



GUIDANCE AND PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING MISCONDUCT AND BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The [IEC Code of Conduct \(Code\)](#) applies to all actors in the IEC technical work, and all actors shall respect and comply with the Code and play their part in its implementation and enforcement.

Actors in the IEC technical work:

- IEC committee officers, working group (or any established consensus group under a committee) convenors, WG secretaries, project leaders
- Delegates and experts
- Liaison representatives

The Code is not limited to what occurs in a meeting, but also includes, for example, what may occur during breaks, social events, between meetings, by verbal statements and/or written form of the documents, by correspondence and in social media. Meetings include both in-person and virtual meetings, including chat functions.

It is the responsibility of all actors to raise concerns or report, in a timely manner, if they observe behaviour that is not in accordance with the Code. An actor does not need to be the target of the alleged breach in order to raise concerns respecting confidentiality and privacy of all involved parties (see Clause 4.1).

Notes:

- Clauses 1, 2 and 3 represent a stepwise approach to addressing concerns, with the expectation that concerns will be resolved successfully at the earliest stages, thereby limiting the necessity of pursuing Clause 3. All alleged breaches of the Code shall first proceed through Clauses 1 and 2 before Clause 3 can be pursued.
- When pursuing Clauses 1, 2 and 3, all known parties involved in such cases shall be granted respect and courtesy in order to have their perspectives heard and understood, without preconceived ideas on the possible outcome.

1 Steps to address alleged breaches to the Code

When you observe or experience a situation where you believe the Code has been breached, as soon as possible:

1.1 Seek to understand what motivated the alleged breach and understand if a breach really occurred according to a common understanding.

1.2 When appropriate, raise your concern(s), either in person or in writing, by approaching the person(s) you believe have breached the Code, clarifying the point of CoC that you believe is breached. Consider retaining written record(s) in case of later escalation as detailed in Clauses 2 and 3 below.

1.3 If the alleged breach occurred openly in a meeting, you may wish to raise your concern in the meeting. Alternatively, to respect the other party(ies), consider using a break in the meeting or following the meeting to approach the person(s) and discuss your concerns.

Consider retaining written record(s) in case of later escalation as detailed in Clauses 2 and 3 below.

1.4 Try to resolve the concerns by agreement to move forward in a mutually satisfactory manner.

1.5 If you are not comfortable approaching the person(s) directly, you may wish to seek support and assistance from your head of delegation or NC and/or one or more of the following (to approach the person(s) in person or in writing):

- a) The committee or working group leadership;
- b) The Technical Officer (TO) of the committee;
- c) Other delegates or experts of the NC, liaison or other organization with which the person(s) is associated.

1.6 It is expected that many such cases may be resolved favourably through professional and respectful dialogue between the person(s) raising concerns and the person(s) who may have breached the Code.

2 Formal requests for resolution of concerns

2.1 Code breaches at the committee level and the working group level

If efforts described under Clause 1 above have been pursued but have not resolved the concerns:

2.1.1 As NCs are responsible for delegates, chairs, secretaries, experts, convenors and project leaders from their countries, a delegate or expert raising concerns shall work through his or her own NC to have them contact the NC of the person(s) alleged to have breached the Code. NCs should communicate with committee leadership (chair, secretaries, convenor, project leader), the TO(s) and other NC(s) as appropriate. NC(s) conduct(s) facts gathering and investigations and decide(s) whether the alleged breach occurred.

2.1.2 Delegates or experts shall direct concerns about the conduct of liaison representative(s) to their NC(s), to have them request that the TO convey the concerns to the liaison organization.

2.1.3 Following the investigation NC(s) and/or liaison organization(s) shall make determination on how to handle the situation and inform the involved parties of the result and conclusion of their investigation.

A list of IEC NCs is provided [here](#).

3 Formal requests for action by the SMB and possible consequences

3.1 There may be some cases where despite their efforts, NCs, liaison organizations, committees or TOs, are unable to reach a resolution on the conflict. If necessary, and as the last resort, a NC may submit a formal request to the SMB secretariat. Such formal requests shall contain full detail of the conflict and all available supporting documentation. This may also include additional corroborating information (see Clause 4.1).

3.2 In all cases where concerns are raised to the SMB for action, the person(s) who are the subject of the concerns shall have the right to respond, through their NC, to the documented concerns. The SMB will consult involved NCs and consider documentations from both sides when making any determination.

3.3 Following an internal process SMB shall make determination on how to handle the situation and inform the involved parties of the result and conclusion of its investigation.

3.4 Any SMB decisions in such cases are subject to possible appeal under Clause 5 of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1.

4 Additional guidance

4.1 Confidentiality and privacy

4.1.1 In order to sustain professional courtesy for all those involved, documentation of cases of inappropriate behaviour shall be shared on a need-to-know basis only. Care should be taken when including and disseminating information on confidential issues. Information about the alleged breach shall not be unnecessarily shared with others in the committee/working group in which the misconduct or breach occurred, nor to those outside the IEC committee without justification.

4.1.2 It is important to avoid or limit any negative consequences to the reputations, professional roles/status, etc. of the concerned parties.

4.2 Anonymity and protection

4.2.1 Parties raising concerns, informally or formally, need to take responsibility for their concerns and cannot be anonymous, but their privacy will be protected to the extent possible.

4.2.2 In all cases of breaches of the Code, all parties shall provide respect and protection without prejudice or retaliation to those who bring forward the concerns.

4.2.3 Person(s) raising concerns are encouraged to consider the purpose for which they are raising a concern. Any concerns raised about another individual under this document shall be directly related to a breach of the Code and not for any individual or organizational advantage within ISO or IEC. Such allegations may be subject to informal requests for assistance or formal requests for action by the SMB.

4.2.4 No person who in good faith reports any breaches of the Code shall suffer intimidation, harassment, discrimination or other retaliation. Any evidence of negative actions against persons raising concerns shall be considered in the case brought forward by those persons or may be addressed as a new and separate case of breach of the Code.

4.3 Unlawful activity

4.3.1 In case of unlawful activities at a meeting, work with the committee leaders and host, and cooperate with the local law enforcement authorities if necessary.

4.3.2 In case of unlawful activities by correspondence between meetings, work with the committee leaders, the TO, and the IEC CO legal counsel, as well as the legal counsels of individual's employer and the individual's NC/MB or liaison organization.