

IOWA DEMOCRATIC PARTY
STATE CENTRAL COMMITTEE CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY
Adopted by the Iowa Democratic Party State Central Committee May 7, 2022

I. Discrimination and Harassment

A. Definitions

1. Protected Characteristic. Protected Characteristic is an individual's race, color, religion, gender, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation), parental status, family medical status or genetic information, military service, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, height, weight, creed, economic status or disability or any other basis protected by law. The IDP intends to be as inclusive as possible and intends to include more Protected Characteristics than defined by legally protected classes.

2. Discrimination. Discrimination is making any decision, judgment, statement or action based on another individual's or group characteristic(s).

3. Harassment. Harassment consists of unwelcome verbal, visual or physical conduct. It may include, but is not limited to, actions such as the use of epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, jokes, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to sex, race, age, disability or other protected categories. Harassment also may include written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual or group, whether that material is sent by email, placed on walls, bulletin boards, computer screens or other devices, or elsewhere on the premises of an activity, event or meeting.

4. Sexual Harassment. Sexual harassment can involve unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It can involve conduct by an individual of any gender identity toward an individual of any gender identity.

5. Hostile Environment. Hostile environment occurs when discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. This includes, for example, displaying sexually suggestive material, unwelcome flirtation or advances, requests for sexual favors, or any other offensive words or actions of a sexual nature.

6. SCC. The State Central Committee is the Iowa Democratic Party's governing body.

B. Policies

1. Commitment. The IDP is firmly committed to providing an environment

free from discrimination, harassment, or intimidation on the basis of an individual's Protected Characteristics. This commitment extends to making reasonable accommodations that enable qualified disabled individuals to perform the essential functions of their duties.

2. SCC Member Action. All SCC Members are expected to behave in a way that does not negatively impact other SCC members, employees, officers, staff, volunteers, people who interact with the IDP in a professional or volunteer capacity, or the IDP's reputation. All SCC Members are expected to be treated and to treat each other fairly and with respect. The IDP will not tolerate any SCC Members acting in a way that may create a hostile, offensive, discriminatory, intimidating or demeaning environment on the basis of an individual's Protected Characteristic. SCC Members will participate in a code of conduct and harassment training during the beginning of their term on the SCC.

3. SCC Decisions. The IDP will not tolerate any individual involved with the operations of the IDP making a committee or assignment of duties decision based on an individual's Protected Characteristic. This commitment covers all practices, including selection, assignment, discipline, termination, access to benefits, and training.

4. Safe Environment. SCC Members should promote a safe environment by:

- a. Respecting others' personal space, and avoiding non-consensual physical contact;
- b. Clearly indicating your discomfort with unwanted physical contact and/or improper language;
- c. Avoiding profane, racist, other prejudicial, exclusionary, abusive, or sexualized language;
- d. Immediately ceasing any behavior that is reasonably perceived as harassing; abusive or violent, and respecting others' feelings for what behavior qualifies as such; and
- e. Respecting others' property, and the property of the organization to which the member belongs.

5. Harassment. Harassment on the basis of a Protected Characteristic is unacceptable discrimination in violation of the IDP's goal and values. Insults, jokes, slurs, or other verbal or physical conduct or activity are unlawful if they create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; or if they unreasonably interfere with an individual's performance.

6. Effect not Intent. Personal behavior and language that are "acceptable" to one individual may be "offensive" to another. All SCC Members must recognize that the focus of this prohibition is on the effect of one's action, not the intent. Even an SCC Member who believes they are "just kidding around" or

“didn’t mean any harm” may act in ways that have the effect of intimidating or demeaning another SCC member, employee, officer, staff, volunteer, consultant, or people who interact with the IDP, and thereby violating this policy.

7. Prohibited Conduct. Examples of prohibited conduct include, but are not limited to:

- a. Discriminatory or harassing speech or actions, including cyberbullying or cyber-harassment;
- b. Making derogatory or belittling statements about an individual or group;
- c. Perpetuating stereotypes about an individual or group;
- d. Harmful, demeaning or offensive verbal or written comments or images related to an individual or group;
- e. Inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces;
- f. Oral or written comments, jokes, teasing and/or other communication of a sexual nature;
- g. Bullying or stalking;
- h. Harassing photography or recording;
- i. Graphic comments about an individual’s body;
- j. The use of sexually degrading words to describe an individual;
- k. Sexual flirtation, advances and /or propositions;
- l. Implying or requesting a quid pro quo;
- m. Physical assault (including grabbing, patting, pinching, groping, brushing against another individual’s body or blocking normal movement);
- n. Real or implied threat of physical harm; and
- o. Creating a hostile work environment.

II. Unacceptable Actions

A. **Duties.** SCC Members have a duty to represent the IDP with integrity, honesty, and in the IDP’s best interest. Failure to do so is against the duties of a board member.

B. **Examples.** The following actions are unacceptable and may result in appropriate disciplinary action. The misconduct identified below is merely illustrative; it is not intended to be a complete list of misconduct, it is not intended to be listed in order of severity of the conduct, and it does not alter the SCC’s policy:

1. Removing IDP property, records, or documents without proper authorization; releasing sensitive or confidential information without proper authorization; allowing access to such information by unauthorized personnel; or using such information or property for personal reasons;
2. Unauthorized possession, willful destruction or abuse of IDP property or the property of any individual on the premises;

3. Entering a restricted area or allowing another individual to enter a restricted area without proper authorization;
4. Use of abusive, threatening or obscene language; using language that adversely affects morale, production, or maintenance of discipline;
5. Engaging in any type of harassment;
6. Possession of weapons on the premises;
7. Illegal or disorderly conduct of any kind such as fighting, wrestling, roughhousing, or any other activity hazardous to life, limb, or property;
8. Failure to follow the IDP rules, state laws, and federal statutes concerning the acceptance of gifts, and the reporting of financial interest, employment or conflicts of interest;
9. Failure to observe general safety procedures, neglect for the safety of others, or the commission of unsafe acts;
10. Unauthorized communications with members of the press, written statements, personal appearances, testimony, articles or comments on any aspect of the SCC Member's official responsibility as a member of the IDP governing board or relating to confidential matters of the IDP without direct clearance from the Chair; or
11. Any other action that is deemed to be inconsistent with the standards and expectations of a leader of the IDP or to show a disregard for the IDP's interests or the SCC Member's duties and obligations to the IDP as a member of the governing body.

II. Reporting, Investigation and Discipline

A. Reporting

1. Goals. It is the intention of the IDP to stop a violation of this policy before it rises to the level of a violation of law. As part of this effort, any SCC Member who believes that they have been subjected to or have witnessed actions that violate this policy shall promptly make a report to the IDP Chair, Executive Director, or Chair of the Operations Committee in order to immediately investigate and take corrective action where appropriate. The SCC Member should not wait until the actions become severe or pervasive but shall report such activity at the earliest possible point. If you feel comfortable doing so, you should respond to the conduct in a way that demonstrates that the conduct is unwelcome. However, you are not required to complain directly to the offending individual.

2. Reporting. Complaints regarding an SCC members behavior that violates this policy may be made by a SCC member, employee, officer, staff, volunteer, consultant, or people who interact with the IDP. The report should be sent to the Chair and Executive Director of the Party at codeofconduct@iowademocrats.org. If an individual does not feel they can report to the Chair and Executive Director, they may send their complaint to the

Chair of the Operations Committee.

3. Details of Report. When reporting a complaint, it is requested that the individual reporting try to provide a description of the alleged discrimination, harassment, or other violation in as much detail as possible, including a description of what occurred and the date(s), time(s), and place(s) of the incident(s). The complaint should also provide the names of individuals who are believed to have information relevant to the investigation.

4. Retaliation. The IDP strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports an incident in violation of this policy or anyone who participates or aids in an investigation of a complaint.

B. Investigation

1. Investigation. Upon receipt of a complaint, the IDP will conduct a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation. Complaints will be investigated by the Executive Director or their designee. If the Chair or the Executive Director is named in the complaint, the Operation Committee Chair or their designee will conduct the investigation. The results of the investigation will be provided to the Operations Committee for further decisions and action. The IDP will protect the confidentiality of harassment allegations to the extent possible. The management of an effective investigation requires sharing information with those who have a “need to know.” Any documents created or obtained concerning the harassment investigation will be treated with the same degree of confidentiality. If an individual is accused of violating this policy, they shall not play any role in administering or making decisions under this procedure.

2. Timeframe. The IDP shall investigate matters in a timely fashion upon becoming aware of an incident and attempt to complete the investigation within seven business days. This timeline begins when the Chair, Executive Director or Operations Committee Chair has knowledge. In cases where the IDP needs a longer period to conduct a proper investigation, the timeline may be extended by mutual consent.

3. Process.

a. At least two of the following: Executive Director, Chair and Chair of the Operations Committee, or a designee, and the aggrieved individual shall meet and attempt to resolve the grievance within seven calendar days of receipt of the written grievance. The Executive Director or their designee will give the aggrieved individual a written response within 14 calendar days of the meeting and provide the written response to the Operations Committee.

b. Any individual who is dissatisfied with or objects to a decision in regard to the investigation and written response, may request a hearing

before the Operations Subcommittee on Grievances. The Operations Subcommittee on Grievances will consist of the Chair of the Operations Committee, the Treasurer and an individual appointed by the IDP Chair. The Chair of the IDP will also appoint a Chairperson for this Subcommittee. If there is a conflict of one of the members for the Operations Subcommittee on Grievances, the appointments to the Subcommittee will be made by the Chair and if they are conflicted out, appointments will be made by the First Vice Chair.

c. A request for hearing shall be sent by electronic mail to the Chair of the Operations Subcommittee on Grievances with a copy to the Executive Director. The request for hearing shall be sent within fourteen days of any final decision by the Executive Director. The Chair of the Operations Subcommittee on Grievances shall forward copies of the request for hearing to other members as soon as practicable and shall convene a meeting of the Committee.

d. The decision whether to hold a hearing or dismiss the request is within the sole discretion of the Subcommittee on Grievances. The Subcommittee shall send a notice of any action to the aggrieved individual and the Executive Director by electronic mail. If the Operations Subcommittee on Grievances grants a request for a hearing, the Executive Director shall provide all written correspondence, the complaint, and all information discovered during the investigation to the Subcommittee. The Operations Subcommittee on Grievances shall set a date for a hearing as soon as is practicable. No hearing, however, shall be held 30 days prior to a general election. The hearing may be in person, via video conference or telephonic. If the Chair is unable to attend, another member of the Subcommittee may be appointed by a majority of the Subcommittee to serve as Chair for the purposes of the hearing.

e. The hearing may be informal. Ordinarily, the hearing may open with an oral statement from the aggrieved individual, followed by an oral statement by the individual whom conducted the investigation. Each party may provide relevant documents to the Subcommittee on Grievances at the close of their respective presentations with a brief explanation of the relevance of each document. At the conclusion of the presentations, members of the Subcommittee may ask questions. The Subcommittee may, in its discretion, decide whether to entertain additional statements from other individuals. The Subcommittee may also, in its discretion, decide to allow the aggrieved individual to have an attorney or legal representative accompany the aggrieved individual to the hearing. The Chair has the power to issue rulings regarding procedure or process at the hearing, subject to being overruled by two affirmative votes.

f. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Operations Subcommittee on

Grievances will convene in private to consider the matter. The Subcommittee shall make its decision within a reasonable time, notifying the Executive Director, the Chair of the Democratic Party, and the aggrieved individual in writing of its decision. The decision of the Operations Committee is binding on all parties.

C. Disciplinary Action

1. Discipline. While it is anticipated that most problems will be resolved through the cooperation of SCC members, there are times when inappropriate conduct or inadequate performance may result in disciplinary action. The Operations Committee shall provide at least one warning notice prior to recommending removal from the SCC, except for actions identified below as not requiring a warning.

2. Corrective Action. SCC Members who violate any aspect of this policy, including the prohibition against retaliation, will face appropriate discipline, up to and including removal from the SCC.

3. No Warnings. No warning notice need be given to an SCC member before the Operations Committee recommends removal from the SCC for dishonesty, sexual harassment, harassment, discrimination, physical altercations, or for intentionally misleading the IDP.

4. Authority. The Operations Committee has sole discretion as to the appropriate disciplinary action of an SCC Member.