

GTSC ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

Membership of the General Thoracic Surgical Club consists of general thoracic surgeons who seek to advance and strengthen the general thoracic surgery community through clinically relevant scientific education, networking and the sharing of best practices among professionals in general thoracic surgery.

Through our in-person annual meeting, Podcasts, and other initiatives, we promote the free exchange of ideas as well as critical discourse and evaluation. This freedom of ideas and discussion is accompanied by a critical responsibility of professional conduct as well as personal, individual responsibilities to maintain an environment free from harassment.

A harassment-free environment is one in which conduct is based on respect for others and which does not in any way exploit power and/or status differences, such as those that exist between (but not limited to) general thoracic surgeons, medical students, general surgery residents, thoracic (cardiothoracic) surgery residents, thoracic surgery fellows, or those who grant access to publication, presentation, or other GTSC activities and those who seek such access. It also includes conduct based on respect in peer-to-peer relationships.

Harassment may be defined as offensive or inappropriate comments or nonverbal conduct in relation to a person or group of persons on the basis of personal characteristics which (i) has the effect or purpose of creating a hostile or intimidating environment; or (ii) has the effect or purpose of offending or demeaning a person or group of persons; or (iii) functions implicitly or explicitly to limit participation in a professional program, activity or opportunity. It is also the case that the victim of harassment can be anyone affected by the offensive conduct, not just the individual at whom the conduct is directed. In other words, what one or two persons may consider "joking around" may be unwelcome to or offensive to a bystander. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal comment or physical conduct of a sexual nature by a person who knows or ought reasonably to know that such conduct is unwanted, including situations in which (i) the request or conduct involves any implied or expressed promise of professional reward for complying; or (ii) the request or conduct involves any implied or expressed threat of reprisal or denial of opportunity for refusing to comply; or (iii) the request or conduct results in what reasonably may be perceived as a hostile or intimidating environment. Such examples are illustrative, not exhaustive.

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature, or consensual personal and social relationships without a discriminatory effect. It refers to behavior that reasonably situated persons would regard as not welcome and as personally intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

GTSC is committed to the creation and maintenance of a harassment-free environment in all its activities, meetings and events. The professional conduct of all members and non-members who participate in such activities, meetings and events is essential for preserving this standard. GTSC is also committed to preventing harassment by or toward its employees and third parties involved in its activities, including contractors, vendors, volunteers, or guests.

Any person who has experienced a serious verbal threat or any physical assault should contact law enforcement officials immediately.

Any person who desires to report a possible violation of the GTSC Anti-harassment Policy should promptly contact the GTSC Executive Office through this [form](#). If the incident occurs during any event organized by GTSC, then the Executive Office should be directly contacted as soon as possible. The matter will be discussed by either the Chair or Vice Chair of GTSC. GTSC has established procedures to address complaints under this Policy that provide guidelines for gathering information, maintaining confidentiality to the extent possible, reaching a determination, and determining the consequences. The investigation of a complaint shall include discussing the complaint with the individual(s) against which the complaint has been directed. Once determination is made, all parties will be informed of the resolution. No individual will be retaliated against for making a complaint or assisting with the investigation of a complaint. Anyone who is found to have engaged in harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include, but is not limited to, reprimand and/or suspension or termination of the individual's membership and/or participation in current or future GTSC operated, sponsored, or affiliated events.