

Amnesty International Canada (ES) Annual General Meeting Code of Conduct (2021)

Introduction

Amnesty International Canada English Section AICS(ES) has adopted this Code of Conduct to protect the safety, integrity and reputation of AICS(ES) and its officers, directors, employees, interns, volunteers and volunteer leaders, members, supporters and all other participants in the human rights efforts undertaken by or in the name of AICS(ES).

The Code applies to (a) all persons, including AICS(ES)'s officers, directors, employees, interns, volunteer leaders and other members, who undertake and participate in any human rights activities in the name of AICS(ES) and (b) any attendees of any national, regional or other in person or virtual meeting or event involving AICS(ES) 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 of Conduct will be deemed to have agreed to abide by this Code of Conduct by assuming any of the roles outlined in subparagraph (a) or by registering and participating in any in person or virtual meeting or event 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 AICS(ES). 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 AICS(ES) 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:

- a. Hold paramount and protect as they are reasonably able the safety, health, integrity and welfare of all persons involved in AICS(ES) activities.

- b. Act in such a manner as to uphold and enhance personal and professional respect, integrity and the dignity of AICS(ES) consistent with its mission in advancing and protecting all human rights.
- c. Consistent with the AICS(ES) 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.
- d. Respect and protect privileged and/or confidential information to which they have access in the course of their duties.

2. Harassment and Discrimination

AICS(ES) 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 AICS(ES)-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 processes outlined in section 6. in this document.

“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.

AICS(ES) specifically will not tolerate any Parties engaging in any of the following in connection with AICS(ES) -related employment, volunteering or events:

- a) Engaging in unwelcome sexually suggestive physical contact or touching;
- b) Physical assault of a sexual nature or indecent exposure;
- c) 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;
- d) Sexually explicit or offensive epithets or jokes, whether written or oral;
- e) 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;
- f) 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 AICS(ES) -related events, or using AICS(ES) equipment, facilities or services, including but not limited to AICS(ES)'s various internet

and social media platforms, such as its website, Facebook page, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter account.

3. 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. AICS(ES) 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 of Conduct; pursuing any complaint or claim under this Code of Conduct; cooperating in any related investigations; or otherwise opposing conduct in violation of this Code of Conduct. Any person who becomes aware of any instance or threat of retaliation in violation of this Code of Conduct should report the incident using the AICS(ES) Ethics Complaint Form.

4. 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 AICS(ES) AGM Ombudsperson, to be lacking any good faith basis, may be the subject of appropriate disciplinary action.

5. Discipline

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

The discretion of discipline is up to the AGM Ombudsperson, based on the authority granted to them by AICS(ES) and the Board of Directors

6. 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 AICS(ES) 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 AICS(ES) Complaint Procedure; and/or (b) if any federal, provincial or local law, statute or regulation applies to disposition of any particular complaint, it will control over any conflicting provision of the AICS(ES) Complaint Procedure.

Any person who is subject to behavior they believe violates this Code of Conduct, has witnessed such behavior or otherwise has reason to believe that an individual has violated this Code of Conduct should promptly contact the AICS(ES) AGM Ombudsperson at ombudsperson@amnesty.ca to place a (a) verbal complaint **or** complete the AICS(ES) Ethics Complaint Form (Appendix A) and either (b) email the completed form to the AICS(ES) AGM Ombudsperson at ombudsperson@amnesty.ca **or** (c) if preserving anonymity is a concern, mail the completed form to The AICS(ES) Ombudsperson addressed to:

**Amnesty International Canada
c/o AICS(ES) AGM Ombudsperson
312 Laurier Ave E
Ottawa ON, K1N 1H9**

However, in those instances where the AICS(ES) AGM Ombudsperson is the subject of the complaint, the submission should be directed to the AICS(ES) Board Chair or any other member of the AICS(ES) Board of Directors who are not identified as the subject of the complaint.

APPENDIX A - Ethics Complaint Form

Required Contact Information			
Name (First / Last)		Phone/Cell #	
Amnesty role or affiliation (e.g., director, officer, employee, intern or fellow, local group, country coordinator, fieldworker, local organizer, volunteer, youth member, supporter or member at large, etc.)			
Email Address			
Mailing Address			
City		Province	Postal Code

Complaint Information	
Date(s) of incident	
Relevant provision in AICS(ES) 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 AICS(ES) AGM Ombudsperson via email at ombudsperson@amnesty.ca or, if preserving anonymity is a concern, mail the completed form to the AICS(ES) Ombudsperson addressed to:

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c/o AICS(ES) AGM Ombudsperson
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