

**Application:** CNS Members will need to acknowledge that they have read and will adhere to the Code of Conduct policy of the CNS. We can integrate it into membership sign-up and conference registration.

**Purpose:** This is a fundamental part of the culture of our society. The Code of Conduct gives CNS a mechanism by which to maintain and manage the culture and standards of interaction among our members.

## **Comparative Nutrition Society Code of Conduct Policy**

### Scope of Policy

The policies herein apply to all members, conference attendees, speakers, exhibitors, contractors, service providers, volunteers, and guests at the annual Comparative Nutrition Society (CNS) conference and any CNS activity, including all engagement with online meetings and content.

### Professionalism and Collaboration

Members of the CNS are committed to upholding the highest standards of professionalism and collaboration within the scientific community. CNS promotes the open discussion and exchange of scientific ideas and knowledge. Members are encouraged to collaborate and share knowledge openly.

- Respect for intellectual property and scientific contributions is fundamental to our mission.
- Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form.
- Honest reporting of research findings is expected.
- Members are expected to be ethical in their research practices, particularly in the use and care of animals. Members shall treat animals involved in research with the utmost care and respect, adhering to ethical guidelines and standards.

### Inclusivity and Respect

CNS is committed to creating an environment where all individuals can feel safe, accepted, and respected to foster open dialogue and the exchange of scientific ideas.

- Equal opportunity and treatment for all attendees of any CNS function, regardless of gender, gender identity or expression, race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion or religious belief, age, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disabilities, medical condition, language, economic class, or any other reason not related to scientific merit, will be maintained. Members shall not engage in any form of harassment or discrimination based on these factors.
- Participants in CNS-sponsored activities should strive to be positive role models.
- Harassment and other forms of misconduct undermine the integrity of CNS conferences and are strictly prohibited.
  - Definitions of Harassment
    - *Sexual Harassment:* Refers to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature; this type of behavior debilitates morale and interferes with effective discourse, and will not be tolerated.
    - *Other Harassment and Unacceptable Behavior:* Harassment on the basis of any of the described characteristics above will not be tolerated. Harassment refers to

behavior that is not welcome or is personally offensive, including but not limited to: epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; display or circulation of material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion towards an individual or group.

### Reporting and Accountability

Members and any participants in CNS-sponsored activities have the professional responsibility to bring any apparent violations of these principles to the attention of any member of the CNS Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is responsible for considering breaches of ethical behavior and taking the appropriate response in accordance with the procedures and policies defined below.

- CNS commits to promoting ethical conduct among its members and participants and will ensure that any allegations of harassment are reported, investigated, and acted upon while protecting confidentiality and affording due process to all parties.
- CNS reserves the right to remove individuals from an event, block them on social media and delete offending posts if they break the Code of Conduct. No reimbursement will be provided. Please note that removal from an event does not imply a formal or legal accusation of harassment on the part of the CNS.

### *Reporting an Incident of Harassment*

If you experience or observe harassment or other unacceptable behavior, we recommend that you write down the details as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible, to help you to recall specific events in the future. If you believe you have experienced or observed harassment, notify the Board of Directors in one or more of the following ways:

- Via our website: [cnsweb.org](http://cnsweb.org)
- By contacting a member of the Board of Directors directly
- Email [CNS.website.email@gmail.com](mailto:CNS.website.email@gmail.com)

The person experiencing harassment is not required to discuss the incident with the offending party unless they feel comfortable doing so. If you feel unsafe or threatened, use a venue phone to ask for security; if the circumstances warrant it, call 911 for medical or police assistance. All complaints will be treated seriously and addressed promptly and appropriately. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent that it does not compromise the rights of others or the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

If you experience or observe inappropriate written behavior related to CNS, whether or not in person, please notify CNS through one of the avenues described above – please include screen captures where appropriate.

### *CNS Procedures for Responding to Harassment Complaints*

The contacted Board of Directors member will report the incident to the rest of the Board as appropriate based on the level of privacy that the reporter would like to maintain and the reporter's impression of the seriousness of the incident.

- The Board recognizes that perceptions of an event may differ but will not hesitate to act if asked to address any reported incidences that violate our Code of Conduct.
- Reporters may be assured that they will not be penalized in any way for reporting harassment or discrimination.

### *Consequences*

As CNS strives to create an environment free from harassment and discrimination, the CNS Board of Directors will determine the appropriate consequences for holding people accountable for conduct reported under this policy.

- The incident report will be recorded in the Board of Directors' executive session minutes.
- In the Board of Directors' sole discretion, these consequences may consist, at minimum, of a warning, but if an incident is particularly serious or repeated incidents occur with the same individual, that individual may be banned from future meetings and/or CNS membership may be revoked.

### *Retaliation is Prohibited*

Retaliation against any individual who reports harassment or assists in an investigation is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation is a serious violation of CNS policy and, like acts of harassment or discrimination, will be subject to consequences. If you believe you have experienced or observed retaliation, notify the CNS Board of Directors via the reporting channels referenced above.

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Thank you for helping to keep the Comparative Nutrition Society an environment where all individuals can feel safe, accepted, and respected to foster open dialogue and the exchange of scientific ideas!

We welcome any feedback on how we may improve this policy and make our events safer or more inclusive.