Code of Conduct for the San Diego Astronomy Association

Final revised version for Board consideration

Purpose

This Code of Conduct describes the standards of behavior expected of everyone participating in the San Diego Astronomy Association (SDAA): members, Board members, officers, volunteers, event leaders, guests, vendors, partners, and the public when present at SDAA activities or in SDAA-managed spaces. Our goal is to foster a safe, respectful, and mission-aligned environment where people can participate fully.

Scope

- Applies to all SDAA events and activities (e.g., meetings, observing nights/star parties, outreach events, socials, banquets, trips).
- All members are expected to follow this Code when engaging with others in club communications and at club activities; this includes keeping discussions civil and avoiding personal attacks.
- Applies to SDAA-managed communication channels (e.g., Groups.io lists, official SDAA pages/accounts, and any other official SDAA forums).
- Applies to anyone representing SDAA in public, including Board members, officers, volunteers, contractors, vendors, and partners.
- Conduct that occurs outside SDAA spaces may be addressed if it materially impacts member safety or SDAA's ability to operate, for example threats, harassment, intimidation, or coordinated attacks related to SDAA activities.
- This Code is intended to support respectful debate and healthy disagreement; it is not intended to suppress reasonable, good-faith discussion.

SDAA is a member community. Disagreement is normal, but participation comes with shared responsibilities. Members are expected to engage in good faith, treat others with respect, and follow the reasonable directions of moderators, meeting chairs, and event leads. Repeatedly derailing discussions, posting inflammatory or demeaning comments, or targeting individuals is not acceptable.

Member expectations (for all members and participants)

1. Commitment to Our Mission

- Act in ways that support and advance SDAA's mission and values.
- Use SDAA resources responsibly and only for legitimate, authorized purposes.
- Avoid activities that conflict with or undermine SDAA's goals or the safety of members and guests.

2. Respectful and Inclusive Behavior

- Treat everyone with dignity, fairness, and respect.
- Maintain an environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, threats, or intimidation.
- Embrace diversity in all forms, including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, religion, and socioeconomic background.
- Debate and disagreement are welcome; critique ideas and actions, not people. Avoid personal attacks, name-calling, inflammatory labels, and statements that demean individuals or groups based on background, profession, credentials, or experience.
- Listen actively and communicate with professionalism, especially in written forums where tone can be misread.

3. Integrity and Ethical Conduct

- Be honest and transparent in communications and decision-making.
- Avoid conflicts of interest; disclose any potential conflicts promptly through the appropriate SDAA process.
- Do not use your role or access for personal gain or to influence others improperly.
- Respect confidentiality and privacy regarding sensitive information about members, donors, volunteers, finances, and SDAA operations (including contact details and non-public Board matters).

4. Safety and Well-Being

- Prioritize the physical and emotional safety of all participants, especially minors and other vulnerable populations.
- Follow all safety protocols, observing-site rules, and any instructions from event leads or site coordinators.
- Report unsafe conditions or urgent safety concerns immediately, including threats or intimidation occurring through electronic communications. For emergencies, contact appropriate emergency services first, then notify the event lead or Board.
- Do not bring or use items in a way that threatens or intimidates others.

5. Responsible Use of Resources

- Use SDAA funds, equipment, facilities, and materials responsibly and only for authorized purposes.
- Protect SDAA property from misuse, damage, or theft; report problems promptly.
- Maintain accurate records and comply with financial controls when handling SDAA funds or assets.

6. Communication and Representation

- Communicate truthfully and respectfully when representing SDAA.
- When posting in SDAA forums (including Groups.io), keep it respectful and on-topic; avoid excessive sarcasm, ridicule, or repeated inflammatory remarks that shut down participation.
- Use online platforms responsibly; avoid sharing private member information or non-public SDAA information.
- If posting personal opinions, avoid presenting them as official SDAA positions unless authorized.
- Respect moderators and meeting chairs; SDAA may moderate, lock, or remove content that violates this Code.

7. Compliance with Laws and Policies

- Follow all applicable local, state, and federal laws.
- Adhere to SDAA bylaws and applicable policies, procedures, and guidelines.
- Participate in required training (if any) and stay informed about policy updates that apply to your role.

8. Reporting Concerns

- Report suspected violations promptly and in good faith.
- Reports may be made to the SDAA Board (or a designated Conduct Officer/Moderator, if appointed). Include dates, context, and any available documentation (e.g., screenshots/links) where possible.
- SDAA prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports concerns honestly and in good faith. Good-faith reports are protected from retaliation even if a concern is ultimately found to be unsubstantiated.
- All parties are expected to cooperate in good-faith review of reported concerns.

9. Review and Response Process

- The SDAA Board (or a designated Conduct Committee) will review reports as promptly as practicable.

- Any designated Conduct Committee will make recommendations to the SDAA Board unless otherwise authorized by the Board.
- When appropriate, the Board/Committee may request additional information and/or provide an opportunity for involved parties to respond.
- For serious or urgent issues, SDAA may take interim steps to protect safety and prevent escalation while review is ongoing.
- Decisions will be based on behavior and impact, not viewpoint or disagreement over ideas.
- SDAA will keep matters as confidential as practical while still addressing the issue appropriately.

10. Consequences

Consequences are intended to be fair, consistent, and proportional, and will be applied in a manner consistent with SDAA bylaws and applicable policies. Depending on severity, context, and prior history, consequences may include:

- Informal reminder or coaching.
- Written warning and expectations for future conduct.
- Removal of content or moderation actions (e.g., locking a thread).
- Temporary restriction from SDAA-managed electronic communications.
- Temporary restriction from SDAA events and activities.
- Suspension or termination of membership, consistent with SDAA bylaws and applicable policies.
- Referral to law enforcement or other authorities when threats, violence, stalking, or other illegal conduct is involved.

Reconsideration

- A member subject to Board action may request reconsideration in writing within 14 days, unless the matter involves immediate safety concerns or legal restrictions.
- Board members with a direct conflict or prior involvement may recuse themselves from reconsideration.
- The Board will review any request and respond with a final determination.

Acknowledgment

All participants—including SDAA members—are expected to read, understand, and follow this Code of Conduct. This Code applies whenever a person participates in SDAA activities or uses SDAA-managed spaces. Any membership-related actions will be handled in accordance with SDAA bylaws and applicable policies.

Proposed for adoption by the SDAA Board on: ____OCT 13, 2026_____