

The Gopher Tortoise Council Code of Conduct

Approved by the GTC Executive Board on November 6, 2020

The Gopher Tortoise Council (GTC) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, supportive, welcoming, and professional environment for all GTC meeting, event, and social media participants – including, but not limited to, attendees, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, GTC staff, members of the media, GTC social media users, vendors, and service providers (hereinafter “participants”).

All GTC meeting, event, and social media participants are expected to adhere to the following GTC Code of Conduct:

- Treat participants with kindness, respect and consideration, valuing the diversity of viewpoints, backgrounds, experiences, and opinions.
- Communicate with respect for others; critique ideas rather than individuals and avoid personal attacks.
- Refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech.
- Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants. Alert GTC staff if you notice a dangerous situation or someone in distress.
- Respect the rules and policies of the meeting venue, hotels, GTC-contracted facility, or any other venue.
- Act professional at all times.

The following are examples of behavior that will not be tolerated at any GTC Annual Meeting, GTC sanctioned event, or on any GTC social media platform:

- Harassment, threats, intimidation or discrimination of any kind.
- Physical abuse.
- Verbal or written comments related to gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, physical appearance, race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, political affiliation, or age that may be interpreted as offensive, insulting, or obscene.
- Engaging in any stalking/threatening behavior directed toward any participants.
- Engaging in unwanted physical contact or sexual attention.

- Use of sexual or discriminatory images in public spaces, presentations, or on GTC social media.
- Excessively loud and/or disruptive behavior in public spaces.
- Bullying behavior.
- Unlawful conduct that breaks State and/or Federal Laws.
- Retaliation for reporting unacceptable behavior.

Reporting of Unacceptable Behavior:

- Notify a member of the GTC Executive Committee (as soon as possible) if you are the subject of or witness to behavior in violation of the GTC Code of Conduct. All reports will be treated seriously, addressed promptly, and confidentiality will be maintained to the extent that it does not compromise the rights of others.
- Call 911 if any behavior constitutes an immediate and/or serious threat.
- Anyone requested to stop unacceptable behavior is expected to comply immediately.
- GTC staff or event security may take immediate action deemed necessary and appropriate, including removal from a meeting or event without warning or refund.
- The GTC Executive Committee reserves the right to revoke GTC memberships, prohibit attendance at future GTC meetings and events, and/or remove users from GTC social media platforms for violation of the GTC Code of Conduct.

Adapted from Guidelines provided by The Wildlife Society 2017 and Ecological Society of America 2018