

National Marine Educators Association Code of Conduct

Preamble

The National Marine Educators Association, hereinafter NMEA, is the leading organization dedicated to making known the world of water, both fresh and salt. NMEA has a long, rich history of convening people to promote professional excellence in marine education. NMEA values diversity, respect, collaboration, accessibility, participation, integrity, and transparency, and works to ensure these values are reflected in all interactions. Members of NMEA come from a wide variety of backgrounds, which adds to the inherent richness of an organization nearly 1,000 members strong.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to outline core principles that encourage constructive discourse, respectful interactions, and the creation of a positive environment where our members and friends can promote and support ocean literacy and making known the world of water, both fresh and salt.

This Code of Conduct applies to all members in respect of their activities and communications on behalf of or in connection with NMEA, and all communications among NMEA members and with members of the public, whether written, oral, electronic or otherwise.

All those who participate as speakers, attendees, volunteers, students, and guests in NMEA-sponsored events are expected to adhere to this Code of Conduct as well.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

NMEA is an equal opportunity organization and does not discriminate in the offering of membership, the hiring and firing of its employees and consultants, and the administration of its programs and activities, on the basis of protected characteristics, including but not limited to race, color, religion, gender, age, nationality, physical or mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, military record, and citizenship.

Principles of Conduct

NMEA members understand that the advancement of NMEA's mission hinges on our ability to communicate openly and thoughtfully with others, critique and challenge one another with respect and integrity, and be willing to change and grow. NMEA members and those who participate in NMEA events are expected to display conduct that is consistent with the following principles:

Principle 1 – Engage in open and constructive dialogue to promote NMEA's mission.

Principle 2 – Treat others with respect and dignity.

Principle 3 – Maintain high ethical standards, good judgment, and integrity.

Prohibited Conduct

There are certain behaviors that are directly at odds with NMEA's mission and Principles of Conduct, have the potential to cause NMEA and its members harm, and may, in certain instances, constitute a violation of law. While NMEA cannot control the conduct of its members and those that participate in its sponsored activities, it wishes to send a clear message about conduct that is not appropriate. While it is not feasible to list all the ways our Code of Conduct may be violated, examples include, but are not limited to:

- Physical or verbal abuse of any member, or any meeting attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, service provider, or other guest;
- Engaging in harassment, including sexual harassment, of other members, or any meeting attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, service provider, or other guest (e.g., repeated use of derogatory or sexually explicit language, epithets or slurs; displaying explicit images or videos; stalking; engaging in unwelcome physical contact; making unwanted sexual advances, propositions or demands);
- Disruption of talks, poster sessions, or social functions (e.g., yelling at presenter, engaging in hostile or threatening behavior);
- Disrespectful treatment of conference venue staff or violating conference venue rules;
- Falsifying a ticket or other document, or gaining unauthorized entry into an NMEA sponsored or co-sponsored event;
- Plagiarism or infringement of intellectual property;
- Disclosing confidential information concerning other members, or any meeting attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, service provider, or other guest;
- Engaging in unauthorized communications on behalf of NMEA or making intentional misrepresentations to others concerning NMEA; and
- Any form of criminal conduct.

Consumption of alcohol or other substances is not an excuse for unacceptable behavior.

Reporting Prohibited Conduct

NMEA encourages any person who has been subject to or witnessed any behavior they believe is inappropriate or contrary to this Code of Conduct to bring the matter to the attention of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors promptly.

Reports of inappropriate conduct will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and will be handled with respect for the privacy of those involved to the extent practical.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Executive Committee may conduct an internal investigation, including speaking with the individuals involved and reviewing available documents and other records. Any investigation will be confidential to the extent practical, given the circumstances. The Executive Committee will endeavor to address the matter promptly.

Consequences of Prohibited Conduct

In the event the Executive Committee concludes there has been a violation of this Code of Conduct, the Executive Committee will seek to craft a resolution that addresses the matter in a constructive way. While an appropriate resolution will vary with the circumstances, some examples may include:

- a verbal or written warning;
- being asked to leave the meeting without refund;
- being asked to step down from a committee or board position;
- being placed on probation as a member; or
- being removed from membership.

Any questions concerning this Code of Conduct should be addressed to the Executive Committee.