

Snohomish County Democratic Socialists of America Code of Conduct

The Snohomish County Democratic Socialists of America is committed to creating a space that is welcoming and inclusive to members of all genders, races, and economic status, ages and abilities. The following policy encourages an environment everyone is able to organize without fear of harassment, abuse, or harm. If you have experienced behavior that runs counter to those ideals please read our 'Reporting' section below.

Our chapter's procedures must follow a baseline set by National DSA's 2017 Resolution 33 regarding harassment, the relevant portions of which are summarized in this document.

This document can only be changed by membership vote on a resolution brought forward at a general meeting of the Snohomish County Democratic Socialists of America.

Positive Conduct

We should be respectful of DSA members and others when we are doing organizing work. We expect all our members to act authentically and in good faith and to assume that others are as well, unless there is legitimate reason to believe otherwise.

We should allow a space for everyone to talk. If we find ourselves talking more than others we should make an effort to talk less and allow others more time. Our meeting leaders will often prefer to allow marginalized voices to speak when possible (a.k.a. 'progressive stack') and this policy is encouraged here.

Members should make efforts to make sure that all who want to be involved have the ability to be involved. This includes finding meeting spaces that are accessible, finding ways for those who can't attend meetings to have their voices heard and making sure that members are comfortable with the technology channels used for communications outside meetings.

Negative Conduct

Members shall not engage in harassment on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical appearance, disability, race, color, religion, national origin, immigration status, class, age, or profession. SnoCo DSA strives to be a place where members of any marginalized group can feel safe and if the above list is missing categories we welcome general membership resolutions to include anyone we missed.

Harassing or abusive behavior can include unwelcome attention, inappropriate or offensive remarks, slurs, or jokes, physical or verbal intimidation, stalking, inappropriate physical contact or proximity, abusive language toward a staff member or volunteer and other verbal and physical conduct.

Organizing can often come with disagreements and debate, but members should exercise respect and avoid abusive language when differences of opinion come up.

Physical feelings of safety are important for members to feel welcome at events. As such, dangerous material such as weapons and firearms should never be brought to events. Members should avoid any conduct that could endanger the life, safety or well-being of others as well.

Privacy

Everyone comes to DSA from different situations. Some can be open about their politics but others cannot due to fear of white nationalist harassment, reprisal from work, relationship concerns or other issues. If you publish personally identifiable information or images make sure to do it consensually and with people's permission.

Representing SnoCo DSA

Our local chapter works hard to build a reputation for socialists in Snohomish County. Members should not claim to speak on behalf or represent the chapter without prior approval. If there is an issue you want the chapter to make a social media or other communications statement on, the Steering Committee is happy to work with members on that.

Financial Conduct

Funds collected for SnoCo DSA should be used for the purpose of growing the organization and advancing socialist causes. Members entrusted with materials, resources or funds are expected to use those only for authorized purposes. Members should not attempt to solicit any gifts because of SnoCo DSA work.

Reporting Harassment

Members can report complaints of abuse, harassment or unwelcoming environments to either the chapter's two Harassment Grievance Officers (a.k.a. HGOs) or to National DSA's HGO.

SnoCo DSA HGOs: grievances@snocodsa.org

National HGO: nationalgrievanceofficer@dsausa.org

There will be no time limits requiring the abuser to file a report within any amount of time after the alleged harassment has occurred.

This policy prevents retaliation against any member for bringing forward a complaint. Retaliatory behaviors include, but are not limited to, threats, intimidation, reprisals and/or adverse actions related to organizing. If any party believes retaliation has occurred they may inform the HGO who will determine whether to factor the behavior into the original complaint or treat it as a separate incident.

What Happens with A Report

When HGOs receive a complaint they must contact the accused member within seven days to notify them of the accusation. The accused has the opportunity to submit a response within seven days of being notified. If the accused denies the substance of the report HGOs are authorized to investigate by interviewing members, requesting documentation and employing any other means deemed necessary.

HGOs should submit a report within 30 days, either to the chapter's Steering Committee if the complaint was sent to chapter HGOs or to the National NPC if sent to National's HGO. That report will give recommendations on if the complaint is credible and what remedies should be taken if it is.

The Steering Committee or National NPC will determine if a report is credible if it 'more-likely-than-not' occurred. They are authorized to give remedies and penalties including a formal discussion with the accused to develop a plan to change behavior, suspension from specific committees or other events, removal from committees, removal from DSA and any other relief deemed necessary.

The appropriate form of relief should be determined by the request of the accuser, the severity of the offense, the response of the accuser and the accused's relevant behavioral history.

Either party may appeal the form of relief decided on. Appeals must be filed within 30 days. The grounds for appeal are either: either party believes the behavior was not interpreted using the standards of harassment sent out in National DSA's 2017 Resolution 33; procedural errors, misconduct, or conflict of interest affected the outcome; or that the remedy determined was grossly disproportionate to the violation.

Harassment Grievance Officer Structure

The processes for appointing HGOs is outlined in the SnoCo DSA bylaws. If SnoCo DSA has more than one hundred members the membership must vet and appoint at least two members as designated HGOs.

The chapter must maintain an e-mail address to function for confidential communication between HGOs and those submitting complaints. They must also develop and maintain template forms for reporting harassment, responding to an accusation and appeals forms.

License

This Code of Conduct is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike license. Parts of it have been based on the DSA Silicon Valley Code of Conduct and the DSA SF Code of Conduct.