Society of Forensic Toxicologists Code of Conduct

I. Introduction

The mission of the Society of Forensic Toxicologists (SOFT) is to advance forensic toxicology through collaboration, education, professional development, and the promotion of research in the interest of justice and public health. Our vision is to elevate justice and public health through excellence in forensic toxicology.

The SOFT Code of Conduct applies to all members of the SOFT community, including but not limited to staff members and participants in all SOFT activities. The Code aims to define and promote high standards of professional practice. The goals of this Code are to:

- Define both expected and prohibited standards of behavior

- Provide a benchmark for behavioral evaluation

- Ensure transparency in organizational activities

- Foster an environment where people can participate and collaborate without fear of harassment or discrimination

- Reinforce the SOFT community identity and establish a culture of care

These standards ensure that all SOFT members promote the mission of SOFT and maintain a professional and respectful environment. The document applies to all activities and interactions involving contributors in SOFT, whether inside or outside the scope of SOFT activities.

II. Our Values and Ethics

Members of the SOFT community agree to conduct themselves in a professional manner. All who behave in a manner detrimental to the organization or the profession of forensic toxicology in general may be censured or expelled from membership.

The SOFT Code of Conduct defines expected behaviors and promotes high standards of professional practice. SOFT strictly prohibits discrimination, intimidation, harassment, and bullying of any kind and on any basis. This commitment calls for a safe, welcoming community where members and participants can do their best work and behave in accordance with this Code of Conduct.

SOFT is committed to maintaining a positive working and meeting environment, a responsibility we all share. All shall adhere to the expected behaviors listed below; failure to do so may be seen as a violation of the Code of Conduct and result in consequences as listed in section VI. This document ensures accountability, provides pathways to address unacceptable behavior, and offers redress where unacceptable behaviors are observed and reported.

III. Application of the Code

The Code of Conduct applies to all SOFT activities, including but not limited to virtual and in-person meetings, functions, conferences, mailing lists, and social platforms. This Code constitutes an agreement to adhere to the standards of conduct.

These policies also cover participant conduct in all professional and educational settings and related environments, even if those settings/environments are not affiliated with SOFT. This may include:

- Professional workplace networking events or activities

- Conferences, meetings, workshops, tutorials, discussion panels, and other activities at SOFT-affiliated meetings (both in-person and virtual)

- Written and verbal communications

- Informal spaces with social activities involving SOFT members

- Informal and professional social networking websites and online platforms

This Code complements, rather than replaces, any other applicable policy, agreement, legal right, law, or obligation for any member or participant in the SOFT community.

IV. Expected Behaviors

All members of the SOFT community in all professional, social, and educational settings covered by the Code of Conduct shall:

- Adhere to SOFT's mission and policies

- Act to uphold the interests and reputation of SOFT

- Treat all members, participants, attendees, staff, and vendors with respect, empathy, consideration, and professionalism, valuing diverse perspectives

- Give others fair, inclusive, and equitable consideration regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin, caste, immigration status, religion, age, marital status, parental status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, body size, socioeconomic background, education level, disability, or veteran status

- Communicate openly with respect for others, critique ideas rather than individuals, and be mindful of allowing space for others in discussions

- Avoid personal attacks on others, whether directed at SOFT members, participants, attendees, staff, or vendors

- Acknowledge the contributions of peers and avoid injuring the reputation of others through false, biased, or undocumented claims

- Respect the rules and policies of all meeting/event venues as well as any other applicable codes of conduct

- Accommodate participants' needs for physical distancing and other accommodations

V. Prohibited Behaviors

Prohibited behaviors, which may result in consequences if found in violation of the Code, include but are not limited to:

- Harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, stereotyping, or recurring patterns of microaggressions

- Physical abuse, intimidation, and disregard for others' safety

- Verbal or written abuse, including the use of coded language or outing aspects of someone's identity without consent

- Violation of personal boundaries or continuation of prohibited behaviors

- Display or distribution of inappropriate images or recordings involving provocative behavior

- Threatening harm, whether physical, emotional, professional, or financial

- Unauthorized recording of others or dissemination of such materials

- Disrespectful communication or disruption of discussions

- Retaliation against those involved in reporting or handling potential violations

- Any behavior that contributes to a hostile environment

VI. Reporting Process

Any member of the SOFT community can report harmful behavior or potential violations of this Code by submitting a report to the external SOFT Accountability Officer (SAO) at safeconferences@gmail.com.

If immediate assistance is necessary, a member of the SOFT staff or Board of Directors should be notified. SOFT prioritizes respecting each person's safety and confidentiality while maintaining the integrity of its environment. The reporting party's identity remains confidential unless disclosure is necessary and agreed upon by the reporting party.

SOFT ensures timely investigations of reported violations. Consequences for violations may include:

- A verbal or written request to cease prohibited conduct

- Removal of messages, solicitations, or attendance from events

- Suspension from SOFT activities, leadership roles, or membership