

Code Of Conduct Policy

Secular Humanists Of Rochester

A Chartered Chapter Of
The American Humanists Association



I'm not concerned with your liking or disliking me...
All I ask is that you respect me as a human being.

—Jackie Robinson

Code Of Conduct Policy

At the Secular Humanists of Rochester (SHOR), we believe it's essential to provide all members and guests with a respectful and safe environment. As a result, we do not tolerate harassment or any mistreatment of any person at any or our community or official events, including unlawful harassment based on the following protected categories:

- Race, color, ethnic or national origin;
- Age;
- Religion or religious creed (or belief, where applicable);
- Sex, including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical conditions;
- Sexual orientation;
- Gender, gender identity, gender expression, transgender status, or sexual stereotypes;
- Nationality, immigration status, citizenship, or ancestry;
- Marital status;
- Protected military or veteran status;
- Physical or mental disability, medical condition, genetic information or characteristics (or those of a family member);
- Political views or activity;
- Status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking; or
- Any other basis prohibited under federal, state, or local law.

Harassment under this Harassment Policy (Policy) is behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or maliciously offensive environment for any member or guest. Engaging in such conduct is a violation of this Policy.

If, by a vote of the Board of SHOR, it is determined that a member or guest's conduct has violated this Policy, we will take steps to ensure the conduct is effectively addressed, and any member or guest found to have engaged in harassing conduct may be subject to a corrective action, up to and including cancellation of membership, a request that they not return to SHOR's gatherings, activities and events, and reporting to law enforcement.

When determining whether conduct violates this Policy, we consider whether a reasonable person could conclude that the conduct created an intimidating, hostile, degrading, or demeaning environment.

This Policy applies to everyone who attends any of SHOR's events or activities.

Everyone—including guests, members, speakers, contractors, and board members—is responsible for following and upholding this Policy.

All SHOR Board Members are required to attend a mandatory sexual harassment training, which includes a comprehensive review of our Policy.

Section-1 Examples of Harassment.

Harassment can range from extreme forms such as violence, threats, or physical touching to less obvious actions like ridiculing, teasing, or repeatedly bothering others.

For example, harassment may include the following types of conduct:

- derogatory or insensitive jokes, pranks, or comments;
- slurs or epithets;
- unwelcome sexual advances or invitations;
- non-verbal behavior such as staring, leering, or gestures;
- ridiculing or demeaning comments;
- innuendos or veiled threats;
- intentionally excluding someone from normal conversations and making them feel unwelcome;
- displaying or sharing offensive images such as posters, videos, photos, cartoons, screensavers, emails, or drawings that are derogatory or sexual outside of an appropriate context;
- offensive comments about appearance, or other personal or physical characteristics, such as sexually charged comments or comments on someone’s physical disability;
- unnecessary or unwanted bodily contact such as groping or massaging, blocking normal movement, or physically interfering with the activities of another individual;
- threats or demands that a person submit to sexual requests as a condition of continued membership or participation with the community or to avoid some other loss and offers of something of value in return for sexual favors.

This list of examples is not exhaustive, and there may be other behaviors that constitute unacceptable harassment under the Policy.

“I was joking” or “I didn’t mean it that way” are not defenses to allegations of harassment. Nor is being under the influence of alcohol or other substances.

This Policy applies to conduct at all SHOR-related social events.

Section-2 Sexual Harassment.

Sexual harassment, which is harassment specifically based on sex, can take two forms:

1. Hostile Environment:

Conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a member or guest's ability to be engaged with the SHOR community, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or contextually inappropriate offensive environment;

2. Quid Pro Quo Harassment:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a member or guest's ability to be a part of the SHOR community, or when submission to or rejection of such conduct by an member or guest is used as the basis for decisions affecting that member or guest (e.g. Offering a position on a committee, a leadership role, or speaking opportunity in exchange for a date).

Sexual harassment can happen regardless of the individual's gender, gender identity, or gender expression and can, for example, occur between same-sex individuals as well as between opposite-sex individuals, and does not require that the harassing conduct be motivated by sexual desire.

Section-3 Bullying.

SHOR does not tolerate abusive conduct, bullying or other intimidating or aggressive behavior among members or guests or others covered by this Policy, whether or not it is based on a protected category. If a member or guest is found to be mistreating others, the Board of SHOR will take appropriate action to stop the behavior. If you would like to report behavior that you believe is bullying, you may use the same reporting procedures outlined below.

Section-4 Reporting Procedures.

We want to do all we can to ensure that we have a safe and friendly community.

Members or guests at SHOR are asked to promptly report any violation or suspected violation of this Policy. Any member or guest who believes that they have been harassed, or have witnessed or heard about a potential violation of this Policy, should report the conduct so that the Board of SHOR can take steps to remedy any violations of the Policy.

If you suspect harassment, discrimination, or retaliation occurred, you are to promptly provide a written or oral complaint to an SHOR Board Member. When possible, a complaint should include details of the incident or incidents, names of individuals involved, and names of any

witnesses. As soon as reasonably possible, SHOR will investigate any allegations and take appropriate remedial action.

We will keep all complaints confidential to the extent possible while still fulfilling our obligation to investigate and end any harassing conduct.

Section-5 Investigation Process.

Upon learning of conduct requiring further review, the Board of Directors will conduct a thorough investigation into the matter. If the complaint is made against a Board Member, the conduct will be investigated outside of normal business without the knowledge of the accused board member.

All persons to whom a complaint is made or who learn of a complaint as part of an SHOR investigation must do everything reasonably possible to keep the complaint confidential in order to preserve the integrity of the investigation while it is ongoing, to ensure fairness to all involved, and to protect the privacy of member or guests who have brought complaints or are accused of misconduct.

Members or guests are asked to cooperate and provide truthful information in an investigation.

Nothing in this Policy is to be construed as a guarantee of absolute confidentiality or intended to curtail member or guest rights under the law to discuss harassment.

Disclosure of information learned through the complaint process and the investigation will be limited to disclosures that are necessary for SHOR to take prompt action to end harassment or as required by law.

Section-6 Retaliation Prohibited.

We recognize that members or guests may find it difficult to raise complaints about harassment, so we have a policy meant to encourage members or guests to come forward with their concerns without fear of retaliation. It is against SHOR policy for any members or guests to retaliate against another for their participation in the complaint process.

Retaliation is when someone penalizes another person for any of the following:

- Reporting what they believe in good faith to be harassment and/or a violation of this Policy;
- Expressing an intent to report what they believe in good faith to be harassment and/or a violation of this Policy;
- Assisting another member or guest in an effort to report harassment and/or a violation of this Policy;

- Participating in any investigation under this Policy. Retaliating against a member or guest who made a complaint or otherwise participates in the investigation process is grounds for cancellation of membership and a request that the perpetrator of the retaliatory behavior not return to our gatherings, activities or events.

If you have questions about this Policy, please contact a SHOR officer.

Revisions to this document.

Date	Changes made
2024.09.01	Initial publication