

Maryland Democratic Party CODE OF CONDUCT

OVERVIEW

The Maryland Democratic State Central Committee (DSCC) is committed to providing a welcoming, respectful, safe, supportive, and harassment-free environment for members, employees, and all others associated with the DSCC. The DSCC expects all leaders, members, employees, and others associated with the DSCC to act professionally and with integrity, and to be respectful of the personal rights and dignities of all individuals involved with the party in order to create a productive, inclusive, and equitable environment for all. Furthermore, all DSCC members are expected to abide by the Maryland Democratic Party state by-laws, the Charter, By-laws, and regulations of the Democratic National Committee, abide by their oaths of office, and respect confidentiality expectations.

All individuals should feel welcome and safe within the DSCC, regardless of their sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, familial status, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, religion, creed, age, physical or mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, military or veteran status, body size, domestic violence victim status, or any other legally protected classifications.

The DSCC's standards are applicable at all times. This includes, but is not limited to all in-person and virtual events sponsored and hosted by, or held in collaboration with the DSCC, local Democratic Central Committees, and all social media platforms, related calls, texts, and emails relating to the Maryland Democratic Party.

GUIDELINES

The DSCC will not tolerate harassment in any form. For the purposes of the Maryland Democratic Party, "Harassment" is considered to be, any form of unwelcome conduct based on race, color, religion or lack thereof, sex (including sexual orientation, gender identity, or familial status), national origin, age, disability, or genetic information (including family medical history). Harassment is when the conduct is severe enough that a reasonable person would consider it to be intimidating, hostile, or abusive:

DSCC Members should not publish/distribute photos, videos, and audio of others if they object or ask to be excluded and immediately ceasing any behavior that is reasonably perceived as harassing, abusive or violent, and respecting others' feelings for what behavior qualifies as such.

The DSCC prohibits the creation of a hostile environment including conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile or otherwise offensive environment, including but not limited to: unwelcome sexual advances, flirtation, teasing, sexually suggestive or obscene letters, invitations, notes, emails, voicemails or gifts; sex, gender or sexual orientation-related

comments, slurs, jokes, remarks or epithets; leering, obscene or vulgar gestures or making sexual gestures; displaying or distributing sexually suggestive or derogatory objects, pictures, cartoons, or posters or any such items; impeding or blocking movement, unwelcome touching or assaulting others; any abusive yelling or screaming, other verbal threats, or disrespectful language (in any form) directed at a person; any sexual advances that are unwelcome as well as reprisals or threats after a negative response to sexual advances; and conductor comments consistently targeted at one gender, even if the content is not sexual.

The examples above are just that—examples. In general, any conduct listed above or that is based on the protected classifications listed above that could interfere with an individual's participation in the DSCC or could create an offensive environment will be considered harassment in violation of this code of conduct. This is the case even if the offending individual did not intentionally mean to be offensive. It is essential that sensitivity to the feelings of others be reflected in all that the DSCC represents.

Throughout this process, the DSCC at every level shall work to ensure the confidentiality of the complaint and the privacy of all individuals who are party to the complaint.

This code of conduct is not for criminal activity. For those types of allegations, please report them to the appropriate law enforcement department.

Retaliation

Retaliation against any individual who makes a good faith complaint or provides any information about a violation of the code of conduct, including participation in an investigation, will not be tolerated. The DSCC takes very seriously its responsibility to provide all members with a welcoming, respectful, and safe environment. The DSCC urges any member who feels uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe to report violations of this code of conduct as soon as possible. Retaliation for reporting violations is prohibited and subject to the same reporting and investigation procedures as harassment claims.

Retaliation may include, but is not limited to, exclusion from meetings or committees, ostracism, disparagement, or other conduct that may limit engagement with the DSCC, or that would be reasonably likely to deter a DSCC member from reporting a violation or participating in an investigation.

PROCESS

Code of Conduct Ad-Hoc Committee

The Chair will create and appoint a ten-member Code of Conduct ad-hoc committee. These members will serve at the pleasure of the Chair. For each complaint received by the Chair, the Chair will select three members from this committee to review the complaint and determine whether it should be forwarded to the Credentials Committee. Members from the three-member panel cannot reside in the same jurisdiction as the person filing the complaint.

Each member of the panel shall be a member of the DSCC for at least 30 days prior to appointment. Care must be taken to ensure diverse and impartial representation.

How to File a Complaint

Any alleged breach of this code of conduct must be first addressed with the local Democratic Central Committee. Before filing a complaint, the complainant must take significant steps to have it addressed at the local level. If the issue is not addressed, then a complaint may be filed with the Chair of the Maryland Democratic Party.

The complaint shall be reported in writing to the Chair of the Maryland Democratic Party. This complaint may be presented in writing and delivered to MDP HQ (275 West St., suite 70, Annapolis, MD 21401) by mail or by email. Verbal reports, voicemails, text messages, or any other means of message delivery shall not be considered valid reporting methods.

Any report of improper behavior should include as much detail as is useful. Specific citations from this policy should be included to help determine the scope and focus of an investigation. The complaint must state what substantial steps were taken to resolve this issue on the local level with their Democratic Central Committee.

Review Process

Within five (5) business days after receiving a complaint, the Chair shall refer said complaint to a three-member panel.

Within ten (10) business days after receiving the complaint, the three-member panel shall meet to determine if the complaint meets the required threshold to be forwarded to the Credentials Committee or if additional information is required to meet that threshold.

The panel will be required to unanimously agree on a determination of the complaint. If the complaint is found to have met the threshold, then the three-member panel shall inform the Chair that the complaint should be forwarded to the Credentials Committee, which is responsible for determining the level of discipline for those who violate the policy outlined in this document.

If the three-member panel deems that the complaint has not met the threshold and does not recommend it be forwarded to the Credentials Committee, then the complainant will have a final opportunity to request reconsideration by amending the complaint within ten (10) business days. After receiving the amended complaint, the three-member panel will have five (5) business days to reconsider the complaint. If, after reviewing the amended complaint, the three-member panel still does not deem it to have met the threshold, the complaint will be rejected without further opportunity to appeal.