

## **AFGHAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION ANTI-DISCRIMINATION & HARASSMENT POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

The Afghan-American Community Organization (AACO) is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all its participants. As such, AACO has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment. All complaints of discrimination will be taken seriously and handled confidentially through the process outlined below.

### **Applicability**

This policy applies to conduct that occurs at all official AACO events, including but not limited to the annual three-day conference Afghan-American Conference (AAC), official regional events (e.g Launch Party, Reunions, and Night of Giving, etc), and any other events in which AACO is a sponsor. All organizers, volunteers, participants, speakers, facilitators, vendors and others in attendance at these events must abide by this policy.

AACO takes these very seriously and encourages anyone who believes they have been the target of such misconduct to report any incidents promptly.

### **What is Discrimination?**

The diversity of AACO is a tremendous asset. AACO will not tolerate discrimination of any kind at its events. Examples of conduct that will not be tolerated include discrimination based on race, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, age, genetics, disability, or any other protected characteristic.

### **What is Harassment?**

Conduct that could be considered harassment includes but is not limited to: slurs; derogatory and/or sexually-oriented jokes, comments or displays; discussion or inquiries about one's own or someone else's sexual activities; unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, flirtations, invitations -- whether written, verbal, electronic, or telephonic; physical conduct including assault, unwelcome touching, gestures, intentional blocking of normal movement, or other conduct directed toward a person due to their gender, race, or any other protected status; and

threats and demands to submit to sexual requests. Anyone can be a victim of harassment, regardless of their sex or gender and the sex or gender of the harasser.

Examples of conduct or behavior which constitutes harassment include, but are not limited to:

### ***Physical Contact***

- Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching
- Physical violence, including sexual assault

### ***Verbal Conduct***

- Comments on a participant's appearance, age, private life, etc.
- Sexual or otherwise provocative comments, stories and jokes
- Sexual advances
- Repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy
- Insults based on the sex of the target
- Condescending or paternalistic remarks
- Sending sexually explicit messages (by text or by email)

### ***Non-Verbal Conduct***

- Displaying, distributing, posting, or sharing of sexually explicit or suggestive material
- Sexually-suggestive gestures
- Whistling/Catcalling
- Leering

### **Reporting Procedure**

Anyone who believes they have been the target of discrimination or harassment at an AACO-sponsored event or function should, where possible and safe, inform the individual engaging in the alleged misconduct that it is inappropriate and unwelcome. Beyond that, any individual who believes they have been the target of such misconduct should immediately bring the matter to attention of the [Insert Subcommittee and email alias], an independent committee of the AACO Organizing Committee with direct reporting into the organization's Board of Directors. In certain situations, the subcommittee may deem it appropriate to engage a third-party investigator to review a report and speak with the parties involved.

### **Consequences for Violation of this Policy**

AACO reserves the right to remove or exclude any individual who has been found to be in violation of this policy from any AACO-affiliated or sponsored event, including AAC. Furthermore, in cases where the misconduct alleged may be criminal and where the reporting party wishes to pursue action, AACO will cooperate fully with any resulting investigations or procedures in support of the reporting party.

### **Implementation of this Policy**

This policy was adopted on March 17, 2018 and is subject to change. All organizers, volunteers, participants, speakers, facilitators, vendors and others in attendance are expected and required to abide by this policy.