



Non-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment, and Complaint Policy

Introduction

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) and its members are committed to full compliance with all laws and regulations, to maintaining the highest ethical standards in the way we conduct our operations and activities, and to broadening equity, diversity, inclusion, and a culture of belonging to create a stronger profession.

Policy Scope

This policy prohibits all harassing and discriminatory behavior, or practices. This includes unwelcome conduct, or discriminatory conduct directed towards a person based on any characteristic, belief, affiliation, lived or professional experience, or identity personal to the individual or to a group.

This policy applies to all AIA members, AIA employees, partners, sponsors, vendors, and others in connection with AIA operations, while attending or engaged in AIA-hosted events or activities, or while at an AIA venue (such as at AIA's offices); or when participating in business or social activities or discussions at the AIA. This policy also includes behaviors and that may occur via email, phone, text messages, direct messaging, social networking sites, or other means.

Conduct occurring at the component level should be addressed under the component's nondiscrimination and/or anti-harassment policy rather than this policy. The AIA Chief External EDI Officer or General Counsel are available to respond to questions from component leaders and staff. The AIA Chief People Officer should be contacted in all instances in which an AIA employee has been involved in the pertinent conduct at a component event or program.

Renée Byng Yancey, Chief External EDI Officer
Terrence (Terry) Ona, Esq., General Counsel
Kiersten Thornton, SPHR, MBA, Chief People Officer

Sexual and other harassment and discrimination are offensive acts and violate this policy even if they do not violate the law. Individuals who violate this policy may be excluded from committees and other activities or expelled or barred from attending AIA events.

AIA encourages AIA members and others to report any conduct that violates this policy so that the issue can be corrected promptly.

AIA reserves the right to exclude any person from any AIA-hosted event or activity at any time in its sole discretion regardless of whether the individual has paid for admission or is an invited guest or using a member benefit. This includes anyone behaving in a disorderly or offensive manner, whether in person, or by digital or other means, or otherwise failing to comply with this policy.



Harassment

Harassment includes unwelcome conduct in a single incident or in multiple incidents, or in a pattern that creates an intimidating, disrespectful, offensive, or hostile environment.

Prohibited harassment may include such things as epithets, slurs, derogatory comments, jokes or images, intimidation, negative stereotyping, ridiculing or demeaning comments, threats, assault or any physical interference with an individual's normal activity or movement, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks or other events, and other conduct that the individual might reasonably find to be offensive. Such conduct violates this policy, even if it is not unlawful.

Sexual Harassment and Discrimination

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome or offensive conduct, which includes but is not limited to misconduct based on sex, sexual orientation, self-identified or perceived sex, gender expression, gender identity and transgender status. The conduct may violate this policy even if it is not motivated by sexual desire. It may be reflected in a single incident or in multiple incidents, or in a pattern of conduct.

Examples of Sexual Harassment and Discrimination

These are various types of sexual harassment, which are strictly prohibited:

- Unwelcome physical acts, including touching of any type (such as kissing or hugging);
- Unwelcome sexual advances or propositions;
- Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks or jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality (including sexual orientation or attraction), or the sexual experience of that person or any other person;
- Sex stereotyping, that is, viewing conduct or traits as inappropriate because they may not conform to other people's ideas about how somebody of a particular sex should act or look. (This includes stereotyping based on gender identity and expression, gender orientation, and/or transgender status);
- Sexual displays or publications (including digital publications or content), such as displaying pictures, posters, calendars, or other materials that are sexually demeaning or pornographic; and
- Hostile acts or creating hostile environments directed at people because of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or transgender status.

Prohibition Against Retaliation

AIA wishes to ensure that people are comfortable raising their concerns without fear of reprisal. Retaliation is when someone penalizes another person for such things as:

- Reporting, or expressing an intent to report, what the person believes in good faith to be harassment, or another violation of this policy;
- Assisting another person in reporting a violation of this policy; and
- Participating in any investigation under this policy.

AIA strictly prohibits retaliation.



Reporting a violation

AIA encourages individuals being harassed or discriminated against to firmly and promptly tell the offender that the behavior is unwelcome. AIA also recognizes power and status differences between an individual and the offender may make such a confrontation uncomfortable. Such direct communication is therefore not required before filing a complaint. Violations should be reported as soon as possible; in some cases, AIA may be limited in what actions it can take because of the length of time that has transpired since the violation.

Reports of harassment and discrimination will be investigated immediately.

Individuals may make a report under this policy, either orally or in writing to any of the following:

- AIA President;
- AIA EVP/Chief Executive Officer;
- AIA Chief People Officer
- AIA Chief External Diversity Officer; or
- AIA General Counsel.

A written complaint form is attached to this policy. Individuals reporting harassment on behalf of someone else, should use the same complaint form and note that it is on another person's behalf.

Anonymous Reporting. AIA recognizes that in some cases, individuals who have been harassed are reluctant to identify themselves. In such cases, the individual may make an anonymous report under this policy as stated above. In some instances, AIA may ask for additional information, including the individual's identity, in order to act under this policy.

AIA's General Counsel or designee will review complaints submitted under this policy and will take such further action as may be appropriate which may include referral to the AIA Executive Vice President/CEO for complaints involving AIA staff or operations. The AIA Executive Vice President/CEO may take any action within the authority of that office.

Individual(s) reporting misconduct against AIA members may submit a complaint to the AIA National Ethics Council which oversees the AIA's Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.

AIA's Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

AIA members are subject to the [AIA's Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct](#) ("Code") and may be disciplined for violations of the Code, which is separate from this policy. The Code's Rules include the following:

Rule 1.401 Members shall not engage in harassment or discrimination in their professional activities on the basis of race, religion, national origin, age, disability, caregiver status, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Commentary: Harassment may include, but is not limited to, offensive jokes, slurs, epithets or name calling, unwelcome physical contact, or threats, intimidation, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures, and interference with work performance. Petty slights, annoyances, and isolated incidents (unless extremely serious) will not rise to the level of violation of this Rule.



Rule 1.402 Members shall not engage in conduct involving wanton disregard of the rights of others.

Commentary: Wanton disregard under this rule includes conduct taken in disregard of (1) a high degree of risk that the Complainant would be adversely affected, and (2) that risk would be apparent to a reasonable person. "Reasonable person" is an objective standard and considers someone who uses such qualities as attention, knowledge, intelligence, and judgement which a society requires of its members to protect their own interests and the interests of others. Wanton disregard under this rule also includes engaging in conduct that is severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would consider it harassing, hostile, or abusive. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual misconduct, bullying, intimidation, or retaliation.

For more information, contact the AIA General Counsel (at tona@aia.org).

[AIA Complaint Form for Reporting Harassment](#) [Link to attached PDF]