

EVENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) is committed to providing a safe and welcoming experience at our events for all participants. This includes Board members, delegates, exhibitors, guests, suppliers, speakers, sponsors, vendors, volunteers, and staff. NSFM values the attendance of all event participants and expects all participants to help ensure a safe and positive experience for everyone. Events include, but are not limited to, activities, announcements, conferences, meetings, trade shows, webinars, and workshops.

All participants are subject to the Event Code of Conduct, and understand that NSFM:

- expects compliance with requests to cease unacceptable behaviour;
- may contact hotel/conference venue security or local law enforcement in the event of unacceptable behaviour;
- may disqualify participants that have demonstrated unacceptable behaviour from participating in future live and virtual NSFM events;
- may expel a participant from an event;
- may report members that, after investigation, are found to have breached the Event Code of Conduct to their municipal council or employer, whichever is applicable;
- will enforce this Code for the entire duration of the event;
- will not refund registration fees or charges to participants expelled from an event;
- will respond in a timely manner to complaints of unacceptable behaviour and will ensure the safety of complainants.

Unacceptable behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- disruption of meetings or events, including social activities;
- failure to abide by the rules of order for any event;
- harassment, which includes offensive verbal comments (e.g. related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, or religion), display of sexual images in public spaces, bullying, deliberate intimidation, stalking, sharing photographic, audio, or video content where the subject would reasonably have an expectation of privacy, sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention;¹
- misuse or abuse of substances, including alcohol and cannabis;
- real or implied threat of professional or financial damage or harm to another;
- violating the rules and regulations of the hotel, convention centre, or other participating site.
- misuse of this Code, including making a report in bad faith, maliciously or without a reasonable and probable basis, engaging in a reprisal against any individual for filing a report pursuant to this Code, or interfering with an investigation pursuant to this Code.

¹ See also: NSFM Harassment Policy

Reporting Violations

A violation of this Code adversely affects the organization. Any individual who has a reasonable belief that this Code has been breached is encouraged to report the alleged violation to the President or the CEO. No adverse action shall be taken against any individual who, acting in good faith, brings forward such an allegation. NSFAM strictly prohibits reprisal or retaliation against anyone who takes any action, decision, or communication that disadvantages any individual for reporting violations under this Code, participating in any investigation pursuant to this Code, or who is associated with a person who has reported a violation or participated in an investigation pursuant to this Code.

If the behaviour identified is serious in nature, and/or poses a threat to safety, NSFAM will take necessary action to ensure safety, including contacting local law enforcement.

Any reported violation of the Code will be subject to examination by the Executive Committee, with a recommendation on disciplinary action or such other action to address the matter, including as set out below, being made to the Board. All complaints shall be submitted in writing, or by using the prescribed Complaint Form, within six months of the alleged conduct breach having occurred. The complaint should include the date, time, location, circumstance, nature of the alleged conduct breach, witnesses, and any other supporting evidence.

If warranted, NSFAM may engage an independent third party to administer the complaint process.

If the Board determines that the complaint is justified, it may sanction the respondent by one or more of the following or other appropriate sanctions, as determined by the Board:

- report details of the complaint and decision in writing to the respondent's local government or employer;
- request that the respondent undertake training relevant to the incident as a requirement for attendance at future NSFAM events;
- suspend the respondent from NSFAM committees and/or external appointments;
- disqualify the respondent from participating in future NSFAM events; and
- cancel or suspend service agreements with vendors for material breach or prohibit the respondent from attending events as a representative of a partner vendor.

Appeals

Either party to a complaint has the option of appeal to the Executive Committee for a review of the procedural steps taken in the complaint review. A request for appeal must be provided to the President or the CEO, in writing, within 14 days of a determination by the Board, and must also set out the reasons why the appellant believes they received improper treatment. The Executive Committee will hear an appeal and render a recommendation to the Board within 30 days of receiving a request for appeal. The Board will make the final determination.

Indemnification

By agreeing to this Code of Conduct, event participants including Board members, delegates, exhibitors, guests, suppliers, speakers, sponsors, volunteers, vendors, and staff, agree that they

are personally responsible for their own conduct and for any breach of this Code they may engage in and shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless NSFM from and against the consequences of any such breach.