



Partner Code of Conduct and Ethical Behavior

MAY 22, 2020

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Partner Code of Conduct and Ethical Behavior

The **Sickle Cell Community Consortium Inc. (“Consortium”)** is a domestic nonprofit corporation in the state of Georgia, has a board approved stated mission and purpose. All of its programs support that mission and all who work for, or on behalf of, the Consortium understand and are loyal to that mission and purpose.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Sickle Cell Community Consortium is a national collaborative of sickle cell warriors, caregivers, community-based organizations (CBOs), community partners and medical/research advisers, working collectively to equip and empower the sickle cell community to be full participants, and lead the charge, in sickle cell advocacy, education, research, legislation and policy.

INTRODUCTION

As the **Consortium** grows, and subsequent lessons of prior years, the Consortium has established written standards for behavior, expectations and consequences. Toward this end the following Standards have been established:

The **Partner Code of Conduct and Ethical Behavior** is a set of rules outlining the social norms, rules, and responsibilities of, or proper practices for, those associated/affiliated with the Consortium. This includes, but is not limited to, the executive director, board of directors, staff, volunteers, interns, individual partners, partnered organizations, and members of all workgroups and advisory boards. All members of this group will be hereafter referred to as **“Partners.”**

All attendees, speakers, sponsors, hosts, and volunteers at our events and/or conferences are required to read, agree to, and sign the following **Code of Conduct**. Event organizers will enforce this code throughout the Annual Leadership Summit and Convention in its entirety. Full cooperation from all event participants is required to help ensure a safe environment for everyone’s peace of mind and enjoyment.

The Sickle Cell Community Consortium (SC3) is trusted to promote, develop, and execute the annual Summit, and Convention. Sickle Cell Disease is the primary focus of our education and planning. SC3 events include various educational and social activities geared toward all ages of SCD Warriors, Caregivers, and general participants. Our goal is to show up and speak up for Sickle Cell Disease by educating the public, and our own SCD Community on the ins and outs of Sickle Cell Disease in areas of Medical Care, Support Systems, Hospital Procedures, Government services, Navigating the Healthcare system, and much more.

We fail in this goal if we, as a whole, create an environment where improper conduct of attendees and participants is condoned. Victims of this poor conduct will not enjoy any SC3 event, nor will they find learning about SCD or the general SCD Community to be fun or accessible.

SC3 and its event-planning teams are committed to responding and taking appropriate action to reports of misconduct.

This code of conduct is for use by the Sickle Cell Community Consortium and is to be distributed to general participants of any Leadership Summit, Convention, or events held and run by the Sickle Cell Consortium.

Please read this document carefully. By signing this document, you acknowledge that you have read and agree to the following rules and regulations which were first introduced on August 1st, 2018 and will continue to be upheld until further notice. Full cooperation from all event participants is required.

STATEMENT OF VALUES

All Partners of the Consortium shall act with honesty, integrity and openness in all dealings as representatives of the Consortium.

Dignity and Worth

Dignity and worth are inherent in each individual. Consortium members and its affiliates must demonstrate our belief that each person is worthy of dignity and respect by treating others as we ourselves wish to be treated.

Integrity and Respect

Our behavior conveys who we are, what we think of others and what we think of ourselves. We must demonstrate trustworthiness and respect for others at all times.

Relationships

Relationships are important to our individual and collective growth and survival. Through our interactions with one another and the community we demonstrate our interconnectedness and value.

EXPECTED BEHAVIORS

The following outlines the expectations and behaviors for all Partners associated with the Consortium.

- Commitment and accountability to the public good of the organization
- Commitment beyond the law
- Respect for the worth and dignity of individuals
- Respect for inclusiveness, pluralism and diversity
- Responsible stewardship of resources; and
- Commitment to excellence and to maintaining the public trust

GOVERNANCE

Adherence to the law is the minimum standard of expected behavior. Partners must embrace the spirit of the law, going beyond legal requirements and making sure that the public understands what the Consortium does. Transparency, openness, and responsiveness to public concerns are integral to the organizational philosophy, behavior, and operation.

CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct is intended to represent what the **Consortium** believes in, what it stands for, and how it approaches everything that is done. Participation in any of the organization's programs is subject to the observance of the **Consortium's** rules and procedures.

The **Consortium** promotes freedom of expression and open communication. It expects all **Partners** to follow the **Consortium's** Code of Conduct and to foster an organized, respectful and collaborative environment.

We will always treat others as we wish to be treated. Kindness, humility and gratitude should be demonstrated with each interaction.

Speak with confidence, not hostility. The reply "No" is a statement of fact and should not be taken personally.

Patience is a virtue. Wait your turn kindly and with tolerance for differences. Even when we do not agree we are always to be agreeable.

Timeliness demonstrates respect and integrity. It shows how we value others, as well as, ourselves. At the height of our position, we are working toward changing the way Sickle Cell Disease is perceived. Proactive planning enables **Consortium** events to function smoothly, helps prevent loss of funds and inconvenience to others. The **Consortium** understands that crises may occur at any time. Generally, Warriors know when they are getting sick and/or beginning a crisis. We ask that you not wait until the last minute to cancel your anticipated attendance to any event and/or to pass on your assignment(s) as it creates avoidable financial cost. We value your health and the time it takes to achieve that.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

All **Partners** are required to participate on committees and in organizational efforts.

All **Partners** are expected to exercise their duties and responsibilities with integrity, collegiality and care.

This includes:

- Cooperating and respecting the opinions of fellow **Partners**, and leaving personal prejudices out of all organizational discussions.
- Supporting actions of the Partners even when a **Partner** may personally not support the action taken.
- Representing the **Consortium** in a positive and supportive manner at all times in public.
- Showing respect and having courteous conduct in all meetings.
- Refraining from intruding on administrative issues that are the responsibility of management, except to monitor the results and ensure that procedures are consistent with **Consortium** policy
- When participating in online conversations, we encourage minimal use of profanity and language that may be offensive.
- Not engaging in serious disputes with cruel and/or malicious intent that could lead to a disruptive

environment.

- Being prepared to discuss the issues and business of the organizational or committee agenda. Which includes having read all background material relevant to the topics at hand.
- Observing established lines of communication. Directing requests for information or assistance to the Executive Director or, in their stead, the appropriate assignee, designee, or committee.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Consortium Partners are prohibited from making statements or comments intended to be perceived as official statements by the **Consortium**, a department, or any elected official without prior authorization from the Director, or an authorized designee.

PROHIBITED SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS

Partners must adhere to all applicable laws and policies when participating in social media. The Code of Ethics and Business Conduct, the Acceptable Use of Information Resources for **Partners**, and any other regulations governing the conduct of the **Consortium** apply equally to all social media postings.

Partners may not post, mail, display, or otherwise transmit in any manner any content, communication, or information that can be deemed as offensive, a personal attack, or that violates an established internal code, rule, or law. Examples of prohibited communications include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Interferes with official **Consortium** business.
- Is hateful, harassing, threatening, libelous, defamatory, pornographic, profane, or sexually explicit.
- Is deemed by the **Consortium** to offend persons based on race, ethnic heritage, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical and/or mental illness or disability, marital status, employment status, housing status, religion, or other characteristics that may be protected by applicable civil rights laws.
- Impersonates a person (living or dead), organization, business, or other entity.
- Enables or constitutes gaming, wagering, or gambling of any kind.
- Promotes or participates in unauthorized fundraisers.
- Promotes or participates in partisan political activities without
 - **Consortium** approval.
- Promotes or participates in unauthorized advertising of **Consortium** projects and any advertising of private projects.
- Compromises or degrades the performance, security, or integrity of **Consortium** technology and information resources including, but not limited to, viruses, logic bombs and/or malicious coding.
- Participation in unauthorized chat rooms, instant messaging, spamming, phishing, auto-response programs and/or services, and chain letters.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE

All information concerning clients, former clients, staff, volunteers, and financial data, health information, and business records of the **Consortium** is confidential.

Rationale

Confidentiality is the preservation of privileged information. By necessity, business, personal and private information is disclosed in a professional working relationship. Part of what is learned is necessary to provide services to others. Additional information is shared within the development of a helping, trusting relationship. Therefore, most information gained is confidential in terms of the law, and disclosure could make Partner(s) legally liable. Disclosure could also damage a Partner(s) relationship and reputation. It also presents difficulties in helping others.

The **Consortium** may be liable for **Partner** acts while acting within the scope of a **Partner's** duty. A breach of confidentiality may result in the

Consortium's refusal to support a **Partner** in the event of legal action and may entitle the **Consortium** to take action against a **Partner**. Breach of confidentiality may violate federal and state statutes which is punishable by fines, imprisonment, or both.

Definition

"Confidential" means that **Partners** are free to talk about the **Consortium**, its programs, and a **Partner's** position. However, **Partners** are not permitted to disclose client information, patient names, and/or talk clients or patients in a way that will make their identity known. In addition, no health or business information may be released without authorization¹ from the **Consortium**. The Board of Directors will have a fiduciary duty to the **Consortium** and shall conform to this rule of confidentiality.

All **Partners** are reminded that confidential financial, personal, health, and other matters concerning the organization, donors, staff, clients/consumers or patients may be included in materials or discussed from time to time. **Partners** should not disclose such confidential information to anyone.

Conflict

- When there is a decision to be made or an action to be approved that will result in a conflict between the best interests of the **Consortium** and the **Partner's** personal interest, the **Partner** has a duty to immediately disclose the conflict of interest so that the Consortium's decision-making body will be informed of the conflict, and take the appropriate course of action.
- The **Consortium** expects you to respect the privacy of clients and to maintain their personal, health, and financial information as confidential. All records dealing with specific clients must be treated as confidential. General information, policy statements or statistical material that is not identified with any individual or family is not classified as confidential. Partners are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of information relating to other **Partners** and volunteers, in addition to clients and/or patients.

¹ Board members are fiduciaries and must act in accordance with the fiduciary duties of care, loyalty, and compliance. Board members are to make careful, good-faith decisions in the best interest of the institution consistent with its non-profit, public or charitable mission, independent of undue influence from any party or from financial interests, as well as intangible assets such as its reputation and role in the community.

Violation

- Failure to maintain confidentiality will result in termination of membership, dismissal from the **Consortium** or other corrective action. This policy is intended to protect **Partners** as well as the **Consortium** because in extreme cases, violations of this policy also may result in personal liability.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

The **Consortium** strives to maintain a professional environment/workplace during any course of business matters that are free from illegal discrimination and harassment. While all forms of harassment are prohibited, it is the **Consortium's** policy to emphasize that sexual harassment and discrimination are specifically prohibited. Any Partners, affiliate, and/or agent who engages in discriminatory or harassing conduct is subject to dismissal from the **Consortium** and legal action. Complaints alleging misconduct on the part of **Partners**, affiliates, and/or agents will be investigated promptly, and as confidentially as possible, by a task force or committee appointed by the Executive Director.

Our conference is dedicated to providing a harassment-free experience for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, religion (or lack thereof), or technology choices. **We do not tolerate harassment in any form.** Sexual language and imagery is not appropriate for any conference venues, including talks, workshops, parties, or online media (*twitter, instagram, facebook, etc.*) in association with SC3 events. Event participants violating these rules may be sanctioned or expelled from the conference *without a refund* at the discretion of the conference organizers.

Definition of Harassment is any behavior that annoys other persons, aggravates them, or makes them feel unsafe. This includes but is not limited to:

- Unwanted or threatening physical contact,
- Unwanted or threatening verbal contact,
- Following someone in a public area without a legitimate reason, and
- Threatening physical harm in any way.

Additionally, the Sickle Cell Consortium does not tolerate discrimination in any form -- based on but not limited -- to gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or physical/mental health conditions. Always ask if you may touch clothing, property, or the person.

If you are being bothered or are uncomfortable with someone's actions toward you, communicate any one of the following messages listed below. If someone won't understand the following simple rules, **contact our on-site SC3 Staff for assistance**, or ask any convention staff member to do so on your behalf. Participants asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately.

- "No." No means no.
- "Please stop." Stop means stop.
- "Please go away." Go away means go away

All participants of this convention have the right not to join in any activities that cause them discomfort and to speak out if they feel harassed or unsafe. Complaints will be taken seriously. The matter may be referred to

law enforcement authorities if deemed necessary. We reserve the right to revoke a registrant's attendance at our discretion at any time. SC3 staff are happy to assist individuals that may be experiencing harassment. We value your attendance and wish for everyone in attendance to be guaranteed a safe experience.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Code of Conduct includes a policy to be followed for social media which enhances and maintains the **Consortium's** reputation and high standard while avoiding potential liability claims.

The Consortium seeks to provide its **Partners** with straightforward guidelines that are easy to follow and will help to eliminate confusion as to what a **Partner** can or cannot do on social media as it relates to the **Consortium**. This guide will help us to be conscious and careful to not mix personal or **Partner** matters with **Consortium** matters without the approval of the Executive Director.

As an active **Partner** of the business community, the **Consortium** realizes the value and importance of social media for business promotion and practices. We also recognize the growing influence of social media and its widening scope. The **Consortium** has implemented the following social media policy to help **Partners** understand and adhere to standard responsible social media practices, put in place to protect the **Partners**, and the **Consortium** as a whole.

Definition

Online, electronic, or Internet media, tools, communities, and spaces for social interaction, sharing user-generated content, or public or semi-public communication. Social media typically uses web-based technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogues. Social media can take many different forms, including internet forums, blogs & micro blogs, online profiles, wikis, podcasts, pictures and video, email, text, instant messaging, music-sharing, and chat, to name just a few. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, the following: LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Wikipedia, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, blogs, and any other current or future social media platforms.

Policy

The Consortium recognizes blogs, networking sites, and other social media (collectively referred to as "social media"). This policy applies to **Partners** when they participate in social media. It also applies to **Partners** that participate in social media at any time and give the appearance of speaking on behalf of the **Consortium** or its affiliates; identify themselves as **Consortium Partners** or as affiliated with the **Consortium**; or discuss the Consortium or its affiliates. Partners are responsible for the content they publish on social media and should use good judgment. **Partners** should be mindful that the things they say or do on social media are publically available and searchable and may be forever accessible, which can be then associated with the **Consortium**. Comments, expressions, and other postings on social media must be honest and respectful of others; respect confidential, personal, and proprietary information; and comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws and **Consortium** policies.

Any time a Partner participates in social media, the **Partner** is posting on their own behalf unless expressly requested by the **Consortium** to post on the **Consortium's** behalf (i.e., social media, marketing purposes). Any posts on social media or other online publishing should be made under the **Partner's** own name or organizational name.

Cyber Bullying

Cyberbullying, which is bullying via digital media, has the potential to cause intense harm to others.

An element of cyberbullying of particular concern is that sometimes children, youth, or adults don't realize that they are cyberbullying either because of ignorance about online etiquette as people do things they would not normally do because of technology.

The Sickle Cell Community Consortium views Cyberbullying as using technological means to:

- Intimidate
- Spread rumors
- Slander
- Harass or threaten
- Abuse others: Mentally, Emotionally, Verbally
- Inappropriate jokes about Sickle Cell Disease or those who have it

The above behaviors constitute a violation of partnership with the Sickle Cell Consortium.

Credentialed Community Based Organizations (CBOs) assume responsibility for enforcing the Anti-bullying Policy set in place by the Consortium.

Disclaimer

When posting anything that may be associated with the Partner professionally, it is vital that the **Partner** post a disclaimer: ***“the opinion expressed here is entirely my own and does not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the Sickle Cell Consortium.”*** This disclaimer is to be used in any communication where the **Consortium** is indicated in the **Partner's** electronic or physical communication, and/or website.

Violation

Any violation of the social media policy is cause for immediate termination from the organization. Discipline may include but is not limited to termination of partnership, legal action for damages, and other remedies as permitted by law.

Guidelines

- If a **Partner** identifies themselves as a **Consortium Partner** via social media, their opinion and viewpoint must reflect the responsibilities of the **Partners**, organization or person, and not that of the **Consortium**. No opinion concerning the **Consortium** is to be made without the authorization of the Executive Director.
- Always adhere to copyright standards and respect the intellectual property of others when utilizing social

media platforms or other online publishing forms.

- Do not, under any circumstances, disclose any personal and/or health information about the **Consortium** and its **Partners**.
- Do not disclose confidential information about the **Consortium**, its practices, or any information meant to be shared only with fellow **Partners**.
- Any rumors, slander, or confidential information shared via social media may have a significant negative impact on the **Consortium** and its reputation. This includes items of a sexual, profane, or excessively violent nature. Legal action may be brought against the individual **Partner** responsible for the publication of this information.
- Always respect the audience. In every situation, use social media as a respectful tool to share ideas and information. Be especially mindful when dealing with sensitive subjects such as politics and religion.
- Share content intelligently. If an item is professionally published, the **Partner** may help to strengthen the community of the **Consortium**. Make sure that the published item is helpful, valuable, and promotes the principles of the **Consortium**.
- Protect privacy. Make sure to protect **Partner** privacy and that of the **Consortium**.

ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES AND WEAPONS

IMPORTANT: Please be aware that the possession, use, and distribution of Marijuana or other Illegal Substances is strictly prohibited in both Georgia and Las Vegas, during both the 2020 Leadership Summit (Georgia) and the 2020 Warriors Convention (Las Vegas) The Georgia Medical Cannabis bill allows for 20 oz or less of CBD (THC) oil ONLY. The oil must be prescribed and in a clearly labeled medical container. All other forms of marijuana remain illegal in the state of Georgia. If you are found with, or found in use of these items during the event by our staff, or hotel and security personnel, you will be asked to leave the 2020 Leadership Summit, potentially facing repercussions in your partnership with the Consortium, as well as be subject to legal action by the state of Georgia. Please do not use or bring Marijuana or any other illegal substance to the 2020 Summit.

LEGALITY

A) This **Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreement** is between the **Consortium** and its **Partners** who are Parties to said Agreement. It is to be governed by and constructed in accordance with the laws of the state of Georgia. Neither the **Consortium** nor its Members shall be deemed to waive any of its rights, powers or remedies hereunder unless such waiver is in writing and signed by both. This Agreement is binding upon and inure to the benefit of the **Consortium**, its **Partner** and their successors and assigns.

B) A **violation** of the Code of Conduct and included policies could cause irreparable injury to the **Consortium** and its **Partner**, and there is no adequate remedy at law for such violation. The non-breaching Party may, in addition to any other remedies available to it at law or in equity, enjoin the breaching Party in a court of equity for violating or threatening to violate the Code of Conduct. In the event the **Consortium** is required to enforce its policies contained therein through legal action, then it will be entitled to recover from the breaching part all costs incurred, including without limitation, reasonable attorney's fees.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

When photographing or videotaping other individuals, please use common courtesy and ask before photographing or videotaping them. Respect their rights if they do not wish to be photographed or videotaped. If someone asks or otherwise indicates that they do not wish to be photographed, please DO NOT photograph or videotape them.

Individuals may take pictures and videotapes for private viewing or sharing with friends. We ask our attendees to be courteous to those they wish to take pictures of, especially if you wish to place those pictures or video clips onto a personal Web page or similar Internet archive. In this case, ask your subjects for their explicit permission to do this.

Any plans to capture audio or visual imagery for repackaging, display, or distribution for any purpose outside of private use, must be pre-approved by the Consortium team, and included in meeting audiovisual liability waivers. This includes, but is not limited to not-for-profit organizations, pharmaceutical companies, academia, industry, government and private think tanks and consultations.

The Sickle Cell Community Consortium also employs a [Community Code of Conduct](#) for all in-person and virtual events. If you have questions or comments regarding SC3 event policies, please contact our team on-site at the event. Failure to comply with the rules and guidelines set forth in this agreement may result in an investigation by the Ethics & Oversight Committee of the Sickle Cell Consortium. All convention members who have failed to adhere to the rules in the previous year, will be notified by January of the following year by the Executive Board as to whether or not they will be allowed to attend events in the future.

ATTESTATION AND CERTIFICATION

I attest that I have read the Code of Conduct and included Confidentiality Agreement in its entirety and do understand all policies and guidelines contained therein. I will uphold the standards set forth in this document and will maintain appropriate and professional conduct at all times.

I agree to abide by the requirements of the Code of Conduct, its included policies and Confidentiality Agreement, and will inform the Executive Director if I believe any violation (unintentional or otherwise) of the policy has occurred.

I understand that violation of the Code of Conduct, any of its included policies and Confidentiality Agreement will constitute breach and violation of the Code of Conduct.

I certify that my attestation to the Code of Conduct, its included policies and Confidentiality Agreement are true and correct.

Signature _____

Name _____

Date _____

Print Name

Signature

Date