

OKANOGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (OCOG)

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Okanogan Council of Governments (OCOG) is a voluntary alliance of governments from across the Okanogan Region working together on issues and opportunities of mutual interest. The region consists of all of Okanogan County.

Our Council is committed to providing a safe and productive meeting environment free of discrimination, hostility, and harassment in any form, for everyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental disability, medical condition, physical appearance, ethnicity, race, religion, political affiliation, nationality, or any other group identity or basis protected by federal law. The Council does not tolerate discrimination, or any form of unlawful harassment.

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

OCOG requires compliance with the policy by all event participants (members, non-members, and speakers), staff, guests, sponsors, volunteers, and vendors/exhibitors at all official meetings meeting breakout sessions, conferences, and social events, as well as at all Council meeting-related events that are expressly sponsored or promoted by the Council, in public facilities (each may be referred to herein as an "Event" or collectively, as "Events").

HARASSMENT DEFINED

Harassment includes speech, gestures or behavior that is not welcome or is personally offensive, whether it is based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental disability, medical condition, physical appearance, ethnicity, race, religion, political affiliation, nationality or any other group identity. It includes deliberate intimidation, coercion, stalking, unwelcome attention, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate/unnecessary/unwanted physical contact, offensive jokes or comments, and unprofessional use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces or in presentations. Behavior that is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another. Whether any act is considered offensive or inappropriate is determined by the recipient of such action, attention, or conversation. Harassment intended in a joking manner still constitutes unacceptable behavior.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

As a professional association, OCOG is strongly committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, professional expression of ideas, and ethical treatment of all members and conference/meeting participants. These values and a zero-tolerance stance on sexual and other forms of harassment are in line with Council's belief in the value of civil discourse, even during critical examination and critique of ideas, and the free

exploration of competing ideas and concepts — with a fundamental respect for the rights, dignity and value of all persons.

OCOG seeks to provide an atmosphere in which diverse participants may learn, network and enjoy the company of colleagues in an environment of mutual human respect. The Council recognizes a shared responsibility to establish, maintain and protect such an environment for the benefit of all. Some behaviors are, therefore, specifically prohibited. Prohibited conduct at Events includes, but is not limited to:

- Harassment or intimidation based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental disability, medical condition, physical appearance, ethnicity, race, religion, political affiliation, nationality or any other group identity or basis protected by federal law.
- Sexual harassment or intimidation, including unwelcome sexual attention, stalking (physical or virtual), or unsolicited physical contact.
- Harassment, intimidation, or coercion based upon a position as a teacher, superior, employer, or any position of influence.
- Abusive, discriminatory, derogatory, ridiculing, lewd, or demeaning language, conduct or presentation materials (visual or auditory).
- Bullying, harassment, or unprofessional conduct aimed at speech or professional status.
- Yelling at, offensive ridiculing of, or threatening speakers (verbally or physically) or any attendees.
- Physical violence or aggression or threats of violence.

REPORTING AN INCIDENT

If you are experiencing a threat to your physical safety, immediately call 911, and contact the Council as soon as you are safe.

Meeting participants should note that OCOG cannot address claimed inappropriate conduct or harassment unless the claims are brought to the attention of the appropriate personnel. Event participants who witness or experience harassment or any inappropriate conduct, including but not limited to the prohibited conduct described above, should report the conduct to the Council. Those reporting a complaint are not expected to discuss the incident with the offending party. All complaints will be treated seriously and be investigated. Confidentiality will be honored to the extent permitted as long as the rights of others are not compromised.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

Within 10 days of a complaint being received, the OCOG Chair will contact the insurance risk management group to conduct an investigation to gather the facts of the alleged complaint. After receiving the investigation report, the Chair will present the facts of the complaint as outlined in the report to the Executive Committee.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

We take all potential policy violations seriously. Policy violations may lead to disciplinary action that matches the nature and circumstances of the violation. If it is determined that an individual has engaged in prohibited conduct, OCOG shall determine the appropriate action to be taken, which may include, but is not limited to:

- Private reprimand.
- Implementation of conditions upon attendance at future OCOG events.
- Restriction from attendance at future OCOG events.
- Suspension and/or termination from the board.
- Criminal Prosecution.

In the event of the potential for serious, injurious, or offensive conduct, when it seems reasonable to preserve the peace and decorum of the event or to limit harm or to avoid further incidents, OCOG may take immediate action and ask a person to leave an event, depending on the nature of the issue; follow-up may occur later.

RETALIATION

OCOG will not tolerate any form of retaliation against persons who file a complaint or assist in the investigation of a complaint. Retaliation is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action.