

Code of Professional and Ethical Conduct for Members of the Health Physics Society and those participating in HPS activities

I. Preamble

Health physics and its related disciplines are essential for promoting public health and safety with respect to the use and management of radiation and radioactivity. Members of the Health Physics Society are engaged to varying degrees in the science and application of radiation protection, with duties and responsibilities which may directly affect the radiation safety of workers and the public, and the protection of the environment. Professional responsibilities will bring them into contact with industry, government, regulators, researchers, fellow professionals, and members of the public. Members of the HPS are expected to exhibit the highest standards of professional ethics and integrity for the benefit of the field, those who practice within it, stakeholders impacted by its practice, and the public at large. Non-members participating in HPS activities are expected to maintain professionalism and respect in their dealings with the HPS.

II. Fundamental Canons

Members of the HPS are expected to support the advancement of the field of health physics through professional competency, honesty, integrity, respect, and accountability. Members shall therefore:

1. Hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public and issue public statements about health physics only in an objective and truthful manner.
2. Perform services only in areas of their competence and represent their expertise truthfully.
3. Strive to promote the advancement and understanding of health physics through research, education, practice, service, and/or communication.
4. Conduct themselves respectfully, ethically, and lawfully in practice and in dealing with others.

III. Professional Obligations (Standards of Practice)

1. Hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public and issue public statements about health physics only in an objective and truthful manner

- Draw attention to hazards where they arise.
- Promote public awareness and understanding of radiation protection.
- Encourage the safe use and management of radiation and/or radioactivity.
- Shall not compromise public welfare and safety in favor of a private interest.
- Present and review information honestly, accurately, and objectively.
- Shall not deliberately mislead others or knowingly allow others to be misled.

2. Perform services only in areas of their competence and represent their expertise truthfully

- Exercise professional skill and judgment to the best of their ability and carry out their responsibilities in a reliable and trustworthy manner

- Inform any person or organization for whom they perform a professional function of any potential or actual conflict of interest.
- Take personal responsibility for the work carried out under their supervision and take all reasonable steps to ensure that persons carrying out such work are competent to perform the tasks assigned to them.
- Never misrepresent their level of competence and/or professional certification.

3. Strive to promote the advancement and understanding of health physics through research, education, practice, service, and/or communication

- Members shall strive to advance the field of Health Physics and Radiation Protection by keeping up to date on the current issues in the field, helping to develop field-related knowledge and skills in others, sharing information and experience with others, and contributing to the work of professional associations, schools, and the professional, scientific, and technical press.
- Strive to accurately identify risks where they exist, take reasonable steps to manage them, and effectively communicate said risks.
- To the best of their ability, members shall endeavor to challenge hypotheses, statements, or conclusions which may inhibit the advancement or understanding of Health Physics; these challenges should be raised/handled in good faith as part of healthy scientific debate.
- When presenting to and/or representing the Society, discussions should primarily focus on contemporary scientific, technical, or regulatory developments and/or be directly related to the mission of the Society.

4. Conduct themselves respectfully, ethically, and lawfully in practice and in dealing with others

- Shall strive to conduct themselves in a manner which will uphold the integrity of health physics as a field and HPS as an organization. Members shall not speak on behalf of the HPS unless specifically authorized to do so.
- Shall strive to follow all regulations and laws relevant to radiation protection or the practice thereof.
- Respect and protect personal information.
- Shall not knowingly take credit for the work of others and shall give credit where it is due.
- Where possible, prevent corrupt practice or professional misconduct and report instances where they occur.
- Shall not attempt to maliciously harm the reputation of any person and organization.
- Shall treat others with professionalism and respect.
 - Essential to the mission of the HPS is the open exchange of ideas, freedom of thought and expression, and productive scientific debate, which require an open, diverse environment, built on dignity and mutual respect for all participants. Disagreements should be conducted in a professional manner.
 - While it is recognized that some topics may engender passionate debate on the part of some individuals, members shall refrain from all badgering and/or intimidating behavior toward any individual or group; desist if asked to stop such behavior, and if necessary, seek alternate means to continue discussion, including seeking neutral third party mediation.

- Members should be aware of potential power imbalances in their professional relationships; members should not attempt to exert undue influence over another due to these relationships. Those perceived to be in a position of power or influence over another have an additional responsibility to reflect on how their position may influence others.

IV. Definition of Harassment

Harassment is, first and foremost, a behavior that can take on many forms and includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal or written comments that are insulting, discriminatory, degrading, hostile, offensive or threatening.
- Verbal or written comments that are of a sexual nature including graphic or suggestive.
 - This also includes display of offensive and/or suggestive objects, pictures, or graphics.
- Unwelcome and targeted photography or recording.
- Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following.
- Initiation of inappropriate physical contact.
- Unwelcome sexual attention, including repeated flirtations or advances.
- Advocating for, encouraging, or intentionally concealing any of the above behavior.

Other, less obvious forms of harassment:

- Harassment does not require intent to offend. The actions as described above are considered harassment.
- Further, actions that are “intended to be jokes, such as “kidding,” or “teasing” can also be considered harassment.
- Sustained disruption of talks or other events.

Harassment does not include consensual personal and social relationships conducted in private spaces.

V. General Policy on Discrimination and Harassment

Members shall always keep in mind that it is illegal to discriminate against someone because of that person's race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or any other status or condition. Discrimination, harassment (see Section IV) and other violations of this Code reduce the value of participation for everyone. HPS will not tolerate harassment of or by Members (or non-members participating in HPS events) in any form, including discriminatory harassment.

- Members (and non-members participating in HPS events) are expected to refrain from all harassing behavior toward any individual or group.
 - Those asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to cease immediately.
- Those 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 Code.
 - Often, this action alone will stop the problem.
 - It is equally encouraged to exercise the option to leave a situation that makes one feel targeted or unsafe.

- Creation of a safe and welcoming environment is a shared responsibility. All society members are encouraged to intervene, whether directly or indirectly, should they witness discriminatory or harassing behavior.

VI. Expectations for Non-Members Participating in HPS Activities

Individuals participating in HPS activities are expected to comport themselves in a professional manner that reflects highly upon themselves and their affiliated organizations and is consistent with applicable HPS policies and/or the principles as specified in Section III.4 and Section V.

VII. Responsibilities and Policy Application

The HPS Board has ultimate responsibility for defining this Code of Professional and Ethical Conduct (PEC) and the PEC Committee is responsible for addressing any suspected failure of HPS members to abide by it. The HPS Board, in consultation with the PEC Committee, will periodically review and, if necessary, revise this document to ensure that it reflects current requirements.

VIII. Incident Reporting

To report a violation of this policy, please follow the link below:

<https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/57816/index.html>

Or call the Secretariat at 703-592-9946

If you believe someone to be in violation of this Code, regardless of how you otherwise choose to initially handle the situation, you are encouraged to report the incident to HPS leadership using the link above. If you choose to do so, you have the option of reporting anonymously. Please alert HPS to violations of the Code regardless of the offender's identity or standing in the Society. Please note that HPS reserves the right to discontinue investigation if it determines that no violation of the Code existed, that the recipient of harassing 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.

Additionally, if you have an incident to report, please report it as soon as possible. Timely reporting helps HPS to take timely, constructive action.

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 will be reviewed by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Secretariat and may be investigated by the Professional and Ethical Conduct (PEC) Committee upon referral.

For more detail on the complaint-resolution procedure, or if you have other questions about this Code, please contact the Chair of the PEC Committee or the Secretariat.

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 2,500 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.