

**Society of Gynecologic Oncology  
Policy and Procedure**

**POLICY NUMBER**            1.11

**POLICY NAME**             Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Policy

**DATE OF ORIGIN**         December 2019

**PURPOSE**                 Members of the Society of Gynecologic Oncology pledge to uphold the principles of ethical conduct. These principles define our professional and personal responsibilities to our patients, colleagues and trainees.

All members deserve to be treated with respect and dignity in an environment free from harassment and discrimination. The key principles outlined in this policy protect our members' safety at our business meetings, society functions and unofficial social events held in conjunction with our business meetings. This policy serves as a companion to the *SGO Rules of Conduct during Business Meetings* and the *SGO Principles of Ethical Conduct and Practice*. This policy was created to outline harassment and discriminatory behaviors that violate our ethical principles and to provide instructions on how to report such behaviors.

**POLICY 1.0**                A. Definition of Harassment

The US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission defines harassment as unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetic information.

Harassing conduct includes using epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group by electronic mail, phone, text messages, social networking sites or other means.

Harassment is defined as unlawful when enduring the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment or if the conduct is severe and pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile or abusive.

B. Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is illegal under federal, state and local laws.

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, whistling or touching; insulting or

obscene comments or gestures; display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

C. Definition of Discrimination

Discriminatory behaviors are actions that can be verbal, written or physical in nature and show hostility or aversion toward an individual based on an individual's race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, or marital status. Discrimination and harassing behaviors have the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. These behaviors interfere with an individual's performance and may affect a member's advancement opportunities. Discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, age or physical disability is illegal under federal law.

D. Expected Behavior

SGO expects all members and meeting attendees to exhibit behavior that adheres to the *SGO's Principles of Ethical Conduct and the SGO Rules of Conduct during Business Meetings*. Professional behavior should be exhibited at all board and committee meetings and this includes conference calls where society business is discussed. Meeting attendees are asked to be courteous and respectful to their colleagues and society staff at all SGO-related functions.

E. Reporting Harassment of Discrimination Grievances during business meetings

SGO encourages any meeting attendee to report perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment. Grievances may be submitted to the CEO, current SGO president, ethics committee chair or the program committee co-chairs or directly to a professional management service contracted by SGO to triage complaints. The professional management service will assist the society with handling complaints and investigations. The mechanism for reporting grievances will be posted in the meeting agenda book, on the SGO internal website and visibly thought the assembly hall during every SGO business meeting. If a complaint involves an SGO member the complaint will follow the grievance process as outlined in the SGO Member Grievance policy. All grievances will be managed fairly and equitably. Grievances against non-members will be handled according to all local, state and federal laws.

SGO prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment, or participates in the grievance process.

False and malicious complaints of harassment or discrimination may be subject to disciplinary action and loss of membership. Members who violate this policy may have his/her membership revoked and non-members may be excluded from attending future meetings.

REFERENCES

1. AMA Code of Medical Ethics: Professional Self-Regulation. <https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/code-medical-ethics-professional-self-regulation>. Accessed July 25, 2018.
2. AMA House of Delegates Code of Conduct. <https://www.ama-assn.org/code-conduct>. Published August 2016. Accessed July 25, 2018.
3. SGO Principles of Ethical Conduct and Practice, 2018.
4. US Department of State Sexual Harassment Policy. <https://www.state.gov/s/ocr/c14800.htm> Accessed February 16, 2019.
5. US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. [https://www1.eeoc.gov//eeoc/newsroom/wysk/harassed\\_at\\_work.cfm?renderforprint=1](https://www1.eeoc.gov//eeoc/newsroom/wysk/harassed_at_work.cfm?renderforprint=1). Accessed November 20, 2019.
6. Von Gruenigen *et al*. Sexual harassment in the workplace: Its impact on gynecologic oncology and women's health. *Gynecologic Oncology* 2018,149:227-229.
7. Jagsi R. Sexual harassment in Medicine--#MeToo. *NEJM* 2018;378(3):209-211.
8. SGO Rules of Conduct during Business Meetings.

Revisions: