

HARASSMENT POLICY

Event Support Solutions Inc. (ESSI)/NekoCon are committed to an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity and are free from all forms of harassment and discrimination. Any form of harassment, even when not unlawful or directed at a protected category, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. All parties including but not limited to staff, vendors, artists, contractors, attendees, guests, volunteers, etc. are expected to adhere to this policy.

Reported or suspected occurrences of harassment or discrimination will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. Following an investigation, ESSI/NekoCon will promptly take any necessary and appropriate disciplinary action.

ESSI/NekoCon will not permit or condone any acts of retaliation against anyone who files or cooperates in the investigation of harassment or discrimination complaints.

1. The term “harassment” includes harassment based on any category protected by federal, state or local law, which may include, but is not limited to, unwelcome slurs, jokes, or verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religious creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, pregnancy, childbirth, physical disability, mental and/or intellectual disability, age, military status or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran, marital status, registered domestic partner or civil union status, familial status, gender (including sex stereotyping and gender identity or expression), medical condition (including, but not limited to, cancer related or HIV/AIDS related), genetic information, or sexual orientation.
2. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:
 1. Submission to such conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition of volunteering;
 2. Decisions are based on a volunteer’s submission to or rejection of such conduct; or
 3. Such conduct unreasonably interferes with a volunteer’s performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Complaint Procedure

ESSI/NekoCon provides you with a convenient and reliable method for reporting incidents of alleged harassment, including sexual harassment, and discrimination. Any volunteer who feels harassed or discriminated against is encouraged to immediately inform the alleged offender that the behavior is unwelcome. In many instances, the person is unaware their conduct is offensive and this action alone may often resolve the problem. If the informal discussion with the alleged offender is unsuccessful in remedying the problem, or if you do not feel comfortable with such an approach, you should immediately report the conduct to your immediate superior and/or Human Resources Department. We cannot resolve a harassment or discrimination problem, unless we know about it. Therefore, it is your responsibility to bring those kinds of problems to our attention

so we can take the necessary steps to correct any problems. The report should include all facts available to you regarding the alleged harassment, sexual harassment, or discrimination.

If you wish to make an anonymous complaint, you may do so. However, the scope of our investigation may be limited based on the information you provide.

Confidentiality

All reports of alleged harassment, sexual harassment, or discrimination will be treated seriously. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible. However, to conduct a thorough investigation, certain information may need to be disclosed to other individuals, including the alleged offender. Consequently, absolute confidentiality cannot be promised and cannot be guaranteed.

Investigative Procedure

Once a complaint of alleged harassment, sexual harassment, or discrimination is received, we will begin a prompt and thorough investigation. The investigation may include interviews with all involved parties, including the alleged harasser, and anyone who is aware of facts or incidents alleged to have occurred.

Following an investigation, ESSI/NekoCon will promptly take any necessary and appropriate disciplinary action. Disciplinary action will be taken if the investigation reveals that a volunteer has acted in a manner that is not in alignment with the goals of this policy. ESSI/NekoCon may address any issue discovered during an investigation. This may include some or all of the following steps:

1. Restore any lost terms, conditions, or benefits of staffing to the complaining volunteer.
2. Discipline the alleged harasser. This discipline may include written disciplinary warnings, transfer, demotion, or complete removal from the event.

If the alleged harassment, sexual harassment, or discrimination is from an attendee, vendor, contractor, other entity, ESSI/NekoCon will take appropriate action to stop the conduct.

If you have made a complaint but feel that the action taken in response has not remedied the situation, you should make an additional complaint following the complaint procedure outlined in this policy.