



Health Physics Society  
Specialists in Radiation Safety

## Respectful Behavior Policy

### I. PREFACE

The mission of the Health Physics Society (HPS) is to promote excellence in the science and practice of radiation safety. Essential to this mission are the open exchange of ideas, freedom of thought and expression, and productive scientific debate, which require an open, diverse environment, free of bias and intimidation, built on dignity and mutual respect for all participants. Moreover, the HPS was formed "to support health physicists in all aspects of the practice of their profession." As such, HPS is dedicated to providing a safe, welcoming, and productive experience for everyone participating in Society events and other Society activities, regardless of age, color, creed, disability, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, marital status, military service status, national origin, parental status, physical appearance, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or any other status or condition. HPS will not tolerate harassment of or by participants in any form, including discriminatory harassment. Participants in HPS activities who violate this principle are subject to disciplinary action up to and including forfeiture of membership in the Society ([see Section V](#)).

### II. DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

Harassment is behavior that is hostile or offensive. Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal or written comments that are insulting, discriminatory, degrading, or threatening.
- Verbal or written comments that are sexually graphic or sexually suggestive.
- Unwelcome and targeted photography or recording.
- Sustained disruption of talks or other events.
- Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following.
- Display of offensive and/or suggestive objects, pictures, or graphics.
- Initiation of inappropriate physical contact.
- Unwelcome sexual attention, including repeated flirtations or advances.
- Advocating for, encouraging, or intentionally concealing any of the above behavior.

Harassment does not require intent to offend; harassment includes actions above that are intended to be jokes, "kidding," or "teasing." Harassment does not include consensual personal and social relationships conducted in private spaces.

### III. EXPECTATIONS

All participants in HPS events and other Society activities are expected to treat other participants with professionalism and respect. Participants are expected to refrain from all harassing behavior toward any individual or group. Participants asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately.

Creation of a safe and welcoming environment is a shared responsibility held by all participants. Harassment and other violations of this policy reduce the value of participation for everyone, not just those on the receiving end. Participants who believe they are witnessing or experiencing harassing behavior are encouraged, though not required, to ask the offender to stop the unwelcome behavior by

referencing this policy. Often, this action alone will stop the problem. Participants are equally encouraged to exercise their option to leave a situation that makes them feel targeted or unsafe.

If you or someone else experiences harassment, regardless of how you otherwise choose to initially handle the situation, you are encouraged to report the situation to HPS leadership. If you choose to do so, you have the option of reporting anonymously ([see Section V](#)). It is possible that the behavior you experienced is part of a larger pattern of repeated harassment. Please alert HPS to behavior you feel to be harassment regardless of the offender's identity or standing in the Society.

Additionally, if you have an incident to report, please report it as soon as possible. The most effective method of resolving actual or perceived harassment is early identification and intervention. Timely reporting helps HPS to take constructive action before relationships become irreparably damaged.

#### **IV. POLICY APPLICATION**

This policy applies to all HPS members, affiliates, volunteers, and other event attendees, including speakers, sponsors, exhibitors, and vendors. This policy applies at all official HPS events and other activities related to Society business, such as annual and midyear meetings, training courses, committee and other business meetings, and public-speaking engagements. For in-person events, participants are expected to follow these rules at all event venues and event-related social activities. For remote activities, participants are expected to follow these rules in all nonphysical spaces associated with the activity (e.g., teleconferences, group emails, online comment threads, and any other work related to or sponsored by the Society, written or oral).

#### **V. REPORTING AND ENFORCEMENT**

If you have an incident to report, you have several options. If you are at an in-person event, you may contact the designated person listed in the event program, anyone in the HPS leadership team (whom you may also contact for remote activities), or the chair of the Local Arrangements Committee. The complaint and investigation will be handled with respect for the privacy and wishes of all involved and will be confidential (anonymous if desired) to the extent practical. Upon receiving a complaint, the matter may be further investigated by the executive director and/or the HPS president. Details of the complaint may later be shared with members of the Executive Committee and/or the Board of Directors, depending on the case. Individuals to be notified and actions to be taken will be discussed beforehand with the recipient of the harassing behavior, where possible.

Please note that HPS believes in respecting the wishes of those directly involved in the incident. While you may report an incident if you are not the target of the harassing behavior, HPS reserves the right to discontinue enforcement if it determines that no harassment existed, that the recipient of the behavior does not wish to further pursue a complaint, or that the information provided is not complete enough to allow an investigation to be made.

Disciplinary action for participants found to have violated this policy may include reprimand, expulsion from an event or activity with or without a refund, temporary or permanent exclusion from all HPS events and activities, suspension or expulsion from volunteer leadership positions or groups, and/or suspension or forfeiture of Society membership, as appropriate.

For more detail on the complaint-resolution procedure, or if you have other questions about the Respectful Behavior Policy, please contact the HPS executive director or president.

The Health Physics Society is a nonprofit scientific professional organization whose mission is excellence in the science and practice of radiation safety. Formed in 1956, the Society has approximately 3,500 scientists, physicians, engineers, lawyers, and other professionals. Activities include encouraging research in radiation science, developing standards, and disseminating radiation safety information. The Society may be contacted at 950 Herndon Parkway, Suite 450, Herndon, VA 20170; phone: 703-790-1745; fax: 703-790-2672; email: [HPS@BurkInc.com](mailto:HPS@BurkInc.com).