



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR NTCA PERSONNEL

All employees, contractors, and volunteers of NTCA must accept and act in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined within this Code of Conduct.

Definitions:

Employee: A person who is hired for a wage, salary, fee, or payment to perform work for NTCA on a regular basis.

Independent Contractor: A person who provides seasonal services in exchange for a fee. Independent contractors are offered assignments for work. These assignments can be refused.

Volunteer: A person who gives of their time freely to NTCA. Volunteers are offered assignments for various events. These assignments can be refused.

By the acceptance of employment or assignments, all employees, contractors, and volunteers agree to abide by this Code of Conduct. A failure to adhere to these standards may subject the employee, contractor, or volunteer to termination or suspension of employment or revocation of any and all remaining assignments.

NTCA also reserves the right to remove said employee, contractor, or volunteer from future work with NTCA. NTCA will not tolerate conduct that impacts negatively on the organization, either in terms of an employee's or contractor's individual work performance, workplace safety, or the business interests and corporate image of NTCA. All employees, contractors, and volunteers must consider themselves as an ambassador of NTCA. You are not only expected to uphold all policies yourself, but to help remind others of them when necessary.

Further, NTCA reserves the right to discipline, discharge, or suspend an employee, contractor, or volunteer who engages in or is alleged to have engaged in unlawful activity outside the workplace to the extent consistent with applicable law.

ALCOHOL

The employee, contractor, or volunteer agrees to not consume alcohol while "at work" with NTCA. "At work" includes the time period between the beginning of the day and close of competition. The employee, contractor, or volunteer agrees not to consume alcohol until his/her responsibilities are completed for the day. Violators may receive disciplinary actions, including dismissal or suspension.

It is unlawful to bring alcohol onto any school grounds and most arena facilities. Violation of these laws could result in immediate dismissal or suspension.

Any employee, contractor, or volunteer driving a NTCA vehicle or transporting NTCA personnel in vehicles must refrain from consuming any alcohol beverages before or during operation of vehicles.

DRUGS

The employee, contractor, or volunteer agrees not to pursue, continue, or engage in the use of, or be under the influence of, illegal or recreational drugs, or prescription medications or substances which may affect your ability to function or cause one to be impaired while “at work” with NTCA. “At work” includes the time period between the beginning of the day and close of competition. Violators may receive disciplinary actions, including dismissal and referral to law enforcement for violations of the law.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

NTCA strictly prohibits all conduct which could pose a threat to the safety of participants, employees, independent contractors, and volunteers. This policy sets forth NTCA’s expectation that all individuals associated with NTCA-sanctioned events shall report the following kinds of misconduct without exception:

- Any misconduct of a sexual nature or potentially classifiable as a sex offense under applicable law, including without limitation so-called “victimless” activities such as prostitution, pornography, and indecent exposure
- Any misconduct in which actual or suggested sexual relations is an element
- Any harassing conduct pertaining to, in whole or in part, an individual’s sex, gender, sexual orientation, or gender expression
- Any conduct involving harm to a minor

Anyone found to have participated in misconduct that threatens the safety of a participant, employee, independent contractor, or volunteer will be disciplined as NTCA finds appropriate, up to and including a permanent ban from association with any NTCA sanctioned event in any capacity.

HARASSMENT

Behavior that may be considered inappropriate or may be deemed as harassment is not allowed. Harassment refers to a wide spectrum of offensive behavior. When the term is used in a legal sense, it refers to behaviors that can be found to be threatening or disturbing, and beyond those that are sanctioned by society. Conduct that creates a hostile environment is prohibited.

Such conduct may include:

- Any harassing conduct pertaining to, in whole or in part, an individual’s sex, gender, sexual orientation or gender expression.
- Repeated unwanted sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Verbal comments about an individual’s body
- Sexually degrading words used to describe an individual
- Unwanted physical contact
- Cyber-bullying or social media abuse
- Any other behavior that is not socially acceptable in a professional environment

Any employee, contractor, or volunteer who is found after an appropriate investigation to have harassed another employee, contractor, volunteer, performer, or customer of NTCA will be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions, including dismissal or suspension.

ANTI-RETALIATION AND WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

In an effort to protect all interested parties and address our commitment to integrity and ethical behavior, NTCA will not tolerate any retaliation against anyone who makes a good faith report, or threatens to make a good faith report, regarding NTCA, another organization, or an individual, whose suspected violation of the law or other violation endangers the health or safety of a participant, employee, independent contractor, volunteer, or the general public.

GENERAL CONDUCT

Our reputation depends on the conduct of all employees, contractors, and volunteers. All those employed or engaged by NTCA must play a part in maintaining that reputation to the highest ethical standards. Good manners, courtesy, and common sense are generally all that is required in order to ensure appropriate conduct and behavior. Conduct or language that could be perceived by a reasonable person as being rude, inappropriate, abusive, disorderly, derogatory, immoral, or threatening will not be tolerated.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (AFFILIATIONS) As a person employed or engaged by NTCA, you are expected to work in the best interests of the organization at all times, as a disinterested and reasonable observer would view that interest in the circumstances. Impartiality and the perception of impartiality are critical to our success.

A conflict of interest exists when you take any action that is contrary to or interferes with the impartiality or the perception of impartiality of NTCA's mission. A conflict of interest may be real, potential, or perceived. Accordingly, you must avoid and disclose all conflicts between the best interest of the organization and your own personal interests or personal relationships.

A conflict of interest also exists whenever a person employed or engaged by NTCA may personally benefit either directly or indirectly, financially or otherwise, from their position in the organization.

You must disclose all actual and potential conflicts of interest promptly. It is your responsibility to comply with this requirement each time you become aware of a new conflict of interest or if any initial disclosure no longer accurately reflects the nature of the conflict of interest. In most cases, disclosure may be all that is required. If NTCA determines that an actual conflict of interest exists, it will determine what additional actions are required by you to remedy that conflict and instruct you accordingly.

It is impossible to describe every potential conflict of interest. The vast majority of conflicts of interest will deal with adjudication but could also exist in other situations. However, to assist you in understanding and complying with this policy, an illustrative, but not all inclusive, list of actual conflicts of interest follows:

- You personally are a designer, instructor, manager, or administrator of a group competing at NTCA events
- You have a family member, spouse, or significant other relationship that are employed or engaged with a group competing at NTCA events
- You receive compensation from a school music department or organization that sponsors a competing group (i.e. an individual who teaches music in the school when the music department sponsors a group)

- You have given an in-person consultation to a group in the current year.
- You display a group's insignia while at a NTCA event
- You operate a business venture, are doing business for or being retained by a third party for services that conflicts with NTCA.

Employees, contractors, and volunteers may not use the intellectual property of NTCA (ex. logo, judging systems, proprietary and non-public training materials) for personal financial benefit

SOCIAL NETWORKING

NTCA respects the right of employees, contractors, and volunteers to use social networking sites on their own time and does not wish to discourage from self-publishing or self-expression. Nevertheless, we expect those employed or engaged by NTCA to follow applicable guidelines and policies.

Blogging or other forms of social media or technology include but are not limited to video or wiki postings, sites such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, chat rooms, personal blogs or other similar forms of online journals, diaries or personal newsletters not affiliated with NTCA. Unless specifically instructed, persons engaged by NTCA are not authorized to speak on behalf of the organization.

Our policies prohibit the use of social media to post or display comments that are vulgar, obscene, threatening, intimidating, harassing, or hostile on account of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status, physical or mental disability, or any other basis or characteristic protected by applicable law.

When posting to any website, assume that many people, including coworkers, fans, supporters, performers, parents, school administrators, customers and potential customers, and the media are reading your comments. All parties should be aware of your association with NTCA in online media streams. Use common sense, professional judgment, and caution.

Bloggers and commentators are personally responsible for their commentary on blogs and social networking sites. Bloggers and commentators can be held personally liable for commentary that is considered defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous.

Guidelines for using personal social media:

- No communication is allowed privately or publicly via email, text, or on any social media streams or with any director, instructor, judge or performer about any competitive aspect of a participating group. This type of communication is strictly prohibited.
- NTCA staff and judges should never comment on an individual group's anticipated or actual performance or anything of a competitive nature, however positive. Such postings create openings for questions from anyone reading the post. What seems like an innocent comment can be easily misconstrued.
- NTCA staff and judges should change personal settings on Facebook to allow review and approval of any post visible to the public. Use caution on "liking" any post regarding any individual group or NTCA.
- NTCA staff and judges are prohibited from promoting any participating group with which they are affiliated so not to present the appearance of intended influence.

- NTCA staff and judges should refrain from posting or liking any pictures or comments that imply favoritism towards any one group, instructor, circuit or region.
- NTCA staff and judges should use caution in posting or “tagging” photos or videos of any color guard on your personal social media streams.

It is important to remember that anything posted on the Internet is permanent. Although it can be “taken down”, it may well exist somewhere for years to come and often reach large numbers of people quickly. If misinterpreted or open to misinterpretation, such postings can do incalculable damage to the reputation of individuals, organizations, and NTCA.

NTCA will use these guidelines to determine whether an employee or contractor has been appropriate in their public online behavior with respect to their NTCA-related responsibilities. Those employees and contractors associated with NTCA must represent appropriate conduct for a competitive, scholastic-based activity. Violation of these guidelines can lead to disciplinary action including suspension and/or termination.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Employees, contractors, and volunteers who are found to be in violation of this Code of Conduct will be subject to further investigation as conducted by the NTCA Executive Board. Based on the circumstances considered, the decision to apply disciplinary action or dismissal can be at the sole discretion of the President.

The type of action taken depends on the facts and circumstances surrounding each situation. Please note that the corrective action may vary, or steps skipped, depending on the circumstance. It’s important to note that the type of action applied to an employee, contractor or volunteer as well as any prior notice of action, is at NTCA’s sole discretion.

The policies of this Code of Conduct should provide any and all employees, contractors, and volunteers with an understanding of what is considered appropriate or inappropriate behavior. While all possible circumstances are impossible to delineate, those engaged with NTCA should not take any chance with the spirit and intent of these guidelines.