



Georgia Podiatric Medical Educational Foundation

Policy on Conduct at GPMEF Meetings and Events

It is the policy of the Georgia Podiatric Medical Educational Foundation (“GPMEF”) that all attendees of GPMEF hosted meetings, events and other activities are expected to exhibit respectful, professional, and collegial behavior during such meetings, events, and activities, including but not limited to dinners, receptions and social gatherings held in conjunction with such GPMEF hosted meetings, events, and other activities. Attendees should exercise consideration and respect in their speech and actions, including while making formal presentations to other attendees, and should be mindful of their surroundings and fellow participants.

Any type of harassment of any attendee or staff of an GPMEF hosted meeting, event, and other activity, including but not limited to dinners, receptions and social gatherings held in conjunction with an GPMEF hosted meeting, event, or activity, is prohibited conduct and is not tolerated. The GPMEF is committed to a zero tolerance for harassing conduct at all locations where GPMEF business is conducted. This zero-tolerance policy also applies to meetings of all GPMEF committees and task forces as well as other GPMEF-sponsored events. The purpose of the policy is to protect participants in GPMEF-sponsored events from harm.

Definition

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct whether verbal, physical or visual that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship or otherwise, and that: (1) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment; (2) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s participation in meetings or proceedings of the GPMEF; or (3) otherwise adversely affects an individual’s participation in such meetings or proceedings.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and written, electronic, or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group and that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the site of any GPMEF meeting or circulated in connection with any GPMEF meeting held in person or virtually.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment also constitutes discrimination and is unlawful and is absolutely prohibited. For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment includes:

- making unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or other verbal, physical, or visual conduct of a sexual nature; and
- creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment or otherwise unreasonably interfering with an individual's participation in meetings or proceedings of the GPMEF.

Sexual harassment may include such conduct as explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments or gestures, descriptive comments about an individual's physical appearance, electronic stalking or lewd messages, displays of foul or obscene printed or visual material, and any unwelcome physical contact.

Retaliation against anyone who has reported harassment, submits a complaint, reports an incident witnessed, or participates in any way in the investigation of a harassment claim is forbidden. Each complaint of harassment or retaliation will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. To the fullest extent possible, the GPMEF will keep complaints and the terms of their resolution confidential.

Reporting

Any persons who believe they have experienced or witnessed conduct in violation of this policy during any GPMEF meetings, events and other activities should promptly notify the (i) GPMEF's Executive Director, and/or (ii) the presiding officer(s) of such meeting or activity.

The report will be investigated by the GPMEF's Executive Director and/or another individual appointed by the GPMEF's President (hereinafter "Conduct Investigator"). Each reported violation will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. Whenever possible, incident investigations should be conducted on-site during the event. This allows for immediate action at the event to protect the safety of event participants. When this is not possible, the incidents may continue to be investigated following the event to provide recommendations for action to the GPMEF Board of Directors.

Based on this investigation, the Executive Director and/or Conduct Investigator will determine whether a violation of the policy on Conduct at GPMEF Meetings and Events has occurred.

All reported violations of the policy on Conduct at GPMEF Meetings and Events, and the outcomes of investigations by the GPMEF's Executive Director and/or Conduct Investigator, will also be promptly transmitted to the GPMEF's Board of Directors (i.e., irrespective of whether the GPMEF's Executive Director and/or Conduct Investigator determines that a violation has occurred).

Disciplinary Action

If the GPMEF's Executive Director and/or Conduct Investigator determines that a violation of the policy on Conduct at GPMEF Meetings and Events has occurred, the Executive Director and/or Conduct Investigator may take immediate action to protect the safety of event participants, which may include having the violator removed from the GPMEF meeting, event, or activity, without warning or refund.

Additionally, if the GPMEF's Executive Director and/or Conduct Investigator determines that a violation of the policy on Conduct at GPMEF Meetings and Events has occurred, the GPMEF's Executive Director and/or Conduct Investigator shall report any such violation to the GPMEF's Board of Directors, together with recommendations as to whether additional commensurate disciplinary and/or corrective actions (beyond those taken on-site at the meeting, event, or activity, if any) are appropriate.

The GPMEF's Board of Directors will review all incident reports, perform further investigation (if needed) and take any additional commensurate disciplinary and/or corrective action, which may include but is not limited to the following:

- Prohibiting the violator from attending future GPMEF events or activities;
- Removing the violator from leadership or other roles in GPMEF activities;
- Prohibiting the violator from assuming a leadership or other role in future GPMEF activities;
- Notifying the violator's employer and/or sponsoring organization of the actions taken by GPMEF;
- Authorization of a Board of Inquiry as defined in the GPMEF's Bylaws; or
- Referral to law enforcement.

The GPMEF Board of Director's may, but is not required to, confer with the presiding officer(s) of applicable events activities in making its recommendations as to disciplinary and/or corrective actions. Consequence for policy violations will be commensurate with the nature of the violation(s).

Assent to Policy

As a condition of attending and participating in any GPMEF hosted meetings, events and other activities, each attendee will be required to acknowledge and accept (i) GPMEF's Policy on Conduct at GPMEF Meetings and Events and (ii) applicable adjudication and disciplinary processes for violations of such policy, and all attendees are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with this policy.

Additionally, individuals elected or appointed to a leadership role in the GPMEF will be required to acknowledge and accept the Policy on Conduct at GPMEF Meetings and Events and these Operational Guidelines.