywhere, anytime.

If it is an emergency or if you need immediate assistance, you should ask any AAEA staff member or the on-site security personnel to help you.

### **Reporting**

An individual being harassed, or who notices someone else being harassed, or has concerns about discrimination at the AAEA annual meeting or another AAEA sponsored activity, should contact the AAEA Executive Director, an AAEA staff member or a member of AAEA Board immediately. At annual meetings these individuals can be identified by their badges or ribbons describing their status. Their names, titles, and contact information are also listed on the AAEA website. These complaints can be made verbally or in writing according to such procedure as AAEA Executive Director, in consultation with the AAEA President, shall determine is appropriate to the circumstances.

### **Investigation Process**

The AAEA Executive Director will act as investigator and conduct an initial investigation and inform the AAEA President about all complaints. If a complaint is lodged concerning the AAEA Executive Director, then the report will be made to the AAEA President who will oversee any subsequent investigation.

If the investigation deems it necessary, the AAEA President, in consultation with the Board, will appoint an ad hoc harassment investigation committee (the "Investigation Committee"), composed with a view to diversity as to gender, race and level of seniority in the profession, as appropriate, to interview the complainant and review the complaint and determine appropriate action in furtherance of this policy. This committee will be appointed within 30 days of filing the, as appropriate. Every report of harassment will be investigated promptly and impartially, with every effort to maintain employee confidentiality. The AAEA Executive Director and the AAEA President, in consultation with the Board of Directors, as appropriate, shall establish a procedure for investigating and determining any action to be taken with respect to the complaint. In case the complaint involves a prima-facie criminal act, such as an assault, local law enforcement agency will be immediately informed.

Once the investigation is complete, the Investigation Committee will develop a report of its findings and a recommendation for further action, if any, to be taken with respect to the complaint. The Investigation Committee will send its report and recommendation to the AAEA President and the AAEA Executive Director.

### **Disciplinary Action**

The AAEA President, in consultation with the AAEA Board of Directors, may take any disciplinary or other action they deem appropriate, which action may be along the continuum from a verbal warning to expulsion from a specific AAEA meeting, conference or activity without refund, expulsion from the AAEA, ban from participation in future AAEA activities (even as a guest) or such other action as is determined to be appropriate under the circumstances.

### **Reporting Without Fear of Retaliation**

No AAEA member or non-member will be retaliated against for reporting harassment or being a whistleblower. This no-retaliation policy applies even when the complaint is determined to be unfounded after investigation. No AAEA officer, director, manager or supervisor is authorized, or permitted, to retaliate or to take any adverse action whatsoever against anyone for reporting unlawful harassment, or for opposing any other discriminatory practice.