

Safeguarding Policies

International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW)

What is safeguarding in IPPNW?

As an international federation of health professionals, the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, respectful, and professional environment at every level of our organization. Safeguarding encompasses the policies and practices that IPPNW undertakes to prevent interpersonal and organizational harm to people — especially women, medical students and young doctors, interns and volunteers, and individuals from low-income countries who are particularly vulnerable to abuse and other forms of exploitation — while in the conduct of IPPNW-affiliated activities. IPPNW is committed to preventing, responding to, and protecting its staff and members from all forms of abuse while participating in IPPNW. Harassment, exploitation, discrimination, coercion, or verbal or physical mistreatment of others will not be tolerated in IPPNW.

IPPNW places a special emphasis on exercising appropriate behaviors and speech at IPPNW meetings, events, and conferences. While attending an IPPNW event, or while representing IPPNW at any external meeting such as a civil society event or at the United Nations, all persons shall agree to abide by IPPNW's Safeguarding Policies and the separate IPPNW Code of Conduct [footnote/link]. These policies and expectations shall extend beyond participation in the meeting itself to include all “after-hours” social and entertainment activities.

IPPNW values diversity, inclusion, and cultural humility. IPPNW welcomes participation irrespective of gender, gender identity and speech, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical appearance, disability, national origin, age, race, or religion. No one representing IPPNW shall knowingly engage in behavior or speech that is potentially injurious to the dignity and identity of others or to the reputation of our organization.

Scope

These safeguarding policies shall apply to all IPPNW staff, volunteers, and interns, as well as IPPNW Board Members, IPPNW International Councilors, IPPNW affiliate representatives, IPPNW students, and any beneficiaries of IPPNW's travel subsidy program (aka the International Fund) when participating in programs, meetings, or other activities under the auspices of IPPNW. All external persons, such as invited speakers, are also covered by these policies when engaged in IPPNW-affiliated activities.

Policy Statement

IPPNW is committed to undertaking all its work in a manner that does not put people at risk of deliberate harm.

IPPNW staff and associated members must not engage in:

- Harassment of any kind (sexual, verbal, emotional).
- Intimidation, stalking, coercion, or unwelcome sexual attention or contact.
- Non-consensual sexual activity, or any sexual, physical or verbal pressure on anyone who has indicated that it is unwanted is considered abuse.

- Sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Likewise, professional seniority must not be used to exploit younger members of IPPNW for sexual activity or other inappropriate acts .
- Discrimination, derogatory comments, or demeaning speech based on characteristics like age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, or disability.
- Physical assault or threats of physical harm.
- Emotional or psychological abuse.
- Inappropriate use of nudity or sexual images.
- Deliberate disruption of sessions or events.
- Harassing photography or recording.

Expected behaviors of IPPNW staff and associated members:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
- Be considerate and respectful. Treat each other with courtesy and consideration.
- Communicate professionally. Engage in thoughtful and respectful dialogue, avoiding personal attacks or discriminatory language.
- Respect boundaries. Be mindful of personal space and the comfort levels of others.
- Respect the culture of countries visited and behave appropriately according to the cultural norms.
- Act with integrity. Display personal and professional integrity, and be aware of how your language and behaviors may be perceived by others.

IPPNW staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

Reporting

Speak up! If you experience, witness, or hear that misconduct has or is about to occur, or if you have any complaint or concern relating to safeguarding, then you should report it immediately to the IPPNW Board Chair or Executive Director. If you feel more comfortable reporting to someone else – an IPPNW staff person, Board member, or trusted colleague – you are encouraged to do so without fear of reprisal and in the knowledge that you will be protected from retaliation. It is important to speak up so that IPPNW can intervene.

IPPNW will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners, and official bodies.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

Enforcement

IPPNW's Safeguarding Policies will be strictly enforced. Violations will not be tolerated. Anyone asked to stop unacceptable behavior must comply immediately. IPPNW reserves the right to take corrective action, which could include immediate removal from a meeting, prohibition from future meetings, and/or expulsion from IPPNW and identifying as a member of our organization, depending on the severity of the violation.

Review

These policies will be reviewed as needed, or at the request of any IPPNW stakeholder, to address areas for improvement or clarification.

Associated policies

- IPPNW Code of Conduct

Adopted by the IPPNW Executive Committee on 2 December 2025

Last modified on 18 November 2025