



MPA Participant Code of Conduct

MPA feels it is essential to enforce a code of conduct for groups participating in any MPA-sanctioned event.

Definitions:

- Participant: A person who is performing with a participating group.
- Staff member: A person who is engaged by a participating group in an instructional or administrative capacity.
- Volunteer: A person who gives of their time freely to a participating group as a chaperone or provides support in any capacity.

All groups participating in any MPA-sanctioned event must accept and act under the policies and procedures outlined within this code of conduct. MPA will not tolerate conduct that impacts negatively on the organization or the experience of our performers or others involved in MPA.

All participants, staff, and volunteers should consider themselves as ambassadors of MPA. All parties are not only expected to uphold these policies but should help remind others of them when necessary.

Further, MPA reserves the right to discipline, discharge, or suspend participants, staff, or volunteers who engage in or are alleged to have engaged in unlawful activity at an MPA-sanctioned event to the extent consistent with applicable law.

Alcohol and Controlled Substances

MPA participants have the right to participate in an environment free of alcohol and controlled substances. MPA participants are not to possess, distribute, or be under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances including, but not limited to, narcotics, inhalants, marijuana, or other dangerous drugs. It is unlawful to bring alcohol and controlled substances onto any school grounds and most arena facilities.

Sexual Misconduct

MPA strictly prohibits all conduct which could pose a threat to the safety of participants of an MPA-sanctioned event. If the participating group receives information of any kind (oral or written, "informal," or "formal") suggesting that misconduct has occurred that is connected in any way to individuals or activities associated with the participating group, and if the suggested misconduct meets any of the following criteria, then the participating group shall inform MPA of the information in writing immediately:

- Any misconduct of a sexual nature or potentially classifiable as a sex offense under applicable law, including without limitation so-called “victimless” activities such as prostitution, pornography, and indecent exposure.
- Any misconduct in which actual or suggested sexual relations is an element.
- Any harassing conduct pertaining to, in whole or in part, an individual’s sex, gender, sexual orientation, or gender expression.
- Any conduct involving harm to a minor.

Scholastic groups will follow all applicable school district policies and procedures, and independent groups shall maintain effective internal policies and procedures, for the protection and safety of its participants, staff, and volunteers, including without limitation the ability of any individual to report suspected misconduct to the leadership of the participating group without reprisal. Participating groups shall conduct an effective internal investigation, report the matter to the appropriate external authorities as may be necessary, and take appropriate and effective remedial action under the circumstances.

Anyone found to have participated in misconduct that threatens the safety of a participant will be disciplined as MPA finds appropriate, up to and including a permanent ban from association with any MPA-sanctioned event in any capacity.

Harassment and Discrimination

Behavior that may be considered inappropriate or may be deemed as harassment or discrimination is not allowed. Harassment refers to a full spectrum of offensive behavior. When the term is used in a legal sense, it refers to actions that can be found to be threatening or disturbing and are beyond those that are sanctioned by society. Conduct that creates a hostile environment is prohibited. Such conduct may include:

- Any harassing behavior about, in whole or in part, an individual’s sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, race, ethnicity, or any other representation of diversity.
- Repeated unwanted sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions.
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature.
- Inappropriate verbal comments about an individual’s body.
- Sexually degrading words used to describe an individual.
- Unwanted physical contact.
- Cyber-bullying or social media abuse.
- Any other behavior that is not socially acceptable in a professional environment.

MPA defines discrimination as any unfair treatment of an individual or group on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, or disability.

Any participant, staff member, or volunteer who is found after an appropriate investigation to have harassed another participant, staff member, employee, contractor, volunteer, customer or other associate of MPA will be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions, including suspension.

Anti-Retaliation and Whistleblower Policy

In an effort to protect all interested parties and address our commitment to integrity and ethical behavior, MPA will not tolerate any retaliation against anyone who makes a good-faith report, or

threatens to make a good faith report, regarding MPA, another organization, or an individual whose suspected violation of the law or other violation endangers the health or safety of a participant, any personnel of MPA or a participating group, or the public.

General Conduct

Our reputation depends on the conduct of all parties involved in MPA. Good manners, courtesy, and common sense are generally all required to ensure appropriate conduct and behavior. Conduct or language that could be perceived by a reasonable person as being rude, inappropriate, abusive, disorderly, derogatory, immoral, or threatening will not be tolerated.

If an undue and unfair pressure is applied to MPA judges or staff through inappropriate behavior, then this places the competitive experience at risk. Examples include, but are not limited to, participants or staff of a group verbally abusing MPA personnel, the inappropriate conduct of any participants or staff members on the contest floor, or inordinate or unauthorized communication to judges or the head judge.

Disruptive or rude behavior among participants, staff members, volunteers, or personnel from any group or MPA will not be tolerated.

Anyone found to have participated in misconduct will be disciplined as MPA finds appropriate, up to and including loss of the privilege that has been violated. For example, staff could lose all critique privileges with judges, be barred from contest floor or venue, or lose the right to use the warm-up venue.

Disciplinary Action

Individual participants, staff members, or volunteers who are found to be in violation of this code of conduct will be subject to further investigation as conducted by MPA. Based on the circumstances considered, the decision to apply disciplinary action or dismissal can be at the sole discretion of the MPA Board of Directors. In extreme circumstances, termination of a group's participation in MPA may be considered if a thorough investigation finds its management has recklessly or continually put participants, staff members, or volunteers in unsafe situations or ignored flagrant violations of this code of conduct.

The type of action taken depends on the facts and circumstances surrounding each situation. Please note that the corrective action may vary or steps may be skipped, depending on the circumstance. It's important to note that the type of action applied, as well as any prior notice of action, is at MPA's sole discretion.

The policies of this code of conduct should provide all participants, staff members, and volunteers with an understanding of what is considered appropriate or inappropriate behavior. While all possible circumstances are impossible to delineate, those participating with MPA should not take any chance with the spirit and intent of these guidelines.