

**SOCIETY FOR CALIFORNIA ARCHAEOLOGY
MEETING SAFETY POLICY AND CODE OF CONDUCT AT SCA EVENTS**

I. PRINCIPLES

Background

This policy (“Policy”) defines a code of conduct for attendees of the SCA Annual Meeting and other SCA events and mandates response to incidents of misconduct in activities sponsored by the SCA. This Policy will be reviewed and updated, as needed, every three years unless events and situations necessitate earlier action.

Everyone is entitled to a safe and harassment-free experience when participating in SCA activities. The SCA understands that participation at its events is an important part of career development and affirms the values of respect, equity, multicultural pluralism, and nondiscrimination at these gatherings. Harassment harms the individual. Harassment also damages the SCA community by discouraging participation in SCA events and compromising the exchange of ideas that is at the center of the SCA’s mission to promote and stimulate interest and research in the archaeology of California.

Because of the importance of the meeting to career development and concerns at the Society about inclusion of marginalized groups in the Society’s events, the SCA has elected in this Policy to give priority to survivors of harassment and assault and to ensure their ability to participate freely in SCA events.

Scope

This policy applies to all meeting attendees at the SCA Annual Meeting and any SCA events, which includes the conference rooms and organized sessions of the SCA, workshops, excursions, receptions, webinars, and SCA committee, task force, and interest group meetings.¹ Although reportable incidents are not limited to those occurring at the Annual Meeting and SCA events, any expulsions or restrictions are limited to areas under SCA control. For example, the SCA can bar or exclude an individual from conference sessions, exposition halls, SCA meetings, or social events; however, the SCA’s ability to restrict individuals from spaces accessible to the general public is limited.

Attendee Health and Safety

When any event participant discloses or reports an incident of misconduct, the SCA’s first immediate priority will be the health, safety, and well-being of the attendee. Except in emergency situations, where the venue policy and procedure take precedence, the SCA Executive Board, in consultation with legal counsel as necessary and hotel/convention center security, will determine whether the involvement of local law enforcement is necessary or prudent.

II. CODE OF CONDUCT

SCA meeting participants involved in SCA activities and events are expected to conform to the principles and provisions of this policy and to the SCA Code of Ethical Guidelines

The following behaviors are prohibited at the SCA Annual Meeting and SCA events:

- Harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, and coercion
- Physical or verbal abuse, including bullying
- Unwelcome comments and/or exclusionary behaviors related to an individual’s age, sex, gender identity and expression, perceived sexual identity, appearance or body size, military status, ethnicity, individual lifestyle, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or cognitive abilities, political affiliation, race, religion, or nationality
- Intimidation, stalking, or following

Any attendee who is required by their employer or by a legal process to refrain from certain behaviors or from contact with certain individuals is expected to adhere to those restrictions while participating in all SCA activities. Violation of employer requirements and/or legal restrictions will constitute a violation of this Code of Conduct if disclosed or reported.

Prohibition against Retaliation

Retaliation is when someone penalizes another person for:

- Reporting, or expressing an intent to report, what the person believes in good faith to be assault, harassment, or any conduct prohibited by the SCA as stated herein
- Assisting another in reporting assault or harassment, or any conduct prohibited by the SCA
- Participating in any SCA inquiry, review, or investigation pertaining to misconduct
- Having previously reported assault, harassment, or misconduct, and/or having participated in an inquiry, review, or investigation, whether the potential violation occurred at SCA sponsored events

SCA strictly prohibits retaliation to ensure that SCA event participants feel comfortable coming forward with their concerns without fear of reprisal. Any person who engages in retaliation in violation of this Policy will be subject to barring or expulsion from SCA events, possible termination of membership, or other disciplinary action.

III. OMBUDS AT THE SCA ANNUAL MEETING

Ombuds

For each SCA Annual Meeting, the SCA will designate two (2) ombuds (“Ombuds”) to serve as confidential resources for meeting attendees. They will also serve during the following year to respond to harassment reported at other SCA events. Ombuds will be selected from from a pool of former SCA officers who have volunteered to serve. The primary duties of the Ombuds are (1) to work with meeting attendees to explore and assist them in determining options to help resolve conflicts, problematic issues, or concerns, and (2) to bring systemic concerns to the attention of the organization for resolution. The Ombuds retained by SCA for its Annual Meeting shall follow the [Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics of the International Ombudsman Association](#).

The Ombuds will operate in a manner to preserve the confidentiality of meeting attendees who come to them, will maintain a neutral/impartial position with respect to the concerns raised, and are independent of formal SCA organizational structures.

What an Ombuds Does²

Activities and functions most frequently undertaken by an Ombuds include, but are not limited to:

- Listens and understands issues while remaining neutral with respect to the facts. The Ombuds doesn’t listen to judge or to decide who is right or wrong. The Ombuds listens to understand the issue from the perspective of the individual. This is a critical step in developing options for resolution.
- Assists in reframing issues and developing and helping individuals evaluate options. This helps individuals identify the interests of various parties to the issues and helps focus efforts on potential options to meet those interests.
- Guides or coaches individuals to deal directly with other parties, including the use of formal resolution resources of the organization. An Ombuds often seeks to help individuals improve their skill and their confidence in giving voice to their concerns directly.
- Refers individuals to appropriate resolution resources. An Ombuds may refer individuals to one or more formal organizational resources that can potentially resolve the issue.
- Assists in surfacing issues to formal resolution channels. When an individual is unable or unwilling to surface a concern directly, the Ombuds can assist by helping give voice to the concern and/or creating an awareness of the issue among appropriate decision-makers in the organization.

- Facilitates informal resolution processes. An Ombuds may help to resolve issues between parties through various types of informal mediation in cases where parties consent to this informal process.
- Identifies new issues and opportunities for systemic change for the organization. The unique positioning of the Ombuds serves to provide unfiltered information that can produce insight to issues and resolutions. The Ombuds is a source of detection and early warning of new issues and a source of suggestions of systemic change to improve existing processes.

What an Ombuds Does Not Do

Because of the informal, neutral, confidential, and independent positioning of an Ombuds in an organization, they typically do not undertake the following roles or activities:

- Participate in formal investigations or play any role in a formal issue resolution process
- Serve in any other organizational role that would compromise the neutrality of the Ombuds role
- Receive notice for the organization
- Make binding decisions or mandate policies
- Create or maintain records or reports of individual visitors and individual consultations for the organization

The SCA Ombuds will be as visible as possible at the Annual Meeting so as to be easily identified by meeting attendees.

SCA Ombuds may, with the permission of the individuals who come to them, make recommendations to the SCA Executive Board about specific actions that might enhance the safety and well-being of the individuals while at the Annual Meeting. In situations where the Code of Conduct is implicated, the SCA Executive Board shall advise the individual of the disclosure and reporting process outlined in Section IV below.

Ombuds will be on-site and accessible during the Annual Meeting and available by e-mail, phone, and for face-to-face meetings. Ombuds' contact information will be published in all SCA Annual Meeting collateral materials (printed and online), including on SCA meeting badges.

Ombuds Selection and Identification

The SCA Ombuds retained for the SCA Annual Meeting will be chosen from volunteers from a pool of past SCA officers. At the SCA Annual Meeting, there shall be two (2) Ombuds of different genders. The Ombuds positions will be filled by the SCA Executive Board after candidate interviews have taken place with a panel made up of the SCA Board or designee(s). Upon selection, the SCA Annual Meeting Ombuds' names and contact information will be published in all appropriate Annual Meeting collateral materials. The SCA Ombuds will be as visible as possible at the Annual Meeting and be clearly badged as the "Ombuds."

IV. DISCLOSURE AND REPORTING AT THE SCA ANNUAL MEETING

SCA encourages reporting of any conduct in violation of the Code of Conduct in Section II above, regardless of the identity of the offender. While SCA encourages individuals to firmly and promptly notify the offender that the behavior is unwelcome, SCA also recognizes that power and status disparities between the offender and the recipient of the offensive conduct may make such a confrontation problematic. Consequently, such direct communication is not a requirement or prerequisite for filing a complaint.

Ombuds Visit

Any meeting attendee may reach out to the SCA Meeting Ombuds. This is an independent, informal, and confidential process that enables attendees to discuss any matter of discomfort or distress. The topic of concern may have occurred at an SCA event or elsewhere, or at any point in the past. Connecting with the Ombuds does not require identifying the individual against whom the report is being made ("Subject Individual"³) nor naming the Attendee to the Subject Individual(s) or to the SCA.

Ombuds visits are intended to explore creatively the range of legal, institutional, policy, and personal options and to discuss with the visitor benefits and disadvantages in order to help the individual identify solution(s) that best support them.

While high-level data about the overall categories and types of issues will be shared with the Board by the Ombuds (in the interest of improving the meeting in the future), the Ombuds will adhere to their obligation of confidentiality (unless the individual consents to disclosure), and no specific or identifying information will be shared with the SCA.

Visiting an Ombuds is not mutually exclusive with other processes (e.g., disclosure or report).

Disclosure and Report

Any SCA member or participant at the SCA Annual Meeting (“Attendee”) may submit a disclosure or a report (as defined below) to the SCA Executive Board. Reports and disclosures can be made orally or in writing. There may be circumstances, particularly with Reports, where an oral report may need some written documentation. The SCA Executive Board will be the primary point of contact for the Attendee. Attendees may report incidents with or without identifying the Subject Individual. For purposes of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

Disclosure (hereinafter “Disclosure” or “Disclosures”) occurs when an Attendee notifies the SCA of a violation of the Code of Conduct or other misconduct and requests assistance from the SCA to enable the Attendee’s continued safe participation in SCA activities. The violation may have occurred at an SCA sponsored events, or at any point in the past. Disclosure does not require further investigation or identifying the Subject Individual(s). Disclosure does not require naming the Attendee to the Subject Individual(s). A Disclosure may be made to any member of the SCA Executive Board.

The Attendee’s identity shall remain anonymous, unless the Attendee elects to be identified.

In cases where a Disclosure is made without identification of the Subject Individual, actions that may be taken will be limited to making accommodations for the Attendee, such as arranging for escorts to, from, and during SCA events at the Annual Meeting.

Reporting (hereinafter “Report” or “Reports”) occurs when an Attendee notifies the SCA of a violation of the Code of Conduct, and requests that the SCA review the matter and take action against the Subject Individual to enable the Attendee’s continued safe participation in SCA activities. A Report may be made to any member of the SCA Executive Board.

Reporting requires that an Attendee identify the Subject Individual. A Report will require a description of the alleged incident of misconduct from the Attendee and may be strengthened by statements from any witnesses to the incident.

The SCA Executive Board may provide the Subject Individual with a description of the incident and request a timely response. The SCA Executive Board will reiterate the non-retaliation provision of the Code of Conduct to the Subject Individual.

Disclosures and Reports under this Policy may be made orally or in writing. To assist Attendees, a form for submission of a written Disclosure or Report is attached to this Policy as **Appendix A**, and all Attendees are encouraged to use this form. The Attendee may designate a third party to represent them when submitting a Disclosure or Report, provided the third party can present written proof or confirmation of such designation to ensure such third party is authorized to speak on the Attendee’s behalf (e.g., signed letter/affidavit). Individuals who are submitting Reports on behalf of other SCA members or individuals should use the form and note that it is on another person’s behalf.

Role of the Ombuds

Attendees who submit a Disclosure or Report will be encouraged to speak with the SCA Ombuds at the Annual Meeting as well. The Ombuds will explore with the Attendee ways to stay safe and ways to participate as fully as possible in the

meeting. If a formal report has not been submitted by the Attendee (in cases where a Disclosure has been made), the Ombuds may discuss the option of filing a Report with the SCA as outlined in this Policy; a complaint with the Subject Individuals' employing institution or local law enforcement; or a grievance with the Register of Professional Archaeologists or another adjudicating body; along with exploring local, institutional, legal, and interpersonal options.

The Ombuds may, if appropriate, mediate or otherwise assist the Attendee and Subject Individual in reaching a resolution, particularly in cases of misunderstandings, if the parties agree to that process.

Actions

THE SCA EXECUTIVE BOARD SHALL BE EMPOWERED WITH THE DISCRETION TO TAKE ACTION AT THE SCA ANNUAL MEETING.

Actions may include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- Providing access to escorts to, from, and during events for the Attendee
- Removing the Subject Individual from the Annual Meeting
- Requiring the Subject Individual to modify and/or restrict his or her behavior and activity at the SCA Annual Meeting
- Other reasonable steps, consistent with the nature of the alleged misconduct

The SCA Executive Board will complete a written memo, summarizing the facts obtained and the resolution. The Attendee and Subject Individual will receive a copy. **There may be circumstances in which identities shall be left out or redacted from the memo.**

The SCA Executive Board shall be responsible for prompt updating to the Attendee about the actions taken. The SCA Executive Board will be responsible for notifying the Subject Individual about actions the SCA is taking.

V. DISCLOSURE AND REPORTING PRIOR TO THE SCA ANNUAL MEETING

Any SCA member or participant at the SCA Annual Meeting ("Attendee") may submit a Disclosure or Report up to 30 days prior to the opening session at the SCA Annual Meeting by e-mailing the SCA (office@SCA.Org). Attendees may use a third party to represent them when submitting a Disclosure or Report to SCA and for purposes of discussing next steps with the SCA, provided the third party presents written proof or confirmation of such designation to ensure such third party is authorized to speak on the Attendee's behalf (e.g., signed letter/affidavit).

Article IV: Membership, Section 3 of the SCA Bylaws states:

Members in the Society shall affirm and adhere to the Code of Ethical Guidelines established in the Bylaws of the Society. A Member or a prospective Member whose acts are contrary to the Objectives of the Society or the Code of Ethical Guidelines established in the Bylaws of the Society may be expelled or excluded from Membership by a three-quarters vote of the Executive Board, but only after the Member has been given 15 days prior notice of the pending action together with the reasons therefore, and has been given the opportunity to be heard, orally or in writing, by the Executive Board at least five days before the effective date of expulsion.

Upon being presented with credible evidence that an individual has been found, by a court of competent jurisdiction or an administrative or regulatory body, to have engaged in conduct or actions contrary to the ideals, objectives, and accepted standards of the Society as set forth in these Bylaws, Board policies, or the SCA Code of Ethical Guidelines, the Board may bar that individual from attending the Annual Meeting and other SCA-sponsored events.

Such conduct or action shall include, but is not limited to, sexual assault and harassment.

Registrants for the SCA Annual Meeting are required to self-certify as follows:

I am not and have not ever been the subject of adverse findings from a discrimination or harassment lawsuit or administrative complaint; and

I have not been found at fault in a disciplinary action, such as suspension or termination of registration resulting from a Register of Professional Archaeologists' grievance investigation.

Disclosures submitted under advance reporting shall be reviewed by the SCA Executive Board for purposes of arranging any accommodations requested to ensure the Attendees' safe participation at the SCA Annual Meeting. The SCA Ombuds for such Annual Meeting will be made aware of the matter and briefed on the accommodations made.

Reports submitted up to 30 days prior to the opening session at the Annual Meeting shall be reviewed by the **SCA Executive Board**.

VI. CONFIDENTIALITY, RECORDS, AND REPORTING

Confidentiality

All matters falling under this Policy will be held strictly confidential within the SCA Executive Committee, Ombuds, SCA Staff, and, if applicable, SCA Counsel. Confidentiality shall be maintained in the interest of protecting the identity of any individual submitting a Disclosure or Report, any other individual party submitting the same, and/or the individual against whom a Disclosure or Report is being made, as well as to minimize legal exposure to the SCA subsequent to any inquiry, review, or investigations conducted by the SCA or the Ombuds ("Inquiry" or "Inquiries").

Notwithstanding the confidentiality of any Disclosure, Report, or Inquiry, the identity of any individual or party to a Disclosure, Report, or Inquiry may be made known on a need-to-know basis, with such individuals' prior written consent, if such individuals so choose. The identity of Subject Individuals, as part of the reporting to the Board and SCA membership, shall be made consistent with the "Reporting" provisions of this Section V below. It is understood that when an adverse determination is made against a Subject Individual, the identity of such Subject Individual will be disclosed on a need-to-know basis, to effectuate the intent of this Policy.

Records

All SCA deliberations with regard to any Disclosure, Report, or Inquiry, including but not limited to deliberations of the Ombuds and SCA Executive Board, shall be kept strictly confidential.

Reporting

The SCA Executive Board will publish an aggregated summary to the SCA membership each year on incidents of misconduct, Disclosures and Reports made, and list of actions taken and accommodations made.

The Ombuds will summarize for the Board within two (2) months of the Annual Meeting basic demographics and problem categories of those who utilized the service (without any identifying information) at the SCA Annual Meeting and will provide any feedback and recommendations the SCA might wish to consider regarding future meetings.

VI. EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

The SCA will provide members with information about appropriate conduct and prevention of misconduct during the SCA Annual Meeting and other SCA events, including the presence of this Policy and contact information for the SCA Annual Meeting Ombuds.

Anti-harassment and all related policies will be posted on the SCA website.

SCA Annual Meeting communications, including web pages, e-mail, and any published materials, including the call for submissions and registration information, will include this Policy or hyperlinks to this Policy. The Policy will be printed in the final program, and a link to the Policy will be provided in the meeting mobile application.

The SCA will promote activities that reduce misconduct in the practice of archaeology, such as trainings for bystander interventions and workshops on reducing abuse, micro-aggressions, and implicit bias. The SCA will make available all information, including the process for making Reports, Disclosures, or filing complaints through social media outlets, where appropriate.

Endnotes

[1] SCA committee, task force, and interest group meetings take place in various venues; the Policy will apply, regardless of venue, for all committee, task force, and interest group meetings that are formally convened. The Policy will not apply to SCA events that are open to the public.

[2] Excerpted from the [International Ombudsman Association](#).

[3] For the purposes of this Policy, “Subject Individual” refers to anyone against whom a report is being made, regardless of SCA membership status.

Appendixes

[SCA Meeting Safety Policies Appendix A](#) (Onsite Reporting)

[SCA Meeting Safety Policies Appendix B](#) (Advance Reporting)