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This policy is intended to align with Ohio law, and local counsel was consulted and has reviewed this policy for this purpose. The policy is also intended to be consistent with the American Institute of Architects (the "Institute") Bylaws, and the Institute Office of General Counsel was consulted and has reviewed this policy for this purpose.

AIA Cleveland, a component of the Institute, is committed to full compliance with all laws and regulations, and to maintaining the highest ethical standards and relationships in the way we conduct our operations and activities. This policy is designed to promote a respectful and professional dialogue with everyone, helping AIA Cleveland forward its mission and strategic plans in meetings, events, and within its public messaging and identity.

Although there is no way to delineate every potential area of professional conduct expected of its members and employees, the following is an illustrative list. AIA Cleveland does not intend this list to be comprehensive or to limit its right to impose sanctions for any other conduct it deems inappropriate. Standards of conduct apply to all members whether he / she / they is on AIA Cleveland property, at an AIA event, conducting AIA business, or within the community. Engaging in any conduct that AIA Cleveland deems inappropriate may result in sanctions, as more fully set forth below.

By participating on AIA Cleveland's Board, committees, events, and in public communication, you agree to abide by the following. If needed, action, as appropriate, will be determined by the AIA Cleveland Board.

**By engaging with AIA Cleveland, in effect your pledge includes:**

- Only speak on behalf the organization when authorized to do so. Board or Executive Committee or President or Executive Director approval covers verbal and written communications within and outside of the organization.
- Aiming to demonstrate a consistent pattern of reasonable care and respectful, professional competence.
- Disclosing conflicts of interest.
- Treating others in a respectful professional manner, maintaining a civil atmosphere, refraining from badgering or intimidating others, and refraining from comments that attempt to shut down an open dialogue.
- Working positively to establish relationships that forward the mission of AIA Cleveland.
- Following AIA Cleveland's policies, and not engaging in harassment or discrimination toward anyone in connection with activities relating to AIA Cleveland.
- Maintaining general confidentiality when discussing information, and disclosing potential conflicts of interest. Confidentiality could include the sharing of another's reasonably-understood business-proprietary information without release. Conflicts of interest could include but are not limited to:



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monetary gain, close relationships or the appearance of a personal affiliation or gain. Confidentiality does not apply to litigation where a protective order or similar protection is in place.

- Refraining from engaging in speech or conduct which is disparaging or derogatory in connection with activities relating to AIA Cleveland.
- Refraining from using AIA Cleveland's logo, marketing materials, or Architype font without receiving approval from AIA Cleveland or as otherwise authorized by the Bylaws of the Institute or of AIA Cleveland.
- Refraining from falsification of AIA Cleveland records or documents.
- Giving the Board the opportunity to decide its position and method of communication on activism.
- Providing monthly reports from Committee Chairs on activities, communications, and strategic planning to the Board before the Board meetings.

## **Reporting a Violation**

Violations of this policy may be reported to the AIA Cleveland Executive Director, a Committee Chair, Meeting Leader, and / or to the Board of Directors. If the Executive Director, a Committee Chair, or Meeting Leader deems that a member or non-member has not followed this Professional Conduct at a specific meeting, he / she / they may:

- Request that the offending person leave and expect this person to honor this request; and / or
- Refer the matter to the AIA Cleveland Board.

The AIA Cleveland Board will be responsible for resolving any reported violation, and will determine an appropriate course of action. This will ordinarily involve, a prompt inquiry or investigation, which shall be conducted with discretion and be kept confidential, within reason. Such inquiry or investigation shall be conducted by the Board or by one or more of its members, by legal counsel retained by AIA Cleveland (or its insurance company), or by such other person(s) as the Board may designate. Board members with a conflict of interest are to recuse themselves from participating in making determinations as to alleged violations, per the current AIA Cleveland Conflict of Interest Policy.

## **No Retaliation**

Retaliation is strictly prohibited. Retaliation is an adverse action against someone because he / she / they has brought a violation of this policy to the attention of the board or provides information to AIA Cleveland regarding such concern or complaint.

## **Board Actions:**

Promptly after the inquiry or investigation has been completed, the resulting findings will be reported to the Board. The Board shall then conduct such proceedings and take such action as may be appropriate and authorized under applicable law and under the governing documents of the Institute and of AIA Cleveland. If a covered individual has been charged with the pertinent violation, he / she / they will be given a copy of the complaint and written notice of a hearing at least 14 calendar-days prior to the hearing, where they may present arguments and supporting evidence on his / her / their behalf, but will not otherwise influence or participate in the Board's proceedings on the violation. After a hearing, the reviewing Board members shall provide a written statement of its decision to be shared with the interested parties.

## **Review of Board Disciplinary Actions / Decisions Via Binding Arbitration:**

Within 10 calendar days of the Board's decision, interested party(ies) seeking review must notify the Board in writing of his/her/their intent to seek a review of the Board's decision(s) through arbitration, as set forth below, and the basis for doing so. Thereafter, the Board and the interested party(ies) must attempt, in good faith, to



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resolve any dispute after meeting to negotiate a resolution. If such dispute(s) are not resolved within forty-five (45) days of the Board's decision, interested party(ies) must seek review of Board's disciplinary decision(s), if at all, by way of binding arbitration in accordance with the procedures of the American Arbitration Association in Cleveland, Ohio. The arbitration shall be conducted by a single neutral arbitrator who is independent and disinterested with respect to the interested parties, AIA Cleveland, and the outcome of the arbitration. The arbitrator may review the Board's decision and the procedure used in reaching it under an abuse of discretion standard, and he/she may uphold or reverse the Board's decision, or may otherwise remand the matter to the Board for further proceedings. Costs of arbitration are borne by the party seeking review. Seeking said review is not itself a violation of this Code of Professional Conduct policy.

Certain acts may violate the [AIA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct](#), and therefore might be the subject of a complaint to the Institute's National Ethics Council. For more information, go to the link provided above.

Adoption                March 14, 2019

Subsequent            September 12, 2019 Revision, June 05, 2020 Revision, September 03, 2020 Revision