

MEETING AND EVENT STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR POLICY

The Society for Birth Defects Research and Prevention (“BDRP”) is dedicated to providing a pleasant and professional experience for all meeting and event participants, regardless of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, physical appearance, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship status, religious convictions or affiliations, or other characteristics (“personal characteristics”). BDRP will not tolerate harassment of or by participants in any form. Inappropriate language and imagery will not be accepted in any meeting or event spaces, regardless of whether the meeting or event is taking place in person, virtually, or in a hybrid format, and including session rooms, poster hall, break/refreshment spaces, social and networking events, private chats within the meeting app, or any virtual meeting or video conference platform. Any participant violating these rules may be sanctioned or expelled from the meeting or event at the sole discretion of BDRP.

MEETING AND EVENT CODE OF CONDUCT

We expect all BDRP meeting and event participants, including speakers and chairs, to help ensure a safe and positive experience for everyone. Differences of scientific opinion are expected in emerging areas of science but should be presented and discussed in a way that is respectful to all. Unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated during any portion of a meeting or event.

Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome and uninvited attention or contact with another participant;
- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other unwelcome physical, verbal, visual or other conduct of a sexual nature;
- Intimidating, harassing, hostile, abusive, discriminatory, derogatory or demeaning speech or actions;
- Harmful or prejudicial verbal or written comments or visual images related to personal characteristics;
- Harmful or prejudicial verbal or written comments or visual images related to gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability or other personal characteristics, including those protected by law;
- Deliberate intimidation or stalking;
- Inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images;
- Real or implied threat of professional or financial damage or harm;
- Inappropriate disruption of meetings or events;
- Photographing, video or audio recording of slides, oral or poster presentations without presenter/author’s permission;
- Use of login credentials by anyone other than the registered individual;
- Inclusion of promotional materials, special offers, job offers, product announcements, or solicitation of services in presentations, messages, or during social and networking events;
- Violating the rules and regulations of the meeting app used to support the meeting;

- Failure to cease unacceptable behavior when requested by an event participant or by a representative of BDRP.

REPORTING HARASSMENT TO BDRP

A meeting or event participant whose safety is threatened or violated is urged to contact local law enforcement. In addition, any event participant who feels unsafe or experiences unwelcome comments or conduct, who observes or experiences unacceptable behavior in violation of this BDRP policy or who reasonably believes there has been a violation of this Policy is encouraged to promptly report such harassment and disruptive behaviors to BDRP staff at BDRP@birthdefectsresearch.org or 703.438.3104.

Reports may be anonymous or attributed. BDRP will use its best efforts to respond to a participant's complaint as promptly as possible, no later than the close of the following business day. Please note that responding to and investigating an anonymous complaint may take BDRP longer and may hinder or even prevent its ability to fully investigate the complaint.

CONSEQUENCES OF MISCONDUCT

Upon receiving a report of complaint of unacceptable behavior or conduct in violation of this Policy, BDRP's first priority is to preserve the safety and security of participants. To do so, BDRP reserves the right to temporarily suspend or terminate the participant's access to the BDRP meeting or event. When facts are in dispute or cannot be fully established, BDRP reserves the right to take such action(s) as may be most likely to safeguard safety and security of meeting and event participants.

Violation of this Policy, as determined by BDRP in its sole discretion, is grounds for any action BDRP deems appropriate, including, but not limited to:

- Issuing a verbal or written warning to the offending party;
- Immediate removal of the offending party or termination of the offending party's access to a meeting or event without warning;
- Denying further access to the BDRP meeting or event (including revoking or denying registration to the BDRP event);
- Being banned from registration for or participation in future BDRP meetings and events;
- Termination of positions on BDRP Council or Committees.

Any person who is denied access or whose access is terminated during a BDRP meeting or event based on this Policy may request that BDRP review the matter after the conclusion of the event. However, BDRP's action in connection with the alleged prohibited conduct or behavior will take effect immediately and will continue until and unless BDRP issues a contrary decision. Unless a contrary decision is issued by BDRP, any person who is denied access to or removed from an BDRP meeting or event based on this Policy will not be eligible for a refund of any registration fees paid for access to or participation in the BDRP meeting or event.

Updated 2025