



## Code of Conduct (August 2023)

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The **Association of Biomolecular Resource Facilities (ABRF)** is committed to ensuring a safe and supportive organization for all participants.

ABRF's key values include:

- A commitment to advancing the integration of technologies, education, communication, and reproducible research in the operations of shared scientific resources
- Supporting best practices, research excellence, and reproducibility in scientific discovery
- Creating a welcoming, collaborative community that cultivates inclusion, professional development, and technology innovation.

ABRF members are expected to abide by this **Code of Conduct** in all ABRF activities, including those in-person or online, as well as in written and verbal communication.

- Exercising consideration and respect in your speech and actions
- Refraining from demeaning, discriminatory, harassing behavior and speech
- Being mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants
- Alerting ABRF leaders if you notice a dangerous situation, someone in distress, or violations of this **Code of Conduct**, even if they seem inconsequential.

If you feel you are being subjected to, or notice that someone else is being subjected to, *behavior* that violates this code of conduct, complete the [online incident report form](#) as soon as possible. Additional information on the incident review process is listed below.

All reports will be kept confidential.

## **ABRF Code of Conduct**

### **Unacceptable Behaviors**

- Intimidating, harassing, abusive, discriminatory, derogatory, demeaning, speech and/or actions by any participant in any ABRF event or activity.
- Harmful or prejudicial verbal or written comments or visual images related to age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability, or other personal characteristics
- Inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces, communication with another ABRF member, email, text, or social media.
- Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following
- Unwanted or harassing photography, including failing or refusing to stop photographing/recording upon explicit request or appearance of discomfort (turning away or covering one's face, etc)
- Photographing slides of oral presentations or posters, or recording of scientific and other sessions when notice is given that speakers have not provided consent
- Violating the rules and regulations of the conference hotel
- Sustained disruption of scientific sessions or other events
- Unwelcome and uninvited attention or contact
- Physical assault (including unwelcome touch or groping)
- Real or implied threat of physical or emotional harm
- Real or implied threat of professional or financial damage or harm

### **What To Do If You Witness or Experience Conduct That Violates the Code:**

If you feel threatened or witness someone being threatened and in immediate need of assistance, please contact venue staff/security or call 911 immediately.

ABRF staff and leadership are available to assist participants in contacting hotel/university security or local law enforcement, and otherwise assist those experiencing harassment, to enable them to feel safe for the duration of the meeting. We value your attendance and want to make your experience as productive and professionally inspiring as possible.

Need to file a complaint? Please complete the [ABRF Code of Conduct Incident Form](#). A copy of the incident form will be provided to the respondent for an opportunity to reply.

If possible, provide the following information, preferably in writing:

- Identifying information (name, badge number, clothing work, hair/eye color, tattoos, etc.) of the participant doing the harassing;
- The behavior that was in violation;
- The approximate time of the behavior (if different than the time the report was made)
- The circumstances surrounding the incident
- Other people involved in or witnessing the incident

All complaints will be treated seriously and responded to promptly.

### **We Respect Your Confidentiality**

The rights and privacy of those involved, including the rights of those who are being investigated, are protected. Keep in mind that if you report a concern, your identity will only be revealed if it is **absolutely necessary** and only to those who have a clear **need to know** so they can completely address and resolve the incident you reported.

### **You Don't Have to Give Your Name**

If you decide to report a concern anonymously, please be sure to provide as many details as possible. To facilitate as complete an investigation as possible with an anonymous report, we need to know who, what, when, where, why, and how, as outlined above.

### **You May Receive Updates**

After you file a report, you may receive periodic updates from ABRF, if you have provided your contact information. Keep in mind, however, that you may not see any obvious signs that your complaint is being reviewed or investigated. In fact, because of our commitment to confidential and fair investigations, you might never know all that was done to investigate or what corrective actions were taken. You are free to contact the ABRF Executive Director at any time for an update.

### **Enforcement & Reporting**

1. Participants who are asked to cease any behavior(s) contrary to this Code of Conduct are expected to comply immediately.
2. ABRF reserves the right to take any action deemed necessary, including immediate removal from the event without warning or refund, in response to any incident of behavior deemed inappropriate under this Code of Conduct;

ABRF reserves the right to prohibit attendance at any future meeting by any individual found to have acted in violation of this Code of Conduct.

3. Persons experiencing harassment or hearing of any incidents of unacceptable behavior in violation of this Code of Conduct are asked to contact an ABRF staff member and ask for either the ABRF President or Executive Director, so that appropriate action can be taken.
4. ABRF has no power whatsoever to prevent any person accused of unlawful or improper behavior who believes such action has caused him or her legal harm from instituting legal action against the person he or she believes has caused the harm.

## **Procedures**

An ABRF staff member may issue a verbal warning to an event participant that such person's behavior violates this Code of Conduct. Warnings should be reported to the President and Executive Director (or a member of the ABRF Executive Board) as soon as possible thereafter and should include: identifying information (name of participant), time the warning was issued, behavior that was in violation, approximate time of behavior (if at a different time than the warning), circumstances surrounding the incident, and other people involved in the incident (including witnesses, if any). Verbal or oral warnings and reports should be reduced to writing as soon as practicable after their occurrence.

## **Reporting**

When taking a personal report, staff should find a space that is safe and that cannot be overheard. It is recommended that one other staff member or Association Board member be present as a witness to the report. Staff will not ask the complainant to confront anyone, and, to the extent possible, the complainant's identity will remain known only to the ABRF representatives receiving the report. However, ABRF may not be able to guarantee confidentiality or anonymity to a complainant or witness.

If at all possible, staff should also interview any witnesses and, depending upon the circumstances of the alleged inappropriate conduct and subject to the decision of the ABRF Executive Board, give the accused an opportunity to respond to the complaint.

Incident reports will be submitted to the ABRF Code of Conduct Committee for review and evaluation. The Committee may elect to recommend enforcement actions to the ABRF Executive Board.

## **Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior**

Unacceptable behavior from any attendee, sponsor, venue staff, or vendor will not be tolerated. Anyone asked to stop unacceptable behavior is expected to comply immediately. Consequences of unacceptable behavior may include:

- Expulsion from a meeting;
- Suspension of future meeting attendance for up to three years
- Permanent termination of future meeting attendance
- Suspension of membership activities (including Research Groups, Committees) for up to three years
- Termination of membership for up to three years
- Permanent Termination of membership, with the opportunity to apply for reinstatement upon review by the ABRF Executive Board

**Abbreviated version of the policy for posting:**

ABRF is committed to ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for all participants.

We expect all ABRF members to abide by its **Code of Conduct** in all ABRF activities, in-person and online, as well as in written and oral communication.

If you are being subjected to, or notice that someone else is being subjected to, behavior that violates this code of conduct, complete the [ABRF Code of Conduct Incident Form](#) or contact a member of the ABRF Executive Board.

***ALL REPORTS ARE CONFIDENTIAL.***