

THE SOCIETY OF BLACK ACADEMIC SURGEONS CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

A. Purpose

It is the intent of the Society of Black Academic Surgeons (hereinafter referred to as the “SBAS”) to strive for the highest professional and ethical conduct from all SBAS members and officers. Thus, to fulfill the mission and goals of the SBAS, the SBAS leadership is committed to providing a safe and productive environment for all SBAS members and officers, that is free of harassment (including sexual) and/or other inappropriate behavior, each defined below. All SBAS members and officers are expected to treat others with respect, and comply at all times with the SBAS’ Code of Conduct Policy.

B. Policy Statement

The SBAS strictly prohibits any form of harassment, sexual or otherwise, as well as other inappropriate conduct at its meetings, courses and sponsored events.

C. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all SBAS members, officers, attendees, speakers, faculty, staff, volunteers and/or guests at all SBAS meetings, whether in person or virtual, and other SBAS sponsored events such as resident and practitioner courses. This policy shall also apply to all ancillary social activities held in conjunction with SBAS meetings and/or courses that are controlled or sponsored by SBAS.

D. Definitions

The following definitions shall be applicable to this policy:

1. **Harassment** - Harassment is any behavior by an individual or group that contributes to a hostile, intimidating, and/or unwelcome environment. Harassment includes speech or behavior that a reasonable person would find unwelcome or offensive, whether it is based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, physical appearance, disability, military or veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Conduct that constitutes harassment also includes: epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; demeaning jokes; and display or circulation of written or graphic material that demeans or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group.
2. **Sexual Harassment** – Sexual harassment refers to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical actions of a sexual nature. The following examples may constitute sexual harassment if unwelcome: sexual flirtations, advances or propositions; unnecessary touching; verbal comments or physical actions of a sexual nature; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; display of sexually suggestive objects or images including material sent electronically; and sexually explicit jokes.
3. **Other Inappropriate Conduct:** Inappropriate conduct is also covered and is a separate, broader category of misconduct that may not meet the definition of harassment listed above. This type of conduct, though inappropriate and covered under this policy, may not constitute harassment under the law. Inappropriate conduct includes any comments or conduct that disparages or demonstrates hostility or aversion towards any person that could reasonably be perceived as disruptive, disrespectful, offensive, or inappropriate in the workplace. These may also be referred to as microaggressions, as defined above. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Actions or behaviors inconsistent with SBAS’ mission and/or goals, or that otherwise place and/or portray SBAS in negative light to the general public;
 - Rude comments, ridicule, disrespectful jokes, or insults;
 - Inappropriate yelling or emotional outbursts, using expletives, throwing objects, or banging/slammng doors;
 - Inappropriate touching or any form of physical intimidation or aggression (e.g., holding, restraining, impeding, or blocking movement, following, inappropriate contact or advances, bullying, or any other forms of inappropriate touching).

E. Procedure

1. **Acknowledgment.** All current SBAS members and officers will be required to acknowledge in writing that they have received, read, understand and agree to abide by this policy. This is a condition precedent to maintaining active membership in the SBAS. Additionally, any individual applying for membership in the SBAS will be required to sign and agree to abide by this policy.
2. **Reporting Perceived Harassment or Other Disruptive Behavior.** Any individual who believes that the individual has been subjected to harassment or other inappropriate conduct within the scope of this policy may report such conduct (a) in person to any current SBAS Officer; (b) through a telephone discussion with any current SBAS Officer; or (c) by email addressed to any current SBAS Officer. Separately, any complaint under this policy may be reported anonymously by the individual to an SBAS Officer. While complaints may be lodged anonymously, you are expected to cooperate in this process if asked to do so, and to provide truthful information. The SBAS will make every effort to respect the privacy of those involved in an investigation under this procedure. However, please understand that we may need to disclose certain information to complete our investigation or otherwise address the matters raised in the complaint.

All reports of perceived harassment or other inappropriate conduct should include pertinent information such as the name of the individual(s) involved, the date, time and location of the incident, a description of the prohibited conduct in issue, and whether there are any individuals who witnessed the conduct in issue.

3. **Initial Investigation of Complaints.** Any complaint made under this policy will be reviewed initially by the SBAS Officers. The SBAS Officers shall determine, based on its review of a complaint, if immediate action is required and will be responsible for further investigation and handling, which shall include interviewing all relevant parties, including the complainant, the respondent and any witnesses. However, the actual investigation and interviewing of all relevant parties will be conducted by a group of three (3) SBAS Officers. Upon conclusion of the investigation, the three SBAS Officers shall report their findings to the SBAS President or such other SBAS Officer as is designated by the SBAS President.
4. **Action by the SBAS President.** The SBAS President, upon review of the findings, reserves the right to take any action the SBAS President deems appropriate against a SBAS member, officer, attendee, speaker, faculty, staff, volunteer and/or guest who engages in conduct that violates this policy.
5. **Confidentiality.** To the fullest extent possible, the SBAS will keep complaints, investigations and any findings related thereto confidential.

CODE OF CONDUCT ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and understand the Society of Black Academic Surgeons' Code of Conduct Policy. I agree to comply with the Policy at all times while I am a member, officer, attendee, speaker, faculty, staff, volunteer and/or guest of the Society of Black Academic Surgeons. I understand that if I fail to comply with the Code of Conduct Policy, this will result in disciplinary action up to and including having my membership and/or attendance temporarily suspended and/or permanently revoked, at the sole discretion of the Society of Black Academic Surgeons.

Signature

Date

Name (Printed)