



Template Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct

We would like this Convention to be a welcoming and friendly event.

We are dedicated to providing a safe and comfortable convention experience for everyone.

In order to offer a welcoming and safer space for everyone, we require participants to be respectful of all others and their space, be that physical or social.

Requirements:

- Participants must not engage in harassment, at any convention venue or convention-related event & online space, at any time.
- Participants asked to stop any harassing behaviour are expected to comply immediately. This includes not only anyone involved in the incident, but any onlookers contributing to the disruption. As a general rule, practicing common sense in physical and social interactions with strangers will ensure everyone has a comfortable convention experience.

In order to make this Convention a safe event, please be aware of this Code of Conduct, of using non-oppressive language, and of boundaries. Assist others: if you see someone being harassed or appearing uncomfortable, ask if they are okay.

This policy covers everyone involved with the convention. This includes all participants, event organizers, Guests of Honour, volunteers, dealers or anyone present at the convention. Paying membership at the convention is not required to be subject to the policy. It also covers online spaces relating to the convention.

Harassment includes (but is not limited to):

- Offensive verbal comments about gender, sexuality, impairment, physical appearance, body size, race, class/economic status, or religion.
- Racist behavior.
- Showing sexual images in public spaces.
- Intimidation, stalking or following.
- Sustained disruption of talks or other events.
- Uninvited physical contact and/ or uninvited sexual attention.
- Symbols or images that the event organizers deem offensive. This could include t-shirt design and posters.

Discussions or images related to sex, pornography, discriminatory language or similar is permitted if it meets all of the following criteria:

- ❖ organizers have specifically granted permission



- ❖ it is necessary to the topic of discussion and no alternative exists
- ❖ it is presented in a respectful manner
- ❖ attendees are warned in advance in the programme and respectfully given ample warning and opportunity to leave beforehand.

This exception does not allow use of gratuitous sexual images as attention-getting devices or unnecessary presentation or panel examples.

What should I do if I am being harassed?

In some cases, you may find the harassment stops if you clearly say 'no' or 'please leave me alone', or simply walk away. We would appreciate it if a volunteer was still informed to help us identify any repeat offenders.

If you continue to be harassed or notice someone else being harassed, please contact a volunteer/team member immediately. The volunteers will help participants contact venue security or law enforcement, provide escorts, or otherwise assist those experiencing harassment to feel safe during the con. The first convention volunteer or organizer you report to will take whatever steps they can to assist you in feeling safe, and will put you in contact with or bring you to an appropriate member of the event organizing team. We value your attendance. You do not have to give us details of the harassment, and can choose whether or not to take a formal report. If you wish to report, we will take details of the harassment and work with you to respond to the issue in a way that assists you in feeling safe and maintains the safety of the wider convention environment, as well as enforcing our anti-harassment policy. If you report a serious criminal matter, please be aware that we may be obliged to contact the police. We would however take into account any concerns you may have around involving them.

If you would like to discuss the harassment without making a report, we will help you meet with the designated member of the event organizing team. Please bear in mind that this is for informal emotional support only; our volunteers don't have counseling training, and we can't promise confidentiality. You can access this service by contacting any convention volunteer. The volunteer may need to involve another member of the team to assist with your issue.

Notes:

We reserve the right to take any action we deem appropriate, including: issuing the offender with a warning if, in the determination of the event organiser and/or the person reporting the incident, the incident is considered accidental or minor; making an internal note of the incident to document repeat offending; making a formal report of the incident available to volunteers, the event organising team or all convention participants at the discretion of the event organiser; contacting hotel security; contacting law enforcement; removing the offender from the



convention with no refund; and reporting the offender's behavior to other conventions, local genre societies or regulatory organisations.

The organisers reserve the right to refuse entry to anyone for any reason. We do intend to let you know why, but might not be able to give you all the details.

Reasons for refusal of entry may include behavior at other conventions, a historic pattern of harassment complaints, behavior online, via email or messages that have made others feel uncomfortable or harassed.

If you are concerned about someone who is, or you think might be, attending the event please contact the organising team.

This was put together by Karen Fishwick on behalf of HWS

www.HWSevents.co.uk

You are welcome to use this document, but do update and amend it for your own circumstances/event. Nothing on this page or in these documents can be taken as legal advice, including health & safety, discrimination etc.