U.S. Geological Survey Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to restate important principles and expectations for professional conduct and acceptable behavior by all personnel. While not exhaustive, this Code is a shared statement of commitment to uphold the ethical, professional, and legal standards required to fulfill these principles and objectives.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) values the diversity of views, expertise, opinions, backgrounds, and experiences reflected among our workforce and our colleagues in our broader community and is committed to providing a safe, productive, and welcoming work environment. This Code of Conduct is important to promoting diversity and creating a respectful, inclusive, supportive, and collaborative environment for all.

This Code of Conduct applies in all working environments including office, field work, meetings, workshops, ancillary events and social gatherings, and on-line forums and discussions attended by USGS personnel. This requirement applies when you are in travel status or if any of these work-related activities or social gatherings occur after business hours.

Code of Conduct

USGS employees must adhere to our Code of Scientific and Scholarly Conduct and are expected to observe and follow our Guiding Principles which address, among other things, expectations for respect, accountability, communication, valuing differences, and collaboration. Teams should review and discuss these Guiding Principles routinely, so all members understand how these principles will be demonstrated daily.

Expected Behavior/Conduct

All employees are expected to:

- Focus on the mission and vision of the USGS, and their contribution to the success of both.
- Treat others with courtesy, dignity, respect and consideration in day-to-day interactions, valuing a diversity of views and opinions, including those you may not share.
- Communicate clearly and openly in a manner respectful of others, for example, by critiquing ideas rather than individuals.
- Honor the roles and responsibilities of all employees, valuing the contribution of all regions, mission areas, and offices.
- Take personal responsibility for assigned work and personal conduct and hold others accountable for their responsibilities.
- Provide a safe and rewarding work environment that nurtures, challenges, and encourages all employees.
- Be mindful of their surroundings and of their fellow colleagues, alerting a manager/supervisor or other appropriate office/official if they notice a dangerous/unsafe situation or someone in distress.

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- Respect the rules and policies of the federal workplace, including DOI-wide policies (https://www.doi.gov/elips/browse).
- Respect the rules and policies of meeting venues, hotels, facilities, or any other venue where the mission is performed.
- Refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech.

Unacceptable Behavior/Conduct
Examples of unacceptable behavior/conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Harassing conduct or discrimination in any form, including retaliation against an employee for reporting harassing conduct or discrimination, requesting a reasonable accommodation, or participating in a complaint process. *(Note: behavior that is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another, so use discretion to be certain respect is communicated.)*;
- Physical or verbal abuse/assault;
- Unwelcome or offensive verbal comments or exclusionary behavior related to age, appearance or body size, employment or military status, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, individual lifestyle, marital or parental status, national origin, disability status, physical or cognitive ability, genetic information, political affiliation, race, color, or religion;
- Unwelcome physical contact, including touching, tickling, stroking, hitting, or punching;
- Unwelcome sexual attention or terms of endearment;
- Display or use of sexual or discriminatory pictures, calendars, cartoons, objects, or other materials of an offensive or sexual nature;
- Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following;
- Verbal or written comments, jokes, innuendos, slurs, name-calling, ridicule, and insults, including off-color jokes, jokes about race, national origin, age, sex, or any other protected status, affinity group, physical attributes, or stories/notes/letters/text/phone calls of an offensive or derogatory nature;
- Humiliating, intimidating, or bullying a person;
- Retaliation for reporting unacceptable behavior, for expressing the unwelcomeness of unacceptable behavior, or for requesting a reasonable accommodation.

Reporting Unacceptable Behavior
Anyone experiencing or witnessing behavior or conduct that constitutes an immediate or serious threat to safety or security should contact local law enforcement (by calling 911) and immediately notify facility security.

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For other unacceptable behavior or conduct there are several resources available to address the matter. Please use the following links to access additional information regarding these options:

- Reporting Harassing Conduct: https://www.usgs.gov/about/organization/science-support/human-capital/anti-harassment-program
- Reporting Discrimination: Visit the internal site of the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity
- Ethics Violations: https://www.usgs.gov/about/organization/science-support/office-science-quality-and-integrity/usgs-ethics-office
- Scientific Integrity: https://www.doi.gov/scientificintegrity/
- Waste, Fraud and Abuse: https://www.doioig.gov/