

# **INDIANA DEMOCRATIC PARTY CODE OF CONDUCT**

As Democrats, our united effort is focused on working together toward common goals in the best interest of Hoosiers, treating each other with respect, trusting one another to act in our Party's best interest, inviting constructive feedback, and collaborating with each other as we work toward a better tomorrow.

The purpose of the Indiana Democratic Party's Code of Conduct is to foster and encourage a healthy culture of engagement, civic action, respect, inclusion, and safety among all individuals involved with Democratic politics in the state of Indiana. Those engaging with the Indiana Democratic Party ("the Party") have the right to be treated fairly, equally, and within the bounds of Party rules and this Code of Conduct. While robust and passionate debate on policy, strategy, and message is encouraged, it does not justify violating the norms of civility and other behaviors detailed in this Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct defines the expectations that anyone who Affiliates with the Party shall adhere to in order to keep everyone safe. It also provides a framework to ensure the Party's standards of conduct are demonstrated consistently by those representing the Party. Anyone who engages in the Party's work is responsible for maintaining a welcoming environment.

All Affiliates of the Party, including but not limited to: elected officials, candidates, volunteers, Official Party Members, Party staff, Party interns, and attendees of Party events are expected to follow this Code of Conduct. All Official Party Members are expected to sign this Code of Conduct; other Affiliates are encouraged to sign.

A person may be in violation of the Code of Conduct even if they did not intend to be in conflict, or believed the conduct was welcome.

Failure to observe all aspects of the policies outlined in this Code of Conduct is subject to further action as described in this Code of Conduct. Failure to read this Code of Conduct does not excuse an individual from these responsibilities.

While Party staff is expected to follow this Code of Conduct, the process as outlined in the Employee Handbook for any Code of Conduct violations that occur (by or to Party staff) takes precedence and will be followed.

The Code of Conduct does not anticipate every situation or answer every question, but clearly states behaviors that will not be tolerated by the Party. The Ethics Committee will review all reported incidents to determine if a violation occurred and what remedy may be applied. All reports made to the Ethics Committee must

contain substantial reasons why such a violation has occurred.

The Party reserves the right to refer any breach of this Code of Conduct which breaks criminal law to law enforcement in addition to taking any Party disciplinary actions.

## **Bias, Discrimination, and Harassment**

Bias is a broad category of behaviors including discrimination, harassment, and other actions which demean or intimidate individuals or groups because of personal characteristics or beliefs of their expression.

Discrimination is when someone treats an individual differently because of their race, color, age, sex, disability, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristic.

Harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct that is based on a person's sex, national origin, race, color, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, or other immutable characteristics.

The Indiana Democratic Party prohibits bias, discrimination, and harassment against anyone who Affiliates with the Party.

Additional prohibited conduct may take the form of bullying, threats, and assault, as well as verbal, written, physical, or visual harassment which may include, but is not limited to, derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, jokes, intimidation, negative stereotyping, or graphic material.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is defined as communication of a sexual nature, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or sexually motivated physical contact. Sexual harassment also may be in the form of nonsexual, offensive conduct that is directed at a person because of their gender.

Sexual harassment can also be quid pro quo in nature, which is when someone demands sexual favors in exchange for employment benefits or advancements in the Party. Quid pro quo also includes a threat of negative consequences for non-compliance of sexual favors. Quid pro quo does not have to be overtly stated and can be implied.

Sexual harassment may also include conduct that is verbal, written, visual, or physical. Sexual harassment is not limited to conduct motivated by sexual attraction, and might occur between members of the same or different genders.

Anyone who Affiliates with the Party who engages in sexual harassment is in violation of this Code of Conduct and is subject to disciplinary action.

## **Retaliation**

We know it takes courage to come forward and share concerns. The Party is committed to maintaining a culture in which people feel comfortable reporting conduct that puts them at risk. Retaliation of any kind against those who make a good faith report or participate in an investigation of a possible violation of the Party's Code of Conduct, politics, or the law is inconsistent with our values, is not tolerated, and will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Disciplinary Action**

Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to, the following remedies:

- Written warning
- Censure: Official statement reprimanding an individual for the breach of the Code of Conduct
- Suspension: Any period of time whereby an individual is barred from participating in Party activities, attending Party meetings or events, or from serving as a Party Official for a designated amount of time not to exceed 6 months.
- Ban: A temporary or permanent ban for attending Party events and meetings and holding Party Office

The Ethics Committee will put forward a recommendation for disciplinary action to the State Committee.

## **Acknowledgement of Understanding**

I hereby confirm that I have read and understand the Indiana Democratic Party Code of Conduct. I further acknowledge that a violation of the Code of Conduct will result in discipline which may include anything from a private reprimand to a permanent ban.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_