AAFCS Code of Conduct

The AAFCS Annual Conference aims to be inclusive to the largest number of contributors, with the most varied and diverse backgrounds possible. As such, we are committed to providing a friendly, safe and welcoming environment for all, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ability, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, political beliefs, and religion.

This Code of Conduct outlines our expectations for all those who participate in the AAFCS Annual Conference, as well as the consequences for unacceptable behavior.

We expect all participants in the AAFCS Annual Conference to create a safe and positive experience for everyone.

“Participant” in this policy refers to anyone present at the AAFCS Annual Conference, including staff, contractors, vendors, exhibitors, hotel and AV staff, speakers, AAFCS leadership, and all attendees.

Expected Behavior

We expect all participants at the AAFCS Annual Conference to abide by this Code of Conduct in all venues, including ancillary events and official and unofficial social gatherings.

- Exercise consideration and respect in your speech and actions.
- Refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech.
- Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants.
- Alert AAFCS staff or leadership if you notice a dangerous situation, someone in distress, or violations of this Anti-Harassment Policy, even if they seem inconsequential.

Unacceptable Behavior

Unacceptable behaviors include but are not limited to

- intimidating, harassing, abusive, discriminatory, derogatory, or demeaning speech or actions by any participants in the AAFCS Annual Conference, at all related events and in one-on-one communications carried out in the context of the AAFCS Annual Conference. AAFCS event venues may be shared with members of the public; please be respectful to all patrons of these locations.
- harmful or prejudicial verbal or written comments or visual images related to gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability, age, appearance, political beliefs, or other personal characteristics
- inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces (including presentation slides)
- deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following
• harassing photography or recording
• inappropriate disruption of talks or other events
• unwelcome and uninvited attention or conduct
• physical assault (including unwelcome touch or groping)
• real or implied threat of physical harm
• real or implied threat of professional or financial damage or harm
• possession or use of any illegal drug, narcotic or banned substance
• possession or use of any item defined as a weapon, illegal or not

Exhibitors in the expo hall, sponsor or vendor booths, and similar activities are also subject to the Code of Conduct. In particular, exhibitors should not use sexualized images, activities, or other material. Booth staff (including volunteers) should not use sexualized clothing, uniforms, or costumes, or otherwise create a sexualized environment.

Be careful in the words that you choose. Remember that sexist, racist, homophobic, Islamophobic, anti-Semitic, transfobic, and other exclusionary jokes can be offensive to those around you. Excessive swearing and offensive “jokes” are not appropriate for the AAFCS Annual Conference.

Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior

Unacceptable behavior from any participant at the AAFCS Annual Conference will not be tolerated.

If a participant engages in unacceptable behavior, AAFCS may take any action they deem appropriate, including removal from the AAFCS Annual Conference (without refund) at which the harassment occurred. Egregious violations will result in more severe sanctions.

If You Are Subject to or Witness Unacceptable Behavior

If you are being harassed, notice someone else is being harassed, or have any other concerns, please contact a member of the AAFCS staff immediately or report through the anonymous online reporting form, available on the AAFCS AC website and in the app during conference. Staff can be found at the registration desk, or wearing navy STAFF ribbons. You may also contact Sara Tantillo, Associate Director, Events & Outreach, by email at stantillo@aafcs.org, or through the conference app (available during conference).

ALL reports are confidential.

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

• Identifying information (name, appearance, role) of the participant who has committed an offense
• The approximate time of the behavior
• The circumstances surrounding the incident
• Other people involved in or witnessing the incident

The staff are trained on how to deal with the incident and how to further proceed with the situation.

If needed or requested, staff will help participants contact venue security or local law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise assist those experiencing harassment to feel safe for the duration of the AAFCS Conference. No one will be contacted without the permission of the person who was harassed/assaulted. If requested, staff will provide a full refund (minus ticketed events already attended) to anyone who has been harassed or assaulted so that they may process the event in their own space.
Addressing Grievances

If you feel you have been falsely or unfairly accused of violating this Code of Conduct, you should notify AAFCS with a concise description of your grievance, by email to stantillo@aaafcs.org or via the online reporting tool (available during conference).

Policy developed based on information from Smarts Consulting

Updated January 23, 2020