POLICY ON MISCONDUCT
Ethics and Conduct Committee

The American Society of Cytopathology embraces diversity, equal opportunity and collaboration, but at times individuals involved in ASC activities (members and nonmembers) may display inappropriate behavior or harmful attitudes that are not conducive to collegial interaction.

This document outlines ASC responses to unacceptable behavior.

Notification and Reporting of Potentially Inappropriate Behavior:
All individuals are responsible for fostering a collegial, welcoming and harassment free environment during ASC annual scientific meetings, committee and Board meetings and during other ASC activities. Members are encouraged to report any potentially inappropriate behavior and circumstances surrounding the event to the ASC for investigation. Individuals who are victims of this behavior may file an informal or formal complaint with the ASC.

Investigations
The Ethics and Conduct Committee is responsible for lodging an investigation into the complaint or report. Informal complaints may be resolved with an informal investigation comprised of members of the Ethics and Conduct Committee, and may be raised to a formal complaint by any individual involved in this process. Formal complaints must be investigated by the Ethics and Conduct Committee with a written report of all proceedings provided to the Executive Board, who deliberate and determine sanctions. Investigations will include interviews of all involved parties and may include witnesses. Formal investigations will be concluded within 3 months of the formal complaint. Informal complaints will be concluded within 1 month or raised to a formal complaint. All complaints will be reported to the Executive Board, along with any investigative findings and the Ethic and Conduct Committee’s recommendation for action.

Appeals
An accused individual has the right to challenge the accusation and appeal the Board’s decision. If the accused so wishes, a separate Inquiry Committee with be established comprised of 6 ASC members, 3 of whom may be advocates for the accused. Prior investigators may not serve on the Inquiry Committee. The Chair, who is the 7th member of the Inquiry Committee, will be a neutral ASC member who has not been involved in or privy to the proceedings to date. The Inquiry Committee may review all prior investigation material, call further witnesses, interview accuser and victim, or perform any other actions necessary to determine for or against sanctions.

Sanctions
The following sanctions may be considered for members of the ASC who are accused of inappropriate behavior (these are not exclusive of other options):
- No action taken
- Verbal education/reprimand from a member of the Executive Board
- Written reprimand from the ASC President
Recommendation to the Executive Board that the member be temporarily removed from active participation in committee/Board activities

Recommendation to the Executive Board that the member be permanently removed from active participation in committee/Board activities

Recommendation to the Executive Board that the member be barred from the organization (denied membership)

Retaliation

Retaliation and attempts at retaliation against the potential victim, complaint lodger or their supporters are not tolerated. Complaints of retaliation are handled in the same manner as other complaints of inappropriate behavior.

Approved by the ASC Executive Board 4/24/2020