



## **Code of Conduct: Harassment and Discrimination Policy at ABC SEMI Events**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Associated Builders and Contractors of Southeast Michigan (ABC SEMI) holds professional conferences and meetings to enable our members to receive continuing education, build professional networks and collaborations, engage and recruit new members, and discover new technologies, methodologies, and services for professional use. To provide all participants — members and other attendees, speakers, exhibitors, staff, and volunteers — the opportunity to benefit from these events, ABC SEMI is committed to providing a safe and productive meeting environment free of discrimination, hostility, and harassment in any form, for everyone, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, protected disability, race, religion, age, national origin, or any other status protected by federal or state laws. ABC SEMI does not tolerate discrimination, or any form of unlawful harassment, and is committed to enforcing this Code of Conduct (the “Code”) at all Associated Builders and Contractors of Southeast Michigan events.

### **SCOPE OF THE CODE**

ABC SEMI requires compliance with the Code by all event participants (members, non-members, and speakers), staff, guests, sponsors, volunteers, and vendors/exhibitors at all official ABC SEMI conferences, meetings, meeting breakout sessions, tours, and social events, as well as at all ABC SEMI meeting-related events that are expressly sponsored or promoted by ABC SEMI, in public facilities and at ABC SEMI’s facilities (each may be referred to herein as an “Event” or collectively, as “Events”).

### **HARASSMENT DEFINED**

Harassment may include speech, gestures, behavior or any conduct or communication that is unwelcome based on a protected legal status and which a reasonable person would find creates a hostile or offensive environment. Such conduct or communication may include deliberate intimidation, stalking, unwelcome attention, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate/unnecessary/unwanted physical contact, offensive jokes or comments, unprofessional use of nudity and/or sexual images in public spaces or in presentations, or requests for sexual favors. Care should be taken to avoid

conduct or communication that may be considered offensive or inappropriate to some, even if it does not rise to the level of illegal harassment.

Within the context of professional practices or scholarly communications, critical examination of beliefs and viewpoints does not, by itself, constitute hostile conduct or harassment.

## **PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

As a professional association, ABC SEMI is strongly committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, professional expression of ideas, and ethical treatment of all members and conference/meeting participants. These values and a zero-tolerance stance on sexual and other forms of illegal harassment are in line with ABC SEMI's belief in the value of civil discourse, even during critical examination and critique of ideas, and the free exploration of competing ideas and concepts — with a fundamental respect for the rights, dignity and value of all persons.

ABC SEMI seeks to provide an Event atmosphere in which diverse participants may learn, network and enjoy the company of colleagues in an environment of mutual human respect. ABC SEMI recognizes a shared responsibility to establish, to maintain and to protect such an environment for the benefit of all. Some behaviors are, therefore, specifically prohibited. Prohibited conduct at Events includes, but is not limited to:

- Harassment, intimidation or discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, protected disability, race, religion, age, nation origin, or any other status protected by federal or state laws
- Sexual harassment or intimidation, including unwelcome sexual attention, stalking (physical or virtual), or unsolicited physical contact.
- Harassment, intimidation, coercion discrimination based on a protected status by a person in a position of power or authority such as a teacher, superior, or employer.
- Bullying, harassment, or unprofessional conduct based on a protected status.
- Yelling at, or threatening speakers (verbally or physically) or any attendees.
- Physical violence or aggression or threats of violence.

## **REPORTING AN INCIDENT**

If you are experiencing a threat to your physical safety, immediately call 911, and contact the ABC SEMI officer as soon as you are safe.

Meeting participants should note that ABC SEMI cannot address claimed inappropriate conduct or harassment unless the claims are brought to the attention of the appropriate personnel. Event participants who witness or experience harassment or any inappropriate conduct, including but not limited to the prohibited conduct described above, should report the conduct to the ABC SEMI President or another officer if you feel more comfortable with someone else. Those reporting a complaint are not expected to discuss the incident with the offending party. All complaints will be treated seriously and be investigated. Confidentiality will be honored to the extent possible consistent with a proper investigation and protecting the rights of others.

ABC SEMI reserves the right at any time to investigate situations that arise at the Event and in ABC SEMI-sponsored online communities provided in connection with the Event. If an Event participant experiences inappropriate conduct, harassment or discrimination at the participant's own or another institution, at a place of work, or online but not via ABC SEMI-sponsored channels (e.g., direct emails between parties), ABC SEMI may be unable to investigate and encourages individuals to contact the appropriate officer/official(s) at that location or institution who handles such issues.

## **INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE**

The following procedure will be followed for investigations.

- The complainant will be asked to submit a report in writing addressed to the President of ABC SEMI. Failure to provide a report in writing may limit ABC SEMI's ability to formally follow up on a complaint. This limitation does not apply to complaints by ABC SEMI staff.
- A designated ABC SEMI investigator will discuss the details first with the individual filing the complaint, then with the alleged offender. The investigator may seek counsel or consult with other ABC SEMI staff, management, officers, and/or legal counsel as needed if the appropriate course of action is unclear.
- Findings and results of all investigations will be reported to the ABC SEMI Executive Committee.
- ABC SEMI will notify the individual filing the complaint regarding the conclusion of the investigation.
- Any ABC SEMI staff, or member involved in the investigation of an incident who believes they have a conflict of interest will recuse themselves from the investigation.
- Investigations may be conducted on site at a meeting or, if impractical or inappropriate, at any other time or location.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

If it is determined that an individual has engaged in prohibited conduct, ABC SEMI shall determine the appropriate action to be taken, which may include, but is not limited to:

- Private reprimand.
- Removal from the Event without warning or refund.
- Implementation of conditions upon attendance at future ABC SEMI Events.
- Restriction from attendance at future ABC SEMI Events.

In the event of the potential for serious, injurious, or offensive conduct, when it seems reasonable to preserve the peace and decorum of the Event or to limit potential harm or to avoid further incidents, ABC SEMI may take immediate action and ask a person to leave an Event, depending on the nature of the issue; follow-up may occur later.

ABC SEMI may, if it deems it appropriate, report any incident to proper authorities, including but not limited to Event security and law enforcement.

## **RETALIATION**

ABC SEMI will not tolerate any form of illegal retaliation against persons who file a complaint in good faith or who assist in the investigation of a complaint. Retaliation is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action.

**DISCLAIMER:** *In adopting and disseminating this Code of Conduct, Harassment and Discrimination Policy for ABC SEMI Meetings, ABC SEMI's main purpose is to encourage appropriate behavior and to address inappropriate behavior. It is important to recognize that ABC SEMI is a nonprofit professional association and is not authorized to adjudicate or enforce the law. However, ABC SEMI believes in the importance of taking action in good faith and in the best interest and protection of members and attendees. Nonetheless, ABC SEMI is not responsible for the conduct of any individual, assumes no duty to halt, limit, or address any problematic or illegal conduct, and shall not have liability for conduct between and among any individuals.*