

**Schizophrenia International Research Society  
Annual Meeting  
Code of Conduct**

**Adopted by Executive Board, April 10, 2019**

## **1. Introduction**

The Schizophrenia International Research Society (“SIRS”) is dedicated to providing a safe and productive experience for all participants and attendees at all official SIRS events regardless of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, physical or mental disability, perceived disability, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by laws. SIRS does not tolerate discrimination or any form of harassment and is committed to enforcing this Code of Conduct (the “Code”) at its Annual Meeting or at any other SIRS event, communication or publication. As a professional society, SIRS is committed to providing an atmosphere that encourages the free expression and exchange of scientific and educational ideas. Furthermore, SIRS upholds the philosophy of equal opportunity and treatment for all participants and staff in any of its activities.

## **2. Scope of Code**

SIRS requires compliance with the Code by all meeting participants, staff, guests, and vendors at all official SIRS events, including the annual meeting, committee meetings or other activities that are sponsored or promoted by SIRS, whether held in public or private facilities.

This policy is an expression of SIRS’s values and commitment to a safe and productive experience for all participants and attendees at its official events. This policy is not an acknowledgement, admission, or description of SIRS’s legal obligations with respect to any of the subject matters addressed herein, nor does it create any such legal obligations.

## **3. Harassment Defined**

Harassment includes verbal, physical, and visual conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment. Harassing conduct can take many forms and includes, but is not limited to, the following: slurs, epithets, derogatory comments, insults, degrading or obscene words, jokes, bullying, demeaning statements, offensive gestures, or displaying derogatory or demeaning pictures, drawings, or cartoons based upon an individual’s sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, physical or mental disability, perceived disability, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by law.

Sexually harassing conduct in particular includes all of these prohibited actions, as well as other unwelcome conduct that is sexual in nature, such as unwanted sexual advances; lewd propositions or innuendos; leering; making sexual gestures; making sexually suggestive or graphic comments or engaging in inappropriate sexually-oriented conversation; displaying sexually suggestive objects, graphics, pictures, or posters, whether physically or over the Internet; making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs or jokes; the sexual touching or display of one’s own body; or unwanted physical touching or assault, as well as impeding or blocking movements.

Sexually harassing conduct can be by a person of either the same or opposite sex. It is a violation of this policy for males to sexually harass females or other males, and for females to sexually harass males or other females. Conduct that begins as consensual in nature may become harassment if one party withdraws his or her consent. Sexual or other harassment prohibited by this policy is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

The above list of prohibited behaviors is not a complete rendering of what may be deemed sexual or other harassment prohibited by this policy. It is impossible to define every action or word that could be interpreted as harassment. However, SIRS has a "zero tolerance" policy toward discrimination and all forms of harassment. SIRS reserves the right to discipline meeting participants who engage in any inappropriate conduct, even if it is not specifically referred to or defined in this Code, or is not legally actionable as sexual or any other form of harassment.

#### **4. Prohibited Conduct**

Prohibited conduct at SIRS meetings includes, but is not limited to:

1. harassment based on sex, race, color, personal appearance, national origin, religion, age, physical disability, mental disability, perceived disability, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal or pertinent state laws;
2. demeaning comments or harassment about a person's professional status, qualifications, or affiliations;
3. sexual harassment, as defined in Section 3;
4. abusive conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with another person's ability to benefit from and enjoy or participate in the meeting, including social events related to the meeting and sponsored by SIRS;
5. undue or excessive interruption of any event, speaker, or session; and
6. violence or threats of violence.

#### **5. Reporting an Incident**

Meeting participants or other individuals, who witness or experience inappropriate conduct at a SIRS meeting or other SIRS event should report such conduct immediately to the President of the management company representing SIRS, Sarah Timm at [stimm@parthenonmgmt.org](mailto:stimm@parthenonmgmt.org) or (615) 324-2374. Any individual reporting such conduct is not required or expected to discuss the concern with the alleged offender.

Anyone experiencing or witnessing behavior at a SIRS event that is an immediate or serious threat to the safety of those present, or to the public, is advised to locate a phone and ask for security, or to otherwise contact the authorities for protection.

SIRS cannot address claimed inappropriate conduct or harassment unless the claims are brought to the attention of SIRS leadership. Meeting participants are encouraged to report any incidents of perceived violations of this policy as quickly as they can or otherwise feel safe doing.

SIRS is committed to taking reasonable steps to prevent harassment, discrimination and other prohibited conduct at its meetings, and will make reasonable efforts to promptly and completely address and correct any prohibited conduct that may occur at an official SIRS event. SIRS will keep any investigation of an alleged violation of this policy as confidential as possible.

SIRS can only investigate situations that arise at SIRS meetings or other SIRS events. If a meeting participant experiences inappropriate conduct or harassment at the participant's own or another institution, at a place of work, at a research facility, or online but not via SIRS-sponsored channels that individual should contact the appropriate person or department responsible for such things at that particular institution, facility or medium.

## **6. Investigation**

The Ethics Committee of SIRS will promptly and impartially investigate the facts and circumstances of any claim of inappropriate conduct or harassment under this policy. SIRS will make every effort to keep the reporting individual's concerns confidential and will not deliberately share personal information, other than as necessary to carry out the purpose of investigation. While complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, SIRS will keep the investigation and its findings as confidential as possible under the circumstances.

During an investigation, SIRS or a designated independent consultant subject to obligations of confidentiality, generally will do the following (as necessary) to make a determination as to appropriate action:

- document the nature of the complaint;
- interview the complainant and the person who is the object of discrimination or harassment if the complainant is a witness;
- conduct further interviews as necessary, such as with witnesses and, at an appropriate time, the alleged offender;
- document the SIRS's findings regarding the complaint;
- document recommended follow-up actions and remedies, if warranted; and
- inform the complainant and the person who is the object of discrimination or harassment if the complainant is a witness of the basic nature of the SIRS's findings.

SIRS will attempt to investigate any complaint or report of a violation of this policy in a prompt and timely manner. Upon completion of the investigation, SIRS will take appropriate corrective measures against any person who has engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy, if SIRS determines such measures are necessary. Such remedial action may include, but is not limited to, the items listed below in Section 7.

## **7. Disciplinary Action**

If SIRS determines that an individual has engaged in prohibited conduct, SIRS shall determine the appropriate action to be taken, which may include, but is not limited to:

- private reprimand;
- removal from the Meeting and/or membership in the society without warning or monetary refund;
- implementation of conditions for attendance at future SIRS events;
- restriction from participating in any future SIRS events or
- expulsion from SIRS.

SIRS may, but is not required to, report any incident to proper authorities, including but not limited to law enforcement. SIRS will do so if, in its sole discretion, such reporting is advisable or necessary. If SIRS determines that an individual has engaged in prohibited conduct at a SIRS meeting, and such individual is a SIRS member, SIRS may take disciplinary measures consistent with Article XI of the SIRS Bylaws. Nothing in this policy shall restrict or discourage any individual who experiences or is the target of conduct prohibited by this policy from reporting such conduct to the authorities, to the extent he or she deems such a report advisable or necessary.

## **8. Retaliation Is Not Tolerated**

Retaliation for complaints of inappropriate conduct or harassment are also considered harassment and will not be tolerated. Retaliatory behavior in connection with SIRS events or other activities will be investigated in a similar manner to initial complaints.