



Harassment Policy

As a professional organization dedicated to the broad range of interests and concerns of those involved in violins and the art of making instruments and bows of the violin family, The Violin Society of America (VSA) seeks to provide an open, inclusive environment for all. Such an environment must be free from harassment, discrimination, or retaliation against individuals reporting such incidents.

Harassment is any form of intimidation or oppressive treatment, including physical, written or verbal threats, inappropriate physical contact, unwelcome sexual attention, and other activity that would cause a reasonable person significant alarm or distress. The VSA will not tolerate harassment or other discrimination. The VSA prohibits retaliation against anyone filing a good faith complaint or participating in a VSA review in good faith.

This policy applies to all Board members, attendees, students, guests, staff, contractors, exhibitors, and participants in any annual meetings, social events, or other sponsored VSA activities.

The VSA may immediately withdraw or deny access to VSA activities to any individual or entity engaging in harassing, discriminatory, or retaliatory behavior and the individual or entity will not be eligible for refund of registration fees or other costs. Offenders may also be sanctioned by exclusion from future VSA events, and membership in the Society can be revoked.

Process

Situations where there has been an accusation of harassment are extremely sensitive and often complex. At all times, the emotional and physical safety of the complainant is paramount, and this may involve taking steps that are not outlined herein.

Complaint: To report discrimination, harassment, or retaliation in any VSA-associated event or venue, please contact the General Manager at info@vsaweb.org or any member of Governance Committee of The VSA Board.

If the General Manager or a Board Member is a focus of the complaint, please contact a member of the Executive Committee instead.

When considering a complaint the relevant committee will sit as a Harassment Complaint Committee and its membership will be augmented as needed.

Our priority will be to provide immediate assistance in addressing the concerns of impacted individuals and stopping and addressing discrimination, harassment, or retaliation occurring in violation of this policy. All complaints will be reviewed promptly.

If the behavior described would not constitute discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, the Governance Committee will determine what, if any action, is warranted. If the complaint involves the General Manager or a Board Member, then the Executive Committee will determine the

appropriate action. In either case, this may involve determining whether other VSA policies or expectations have been violated. Mediation may also be available.

Otherwise, the Governance Committee or, where applicable, the Executive Committee will appoint an investigator or investigation team to review the complaint.

The investigator(s) will conduct a thorough and unbiased investigation and provide a written report, including recommendations for action, to the Governance Committee, or, where applicable, the Executive Committee. The Committee will decide as to the appropriate action.

Action

When considering the appropriate action, the Committee will consider the evidence, including but not limited to the nature of the conduct, whether physical contact was involved, whether the situation was isolated, and whether there was an abuse of power.

Actions may include:

- Verbal or written apologies;
- A letter of reprimand or suspension;
- A referral to counseling;
- Demotion;
- Termination of employment, volunteer activity, and/or membership/relationship with VSA;
- Referral to law enforcement or other legal authorities; or
- Other sanctions.

Confidentiality

Complaints of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation will be received and reviewed confidentially in accordance with the procedures, including prescribing corrective action. However, some information may need to be disclosed to review the concerns raised, take corrective action, or respond to legal processes, like litigation or responses to subpoena. Additionally, information may be shared with the full Board in connection with its oversight functions.

Information that must be shared will be disclosed on a need-to-know basis. Retaliation against any individual filing a complaint or participating in this process in good faith is prohibited.

2024 Reporting Contacts:

General Manager Peter Koniuto at info@vsaweb.org .

Governance Committee: Bill Scott (chair), Julian Cossmann Cooke, Colin Maki, Kristin Siegfried Ballenger, Chris Clark, Charles Tucker IV, Jay VandeKopple, Chris Ulbricht

Executive Committee: Julian Cossmann Cooke (chair), Colin Maki, Bill Scott, Krissy Balenger, Chris Clark, Jay VandeKopple