

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PARASITOLOGISTS DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Statement of Policy

In accordance with the bylaws of the American Society of Parasitologists (ASP), the Society will afford an environment free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. The ASP will not tolerate actions, statements, or contacts that discourage the free expression and exchange of scientific ideas. This includes unequal treatment or harassment of any person based on their age, gender, gender identity or expression, marital status, sexual orientation, race, color, national or ethnic origin, religious identifications, beliefs or practices, disabilities, veteran status, or any other reasons or expressions that are unrelated to their scientific merit. Harassment, sexual or otherwise, shall be considered as a form of misconduct and violators will be subject to disciplinary actions, including expulsion from a society function or from the society itself.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment refers to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that is not welcome, is personally offensive, debilitates morale, and therefore, interferes with a collegial atmosphere. The following are examples of behavior that, when unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment: sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions; verbal comments or physical actions of a sexual nature; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; a display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; sexually explicit jokes; unnecessary touching. What is perceived as acceptable to one person may be unwelcome by another. Those who have positions of authority or higher rank should be aware that others may be reluctant to outwardly express objections or discomfort regarding unwelcome behavior or language.

Other Types of Harassment

Remarks and behaviors based on other protected characteristics are also unacceptable to the Society. These include stereotyping, slurs, derogatory jokes or statements, and any hostile or intimidating acts.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all attendees and participants at ASP meetings and functions, including social functions, tours, or off-site activities during the course of meetings and functions, and include all members, guests, staff, contractors, and exhibitors.

Reporting an Incident

If any individual covered by this policy believes that they have experienced or witnessed harassment or bullying they should contact the society's designated individual [whose name will be posted in meeting programs, and the society website with names and emails included]. No complainant will be required to discuss any incident with a respondent, no respondent will be required to discuss any incident with a complainant. All individuals (complainant or respondent) may bring an accompanying individual of their choice with them for support at any point when they discuss the matter with the society's designated individual, or during any course of an ensuing investigation. Because allegations of discrimination, harassment and misconduct are sensitive matters with the potential to negatively impact the reputation of individuals, institutions, and/or our Society, confidentiality and discretion throughout the process is expected from all parties involved and is assured from the ASP's designated individual and all involved in the investigation.

Regardless, a complainant may speak in confidence with the society's designated individual without involving an official report, an investigation or a respondent. All complaints that are received will be treated seriously, and will be addressed promptly if that is the wish of a complainant. Any incidents of sexual assault should be immediately reported to the police. Note that many local and regional governments also consider a variety of behaviors to be reportable crimes regardless of the wishes of the complainant, respondent or of the society.

Investigation

Following the official report of an incident, the Society's designated individual, in consultation with ASP Council, will name an impartial investigator, usually an elected officer or Council member, and the respondent will be promptly notified. No one who has a conflict of interest with respect to the complainant or respondent will serve in this role. A complainant will be asked to file a formal written complaint, the respondent will be notified immediately and prior to any discovery procedures. A respondent will be invited to respond to the complaint and allowed to bring evidence. The Council of the society reserves the right to interview other individuals as witnesses at its own discretion. The investigator is allowed to seek counsel if they are in doubt as to how to proceed. When the investigation is complete, the findings will be communicated to the elected officers, as well as both to the complainant and respondent. Those officers without a conflict of interest will decide on appropriate disciplinary actions.

Retaliation

The Society will not tolerate any form of retaliation against individuals who report an incident, against those who are subject to a complaint, nor against those who participate in an investigation. Retaliation will be considered a form of discrimination in and of itself and offenders will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including ejection from the society.

Disciplinary Action

If an individual harasses, retaliates, or knowingly makes a false claim, they will be subject to disciplinary action. These actions might range from a verbal warning to a request to leave the meeting or function without refund of fees and a reporting of the incident to the person's employer. Should repeated complaints, patterns of inappropriate behavior, or other events emerge, the society's by-laws permit its Council to exclude and eject members through a process that has no appeal.

Appeal & Questions

Should any person be dissatisfied with the result of an investigation or disciplinary action, they may appeal to the President of the Society, or to the highest ranking officer without a conflict of interest. Questions concerning the policy can be directed to an ASP officer or the ASP designated individual.