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## Code of Conduct

LibraryLinkNJ (LLNJ), The New Jersey Library Cooperative, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that hosts an annual membership meeting, and sponsors a variety of forums, meetings, and professional development opportunities, both virtually and in-person.

LLNJ adopts the New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL) “Safe Spaces Statement” for our in-person and virtual events:

“This is a safe space for open, honest, and respectful communication. We acknowledge that our personal experiences, values, and opinions differ. Therefore, we honor the following ground rules for discussion in this group:

- We agree that everyone present in this meeting has equal worth and deserves to be heard.
- We agree to check our personal biases and refrain from making judgments about the words or actions of others.
- We agree to respect each other’s humanity. We forgive as needed and learn from our mistakes.
- We agree to utilize active listening and make it our goal to listen to understand.”

### EXPECTED BEHAVIORS

LLNJ does not tolerate harassment of members, attendees, staff, venue workers, speakers, or other participants at any meetings or events we sponsor. We recognize a shared responsibility to create and maintain an environment based on mutual respect and that is free of harassment for the benefit of all. Participants may - and do - exercise their option to leave a session or a conversation. As a statewide organization that supports the work of libraries of all types in the State of New Jersey, the events sponsored by LLNJ are an extension of work and no person should work under the threat of harassment.

## **PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS**

In an effort to create an environment based on mutual respect and that is free of harassment, some behaviors are specifically prohibited. These include, but are not limited to:

- Stalking (physically or virtually)
- Harassment in any form, including jokes or comments that target a person's race, color, religion, gender (including pregnancy and breastfeeding), sex, gender identity or expression, affectional or sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status veteran status, genetic information, or disability. This includes questioning a person's right to use the bathroom or other facilities based on these categories.
- Unwelcome attention or contact. This includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.
- Intimidation
- Assault and/or battery
- Sustained disruption of events
- Harassing or non-consensual photography or recording

## **REPORTING CONCERNS, CONSEQUENCES, & APPEALS**

All participants and presenters are expected to observe these rules and behaviors at all LLNJ meetings and events. Your attendance at an LLNJ meeting or event signals your willingness to comply with this Code of Conduct. Any breach of this Code of Conduct will result in an appropriate course of action including but not limited to:

- Oral or written warning
- Expulsion from the event or meeting
- Exclusion from future events and/or meetings
- Revocation of membership

Anyone can report harassment. If someone's behavior has made you uncomfortable, or if you witness the same happening to someone else, you should immediately contact an LLNJ staff person, Board member or Event/Meeting convener. The LLNJ webpage provides an email address and phone number for reporting code violations and all agendas, programs, and contracts will include a link to that information.

Any reports of code violations will be forwarded immediately to the LLNJ Executive Director, or designee, who will determine and carry out the appropriate course of action, and who may consult with and engage other LLNJ staff, Board members, and legal counsel as appropriate. Site security and/or local law enforcement may be involved, as appropriate, based on the specific circumstances. A follow-up report will be made to individuals who report being harassed and a written summary of all such code violations will be made annually to the LLNJ Executive Board. The Executive Director, in consultation with the Executive Board, may develop additional procedures to implement this policy.

It is illegal to retaliate against individuals who make good faith complaints of harassment and discrimination, and individuals who cooperate in investigations into those complaints. Anyone who believes he or she has been retaliated against as a result of a report of harassment or for participating in an investigation should immediately report the retaliation in accordance with this policy.

LLNJ staff, Executive Board and/or Meeting/Event conveners who receive reports of code violations are responsible for reporting the incident immediately to the Executive Director and documenting the report in writing and forwarding it to the Executive Director within 24 hours.

Actions that result in expulsion or exclusion from an event or revocation of LLNJ membership can be appealed in writing to the Executive Director. If relief is denied, a hearing may be requested in front of the Executive Board.

### **NOTICE TO BE USED FOR VIRTUAL MEETINGS**

The following abridged version of the policy will be added to all LLNJ virtual meetings:

By attending this meeting or program, you agree to abide by the **LibraryLinkNJ Code of Conduct**, which includes these discussion ground rules:

- This is a safe space for open, honest, and respectful communication. We acknowledge that personal experiences, values, and opinions differ.
- Everyone present has equal worth and deserves to be heard.
- We check our personal biases and refrain from judging the words or actions of others.
- We respect each other's humanity, forgive as needed, and learn from mistakes.
- We practice active listening with the goal of understanding.

The complete Code of Conduct is available on the LibraryLinkNJ website [link to page on website].

*Approved by the LLNJ Executive Board - February 18, 2021*

*Revised February 16, 2023*

*Revised March 19, 2026*