

Rules of Conduct

For Participants in the University of California's
Anti-Discrimination Resolution Processes

March 2026

Anti-Discrimination Policy

The University of California (University) is committed to maintaining a community dedicated to the advancement, application, and transmission of knowledge and creative endeavors through academic excellence, where all people who participate in University programs and activities can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of discrimination, harassment, and related retaliation.

Discrimination, harassment, and retaliation prohibited by the [Anti-Discrimination \(A-D\) Policy](#) interfere with those goals. This behavior is referred to as “Prohibited Conduct.” The University will respond promptly and effectively to reports of Prohibited Conduct, including action to stop, prevent, correct, and, when necessary, discipline, behavior that violates the A-D Policy.

A-D Resolution Processes

Under Section V.A.5 of the A-D Policy, a report of Prohibited Conduct may be resolved through Alternative Resolution, Formal Investigation, or Other Inquiry. The Rules of Conduct described in this document apply throughout all of these resolution processes. Details on each resolution process¹ can be found in the following procedures:

- For student respondents: [Appendix G: A-D Student Investigation and Adjudication Framework of the Policies Applying to Campus Activities, Organizations, and Students \(PACAOS\)](#)
- For staff and non-faculty academic personnel respondents: [A-D Investigation and Adjudication Framework for Staff and Non-Faculty Academic Personnel](#)
- For faculty respondents: [A-D Investigation and Adjudication Framework for Senate and Non-Senate Faculty](#)
- For Regent respondents: [Regents Policy 1112: Policy on Review of Allegations of Board Member Misconduct](#)

¹ Note that the procedure that applies depends on whether the respondent (the person alleged to have engaged in Prohibited Conduct) is a student, staff/non-faculty academic personnel, or faculty member. This is because the specific steps that must be followed in the disciplinary process vary for each group.

Rights and Expectations

Complainants and Respondents in the University's A-D resolution processes rights include the right to:

- Be treated fairly and respectfully by University employees
- Be provided with written information about the A-D resolution processes and resources in accordance with the A-D Policy
- Request and receive appropriate and reasonable disability-related accommodations and language services
- Have all University policies and procedures applied in a nondiscriminatory manner

All participants in the University's A-D resolution processes are expected to:

- Follow the University's investigation and adjudication procedures
- Respect the instructions provided by University employees administering the A-D resolution process, and raise questions or concerns in a respectful and non-harassing manner
- Not engage in intimidatory or retaliatory behavior toward the other parties, witnesses, or others
- Not unnecessarily delay or disrupt the process

Standards of Ethical Conduct

The University's [Standards of Ethical Conduct](#) affirm our commitment to the principle of treating each community member with respect and dignity. Members of the University community are expected to conduct themselves ethically, honestly, and with integrity in all interactions. These principles are paramount when the University conducts resolution processes under the A-D Policy. The University expects all participants in an A-D resolution process—including parties, advisors, support persons, witnesses, University employees, and others responsible for administering the resolution process—to uphold these principles and comply with these Rules of Conduct.

Right to Advisor and Support Person

Under A-D Policy Section V.A.5.b.iii, parties have the right to an advisor of their choosing in the A-D resolution process. Student Respondents also have the right to request that the University provide an advisor to them. A party's advisor may be any person (including an advocate, attorney, friend, or parent) who is not another party or a potential witness. Other witnesses may have a representative present at the discretion of the Local Implementation Officer or as required by University policy or a collective bargaining agreement.

- A party's advisor's primary role is to provide guidance through the process.
- A party's support person's primary role is to provide emotional support.

Advisors and support persons must follow the Rules of Conduct throughout the A-D resolution process. Advisors and support persons may not speak on behalf of a party, nor may they disrupt any interviews or process-related meetings. Advisors and support persons who fail to follow the Rules of Conduct may be removed from an A-D resolution process.

If a party's advisor or support person is removed from the process, they will be given an opportunity to identify a new advisor or support person. In circumstances where a student Respondent has requested and been provided an advisor by the University and that advisor is removed, the University will appoint a new advisor.

Rules of Conduct in Investigations

Under A-D Policy Section V.A.5.b, the Local Implementation Officer may initiate a Formal Investigation when a decision has been made not to close a report after initial assessment. The specific investigation procedures for student, faculty, and staff respondents are further described in the applicable frameworks (linked above).

Investigations involve several steps in which understanding and following the Rules of Conduct are particularly important. These steps include, for example, communications between a party and the Local Implementation Office when the investigation is initiated, scheduling and participating in interviews, providing and reviewing evidence, and any process-related meetings with University staff, such as Student Conduct, Human Resources, or Academic Personnel offices. Throughout an investigation, it is important for parties to be responsive to the University's inquiries – including informing the University if a party chooses not to participate in a resolution process – and to not unnecessarily delay the process.

Advisors and support persons who fail to follow the Rules of Conduct may be removed from participating in the investigation. The removal of a party's advisor or support person during the

investigation will not be held against the party, nor will it play any factor in the investigator's or Local Implementation Officer's assessment of the allegations that are the subject of the investigation.

Role of Advisors in Investigations

As noted above, a party may have an advisor present throughout the process, including when they are interviewed or during other process-related meetings. An advisor is free to communicate with their party during breaks or when the meeting or interview is adjourned. However, the advisor may not:

- speak on the party's behalf at any interview or meeting, such as answering for the party when the party is being questioned by the investigator;
- interrupt questioning by the investigator; or
- provide their party with answers to questions through electronic or other third party means.

Questioning of Parties and Witnesses

In all investigations, the Local Implementation Officer will manage the investigation and will designate an investigator to conduct a fair, thorough, and impartial investigation. The burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding whether violation(s) of the *A-D Policy* occurred rests with the investigator.

During the investigation, the Complainant and Respondent will be provided an equal opportunity to meet with the investigator, submit information, identify witnesses who may have relevant information, and propose questions for the investigator to ask the other party and witnesses. The investigator has discretion to determine which witnesses to interview based on the relevance of the evidence they would potentially offer, and to determine what questions to ask, and will decline to ask questions that are irrelevant, repetitive, or that would violate these Rules of Conduct.

The investigator will meet separately with the Complainant, Respondent, and witnesses, and will gather other available and relevant evidence. Parties and witnesses may be asked relevant questions, including those that are relevant to assessing credibility. The investigator may follow up with the Complainant, the Respondent, and witnesses as needed to discuss new information and clarify any inconsistencies or evidence gathered during the investigation.

Several types of questions and evidence are categorically excluded as irrelevant and will be screened out by the Investigator. These types of questions include questions about a party's clinical or privileged records, unless the party has provided voluntary written consent.

Examples of Violations of the Rules of Conduct

The parties, advisors, and support persons will be informed that advisors or support persons who do not follow the Rules of Conduct may be removed by the University pursuant to the procedures outlined below. Examples of potential violations of the Rules of Conduct include:

- Directing abusive language toward any participant in the resolution process
- Intimidating, harassing, or retaliatory behavior toward a party or a witness
- Preventing or unreasonably delaying a meeting or interview

Removal

As stated above, the University may remove any person who is not a party from an A-D Resolution Process for violating the Rules of Conduct. In general:

- As a first step, a University staff person or official, such as the Local Implementation Officer, will bring the concerning conduct to the individual's attention through a written reminder of the applicable Rules of Conduct and procedures. The individual will be warned that if the conduct continues, the interview or process-related meeting, may be paused.
- If the conduct continues, the interview or process-related meeting may be paused in order to address the conduct with the individual. The length of such a pause is at the discretion of the University staff person or official who has convened the interview or process-related meeting. The individual will be warned that if the conduct continues, they may be removed from the interview or meeting.
- If an advisor or support person continues to violate the Rules of Conduct, the University staff person or official may remove the individual from the interview or process-related meeting.
- If a party continues to violate the Rules of Conduct, the University staff person or official may recess the interview or process-related meeting for an appropriate period to remedy the conduct at issue, including requiring the party to receive additional instruction or training.

The University staff person or official may, but is not required to, proceed through each of the steps outlined above before arriving at the next. The University takes the safety and well-being of all participants and integrity of the University's resolution processes as paramount. When imposing any of the steps above, the University will ensure that the record includes a clear and specific description of the nature of the conduct and the steps taken in response. Advisors who violate the Rules of Conduct may be prohibited from serving as a party advisor in the University's A-D resolution process at the campus or location in which the conduct violation occurred, and

systemwide. As noted above, parties will be given an opportunity to identify a new advisor or support person if their advisor or support is removed from the process.

Questions about the Rules of Conduct?

If you have questions about the Rules of Conduct,
please contact your local Civil Rights Office.

For contact information
for your local Civil Rights Office and available
resources, visit the [Systemwide Anti-
Discrimination Office website](#)