Amnesty International USA

Code of Conduct (6/13/20)

# Introduction

Amnesty International USA (“AIUSA”) is the United States section of the Amnesty International movement, the largest human rights organization in the world. AIUSA has adopted this Code of Conduct (the “Code”) to protect the safety, integrity and reputation of AIUSA and its officers, directors, employees, interns, volunteers and volunteer leaders, members and all other participants in the human rights efforts undertaken by or in the name of AIUSA.

The Code applies to (a) all persons, including AIUSA’s officers, directors, employees, interns, volunteer leaders and other members, who undertake and participate in any human rights activities in the name of AIUSA and (b) any attendees of any national, regional or other in person meeting involving AIUSA activities or any related social gathering outside any such meeting (all such individuals are hereinafter referred to as a “Party” or “Parties”). Any person who meets the definition of a Party as defined in this Code will be deemed to have agreed to abide by this Code by assuming any of the roles outlined in subparagraph (a) or by registering and participating in any meeting outlined in subparagraph (b).

# Statement of Values

All Parties are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that embodies integrity and respect at all times. The personal conduct of all Parties shall be above reproach in regard to any activity that may reflect upon AIUSA. All Parties are, in particular, required at all times to conduct themselves consistent with core human rights principles including non-discrimination, accessibility, participation and inclusion, respect for diversity and equity between and among all individuals. Parties should strive to demonstrate the highest standard of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, collaboration, inclusion and fortitude in all activities and efforts related to the mission of AIUSA in order to inspire confidence and trust in such activities and efforts.

# Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards

General Overview

The following list sets out expected standards of conduct for all Parties. All Parties shall:

* 1. Hold paramount and protect as they are reasonably able the safety, health, integrity and welfare of all persons involved in AIUSA activities.
  2. Act in such a manner as to uphold and enhance personal and professional respect, integrity and the dignity of AIUSA consistent with its mission in advancing and protecting all human rights.
  3. Consistent with the AIUSA values of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (“IDEA”), treat with respect, fairness and impartiality all persons, without regard to or discrimination on the basis of characteristics such as race, ethnicity, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, marital status, wealth, income, class, disability, veteran status, citizenship status, education, political viewpoints, genetic information, sexual orientation, physical appearance or affect, or gender identity or expression.
  4. Respect and protect privileged and/or confidential information to which they have access in the course of their duties.

1. Harassment and Discrimination

AIUSA will not tolerate harassment or discrimination against any person on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender, wealth, income, class, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, education, political viewpoints, genetic information or citizenship status or any other characteristic protected by law. Harassment and other forms of discrimination will not be tolerated at any AIUSA-related events, regardless of whether such conduct is illegal under local law in the jurisdiction in which the conduct occurs. Any person who is subject to harassment or discrimination, or witnesses such behavior, should report it using the AIUSA Ethics Complaint Form which is part of this Code of Conduct.

“Harassment” for purposes of the Code of Conduct includes any physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct toward another person that creates an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment, as viewed from the perspective of a reasonable person with the same characteristics as that other person or otherwise. An aggregation of less serious incidents can constitute harassment, even if one of the incidents considered on its own might not be harassment. Harassment can be physical, spoken or written, and in-person or through other means, such as email or social media. Harassment could be: verbal (for example, epithets, derogatory statements, slurs, derogatory comments, or jokes); physical (for example, assault or inappropriate or nonconsensual physical contact); visual (for example, displaying derogatory posters, cartoons, drawings, or making derogatory gestures); or online or by email (for example, derogatory statements or sexually suggestive social media postings).

In particular, all Parties are prohibited from engaging in sexual harassment. Sexual harassment for purposes of the Code of Conduct means any harassment based on a person’s sex, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity or expression. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature or which is directed at an individual because of that individual’s sex. Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle or not so subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender, gender identity or orientation. Sexual harassment can be physical and/or psychological in nature and also includes harassment that is not sexual in nature (for example, offensive remarks about an individual’s sex, sexual orientation, physical appearance or affect, gender or gender identity) as well as sexual solicitation, physical advances, or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature.

**AIUSA specifically will not tolerate any Parties engaging in any of the following in connection with AIUSA-related employment, volunteering or events:**

1. Engaging in unwelcome sexually suggestive physical contact or touching;
2. Physical assault of a sexual nature or indecent exposure;
3. Making unwelcome sexual or romantic advances toward any person, including but not limited to propositions, sexual flirtations, subtle pressure or requests for sexual activities, and including where submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment; is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or where such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, abusive or offensive environment;
4. Sexually explicit or offensive epithets or jokes, whether written or oral;
5. Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, including, but not limited to: inappropriate comments about a Party’s physical appearance of a sexually-oriented nature, or inappropriate use of sexually explicit language in discussions or other forms of communication, including email, social media or other online forums;
6. Displaying, storing, recording, reproducing, forwarding, transmitting or arranging to receive pornographic, sexually oriented or sexually suggestive images, objects, sound recordings, text, publications or materials at AIUSA-related events, or using AIUSA equipment, facilities or services, including but not limited to AIUSA’s various internet and social media platforms, such as its website, Facebook page, and twitter account.
7. Retaliation

No person shall engage in acts of retaliation, or threats of retaliation, against any individual who, in good faith, reports any suspected discrimination, harassment or any other violation of this Code. AIUSA will not tolerate any kind of any kind of reprisal, intimidation or retaliation for reporting in good faith any suspected violation(s) of this Code; pursuing any complaint or claim under this Code; cooperating in any related investigations; or otherwise opposing conduct in violation of this Code. Any person who becomes aware of any instance or threat of retaliation in violation of this Code should report the incident using the AIUSA Ethics Complaint Form.

1. False or Frivolous Complaints

Claims of false or frivolous complaints asserted under the Code of Conduct may themselves be the subject of a complaint under the Code of Conduct and, if found, following an investigation by the Ethics Committee, to be lacking any good faith basis, may be the subject of appropriate disciplinary action.

1. Discipline

Any Party who is found, as a result of an investigation, to have violated this Code will be subject to disciplinary action, including removal from AIUSA position(s), suspension or cancellation of membership or disqualification from participation in AIUSA-related activities. In addition, where there is a good faith basis for believing that the action under investigation violates any applicable federal, state or local law, statute or regulation, AIUSA will promptly refer the matter at issue to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

1. Filing a Complaint

The procedure for filing a complaint to address a violation of this Code of Conduct applies to all Parties except: (a) if a Complaint involves Parties to any collective bargaining agreement between AIUSA and any union or other group of employees, any applicable provision of that agreement which provides for addressing any particular complaint involving such employee will control over any conflicting provision of the AIUSA Complaint Procedure; and/or (b) if any federal, state or local law, statute or regulation applies to disposition of any particular complaint, it will control over any conflicting provision of the AIUSA Complaint Procedure.

Any person who is subject to behavior they believe violates this Code, has witnessed such behavior or otherwise has reason to believe that an individual has violated this Code should promptly complete the [AIUSA Ethics Complaint Form](https://www.amnestyusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Ethics-Complaint-Form.docx) (Appendix A) and either (a) email the completed form to the Chair of the AIUSA Ethics Committee at [ethics@aiusa.org](mailto:ethics@aiusa.org) or (b) if preserving anonymity is a concern, mail the completed form to the Chair of the Ethics Committee addressed to the New York City office of AIUSA.

**APPENDIX A - Ethics Complaint Form**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Required Contact Information** | | | | | |
| Name (First / Last) |  | Phone/Cell # |  | | |
| Amnesty role or affiliation (e.g., director, officer, employee, intern or fellow, local group, country specialist, member at large etc.) |  | | | | |
| Email Address |  | | | | |
| Mailing Address |  | | | | |
| City |  | State |  | Zip Code |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Complaint Information** | |
| Date(s) of incident |  |
| Relevant provision in AIUSA Code of Conduct (if known) |  |
| Subject(s) of Complaint |  |
| Witness(es), if any |  |
| Co-Complainant(s), if any |  |
| Place(s) incident occurred |  |
| Please describe in detail the nature of your complaint (attach additional sheets if necessary) |  |
| Actions, if any, previously taken to address the complaint, including any concerns regarding retaliation relating to the underlying complaint |  |
| Desired outcome of this complaint process. |  |
| Are you aware of any previous/similar incidents concerning the subject(s) of this complaint? |  |
| Supporting documentation (please list here and attach to this form). |  |
| **Signature** |  |
| **Date** |  |

When you have completed this form, please submit it along with any relevant supporting documentation to the AIUSA Ethics Committee Chair via email at [*ethics@amnestyusa.org*](mailto:ethics@amnestyusa.org)or, if preserving anonymity is a concern, mail the completed form to the Chair of the Ethics Committee addressed to the New York City office of AIUSA.However, in those instances where the Ethics Committee Chair is the subject of the complaint, the submission should be directed to the Vice Chair of the Ethics Committee or any other member of the Ethics Committee not identified as a subject of the complaint.