

**Illinois Psychological Association  
Governance—Staff Interactions  
Principles and Guidance.**

**Equal Employment Opportunity**

The Illinois Psychological Association (IPA) provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status, number of dependent children or the ages of the children, physical or mental disability (visible or nonvisible), or any other basis on which discrimination is prohibited by federal, state, or local law. This policy applies to recruiting, hiring, training, promotion, and all terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

**Sexual Harassment**

IPA in its effort to maintain a safe, fair, humane, and respectful working environment for all employees sets forth its policy regarding sexual harassment. The principles and practices described in this policy apply equally to harassment due to race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any of the other characteristics enumerated in the *Equal Employment Opportunity* statement above. IPA deprecates such conduct and will not tolerate any acts that violate this policy. IPA employees, agents and supervisory staff are prohibited from harassing other IPA employees on the basis of the enumerated characteristics.

**General Principle I**

*Staff and members are professional; all interactions should be on a professional-to-professional basis.*

Guidance

1. Harassment or intimidation of any nature is not tolerated. Civility, courtesy, and mutual respect in all interactions are expected.
2. Relationships among professionals require equality. Requests made of one party should stand the test of reciprocity.
3. Over time relationships can often become more personal. It is important that mutual respect continue to be part of the ongoing relationship.

## **General Principle II**

*Staff's primary responsibility is to facilitate the work of the group; requests from board or committee members should relate to the goals of the group.*

### Guidance

1. Staff are responsible for providing support for the board or a committee. This includes, but is not limited to, making meeting arrangements, developing agenda items, working with chairs to facilitate meetings, acting as resources at the meeting, and carrying out and managing complex and extensive activities subsequent to the meetings.
2. Requests from members to staff that go beyond staff responsibility such as personal favors (i.e., picking member up at the airport, making reservations for personal activities, etc.) are not appropriate, and generally will not be honored.
3. A member with a disability may request special assistance or specific accommodation that may initially appear personal in nature, i.e., holding a door open, carrying meeting materials for a person with a disability, or reading written material for a person who is blind or visually impaired. Such accommodations may allow the member with a disability to carry out functions or tasks consistent with the purpose of the meeting and may aid in that person's interaction or participating in the meeting.

There are some requests that are personal in nature, i.e., a member asking for staff to pick up dry cleaning or arrange for tours of a popular local museum. Staff should always have a personal level of comfort when providing a requested service or accommodation. Requests may be denied if determined personally inappropriate or clarified as inappropriate by senior staff. It is not the responsibility of the staff person to anticipate any person accommodations or requests.

## **General Principle III**

*In meetings after regular working hours and in social situations, staff are still performing work-related duties.*

### Guidance

1. Social functions and/or meetings outside regular working hours or outside regular meeting locations are characterized by more informal and sometimes personal interactions. It is important to remember that in these situations, staff and members are expected to remain professional and courteous.

2. Staff and members can view social situations differently. Members may find these settings a time to relax and to enjoy the company of others. For staff, these events are part of their professional obligations. It is important to recognize that individuals may experience these situations in different ways.

#### **General Principle IV**

*All staff ultimately report to the Executive Director of IPA and receive work instruction from their supervisor.*

#### Guidance

1. Members should recognize that work priorities for staff are set by the staff's supervisor. It is not appropriate for members to give work direction to staff, except in cases in which the chair directs implementation of decisions made by the board or committee. If members make an unusual and unreasonable request of staff, it is appropriate for the staff to notify their supervisor of the request.
2. If a project requires unusual resources from a specific staff person, the chair may contact the Executive Director to request that priorities be re-assigned, if possible.
3. Some staff may be asked to leave during executive sessions of the board or committee, however all staff may not be excluded without prior approval of the Executive Director or his/her designate, and without a member of the Executive Committee being present during the executive session.