



# POETRY BY THE SEA

## **Poetry by the Sea Policy Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment**

Poetry by the Sea is committed to maintaining all its activities, including its yearly conference, free of harassment and discrimination of any kind, where all individuals are treated with respect and dignity regardless of their race, color, sex, national origin, past or current physical or mental disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, religion, age, or any other classification protected by law. In keeping with this commitment, it will not tolerate harassment of, or discrimination against, any conference attendee (including, without limitation, faculty, presenters, workshop or seminar leaders, members of its Board of Directors or Advisory Committee, or scholarship recipients) by any other such conference attendee.

### Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment can take many forms, subtle or not so subtle. While it is not possible to list all the circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct that, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwanted sexual advances, whether they involve physical touching or not, propositions, or other sexual comments, jokes, noises, or gestures;
- Displaying any pictures, calendars, objects, or other materials that are threatening, demeaning, insulting, hostile, sexually suggestive, or pornographic;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, or suggestive comments;
- Any unwelcome physical contact, and any physical contact that due to such factors as the intensity, nature, closeness or lingering of the contact, could make an individual feel uncomfortable. This physical contact includes, without limitation, hugging, patting, touching, rubbing, or kissing;
- Stalking, or deliberate following, or repeated unwelcome texting or calling;
- Inquiries into, or discussion of, one's sexual experiences or activities.

### Other Harassment

As noted in this policy, Poetry by the Sea also prohibits discrimination of any kind, including harassment through oral, written, or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his, her, or their race, color, sex, national origin, past or current physical or mental disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, religion, age, or any other classification protected by law.

The following are some examples of conduct that is prohibited under this policy:

- Discriminatory comments, slurs, slang words, threats, or insults directed toward an individual or group;
- Epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping;
- Threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts;
- Denigrating jokes and any written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group.

Poetry by the Sea encourages all conference attendees to promptly report any complaints of discrimination or of sexual or other harassment, and/or to cooperate in any investigation. Poetry by the Sea will not retaliate against any attendee for making such a good faith complaint.

### Complaint Procedure

1. If you observe or experience any harassing conduct, please report it to a member of the Board of Directors of Poetry by the Sea. A phone number will be available for this purpose at each conference and regularly monitored for the duration of each conference. You may also contact any Board member in person or report the conduct in writing to any Board member, including by email to [poetryby\\_thesea@yahoo.com](mailto:poetryby_thesea@yahoo.com)
2. Poetry by the Sea also encourages, but does not require, conference attendees who believe they are being harassed to firmly and promptly let the person(s) know, if they are comfortable doing so, that the behavior is offensive and must stop immediately.
3. Poetry by the Sea will not take any adverse action against any conference attendee for making a good faith harassment complaint or pressure any attendee not to report such behavior.

### Harassment or Discrimination Investigation

Poetry by the Sea will investigate all complaints of discrimination and/or harassment and will make every reasonable effort to do so promptly, discreetly, and with sensitivity. During the investigation, it may be necessary for Poetry by the Sea to disclose facts and the name of the complainant to alleged witnesses and to the alleged harasser, all of whom will be requested to maintain confidentiality. A Board member may also involve one or more Advisory Committee members. Poetry by the Sea will otherwise take reasonable steps to keep the report confidential, unless consent to disclosure is given or disclosure is required in order to take other needed steps, such as contacting security or law enforcement personnel.

All parties involved in a complaint are entitled to respect, and, as noted above, retaliation will not be tolerated against an individual who has provided information in good faith either as an alleged target of harassment or discrimination or as a witness.

### Corrective and Remedial Action

If you are told by any other conference attendee that they view your behavior toward them as harassing, you are expected to stop the behavior. Agreeing to stop the behavior will not, however,

preclude Poetry by the Sea from taking other steps to enforce this policy should it deem those measures appropriate.

Poetry by the Sea reserves the right to enforce this policy through any action that, in its sole discretion, acting through its Board of Directors, it determines to be appropriate. These actions may include, but are not limited to, requiring the person determined by the Board to have engaged in harassment to leave the conference without a refund of fees, and not allowing that person to register for future events. The Board may also bring to an immediate halt any ongoing event where it believes harassment or discrimination is taking place.

Poetry by the Sea recognizes that the question of whether a course of conduct constitutes harassment or discrimination often requires a factual determination and that false accusations can have a serious effect on innocent persons. Therefore, if an investigation results in a finding that a person falsely accused another of harassment or discrimination maliciously or recklessly, Poetry by the Sea reserves the right to take any action that, in its sole discretion, acting through its Board of Directors, it determines to be appropriate. These actions may include, but are not limited to, requiring the person determined by the Board to have accused another of harassment, maliciously or recklessly, to leave the conference without a refund of fees and not allowing that person to register for future events.

An environment free of harassment and discrimination is fundamental to the culture of Poetry by the Sea. Please note that while this policy deals specifically with behavior that is defined as harassment or discrimination, Poetry by the Sea may also take steps to halt other conduct that it prohibits or deems unacceptable.