

Enabling a Healthy, Productive Work Environment at Defend Public Health (DPH)

Defend Public Health (DPH) is committed to ensuring that everyone has what they need for a healthy life, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity/expression. Therefore DPH must maintain an inclusive environment for our members (i.e. anyone who participates in our activities) that is respectful and free of harassment and discrimination of any kind.

Further, we seek to provide a supportive, collegial atmosphere among ourselves based on our shared passion for the mission of DPH and an acknowledgement that we all bring unique skills, experience and expertise to this endeavor. We strive to hold space and time for constructive and respectful discussions, disagreements and debate. Hostile comments or behavior (including insults, disparaging remarks, and/or bullying) directed at other members of DPH does not enable such an environment.

When we issue public statements, orally or in writing, they must be aligned with our values and agenda as an organization. Whenever possible, state teams should confer with coaches or with the state team leader, Jon Shaffer, if they are making a commitment on behalf of DPH that is not based on approved/already released materials. For non-state team specific issues, members should confer first with a member of the coordinating committee. In the case of comments to the media or the management of our social media accounts, that authority to take action rests with the Communications Committee co-chairs.

Reasons for Initiating Process of Probation or Expulsion

The following are examples of reasons for initiating a disciplinary process of probation and possible expulsion from DPH:

Any racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, or ableist comments or behavior from any DPH member, whether state team or national organization;

Bullying, harassing or generally disrespectful behavior on calls or emails, as well as in person;

Behavior whereby a member in a position of leadership or responsibility undermines, interferes with, and/or refuses to undertake agreed-upon activities of the organization; and/or

Speaking publicly on behalf of DPH (e.g., social media posts, public engagements; written pieces) in a manner that could be damaging to the organization.

Any person, whether a member of DPH or not, can report such behavior to the Coordinating Committee, who will then launch a process to investigate the complaint. Should you observe such behavior, please email defendpublichealth@gmail.com.

Disciplinary Process

In the event that a member's comments and/or behavior are alleged to violate these norms, a group of at least two members of the Coordinating Committee will meet with that member to discuss the alleged infringement and issues of concern.

Before such a meeting occurs, documentation of the violation will be gathered and maintained (e.g. e-mails, transcripts and notes). The member will have the opportunity to present their perspective, explain their behavior and rebut any accusations made.

If the behavior/comments are determined to constitute a violation of DPH's values and norms, either:

1. A pathway to remedy the identified issues/behavior and a commitment to do so may be mutually agreed upon, and probation for three months may be considered. Probation will entail monitoring for three months to determine if the person has demonstrated that they have made earnest efforts to improve; or

2. If no mutual agreed-upon remedy is possible, expulsion from DPH shall be immediate.