



Education | Healthcare | Public Services

## AFT Code of Conduct

(Adopted by the AFT Executive Council, October 3, 2018)

### **Purpose:**

The AFT is committed to providing a positive and respectful environment that is free of discrimination and harassment, regardless of an individual's race, ethnicity, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, ancestry, pregnancy, or any other characteristic prohibited by law. As such, the AFT will not tolerate discriminatory, harassing, or otherwise unacceptable behavior in the workplace or at any of its activities, events, or meetings, even if the conduct has not risen to the level of a violation of law. The AFT expects everyone in the workplace and those that participate in any of its activities, events, or meetings to abide by this Code of Conduct.

### **Definitions:**

#### A. Discrimination

Discrimination against an individual because of another person's race, ethnicity, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, ancestry, pregnancy, or any other characteristic protected by law is illegal discrimination.

#### B. Harassment

Harassment is a form of discriminations that can take many forms including physical contact, verbal comments, written communications, or other unwelcome conduct. It may include, but is not limited to, actions such as use of epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, jokes, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to sex, race, age, disability, or other protected categories. Harassment may also include written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual or group based on protected characteristics, whether that material is sent by email, placed on walls, bulletin boards, computer screens or other devices, or elsewhere on the premises of the activity, event, or meeting.

#### C. Sexual Harassment

Sex harassment is a form of sex discrimination. It can take many forms, including physical contact, verbal comments, written communications, or other conduct. Sex harassment does not have to be sexual in nature; non-sexual contact, comments, or conduct can still- depending on the circumstances - create an intimidating, offensive, or harassing and discriminatory environment or experience.

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The AFT is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

Randi Weingarten  
PRESIDENT

Fedrick C. Ingram  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Evelyn DeJesus  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

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**Expected Behavior:**

The AFT is a democratic organization that values open and vigorous discussion of the issues facing the AFT, our members, working people and the labor movement. This Code of Conduct is not intended to restrict free and open debate, but rather is concerned with preventing unacceptable behavior.

The AFT expects everyone in the workplace and all participants in AFT activities, events, or meetings to conform to the following Code of Conduct:

- Respect others and their views
- Recognize and value individual differences
- Be sure you do not engage in aggressive, bullying, or intimidating behavior
- Do not engage in discriminatory or harassing behavior

**If Subject to Unacceptable Behavior:**

Prior to the start of AFT activities, events, or meetings with non-staff participants (affiliate leaders, staff, or members, partner organizations, employer representatives, public officials, etc.) attendees will be informed of this Code of Conduct, and the AFT designee to whom complaints may be directed will be identified for all attendees.

If you are subject to what you believe is unacceptable behavior under this Code of Conduct, or witness such behavior, please inform the AFT designee immediately. If that person is not available, you may inform any other AFT manager or officer, who will work with the AFT designee to respond to the complaint.

The AFT takes these complaints seriously, and may, at its discretion, take action that it deems appropriate upon assessing the situation. Possible responses may include a warning to or expulsion of the alleged offender from the AFT activity, event, or meeting. Additionally, where appropriate, the AFT may inform the alleged offender's affiliate or employing entity of the offending behavior and complaint or initiate disciplinary proceedings for those that hold a position subject to discipline by the AFT. If needed or requested, an AFT designee will help complainants contact security or local law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise assist complainants experiencing unacceptable behavior to feel safe for the duration of the activity, event, or meeting.

Any AFT staff person who is subject to unacceptable behavior should contact Gria Hernandez-Curtis, Human Resources Director, at (202) 434-4699 or [ghernandez@aft.org](mailto:ghernandez@aft.org); Tear Jones, Chief of Staff, at (202) 879-4443 or [tear.jones@aft.org](mailto:tear.jones@aft.org); or Daniel McNeil, General Counsel, at (202) 393-6305 or [dmcneil@aft.org](mailto:dmcneil@aft.org).

Any complaint brought to AFT's attention will be treated confidentially to the extent possible to properly assess the situation. The AFT will take all appropriate steps to ensure that the complainant is no longer subject to the unacceptable behavior.

The AFT will not tolerate retaliation against any individual who complains of unacceptable behavior under this Code of Conduct. It will take every step necessary and appropriate to ensure that retaliation does not occur, and if it believes that retaliation has occurred, the AFT will take immediate action to stop the retaliation.