



WQA CODE OF CONDUCT

Statement of Appropriate Conduct for everyone attending WQA’s virtual, social media and in-person events, including but not limited to: staff, members, guests, volunteers, speakers, sponsors, exhibitors, and attendees approved by the WQA Board 03/19/2020.

Our positive reputation reflects not only on WQA but also the entire industry we serve.

The Water Quality Association (WQA) empowers water treatment professionals to move the industry forward in several ways including, but not limited to, serving in volunteer capacities, attending organized events, receiving continuing education, building professional networks, and discovering new products and services for professional use. To provide all water treatment professionals — such as staff, members, guests, volunteers, speakers, sponsors, exhibitors, and attendees — the opportunity to benefit from the education, events, and volunteer opportunities, WQA is committed to providing virtual, social media and in-person environments free of physical and verbal harassment and bullying.

As an association, WQA is strongly committed to inclusivity, equity, and the free expression of ideas. WQA is committed to the value of civil discourse and the free exploration of competing ideas and concepts — with a fundamental respect for the rights, dignity, and value of all persons.

In the context of the WQA Code of Conduct and the professional practices of the water treatment industry, critical examination of beliefs and viewpoints does not, by itself, constitute hostile conduct or harassment. This Code of Conduct is not intended to constrain responsible scholarly or professional discourse and debate. We welcome engagement with difficult topics, done with respect and care. We recognize a shared responsibility to create conduct expectations and hold each other accountable to sustain that environment for the benefit of all.

MINDSET expectations:

- Maintain focus on association members and the entire industry, instead of a personal agenda.
- Look out for one another. Advocate for, stand up for, and help one another to accomplish goals.
- Demonstrate a unified front by supporting majority decisions made by any group you are involved with.
- Respect all opinions being openminded to new ideas and new approaches.
- Accept all people without discrimination, harassment or intimidation.
- Respect the boundaries and privacy of others.
- Take accountability for statements by speaking using “I” statements, rather than in the “third” person.
- Openly express ideas without abuse of power.
- Facilitate collaboration without being disruptive.
- Be curious, not defensive.



BEHAVIOR expectations:

- Treat colleagues as professionals – with respect and consideration.
- Attack problems, not people.
- Use appropriate communication channels, including:
 - Use e-mail primarily to request and convey information.
 - Rely on oral, and preferably in-person, communication to convey critiques and/or concerns.
 - Consider separating personal and professional social media profiles, opinions, and networking.
- Make every effort to be on-time, in the moment and avoid distractions when participating in meetings.
- Should you choose to drink alcoholic beverages or use a controlled substance, behave in accordance with usual business standards.
- Treat people without harassment, including unwelcome verbal or physical attention and contact.
- It is not appropriate to represent yourself as a spokesperson for WQA or to share personal advertisement of products or services absent permission from WQA.
- Privacy or IP rights are critical for industry professionals, recording or taking photographs is prohibited.
- It is the responsibility of everyone to ensure full compliance with the WQA Antitrust Policy and the WQA Code of Ethics and to be aware of the WQA Whistleblower Policy.

CRUCIAL CONVERSATION expectations:

- Crucial conversations will occur to build relationships on trust and respect without false perceptions.
- WQA is a feedback-rich environment. Feedback can be tough, but acceptance is always professional.
- Suspend judgment and assume good intentions by all. Most humans do not have bad intentions.
- Conflict resolution begins ASAP and with crucial conversations between those involved.
- Successful conflict resolutions focus on facts and less on assumed motives.
- Everyone needs an outlet to vent when difficulties arise. Issues should be shared in appropriate channels rather than public forums or rumor mills.

All WQA staff, members, guests, volunteers, speakers, sponsors, exhibitors, and attendees are expected to observe these rules and behaviors in all meeting venues, including virtual venues, and in-person meetings and social events. Participants asked to stop inappropriate, hostile or harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately. Meeting participants seek to learn, network, and socialize with others in the industry. Please do so responsibly and with respect for the right of others to do likewise.

Please contact WQA staff immediately regarding any issue arising under the WQA Code of Conduct. All such reports will be directed immediately to the WQA Executive Director. An appropriate review will be conducted, including, as appropriate, consultation and fact development with other WQA staff, volunteer leaders, and/or legal counsel. Event security and/or local law enforcement may be involved as appropriate, based on the specific circumstances.

Consequences match the severity of the situation ranging from minor infractions to illegal or repeated offenses. For violation of this Code of Conduct, consequences escalate and may rise to the level requiring termination of volunteer participation, expulsion from the meeting without refund, notification of employer, disqualification from attending future events, and/or termination of WQA membership.