

**Code of Conduct**  
**Mountain Club of Maryland (MCM)**  
September 18, 2022

**Statement of Purpose and Values**

MCM's Code of Conduct is meant to protect nature and the trails we hike as well as the people who hike those trails with us. MCM intends to create a welcoming and safe community among hikers that protects the trails we hike on.

We encourage the involvement of all people in our organization and activities. Our goal is to be a community that values kindness, and is comfortable, inviting, and accessible for people with a broad range of identities and backgrounds. We are united in our adventures by mutual trust, collective safety, respect for the natural world, and appreciation for our time together outdoors.

**Scope**

The Code of Conduct applies across all MCM activities regardless of location -- including indoors, outdoors, and online. The Code of Conduct applies to all people involved in MCM activities, including volunteers, members, leaders, and guests.

**Alignment with Laws**

MCM's Code of Conduct will consider misconduct to include violation of federal and Maryland state law relating to how to treat nature and how people shall treat each other. Specifically, according to federal and state civil rights law, discrimination is prohibited against specified protected identities of people, including race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, genetic information (including family medical history), status as a parent, or marital status. Under the law, protected activities include reporting harassing, discriminatory, or retaliatory conduct; filing a claim of harassment; supplying evidence in any investigation; or intervening to protect others who have suffered harassing misconduct, discrimination, or retaliation.

**Misconduct**

Misconduct includes:

- Unwelcome or exclusionary behavior toward others of any kind based on a person's identity, including use of slurs, epithets, threats, intimidation, negative stereotyping, or other derogatory language.
- Failure to prioritize personal and group safety during participation in MCM sponsored activities.

- Disregard for Leave No Trace principles and/or for the rules and regulations of outdoor places we visit.
- Physical or sexual assault or threats; violence or threats of violence toward others.
- Discrimination, harassment, or hostility toward others of any kind.
- Action or behavior that denigrates, threatens, bullies, shows hostility or aversion towards, or seeks to exclude an individual or group from participation based on their identity.
- Misuse or embezzlement of MCM funds, membership lists, or other assets for activities not authorized by MCM.
- Illegal or unethical conduct of any kind in the conduct of MCM business.

## **Resolution**

### **Informal Resolution.**

When an incident of misconduct occurs, any person who is affected by or who witnessed the incident should report it to the immediate MCM leader of the activity, such as the hike leader on a hike. The leader should make efforts to intervene in and resolve the issue quickly, informally, and between the people directly involved. Hike leaders or others leading an MCM activity are empowered to intervene and resolve immediate issues, and then to make a confidential report to President and Code of Conduct Committee if the misconduct was severe or may persist.

### **Formal Complaint and Resolution**

Any person affected or involved in an incident may file a written complaint with the President. When a formal complaint is received, the President shall promptly appoint and convene members of the Code of Conduct Committee, with due consideration to relevant representation on the committee as regards the nature of the complaint.

The Committee will consider all complaints and issues that are alleged to be in violation of the Code for investigation and any possible remedial action. The Committee will consider anonymous complaints; however, in order to facilitate the investigation, complainants are encouraged to provide the following details when reporting an issue:

- Name and contact information of person making the complaint (complainant).
- Name and contact information of persons alleged to have committed misconduct (respondent).
- Date, time, and location of incident
- Type of event and event leader(s) if known
- Details of incident and any attempted resolution, if any.
- Names of any witnesses

The Committee will acknowledge receipt of the initial complaint within five business days, and endeavor to resolve complaints connected with the Code as quickly as possible. During the investigation, designated members of the Committee typically will

speak separately with the complainant and the respondent. The Team may interview others as deemed appropriate.

At the conclusion of the investigation, a decision will be made as to the need for any intervention to remedy any harm done and to discourage repetition of the misconduct. The Committee will prioritize, where appropriate, a “restorative justice” approach, which encourages offenders to take responsibility for their actions, to understand the harm they have caused, to give them an opportunity to redeem themselves, and to discourage them from causing further harm. For victims, its goal is to give them an active role in the process and to reduce feelings of anxiety and powerlessness. A restorative approach may be informal and accomplished by a meeting with the parties involved. Alternatively, or in addition to a restorative approach, a more legal disciplinary resolution may be appropriate, such as requiring mediation or counseling, loss of membership, exclusion from activities, revocation of leader or volunteer status, termination of employment, or legal prosecution. The Committee will inform the complainant(s) and the respondent(s) of the investigation’s outcome.

### **Data Collection and Confidentiality**

Individual identifying information in a complaint will be kept confidential by the Code of Conduct Committee and others who know. However, the Code of Conduct Committee will collect and report to the Council or others as required on broader metrics such as issue types, locations, remedies, and other non-identifying data.