SRNT 2021 Code of Conduct Policy
For all In-Person and Virtual Meetings

The Society for Research on Nicotine & Tobacco (SRNT) is committed to providing a respectful, safe, and welcoming environment that is free from harassment, discrimination, retaliation, and other intimidating or disruptive behavior for all participants, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, or other protected characteristic, as well as place of employment, research funding source, or positions/viewpoints on divisive issues related to nicotine/tobacco research.

This policy covers Expected Behavior; Harassment; and Photography/Recordings. This policy will be updated as necessary.

Applicable Settings
This policy applies to all SRNT-sponsored events and the policies herein apply to all attendees, speakers, presenters, exhibitors, staff, contractors, volunteers, and guests participating in the following:

- Annual Meeting, including scientific sessions, pre-conference workshops, exhibits, and any other SRNT-sponsored events related to the Annual Meeting
- Board teleconferences and meetings
- Network and Committee teleconferences and meetings
- Posts on the SRNT and SRNT-sponsored listservs
- Any other meeting that is being convened under the SRNT name

The above list is not exhaustive. Any meeting or event—virtual or in person—sponsored by SRNT is covered by this Code of Conduct.

Who is Bound by this Code?
This policy applies to all participants/attendees, speakers and presenters, exhibitors, staff, contractors, volunteers, and guests.
Expected Behavior

Participants in SRNT-sponsored activities are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner. As representatives of our field, members and Participants should, at all times, demonstrate high standards of personal conduct and aspire to elevate the field of nicotine/tobacco research by modeling integrity, competency, professionalism, and truthfulness. Members and participants of SRNT shall:

- Demonstrate respect and consideration for all people.
- Truthfully and accurately represent one’s credentials, professional education, and experience, as well as conflicts of interest and, where appropriate, funding sources.
- Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants. Alert SRNT staff if you notice a dangerous situation or someone in distress.
- Be collaborative. Communicate openly, with respect for other participants, critiquing ideas rather than individuals.
- Be mindful not to exert dominance over others or over exchanges. Examples of exerting dominance include, but are not limited to:
  - exceeding appropriate talking times when voicing questions/comments after presentations
  - interrupting others, talking over others, and raising your voice to prevent others from voicing their opinions
  - engaging in body language that communicates dismissal of others’ opinion (e.g. eye rolling, scoffing)
  - ignoring verbal or nonverbal cues that the other individual is no longer comfortable partaking in a conversation with you
  - purposefully eliciting embarrassment, anger, or defensiveness in another individual within a conversation
- Demonstrate that differing perspectives are valued – including those that you may not share; SRNT is, after all, a gathering place for researchers from different backgrounds, different viewpoints, and different approaches to solving the problems facing our field and society. Critique ideas, not people. No personal attacks.
- Do not engage in behavior and speech that is intimidating, harassing, abusive, discriminatory, disruptive, threatening, derogatory, unlawful, or demeaning toward others.
- If asked by a session leader or facilitator, or any convening official, to stop conduct or comments, immediately comply.
- Honor the intellectual property rights of SRNT and its participants.
- Respect the rules and policies of the meeting venue, hotels, SRNT-contracted facility, or any other venue.
- Refrain from harmful or inappropriate verbal or written comments or visual images related to gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability, or other protected characteristics.
- Refrain from inappropriate use of nudity and/or sexual language and images in public spaces (including presentation slides and speech).
• Refrain from destroying or vandalizing the property or materials of others.
• Refrain from inappropriate use of alcohol or smoking, including smokeless tobacco products and ENDS, other than in designated areas.
• Refrain from any other illegal activity not already covered above.

Harassment

Harassing conduct can take many forms and includes, but is not limited to, the following: slurs, epithets, derogatory comments, insults, degrading or obscene words, jokes, demeaning statements, offensive gestures, or displaying derogatory or demeaning pictures, drawings, or cartoons based upon an individual’s sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, physical or mental disability, perceived disability, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal or pertinent state laws or local ordinances.

Sexually harassing conduct in particular includes all of these prohibited actions, as well as other unwelcome conduct that is sexual in nature, such as unwanted sexual advances; lewd propositions or innuendos; leering; making sexual gestures; making sexually suggestive or graphic comments or engaging in inappropriate sexually-oriented conversation; displaying sexually suggestive objects, graphics, pictures, or posters, whether physically or over the Internet; making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs or jokes; the sexual touching or display of one’s own body; or unwanted physical touching or assault, as well as impeding or blocking movements.

Sexually harassing conduct can be by a person of either the same or different gender. Conduct that begins as consensual in nature may become harassment if one party withdraws their consent. Consent must be ongoing and enthusiastic or the conduct is nonconsensual. Sexual or other harassment prohibited by this policy is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

The above list of prohibited behaviors is not a complete rendering of what may be deemed sexual or other harassment prohibited by this policy. It is difficult to define every action or word that could be interpreted as harassment. However, SRNT has a "zero tolerance" policy toward discrimination and all forms of harassment. SRNT reserves the right to discipline meeting participants who engage in any inappropriate conduct, even if it is not specifically referred to or defined in this Code, or is not legally actionable as sexual or any other form of harassment.

Prohibited harassment includes verbal, physical, and visual conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment.

Prohibited Conduct

Prohibited conduct at SRNT meetings includes, but is not limited to:

1. harassment based on sex, gender, race, color, personal appearance, national origin, religion, age, physical disability, mental disability, perceived disability, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal or pertinent state laws;
2. demeaning comments or harassment about a person’s professional status, qualifications, or affiliations;
3. sexual harassment, as defined as outlined in this document;
4. abusive conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with another person’s ability to benefit from and enjoy or participate in the meeting, including social events related to the meeting and sponsored by SRNT;
5. undue or excessive interruption of any event, speaker, or session; and
6. violence or threats of violence.

Reporting Harassment
SRNT is committed to supporting a productive and safe working environment for everyone at SRNT-sponsored meetings or events. Anyone who feels unsafe at an in-person SRNT meeting or event should use a venue phone and ask for security. Persons experiencing or witnessing harassment -- or wrongful conduct of any kind -- are encouraged to report it by one of the methods listed below and providing as many details as possible.

Reports may be made anonymously, although SRNT can investigate and handle a complaint more effectively if the identities of both the alleged victim and harasser are known.

EMERGENCY situations
Contact security at an in-person event venue
Contact SRNT’s Security Consultant, Bill Stoeffler (bstoeffler@reesgroupinc.com)
Call Police at 9-1-1

NON-EMERGENCY situations
For situations with no immediate danger, contact one of the following, based on your comfort level:

1. SRNT Past President Jodi Prochaska (jpro@stanford.edu)
2. SRNT Past President Marina Picciotto (marina.picciotto@yale.edu)
3. SRNT Past President Debbie Ossip (Deborah_Ossip@URMC.Rochester.edu)
4. SRNT Executive Director Bruce Wheeler (608-345-9979, bwheler@srnt.org)
5. SRNT staff at the registration desk at in-person meetings
6. The SRNT President or any member of the Board of Directors

You may expect a response within 24 hours.

Follow-Up & Investigation
ALL complaints will be taken seriously, with an investigation, consulting with the President, other elected officials, and professional consultants, as necessary. During a meeting or event that responsibility may be delegated to an SRNT official or other representative. If a report is made by someone who is willing to be contacted, a management team member from The Rees Group (TRG) or a member of the Board of Directors will follow up with that person.

If a report is made by an individual who wishes to remain anonymous, TRG will forward the report to the Board of Directors for review.
An investigation will be conducted as appropriate, based upon the nature of the complaint. In most situations, the representative will discuss the complaint details first with the individual filing the report and may also contact the alleged offender. The findings will be reported to the SRNT Board of Directors.

SRNT will take action when appropriate to protect the safety and well-being of its members and other meeting attendees. Actions may include removing an individual from a meeting or event without warning, prohibiting an individual from attending future SRNT meetings, and/or rescinding SRNT membership. SRNT may also contact law enforcement authorities if it appears that laws were broken.

**Consequences**

Unacceptable behavior including violations of this policy will not be tolerated. If a member or participant engages in unacceptable behavior, staff, after consultation with the President and as necessary the Board of Directors, may take appropriate action, including removal from the meeting, without refund, and/or prohibition from attending future SRNT meetings or participating in any future SRNT events/activities. Egregious violations will be referred to the Board of Directors for action or sanctions, including, for members, expulsion from the Society (in accordance with Bylaws Article III.2) and the possibility of reporting to local law enforcement.

**No Retaliation**

Retaliation against a person reporting harassment is also a violation of this policy. It is also a violation to report an incident in bad faith. SRNT will take action against any person found to be committing a willful violation.

**Photography, Recording and Social Media**

SRNT promotes the advancement and open sharing of scientific knowledge and also recognizes a fundamental responsibility to prevent the unauthorized use of proprietary, preliminary, or unpublished information shared by speakers.

- **Photography:** Non-flash photographs may be taken during oral or poster presentations for non-commercial personal use only, unless prohibited by the speaker, and may NOT be published in any form. Distraction to presenters and audience members must be minimized when capturing images.
- **Audio Visual Recording:** Audio or video recording of sessions by means of any device (e.g. cell phones/PDAs, laptops, cameras, etc.) is prohibited. This includes video taped interviews during poster or other scientific sessions. If interviews are desired, please contact staff to request assistance from SRNT’s Media Coordinator.
- **Social Media:** Attendees may post information from sessions on social media in a professional manner but are expected to respect the wishes of presenters. Information or images from presentation slides marked “DO NOT POST” may NOT be shared on social media in any form. Information on posters may NOT be posted to social media unless
permission is granted by the corresponding author/presenter. Participants are expected to respect the copyright and other intellectual property rights of presenters.

Note About Differences of Opinion and Offense:
It is not a violation of this Code of Conduct Policy to express an opinion or to raise relevant research or an experience that may be at odds with the opinions of others—if the comments are part of a serious discussion of the convening topic at hand and is offered in a manner that is both respectful and considerate. However, making comments reasonably expected to cause offense gratuitously may be considered a violation.

Code of Conduct approved by the SRNT Board of Directors, December 2020