

CfA General Conduct Policy

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Version 1.0

OVERVIEW

The Center for Astrophysics | Harvard & Smithsonian (CfA) is a joint institution connecting the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory (SAO) and the Harvard College Observatory (HCO). The CfA is a diverse astrophysical institution at which more than 800 staff and students are engaged in a broad program of research and education in astronomy, astrophysics, and earth and space sciences. The CfA is at the forefront, internationally, of the scientific exploration of the universe. Our research covers theoretical astrophysics, observational ground and space-based astronomy, engineering and technology development, and education. The research objectives of the CfA are carried out primarily with the support of government, Smithsonian Institution, and Harvard funds, with additional philanthropic support. At the CfA, the next generation of scientific leaders are being trained and mentored through a broad range of undergraduate and graduate student programs, postdoctoral positions and fellowships.

The CfA strives to be a community where every CfA member and visitor can be fully self-expressive without fear of being made to feel unwelcome or unsafe based on age, race, gender, ethnicity, religion or ideology, religious non-affiliation, nationality or citizenship status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, pregnancy, disability status, education background, socioeconomic status, occupation, seniority, physical appearance. The CfA does not tolerate racism, discrimination, bullying, harassment, bias, and intolerance of any kind from anyone in, associated with, or visiting the CfA in person or virtual spaces.

The CfA empowers and supports its members to abide by this Conduct Policy and to report breaches of this Conduct Policy through one or more of the reporting channels identified within this document.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all CfA members and visitors. CfA members include all CfA-affiliated Harvard and Smithsonian faculty and staff, postdocs, students, contractors, affiliates, associates, volunteers and interns. Visitors include all personnel visiting CfA sites for any time period professionally or personally. The scope of this conduct policy applies to CfA members in any capacity when they are representing the CfA, and/or while in the presence of other CfA members.

This policy is in addition to, and does not supersede, the codes of conduct or conduct policies of a member's university or organization. The member's university or organization codes of conduct or conduct policies override this document if there is a conflict.

PURPOSE

Conduct policies provide a foundation upon which the CfA culture, diversity and inclusion initiatives build. Together, our policies and initiatives aim to ensure that each member's self-respect and dignity are maintained in the work environment.

This policy has been developed to (1) provide a clear statement of the Center's expectations of its members and visitors for their professional and personal work conduct, (2) clarify definitions of unacceptable behavior, (3) provide information on the professional avenues for reporting breaches of this conduct policy, and (4) provide information on the procedure and actions to be taken on breaches of this conduct policy.

POLICY

1. Behavior and conduct

1.1 General Conduct Expectations

All CfA members are expected to:

- act fairly and reasonably, and treat colleagues, students, visitors to the Center and members of the public at the Center with kindness, respect, impartiality, courtesy and sensitivity;
- maintain a professional, cooperative, collegial, and collaborative approach to working relationships;
- exercise their best professional and ethical judgment;
- discharge their responsibilities with integrity and objectivity;
- avoid conflicts of interest;
- be mindful about imbalances of power, and how they impact interactions between people;
- comply with all of their own organization's applicable professional codes of conduct and policies including, but not limited to, those related to:
 - workplace conduct;
 - the conduct of research;
 - confidentiality and privacy of information;
 - equal opportunity;

Creating a supportive environment is everyone's responsibility. Supervisors and managers at the CfA should endeavor to create a professional, inclusive and supportive environment within their teams and groups consistent with this Conduct Policy.

1.2 Unacceptable Conduct

1.2.1 Discrimination

CfA members need to be treated fairly, equitably, and have the support and tools necessary to do their best work and advance their careers. CfA members must not discriminate against anyone in the workplace or in any CfA-related activity on the grounds of age, race, gender, ethnicity, religion or ideology, religious non-affiliation, nationality or citizenship status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, pregnancy,

disability status, educational institution, socioeconomic status, occupation, seniority, physical appearance, or other characteristics protected by law.

1.2.2 Bullying, harassment, intimidation and personal attacks

Promoting a harmonious and inclusive workplace environment is essential for fostering collaboration and growth in the workplace. Bullying, harassment, intimidation and personal attacks have no place at the CfA. CfA members should be able to recognize the full range of behavior that is encompassed within the definitions of bullying, intimidation, harassment and personal attacks. CfA members should report such behavior if they see or experience it. The definitions of bullying, harassment, intimidation and personal attacks are provided below in italics, as defined in the Oxford English Dictionary.

Bullying: *To behave in an overbearing, intimidating, or aggressive manner towards someone; usually to seek to harm, intimidate, or coerce, especially persistently or repeatedly.* In the workplace, bullying includes repeated behavior that offends, degrades, insults, or humiliates another person or group.

Harassment: *Unwarranted speech or behavior causing annoyance, alarm, distress, or intimidation, usually occurring persistently over a period of time.* Harassment creates a work environment that can be intimidating, hostile, or offensive. Offensive conduct may include, but is not limited to, offensive jokes, slurs, epithets or name calling, physical assaults or threats, intimidation, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures, and interference with work performance.

Intimidation: *To render timid, inspire with fear; in modern use especially to force to or deter from some action by threats or violence.* Intimidation may cause a loss of courage or self-confidence. Intimidation can include threats or physical violence, yelling or screaming, ridiculing or insulting a member in front of coworkers or clients, sabotaging a member's work, interference in or prevention of the member's ability to work, insulting or demeaning others in the presence of colleagues or clients, repeated and/or sustained disruption of talks or other events run or presented by a member. Persistent or repeated intimidation can be a form of bullying or harassment.

Personal attacks: *An instance of vehemently expressed antagonism or hostility, or of action intended to undermine or disrupt; especially an instance of fierce public criticism.* Personal attacks can include individual derogatory statements made about a person including, but not

limited to, damaging remarks relating to a member's lifestyle or choices. These types of attack can include derogatory comments that question a person's intelligence, values, integrity, motivations or decisions. Ongoing, repeated personal attacks may be classified as intimidation, harassment or bullying, depending on the intent and effect on the victim.

Bullying, harassment, intimidation and personal attacks can have impacts on the physical and mental health of the victim, can harm the victim's productivity, and can also impact the morale of other members who witness the behavior. Bullying, harassment, intimidation and personal attacks will not be tolerated in any CfA related work or educational context.

1.2.3 Sexual harassment or unwanted attention

The CfA strives to offer a safe workplace environment that is free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as *harassment in a workplace or other professional or social situation, involving the making of unwanted sexual advances, obscene remarks, etc.* Sexual harassment can be unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature including, but not limited to suggestive comments or jokes, vulgar comments and language, unwanted staring or touching, comments on appearance, intrusive questions about a person's private life, harassing photographs or recordings, stalking, and repeated requests for dates or sex. Sexual harassment is unlawful and constitutes misconduct.

1.3 Additional Recommendations

1.3.1 Implicit bias

Implicit bias is conscious or unconscious bias against a group of people that have specific characteristics such as gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion or ideology, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, pregnancy, ability status, education background, socioeconomic status, or occupation. Implicit bias impacts judgment and decisions about people, including assessments of job applications and interview performance, assessments of track record, ability, productivity, and achievements.

Everyone has implicit biases. CfA members are encouraged to proactively identify their implicit biases through evidence-based on-line implicit bias tests, such as the Harvard Project Implicit test (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>). CfA members are expected to actively avoid implicit biases in decision-making, including, but not limited to, judgments made during hiring, performance evaluation, and promotions processes.

1.3.2 Microaggression

All members should strive to learn more about microaggressions. According to the Oxford English dictionary, microaggressions are defined as *a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination or prejudice against members of a marginalized group such as a racial minority.*

Microaggressions can be verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults that communicate hostile, derogatory, biased, prejudiced, or negative messages to persons that may be based upon their age, race, gender, ethnicity, religion or ideology, religious non-affiliation, nationality or citizenship status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, pregnancy, disability status, education background, socioeconomic status, occupation, seniority, or physical appearance.

Many microaggressions are unintentional. CfA members are empowered to kindly address a microaggression as it occurs, while maintaining a kind and respectful demeanor. CfA members shall be receptive to having a perceived microaggression comment addressed in this manner. CfA strives to be a place that is free from microaggressions towards individuals or members of a group.

1.3.3 Tone policing

The Collins English dictionary defines tone policing as *“the action or practice of criticizing the angry or emotional manner in which a person has expressed a point of view, rather than addressing the substance of the point itself”*. Tone policing is particularly inappropriate when engaging in conversations regarding experiences with discrimination, oppression, and racism, because it may invalidate other people’s feelings or experiences.

1.3.4 Power imbalances and relationships

Where one person’s role involves evaluating the work of another, or one person’s decisions can affect the other’s performance and/or professional future, sexual overtures and romantic, intimate or sexual relationships, even if consensual, are inappropriate. CfA members should be mindful of power imbalances and maintain professional boundaries.

2. Conflicts of Interest

- a) CfA members must comply with their employing organization's policy regarding conflicts of interest.
- b) CfA members must avoid actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest between their personal interests or their duties to other parties and their duties and responsibilities as members of the CfA.
- c) CfA members must promptly disclose to their employing organization relevant facts and circumstances giving rise to an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest and cooperate with management to ensure that all appropriate steps are taken to eliminate or manage such conflicts.

3. Public Comment

Any CfA member who makes public comment or representations and identifies themselves as a member of CfA must comply with the CfA Press Release and News Policy and the CfA Conduct Policies.

4. Use and Security of Official Information

a) **Members must:**

- maintain the integrity, confidentiality and privacy of CfA personnel records, and personal and private information which they have access to in the course of their employment or study;
- comply with their own organization's privacy and information policies.

b) **Members MUST NOT:**

- disclose, or offer to supply, confidential or private personnel records or information, including medical information, except when authorized to do so as part of their normal duties and functions, or when required or permitted to do so by their own organization's policy, State or Federal law, a court order or other legal instrument.

5. Work, Health & Safety

Members must comply with their organization's Work Health & Safety policies and procedures and take reasonable care for their own health and safety and the health and safety of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.

6. Reporting unacceptable conduct

To continuously improve our culture and workplace environment, the CfA empowers and supports its members to report breaches of this Conduct Policy. Those reporting breaches will be protected from retaliation. Retaliation against someone reporting a breach of the conduct policy will not be tolerated. Retaliation is a serious form of misconduct and disciplinary actions against retaliation will be strictly enforced.

The CfA will ensure that full support is available to anyone who comes forward to report any unacceptable behavior. Any CfA member may report unacceptable conduct to whomever they feel comfortable reporting to. Reporting avenues include the CfA member's supervisor, division lead, faculty chair, the Director, Deputy Director, or another member of the CfA executive team, the HR staff of the member's employing organization, the Harvard title IX office (Harvard employees and students), or the Smithsonian SI Civil program (Smithsonian employees and students). CfA staff must report conduct policy breaches to the appropriate organization's HR when requested by the reporting member. CfA staff must follow their employing organization's policies for mandatory reporting of sexual harassment.

The HR staff of the member's employing organization will act on each report following their organization's standard HR policies and processes.

SAO and Harvard ombudspersons are available for confidential discussions and advice, and are not a formal reporting avenue.

Reporting contact information is given below:

Harvard employees and students

Please see the information at: <https://iweb.cfa.harvard.edu/professional-conduct>

Harvard College Observatory (HCO) HR contacts:

Purvang Patel (HCO HR representative): purvang.patel@cfa.harvard.edu

Etaine Smith (FAS HR representative): etaine_smith@harvard.edu

Harvard Ombuds Office: <https://harvardombuds.harvard.edu/cambridge/>

Additional Harvard resources:

Solving workplace problems resource: <https://hr.harvard.edu/solving-workplace-problems>

includes an anonymous reporting hotline, the Local HR Offices, Title IX Office, Office of Dispute Resolution, EAP, Labor and Employee Relations, and the Employee Assistance Office.

Harvard Union Employees: <https://hr.harvard.edu/union-contractsUnit>

Non-Union Employees: <https://hr.harvard.edu/policies-forms-contracts>

SAO employees and students:**SAO HR contacts**

Laura Conway, 617-495-7373, lconway@cfa.harvard.edu

Judy Gallagher, 617-495-7374, jgallagher@cfa.harvard.edu

Mary Hebert, 617-496-7816, mhebert@cfa.harvard.edu

Angel Flewelling, 617-496-7817, hflewelling@cfa.harvard.edu

Joy Mathew, 617-496-8327, jmathew@cfa.harvard.edu

SAO Ombudspersons

- Patricia Brennan, located at 60 Garden Street, (617) 495-7293 or by email at: pbrennan@cfa.harvard.edu
- John Raymond, located at 60 Garden Street/160 Concord Avenue, (617) 495-7416 or by email at: jraymond@cfa.harvard.edu

Smithsonian Institution's Ombudsperson: Shadella Davis, is available to all Smithsonian employees (including SAO). She can be reached at (202) 633-2010 (this number is serviced by an answering machine 24 hours a day when the Ombudsperson is not available in person).

SI Civil Program: SI Civil was developed as a resource that employees and affiliated persons may use to report threats of violence, incidents of intimidation, or harassment, and get

information about appropriate next steps. The goal of this program is to empower employees and affiliated persons to communicate workplace concerns and facilitate the resolution of those concerns as quickly as possible. SI Civil contacts are:

Amanda Jones, SI Civil Branch Manager, jonesam@si.edu, 202-633-6379

Laura Wilmot, SI Civil Contractor, wilmotla@si.edu, 202-633-6321

SI Civil Email: sicivil@si.edu

Report a Concern: [si.edu/sicivil/report](https://www.si.edu/sicivil/report)

SI Office of Equal Employment and Supplier Diversity (OEESD): contact 202-633-6430 or eeo-complaint@si.edu; See the following website for more information:
<https://www.si.edu/OEEMA/EEOComplaintProcess>

7. Consequences of breaches of this conduct policy

Those in violation of the conduct policy may be subject to disciplinary action determined on a case-by-case basis according to the HR policies, practices and processes of their employing organization. Disciplinary action recommended by HR may include, but is not limited to, recommendation for counseling, formal reprimand on record, dismissal from a meeting or event, removal from leadership roles, loss of supervision privileges, loss of access to internal funds, suspension, or permanent barring/dismissal from the CfA.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- CfA On-line Work Behavior Policy
- CfA Meetings and Events Conduct Policy
- Smithsonian Institution Standards of Conduct:
<https://www.si.edu/content/ogc/sd103.pdf>
- Smithsonian Statement of Values and Code of Ethics:
https://www.si.edu/content/governance/pdf/Statement_of_Values_and_Code_of_Ethics.pdf
- Harvard Faculty of Science Professional Conduct Policy:
<https://infoforfaculty.fas.harvard.edu/book/conduct>