AAVP Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Policy

Purpose:
The American Association of Veterinary Parasitologists (AAVP) is committed to providing a respectful environment free from harassment, discrimination, bullying, retaliation, intimidation and disruptive behavior for all our members: faculty, staff, residents, students, speakers, guests, and volunteers. Such conduct will not be tolerated. Members of the AAVP and those associated with this organization are expected to act as role models for personal and professional ethical standards as set forth in the **AAVP Code of Professional Ethics** and enforced by the **AAVP Code of Conduct Policy**. Standards are also stated for the veterinary profession in the Veterinarian's Oath and the American Veterinary Medical Association's Principles of Veterinary Medical Ethics. Additionally, the behavioral standards set forth in this document will be communicated to parties engaged by AAVP at conferences or other events, with the expectation that they will adhere to these standards during the time of engagement.

Definitions:
Harassment/Discrimination includes, but is not limited to, verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of the individual's age, race, creed, color, disability, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, membership in the armed forces, or any other basis prohibited by law. Examples include:

- Physical contact such as touching, patting, or pinching, with an underlying sexual connotation;
- Unwelcome or insulting gestures, remarks, jokes, innuendoes, propositions, or taunting about a person's body, attire, sex or sexual orientation, religious affiliation, racial or ethnic origin, country of birth, citizenship or ancestry, age, disability, veteran status, or any other protected characteristics;
- Suggestive or offensive remarks, bragging about sexual prowess, or displaying pornographic, sexist, racial, or derogatory pictures or other offensive material;
- An implied or expressed threat of reprisal for refusal to comply with a sexually oriented request;
- Stalking, defined as follows: engaging in a course of conduct directed at a person that serves no legitimate purpose and seriously alarms, annoys, or intimidates that person.

Application:
This policy extends to all AAVP-related settings, including but not limited to:

- Annual Meeting, including scientific sessions, pre-and post-meeting workshops, tours, ancillary events and all social gatherings within and outside the hotel(s) and conference meeting rooms
- Executive Committee meetings (in person or virtual)
- Committee meetings (in person or virtual)
- Newsletters and Correspondence

Reporting:
Reporting of discrimination or harassment can be made to any AAVP Executive Committee member and may be in person, by telephone or in writing. The existence of this policy is not intended to, and does not, supersede any employer, educational institution, or other agency's policies, standards of conduct, and related reporting requirements applicable to a particular individual. The AAVP encourages individuals to first consider any such policies, standards of conduct, and related reporting requirements before making a report to the AAVP.

If it would help a member to decide whether discrimination or harassment has occurred, and whether a report should be made, the individual should feel free to discuss the matter, in confidence, with either a member of the AAVP Executive Committee or the AAVP Member Representation Committee (MRC). The decision on whether or not to make a report is at the discretion of the impacted individual.

Investigation:
Every report of discrimination or harassment will be investigated promptly and impartially (see below). The scope of an investigation may depend on investigations of the same or similar conduct by other parties such as employers, educational institutions, or event venues. The individual raising concerns regarding harassment or discrimination will be asked to prepare a written statement (for the Executive Committee and appointed Hearing Panel) and would remain private within these groups. The AAVP prohibits retaliation against any individual who in good faith reports discrimination, harassment or any other conduct prohibited by this policy. The AAVP further prohibits retaliation against any individual who in good faith participates in an AAVP investigation into a report made under this policy.

Consequences:
The AAVP will take appropriate action against any individual who violates this policy. The process is outlined in the **AAVP's Disciplinary Action** and **Appeals Procedure** and is given below.

Disciplinary action:
Any Member alleged to have engaged in improper behavior, including, but not limited to, unethical conduct or professional fraud, is subject to disciplinary action. Accuser(s) must present documentation of the allegation(s) to the Executive Committee which, upon a majority vote, shall direct the President to appoint an *ad hoc* Hearing Panel consisting of five members in good standing*, and none of whom shall be acquainted, or have any conflict of interest, with any of the persons or circumstances at issue to the greatest extent possible. The Hearing Panel shall appoint its own Chair and establish its own procedures and will convene within 30 days of its appointment to consider the allegations and supporting documentation. During the procedures, the accused member shall have the right to address the Hearing Panel but not confront the accuser(s). The Hearing Panel shall provide a recommendation to the President for, or against, disciplinary action and a recommended disciplinary action. The Hearing Panel also has the authority to determine that the allegations are unfounded in which case the issue is closed, and the accused member shall remain a member in good standing provided they have met all the other requirements of a member in good standing. Within 30 days after receiving this report, the President shall present the Hearing Panel's recommendation to the Executive Committee, which shall determine the appropriate course of action. Separate communications regarding the course of action will be made within 30 days to each of the parties involved in the complaint. Disciplinary actions include censure, warning and/or termination of Membership, depending on the gravity of the allegations. The Executive Committee may impose conditions or require corrective actions necessary to reinstate membership in good standing. Any member on whom the Executive Committee has imposed disciplinary action may appeal the adverse decision to the **Appeals Committee** within 30 days of being informed of the decision.

*someone who is current with their membership dues.