



*Transforming Passion for Turtles into Conservation Action*

## THE TURTLE SURVIVAL ALLIANCE FOUNDATION CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EVENTS

### BACKGROUND

From time to time, The Turtle Survival Alliance Foundation (Turtle Survival Alliance) organizes events to which employees, members, volunteers, and/or members of the public may be invited or admitted. Some events have a wholly educational or a research purpose, while others are primarily fundraising events, and still others have a

social purpose. Some events have multiple purposes which may include one or more of the foregoing. Participants may (or may not) be required to pay to attend these events and may have the opportunity to purchase food, beverages or merchandise at the events. In some cases, events may take place at the Turtle Survival Center or in premises rented, licensed or otherwise made available to Turtle Survival Alliance for the event, or owned, rented or licensed by one or more of its directors, officers, employees, independent contractors, or volunteers. In still other cases, events may take place on virtual platforms owned or licensed by Turtle Survival Alliance.

### INTRODUCTION

Turtle Survival Alliance is committed to providing a safe, productive, and welcoming environment for all attendees and participants at events, both in-person events and on virtual platforms. Individuals attending Turtle Survival Alliance events have the right to an environment free from discrimination, bullying, inappropriate behavior, and harassment, including but not limited to sexual, sexual identity or racial/ethnic harassment. These behaviors will not be tolerated. **Each participant or attendee at a Turtle Survival Alliance event who registers for, or acquires a ticket to attend, the event must agree, as a condition of participation or attendance, to abide by the terms of this Code of Conduct (Event Code). Participants and attendees at any Turtle Survival Alliance event which does not require registration or ticket (with or without charge) are nevertheless expected to abide by the terms of this Code at those events.** A separate Symposium Code of Conduct (Symposium Code) applies to the Annual Symposium on the Conservation and Biology of Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles organized or co-organized by Turtle Survival Alliance.

Anyone who has violated the Event Code or the Symposium Code of Conduct in the past or who is violating the Event Code may be denied access to, or removed immediately from, a Turtle Survival Alliance event, without repayment of any registration, attendance or other fee of any kind previously paid.

A violation of the Event Code may also constitute a violation of Turtle Survival Alliance's Code of Ethics.

## **EXPECTED CONDUCT:**

Participants or attendees at Turtle Survival Alliance events are expected to:

- Treat everyone with respect and consideration. At any event with an educational, outreach, or research purpose, respect diversity of views, opinions, and cultural practices, and communicate thoughtfully with others.
- Be mindful and aware of your surroundings and sensitive to the experience of fellow participants and attendees.
- Ask before initiating physical contact with any other attendee or participant. Engage in friendly, consensual interactions among individuals and avoid potentially non-consensual physical contact with others.
- At events where alcoholic beverages are available, drink responsibly. • Alert any director, officer or employee of Turtle Survival Alliance who is present at the event if you notice a situation at the event that violates this Code or if you see someone in distress. If you believe that the conduct is, or could be, criminal in nature, please contact local law enforcement or ask a Turtle Survival Alliance director, officer or employee present at the event to make that contact.
- Comply with all applicable laws, including wildlife protection laws. • Respect the rules, policies, and property of the venue, whether a private home or public venue, and regardless of who it is owned or rented by.
- Look out for the safety and comfort of your friends and colleagues.

## **UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT**

**Turtle Survival Alliance has zero tolerance for any form of discrimination, objectification, bullying, or harassment, including without limitation sexual, sexual identity, and racial/ethnic harassment.**

Behavior that is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another, so participants and attendees at Turtle Survival Alliance events must use discretion to ensure that their words and actions communicate respect for others.

Consumption of alcohol or use of other potentially behavior-altering substances is not an excuse for engaging in unacceptable conduct.

Participation in, or facilitation or promotion of, harassment, intimidation, or discriminatory behaviors at an event, in person, or on virtual platforms, or on social media associated with a Turtle Survival Alliance event or other associated activities will not be tolerated. Turtle Survival Alliance reserves the right to take any action deemed necessary and appropriate, including the immediate removal or blocking of individuals from virtual or social media platforms and the deletion of comments from the same, if comments or behavior are deemed to be unacceptable.

Unacceptable conduct includes harassment, as described below, as well as, but not limited to:

- Physical, emotional, verbal abuse or threats against any participant or attendee, including any Turtle Survival Alliance director, officer, employee, or volunteer, service provider or guest.
- Disruption of a Turtle Survival Alliance event or its associated activities.
- Public sharing of sensitive locality data might create risk to those sites from illegal harvesting.
- Publicly sharing the location or contact information of any other participant beyond information shared publicly in event materials.
- Making discriminatory comments.

## **HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment is unacceptable conduct of a sexual nature that makes a person feel uncomfortable. Harassment, including sexual, sexual identity or racial/ethnic harassment, may also violate applicable laws. Examples of behavior constituting sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

### **Verbal Conduct**

- Comments, jokes or insults based on appearance, age, private life, etc. • Sexual comments, stories, or jokes.
- Unwelcome sexual advances.
- Repeated and unwanted invitations for dates or physical intimacy. • Condescending or sexist remarks.

### **Non-verbal Conduct**

- Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material or images.
- Sexually suggestive gestures.
- Whistling or “cat calling”.
- Unwelcome physical contact or inappropriate touching.
- Physical violence, including sexual assault.
- The use of threats or rewards to solicit sexual favors.
- Sending sexually explicit messages electronically or by phone.

## RESPONSIBLE DRINKING

At some events, alcoholic beverages may be purchased, served or otherwise made available. Turtle Survival Alliance expects individuals to drink responsibly while also upholding the standards described in this Event Code. Turtle Survival Alliance and the owner or staff of any event venue have the right to deny service to participants and may require a participant or attendee to leave an event. It is expected that responsible drinking will extend beyond events.

## REPORTING UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

If you have been the victim of an actual or possible violation of this Event Code or have observed an actual or suspected violation in connection with another person, you should report this. **If you see something, say something.** Violations of this Event Code should be reported at the Turtle Survival Alliance event at which they occur, or otherwise as soon as possible thereafter. If you do not report a violation or suspected violation of this Code to law enforcement, or to a Turtle Survival Alliance director, officer, or employee present at the event, or to on-site security personnel at the event, you may report it to Turtle Survival Alliance's following two (2) individuals:

Marc Dupuis-Desormeaux, President and Chief Executive Officer

[marc@turtlesurvival.org](mailto:marc@turtlesurvival.org)

or

Heather Lambert, Senior Director of Operations

[hlambert@turtlesurvival.org](mailto:hlambert@turtlesurvival.org)

or to any other Turtle Survival Alliance director, officer, or employee. The Turtle Survival Alliance representative who receives the report of the complaint or concern has the responsibility to ensure that it is investigated.

If you believe that the violation or suspected violation has been committed by someone who is a Turtle Survival Alliance director, officer or employee, you may also file a complaint under the Whistleblower Policy of Turtle Survival Alliance available on its website.

If you report a violation or suspected violation of this Event Code, you must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of the Event Code. Any allegation made with a malicious intent or which is knowingly false will itself be viewed as an Event Code violation.

If you report a violation or suspected violation verbally, you may later be requested to provide details in writing. Any report should include the pertinent information needed

to investigate the violation (including date, time, misconduct observed, name of the person accused, names of others who may have witnessed the misconduct, and any visual or audio evidence of the violation). Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation or to the extent allowed by law. All complaints will be treated seriously.

Turtle Survival Alliance will employ a “Two Strikes” policy for most Code violations depending on the severity of the offense. Individuals will receive a verbal and/or written warning as described below for a first violation. Following the second violation, more severe consequences may be levied. **An exception to this Two Strikes policy will be made when an egregious violation occurs (including, but not limited to, one that requires intervention by venue security or law enforcement).** In such instances Turtle Survival Alliance may proceed directly to Removal, Rescission, or Barring Participation.

### **Two Strike Policy:**

#### **Strike 1: Warning**

- Anyone requested to stop unacceptable behavior is expected to comply immediately; this strike will be considered a first “strike” warning.
- A person who has engaged in unacceptable behavior may be warned of an alleged or actual Event Code violation at any time during the event, or afterwards based on the timing of reporting and opportunity for an appropriate investigation.

#### **Strike 2: Removal, Rescission, or Barring Participation**

Upon egregious violation or following a second incident of unacceptable behavior which constitutes a violation (i.e. the second “strike”), authorized officers or employees of Turtle Survival Alliance or venue security may take any action which, in their discretion, is deemed necessary and appropriate, including immediate removal of the violator from the event without warning or refund of any amounts paid to attend the event or associated activities. Turtle Survival Alliance reserves the right to:

- Prohibit attendance by the violator at any future Turtle Survival Alliance event or Turtle Survival Alliance co-organized event, as well as at, or in, any Turtle Survival Alliance working group or other Turtle Survival Alliance-related activity.
- Deny consideration of the violator for any award, endorsement, leadership role, or project assignment associated with Turtle Survival Alliance.

## **PERSONAL SAFETY**

**As an attendee or participant at a Turtle Survival Alliance event, you should:**

- Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
- Do not leave personal property unattended anywhere at any time.

**Last approved by the Board of Directors on February 06, 2025.**