

Member Code of Conduct

The following Code of Conduct has been developed to assist members in achieving a level of conduct that will enable SinC to achieve its mission:

- Members will do their best to ensure that no current, new, or prospective member will be excluded or discriminated against due to any aspect of their identity.
- Members will practice integrity and honesty and will encourage others to act in an ethical manner without discrimination.
- Members will respect the dignity of others and refrain from the use of profane, insulting, or otherwise offensive language, including that which constitutes harassment or abuse of others who are participating with SinC.
- Members will behave in ways that align with the core values of SinC. Some examples of the core values in practice include, but are not limited to:
 - Recognizing, avoiding, and calling out discrimination (such as microaggressions).
 - Allowing for a variety of needs and lived experiences to coexist.
 - Respecting personal pronouns.
 - Learning to pronounce names properly.
 - Believing marginalized individuals or groups when they share experiences of exclusion, microaggressions, or other harmful behaviors.
 - Ensuring minoritized members are not tokenized.
 - Using SinC's reporting mechanisms to address discrimination and/or harassment when it is experienced and/or witnessed.
 - Using inclusive language in all SinC posts, discussions, and other community interactions.
 - Being inclusive of people different from you without expecting others to assimilate to your own behaviors or beliefs.
 - Welcoming diverse lived experiences at all levels of leadership at SinC.
 - Utilizing learning resources curated and provided by SinC's DEIJB Committee (Diversity Equity Inclusion Justice and Belonging).

Harassment and discrimination include behaviors that threaten, alarm, or cause discomfort to others. Discrimination refers to actions that "others," belittles, or excludes individuals based on their gender identity, sexual orientation, race, age, religion, disability, neurodiversity, national origin, citizenship, socioeconomic status, or educational background.

Our meetings and board actions will be held in environments free from discrimination and harassment, in alignment with our Member Code of Conduct and SinC's core values. SinC will not accept or tolerate offensive, abusive, coercive, or other unwanted behavior that discriminates, violates personal dignity, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or demeaning environment, whether in public or private settings. This includes all forms of harassment—physical, psychological and verbal.

SinC's reputation for integrity and excellence requires not only compliance with all local, state, and federally applicable laws and regulations, but also strict adherence to the highest standards of conduct as outlined in this document.

We expect SinC's board, members, chapter board members, employees, vendors, volunteers, and others affiliated with our organization to conduct themselves—and any business associated with SinC—in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws. They must also refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

This Code of Conduct applies to anyone involved with Sisters in Crime, no matter where or when they're acting on the organization's behalf. This includes our members, board members, chapter board members, employees, vendors, and volunteers. We also expect guests to follow these rules at events sponsored either in full or in part by Sisters in Crime. Violating or refusing to adhere to this Member Code of Conduct could lead to consequences for non-compliance.

Harassment Policy

We must take every necessary measure to address harassment of SinC employees, volunteers, and members. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, board members, members, consultants, contract workers, and personnel on loan to SinC.

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Consequences of Code of Conduct Violations

The consequences of violating this Code of Conduct will depend on the situation. They may include, but are not limited to, a verbal or written warning; being barred from attending events; cancellation of membership; future bans on attending Sisters in Crime events or being a member of Sisters in Crime; mediation led by the Community Support Team or, as appropriate, legal counsel, with those affected; and/or community reparations, service, and accountability. In serious cases, Sisters in Crime may issue a public statement to its members and community. Sisters in Crime can deny membership to any individual based on comments or actions that violate this Code of Conduct.

Sisters in Crime also reserves the right to withdraw support of or deny sponsorship to any event, withdraw support from any organization, or terminate or replace any vendor not complying with this Code of Conduct. While SinC members are free to attend events not sponsored by SinC, they need approval to officially represent SinC at such events.

If a SinC member experiences or witnesses a violation of our Code of Conduct, they are encouraged to immediately report it using SinC's documentation form. Reports can also be made through a DEIJB Committee or National Board member, who will then inform the Community Support Team on a member's behalf. All reports are confidential while an investigation into the alleged violation is conducted according to the Sisters in Crime national bylaws.

If restorative practices are deemed appropriate, they may include punitive measures as well as community and individual reparations. Board members accused of an alleged violation shall not take part in the investigation, except to respond to the allegations as set forth in the bylaws. The investigation will be kept confidential, protecting the identities of the accused individual, the person reporting the violation, and any witnesses, unless written consent is provided by the claimant or respondent.

Any decision, response, sanction, or action taken by the National Board, the Community Support Team, or Sisters in Crime in response to an alleged violation of the Code of Conduct shall be determined by the guidelines set forth in the Sisters in Crime national bylaws. However, in the event of a claim or potential claim involving civil or criminal proceedings related to or arising from the conduct in question, the board and this organization, upon the advice of legal counsel, reserves the right to defer any such investigation to the legal authorities and, to the extent any investigation was undertaken by Sisters in Crime before such civil or criminal proceedings were instigated or contemplated by any party, to not publicize, comment on, or otherwise voluntarily disclose the allegations, investigation, or consequences pursuant to the applicable State and Federal Laws and/or Regulations. Nothing in the Code of Conduct prohibits members from directing any complaints to the proper legal enforcement bodies at any time. However, any members that do so after first reporting the complaint to Sisters in Crime for investigation, are required to immediately notify Sisters in Crime of such referral to allow Sisters in Crime to act in accordance with the above.

To Register a Complaint

Sisters in Crime has created a committee, independent from the board, to address and respond to complaints regarding violations of our Code of Conduct. To file a complaint, please use this form.

There will be no retaliation against anyone who registers a complaint, and all complaints will be treated seriously. We will maintain anonymity and follow established procedures.