

# Statement of GEM Anti-Harassment Policy

Geospace Environment Modeling (GEM) is committed to providing all participants of any activities associated with GEM an environment that is free from harassment. The purpose of this policy is to gather all anti-harassment policies governing GEM. This policy applies to all attendees at GEM activities including scientists, students, guests, staff, and contractors participating in scientific sessions, auxiliary meetings, and social events associated with any GEM gathering or other associated activity. This document contains where to find policy documentation including the procedure for reporting harassment, a definition of harassment, the procedures and responsibilities of the GEM Steering Committee in addressing harassment (including external harassment cases), and prohibits retaliation.

## The Anti-Harassment Policy

GEM activities are supported in part by the National Science Foundation (NSF) through a grant held by the institution of the Meeting Organizers. Consequently, GEM is subject to NSF policies through the grant holder's institution. The responsibility to ensure NSF policy on anti-harassment is carried out appropriately is ultimately the Meeting Organizer's institution. It is the responsibility of GEM to ensure the policies of the grant holder's institution are prominently displayed on the GEM Wiki and the GEM Workshop websites. Anyone covered by this policy that wants to file a harassment report should access these documents on the GEM websites and follow the instructions therein. The policy of the grant holder's institution must include information about how to file a report about harassment.

GEM has the right to have anti-harassment policies and procedures beyond the policies of NSF and the grant holder's institution, as described in the remainder of this document. If there are any policies herein that contradict policies of NSF or the grant holder's institution, those policies take precedent over the policies herein.

## Definition of Harassment

Harassment is prohibited by Federal law, and is defined as any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct based on race, color, religion, sex (includes sexual harassment and discrimination based on pregnancy), gender, disability, age, national origin, sexual orientation, physical characteristics, and protected genetic information that is so objectively hostile as to alter the conditions of the individual's employment. In the present context, the definition is applied to any action which unreasonably interferes with an individual's ability to conduct professional duties and engage in GEM-related activities by creating an environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive. Mere offensiveness, related for example to a disagreement about professional activities such as research, is not enough to create a hostile environment. Although repeated incidents increase the likelihood that harassment has created a hostile environment, a serious incident, even if isolated, can be sufficient to create a hostile environment. Harassment does not necessarily have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. Furthermore, any retaliation against an individual who has brought forth a complaint alleging harassment is similarly unlawful.

Sexual harassment is a concern that deserves special mention. Federal guidelines and case law define sexual harassment as including "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature" not only when the conduct is made as a condition of employment ("quid pro quo" harassment), but also when the conduct creates a hostile environment.

## Reporting an Incident

Any individual covered by this policy who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment and would like to report it is recommended to document what happened with as many details as possible (times, places, nature of the incident, and comments made). Harassment should be reported following the policy of the grant holder's institution. It is strongly recommended that harassment is reported before it becomes severe or pervasive. Anonymous reporting is typically acceptable.

Whether or not an incident is reported to the grant holder's institution, the accuser has the option to contact a member of the GEM Steering Committee to alert them of the incident. A list of members of the GEM Steering Committee is available on the GEM Wiki. The individual should contact whichever member they are most comfortable with, including the Meeting Organizer or Chair.

## Response to Incident

A Steering Committee member receiving a complaint should bring it to either the Meeting Organizer, Chair, and/or Vice Chair as soon as possible. The Meeting Organizer, Chair, and Vice Chair (MCV), except for those who are conflicted (e.g., cannot handle the complaint in an impartial manner), will then meet and discuss the complaint and whether any actions need to be taken from the perspective of meeting organization for the safety of all parties involved. They will protect the confidentiality of harassment allegations to the extent possible. If the individual reporting the incident, or the person or people accused, would like help to not be in the same sessions as each other, the Meeting Organizer will try to accommodate. The MCV should seek guidance from a Title IX office if warranted. If deemed necessary for the safety of those involved, the MCV has the right to prevent the accuser or accused from attending the meeting until the matter is resolved. The Meeting Organizer is responsible for the actions being carried out; if the Meeting Organizer is conflicted, the Chair is responsible for the actions being carried out.

In the interim, at any time between the report being made and the matter being closed, GEM unfortunately is not able to provide counseling support for the accuser, the accused, or anyone else covered by this policy. Those interested in such support should contact the meeting organizer's institution, similar resources from their home institution, or third-party hotlines such as the one by RAINN (1-800-656-4673).

Individuals engaging in harassment as defined by this policy, as well as those making allegations of harassment in bad faith, are subject to disciplinary action. Possible actions may include a verbal warning, ejection from the meeting or activity in question without refund of registration fees, a permanent ban from GEM activities, and/or the reporting of the incident to the offender's employer. The Meeting Organizer is responsible for the actions being carried out; if the Meeting Organizer is conflicted, the Chair is responsible for the actions being carried out.

## Retaliation is Prohibited

"Retaliation" is defined as taking an adverse action against an individual, or subject an individual to conduct, with the purpose of unreasonably creating an environment that is hostile because of something that individual did to further this policy. This includes, but is not limited to, a person reporting an incident, any people who served as witnesses, and people supporting or opposing a complaint. Retaliation also includes interfering with the reporting of, or the investigation of, prohibited behavior. Examples include tampering with or destroying relevant evidence and intimidating, threatening or attempting to influence, in any way, the testimony or information of a complainant or witness.

GEM does not tolerate any form of retaliation against persons who report an incident, witnesses, or those who assist in the response to a complaint. Retaliation is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, is subject to disciplinary action as described in the previous section.

## GEM Authority on External Harassment Cases

If there is a harassment complaint or investigation involving people covered by this policy that occurred in a setting external to GEM, such as at a home institution or another meeting, the GEM Meeting Organizer may take actions to preserve the security of the meeting and its participants. Whether previous or ongoing, attendance can be restricted or barred as deemed appropriate. The Meeting Organizer is responsible for the actions being carried out; if the Meeting Organizer is conflicted, the Chair is responsible for the actions being carried out.