

AGPA SAFE ENVIRONMENT CONDUCT POLICY

This policy will be widely publicized on the website and in Meeting materials, including the Meeting App. The policy will also be referenced at one or more plenary events during AGPA Connect. It is a living document that will continue to be updated as needed over time.

1. Purpose

- The American Group Psychotherapy Association comprises a large number of professionals of diverse backgrounds. As such, we are committed to providing a friendly, safe, respectful, and welcoming environment for all, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, nationality, ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, disability, age, size or appearance, or other personal characteristics. We are also committed to creating an inclusive learning environment characterized by constructive dialogue and the engagement of different viewpoints and perspectives.

The AGPA Safe Environment Conduct Policy outlines our expectations for all those who participate in AGPA as well as how we will respond to interactions or behavior that violate these aims. We recognize the tension that can arise, at times, in creating space for candor and openness *and* in assuring a safe space, particularly for people who are or may be marginalized in society. We invite your support in recognizing and balancing both of these imperatives.

This policy refers to anyone participating in any AGPA activity, including staff, members, faculty, volunteers and all attendees at AGPA Connect, e-Learning, e-Communities, and official and unofficial social gatherings connected with AGPA as well as sponsors, contractors, vendors, exhibitors and venue staff.

2. Expected Behavior

We expect all participants to abide by the AGPA Safe Environment Conduct Policy by:

- Supporting a safe environment and positive learning experience for everyone
- Exercising consideration and respect in their speech and actions
- Abiding by the **AGPA Policy Statement on Inclusion**, and the **AGPA Guidelines for Creating Affirming Group Experiences**.

3. Problematic Behavior

We recognize that in a society that is rife with systemic bias based on the array of social identities mentioned in the Purpose statement above, problematic behavior will occur. AGPA's goal is to minimize such behavior to create safety and a sense of inclusion and to be a place where group psychotherapists develop their skills in identifying and addressing problematic behavior.

Problematic behaviors include speech or actions that are intimidating, harassing, abusive, discriminatory, derogatory, demeaning, or threatening. These problematic behaviors typically appear in one of two ways: 1) as macroaggressions, which are significant, very obvious offensive remarks or behaviors, which may be intentional; or

2) as microaggressions, which are usually remarks or behaviors by someone who is not intending to do harm but who is unaware and uninformed. It is problematic when either macroaggressions or microaggressions are enacted by participants in AGPA, at all related events, and in any one-on-one or group verbal or written communications carried out in the context of AGPA.

When there is problematic behavior, AGPA encourages participants who experience or witness the behavior, where possible, to address the problematic behavior directly and immediately with the offending individual(s). This helps to support the establishment of a healthy “call-in” culture, where those who offend receive real-time feedback, have the opportunity to learn, and can respond. However, we recognize that it is not always possible to “call-in”, because of the power dynamics, and because calling-in can be burdensome for the person who has been harmed. Thus, allies who will step up and speak up are particularly important.

Should a participant engage in problematic behavior, particularly macroaggressions or persistent microaggressions, AGPA reserves the right to take action that is deemed appropriate, usually beginning with discussion or mediation. If desired, AGPA will help participants engage in a process of restorative justice. This process will include but is not limited to: support for those harmed, including allowing them to provide input into the resolution; educational interventions for those who have perpetrated harm; where appropriate, facilitation of restorative communication between these parties; and, where appropriate, communication to the larger AGPA community about the behavior and resolution. It is designed to support those harmed in having meaningful input into the resolution.

In extreme cases, a participant may be removed from an event without refund. In very extreme cases, after due process, AGPA reserves the right to bar a participant from attendance at future AGPA activities, suspend and/or ban them from AGPA membership, and report them to their respective state licensing board.

4. If You Are Subject to or Witness Problematic Behavior

If you are subject to or witness problematic behavior, particularly macroaggressions or persistent microaggressions, and you are not comfortable with handling this directly with the offending individual(s), you have addressed the offender but are uncomfortable with their response, or you need additional support, please contact the AGPA CEO or their appointed designee(s), Meeting Co-Chairs, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Co-Chairs or DEI Task Force Members, and/or the AGPA President.

All complaints will be treated seriously and responded to promptly.

All reports are confidential. In order to pursue further action, AGPA may request of you that confidentiality be lifted.

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

- Identifying information of the participant behaving in a problematic manner
- 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

5. Addressing Policy Concerns

If you feel you have been incorrectly or unfairly accused of violating this AGPA Safe Environment Conduct Policy, you should notify the AGPA CEO or their appointed designee(s), Meeting Co-Chairs, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Co-Chairs or DEI Task Force Members, and/or the AGPA President with a concise description of your grievance. Your grievance will be handled in accordance with our existing governance policies.

6. Threat to Physical Safety

If your physical safety is threatened, please contact venue security or call 911 in addition to reporting your experience to AGPA.

Abbreviated Version

AGPA SAFE ENVIRONMENT CONDUCT POLICY

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

We expect all participants at AGPA to uphold and abide by the AGPA Safe Environment Conduct Policy in all venues, including ancillary events and official and unofficial social gatherings by supporting a safe environment and positive learning experience for everyone and exercising consideration and respect in your speech and actions.

If you believe you have been subjected to problematic behavior, an AGPA Safe Environment Conduct Policy violation or have any other concerns, please contact the please contact the AGPA CEO or their appointed designee(s), Meeting Co-Chairs, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Co-Chair or DEI Task Force Member, and/or the AGPA President immediately.

All reports are confidential. In order to pursue further action, AGPA may request of you that confidentiality be lifted.

The full version of this policy can be found at:

<http://www.agpa.org/home/media/social-issue-policy-resolutions/agpa-safe-environment-conduct-policy>