Code of Conduct

I. Purpose

The San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers is committed to providing a positive and respectful environment that is free of discrimination and harassment, regardless of an individual's race, ethnicity, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, ancestry, pregnancy or any other characteristic prohibited by law. As such, the San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers will not tolerate discriminatory, harassing or otherwise unacceptable behavior in the workplace or at any of its activities, events or meetings, even if the conduct has not risen to the level of a violation of law. The San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers expects everyone in the workplace and those who participate in any of its activities, events or meetings to abide by this Code of Conduct.

II. Definitions

A. Discrimination: Discrimination against an individual because of a person's race, ethnicity, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, ancestry, pregnancy or any other characteristic protected by law is illegal discrimination.

B. Harassment: Harassment is a form of discrimination that can take many forms, including physical contact, verbal comments, written communications or other unwelcome conduct. It may include, but is not limited to, actions such as the use of epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, jokes or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to sex, race, age, disability or other protected categories. Harassment may also include written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual or group based on protected characteristics, whether that material is sent by email or placed on walls, bulletin boards, computer screens or other devices, or elsewhere on the premises of the activity, event or meeting.

C. Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. It can take many forms, including physical contact, verbal comments, written communications or other conduct. Sexual harassment does not have to be sexual in nature; non-sexual contact, comments or conduct can still—depending on the circumstances—create an intimidating, offensive or harassing and discriminatory environment or experience.

III. Expected Behavior

The San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers is a democratic organization that values open and vigorous discussion of the issues facing the San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers, our members, working people and the labor movement. This Code of Conduct is not intended to restrict free and open debate, but rather is concerned with preventing unacceptable behavior. The San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers expects everyone in the workplace and all participants in San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers activities, events or meetings to conform to the following Code of Conduct:

A. Respect others and their views.
B. Recognize and value individual differences.
C. Do not engage in aggressive, bullying or intimidating behavior.
D. Do not engage in discriminatory or harassing behavior.

IV. Procedure If Subject to Unacceptable Behavior

A. Prior to the start of board or membership meetings, activities or events, attendees will be informed of this Code of Conduct, and be informed that the three officers--President, Vice President, and Fiscal Officer--of the San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers Executive Board are to whom complaints may be directed of any unacceptable behavior.

B. If a board member, employee, union member, or attendee of any union meeting, activity, or event is subjected to what they believe is unacceptable behavior under this Code of Conduct, or witness such behavior, they should inform the President, Vice President, or Fiscal Officer immediately. If one of those persons is not available or implicated in the potentially unacceptable behavior, a complainant may inform any other San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers board member who will work with the three officers to respond to the complaint.

C. The San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers takes these complaints seriously and may, at its discretion, take action that it deems appropriate upon assessing the situation.
   a. Where appropriate, a board member may issue may a warning to or expel the alleged offender from the activity, event or meeting.
   b. Where appropriate and when a complaint is found to be credible, the San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers may initiate an investigation into the complaint.
   c. Where appropriate, and only after an unbiased and impartial investigation into the alleged conduct, the San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers may initiate disciplinary proceedings for those in a position to be disciplined by the San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers.

D. If needed or requested, the three officers will help complainants contact security or local law enforcement, provide escorts or otherwise assist complainants experiencing unacceptable behavior to feel safe for the duration of the activity, event or meeting.

E. Any complaint brought to the San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers’ attention will be treated confidentially to the extent possible to properly assess the situation.

F. The San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers will not tolerate retaliation against any individual who complains of unacceptable behavior under this Code of Conduct. The San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers will take every step necessary and appropriate to ensure that retaliation does not occur, and if it believes that retaliation has occurred, the San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers will take immediate action to stop the retaliation.