

1 **ePIC Code of Conduct Policy**
2 **Version 2**
3 **Updated after the ePIC Charter Revision - May 2026**
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5 This document outlines expectations for ethical professional behavior that all members
6 of the ePIC collaboration must follow and how any violations of this code of conduct will
7 be addressed. These expectations are based on the values of the ePIC collaboration.

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9 **1. Statement of Values:**

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11 The ePIC Collaboration is a diverse international scientific community working
12 collectively to design, construct, commission and operate the ePIC detector to exploit
13 the physics potential of the Electron-Ion Collider. The success of the ePIC Collaboration
14 relies on contributions from all members. Therefore, the ePIC Collaboration strives to
15 provide a welcoming, accessible, safe, and supportive environment free from all forms
16 of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, where all collaborators representing
17 various cultures and identities are fully included, respected and able to contribute their
18 best work. Sustaining such a peaceful professional environment is the responsibility of
19 all collaboration members.

20 **2. Applicability:**

21 The ePIC Code of Conduct applies to any interaction which would not have occurred
22 without ePIC. This includes not only internal ePIC meetings but also any social
23 gatherings around those meetings, such as dinners and coffee breaks, as well as any
24 meetings or online interactions where someone represents or could reasonably be
25 assumed to represent the ePIC Collaboration.

26 **3. Expectations for Professional Behavior:**

27 Professional behavior is essential and all Collaboration members are responsible for
28 fostering a respectful, productive and collaborative environment. Therefore, all
29 collaboration members are expected to **complete and stay current with the**
30 **Professional Conduct and Collaboration Culture Training**, ~~maintain their~~
31 ~~Expectations for Professional Behavior Training~~ which will be developed by the
32 **Collaboration Culture Committee (CCC) DEI** committee specifically for the ePIC
33 collaboration. This requirement includes completing the initial **Professional Conduct**
34 **and Collaboration Culture Training** ~~Expectations for Professional Behavior Training~~
35 **Course** within one year of adopting this policy or within six months of joining the
36 Collaboration. As the collaboration and society evolves, additional training may be
37 implemented by the **CCC DEI** committee but will not exceed more than 1 required

38 training course per year. Such training will be designed to address the needs of the
39 Collaboration and will be offered several times throughout the year and at various times
40 via an online format.

41 The basis of professional behavior includes but is not limited to respectful
42 communication, teamwork and integrity. Collaborators must treat everyone with respect,
43 regardless of their position, age, sex, gender, gender identity, ability, race, nationality,
44 ethnicity, or appearance. Everyone must be given a chance to contribute to discussions.
45 Collaborators should listen actively to others and value their opinions, even if (or
46 particularly when) they differ from their own. Collaborators should be mindful of cultural
47 differences and avoid making insensitive or offensive remarks and avoid comments on
48 physical appearance, even when well-intentioned. We understand that even
49 well-intentioned remarks can have a hurtful impact but we all make mistakes. When
50 called out, one should apologize instead of becoming defensive. Likewise, collaborators
51 should avoid physical contact, unless they have confirmed the other person's consent.

52 Successful collaboration and teamwork require fostering a collaborative spirit and
53 willingness to share ideas, data, and resources in an environment free from any forms
54 of harassment, discrimination, or bullying. Collaborators must give credit for the original
55 work of others and acknowledge those contributions. They must also be willing to learn
56 from others which requires being open to feedback and constructive criticism.

57 Collaborators will follow ethical practices and uphold the integrity of the collaboration
58 and the scientific method. This includes demonstrating impartiality. Collaborators must
59 be honest and transparent in their communication and actions. This includes avoiding
60 conflicts of interest and disclosing any potential conflicts of interest promptly. A conflict
61 of interest arises when the personal interests of an individual might adversely affect
62 their duty to make decisions for the benefit of the collaboration. Note that the
63 appearance of conflicts of interest is relevant, not only when the individual feels
64 conflicted. Conflicts of interest can include romantic relationships (disclosure does not
65 need to include the reason or details of a conflict). Collaborators must also maintain
66 appropriate confidentiality of information received as part of committee duties. Likewise
67 collaborators must safeguard information, documents or data internal to the
68 Collaboration, and ensure that such material in our possession is appropriately used
69 and protected.

70 ePIC will maintain a healthy and safe work environment which requires all collaborators
71 to comply with local safety rules. Collaborators are expected to know and follow
72 applicable laws and regulations.

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74 4. Addressing Violations of the Code of Conduct

75 To ensure that the Code of Conduct is upheld, this section describes the procedures for
76 reporting and handling the reports of violations. The CCC DEI committee will report to
77 the Collaboration Council at least annually on the statistics of reported violations and
78 their handling.

79

80 **4.1 Reporting Violations**

81 Individuals who experience or witness any behavior that violates the Code of Conduct
82 are encouraged to report the incident as soon as possible. Violations of the Code of
83 Conduct should be reported to any member of the CCC, the Spokesperson and/or the
84 Collaboration Council (CC) leadership. ~~any among the Spokesperson's Office, the
85 Collaboration Council chairs or the DEI Committee.~~ The CCC DEI Committee will be
86 notified of all reports and will ensure the procedures described in section 4.2 of this
87 policy are followed. When necessary or required by law, outside parties including local,
88 state, and federal authorities, and people's home institutions will be notified. The
89 relevant collaboration council representative shall also be consulted in such cases.

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91 **4.2 Handling Violations**

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93 All reports of violations will be subject to the following procedure which includes a timely
94 assessment of the reported incident and recommended response. Anyone with a
95 conflict of interest must recuse themselves from participating in any deliberations or
96 decisions in the process. In the event that a misconduct issue cannot be resolved
97 through standard procedures, or if it involves one or more members of the CCC, the CC
98 Chair shall appoint an ad-hoc committee of uninvolved CC members. This committee
99 will review the case, consult with the parties involved, and propose a fair and balanced
100 resolution.

101

102 **A. Assessment:**

103 Upon receiving a report, the CCC DEI committee will consult with the Spokesperson's
104 Office and Collaboration Council Chairs. It will conduct an initial review to determine if
105 the reported behavior could violate the Code of Conduct. If the initial review indicates a
106 potential violation, the CCC DEI committee will form a hearing committee of at least
107 three Collaboration members, who are not career-vulnerable, to conduct interviews with
108 the parties involved and witnesses, and review any relevant documents or materials.
109 Input from the relevant parties may be considered when determining the hearing
110 committee membership. The assessment period must be completed in a timely manner
111 and should not exceed six months.

112

113 **B. Interim Measures:**

114 During the assessment of the alleged violation, interim measures may be taken to
115 ensure the safety and well-being of collaborators. The CCC DEI committee will
116 recommend appropriate interim measures as warranted to the Spokespersons. These
117 measures may include, but are not limited to, temporary suspension of the accused
118 individual from attending meetings, no-contact order, alerting local, state, and federal
119 authorities, and/or recusal from deliberations. These measures will be initially effective
120 for a 90 day but may be extended as needed for no longer than six months.

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122 **C. Resolution and Disciplinary Action:**

123 Upon completion of the assessment, the hearing committee and the CCC DEI
124 committee will recommend appropriate action.

125 Three tiers of possible actions are foreseen:

126 **Tier 1.** In case of minor violations and with the cooperation of the accused, no formal
127 decision is needed by the Spokesperson's Office or the Collaboration Council.
128 Examples of Tier 1 actions may include but are not limited to:

- 129 ● Mediation or verbal discussion of the incident with relevant parties
- 130 ● No sanction, but a maintained record of the incident
- 131 ● Written warning;
- 132 ● Voluntary no-contact agreement;
- 133 ● Voluntary recusal from deliberations;
- 134 ● Voluntary hiatus and/or resignation from leadership role(s).

135 **Tier 2.** In cases where cooperation and voluntary acts are impractical or impossible,
136 actions are applied after deliberation among the Spokesperson's Office, Collaboration
137 Council Chairs and the CCC-DEI Committee, subject to a simple majority vote among
138 the voting members. Voting members here refers to all members of the CCC DEI
139 committee, the Spokesperson's Office and the Collaboration Council Chairs who have
140 not recused themselves. Anyone with a conflict of interest must recuse themselves but
141 others may also choose to do so. Examples of Tier 2 actions may include but is not
142 limited to:

- 143 ● Involuntary no-contact order;
- 144 ● Involuntary recusal from deliberations;
- 145 ● Involuntary hiatus and/or removal from leadership role(s).

146 **Tier 3.** In very serious cases, actions may be necessary that require the entire
147 Collaboration Council to weigh in, and the case may need to be escalated to the CC
148 Chair for action under the Collaboration Charter procedures. The motion to escalate can
149 be made by any member of the hearing committee or CCC committee. After deliberation
150 among the Spokesperson's Office, Collaboration Council Chairs and the CCC
151 Committee, the decision about escalation is then subject to a simple majority vote
152 among all members of the CCC committee, the Spokesperson's Office and the
153 Collaboration Council Chairs who have not recused themselves. Anyone with a conflict

154 of interest must recuse themselves but others may also choose to do so. ~~recommended by~~
155 ~~the voting members described above are applied only after a majority vote among the~~
156 ~~Collaboration Council.~~ Examples of Tier 3 actions may include but is not limited to:

- 157 ● Suspension or permanent exclusion from in-person Collaboration events;
- 158 ● Suspension or removal from email lists;
- 159 ● Suspension or permanent exclusion from giving talks on behalf of the
160 Collaboration;
- 161 ● Expulsion from the Collaboration with the right to reapply after a fixed duration;
- 162 ● Expulsion from the Collaboration with no right of reapplication;
- 163 ● Notification to the appropriate funding agency.

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165 **D. Appeals**

166 Individuals dissatisfied with the resolution of their report or the interim measures may
167 appeal the decision. All appeals must be submitted to the ~~CCC DEI~~ committee and
168 Collaboration Council chairs with a justification of the appeal that should include new
169 evidence or information about the case. When the CC chairs receive a request for an
170 appeal, they will determine if the appeal warrants a formal review. For an appeal to
171 move to the review process, it must be a decision not previously appealed and reviewed
172 by an ad hoc appeal committee, there must be new evidence or information available or
173 proof of a flaw in the original process. The CC chairs will form an ad hoc committee of 3
174 members of the Collaboration Council that will serve as a review board for an appeal.
175 The DEI committee will provide the review board with a summary of the reported
176 violation, the procedures followed and rationale that ~~led lead~~ to the imposed sanction.
177 The review board will meet with the person who submitted the appeal and review any
178 new information provided. The review board will make a summary of their findings and
179 provide a recommendation. This recommendation may be to deny the appeal and
180 uphold the original sanction, alter the previous sanction, or recommend a majority vote
181 of the Collaboration Council to repeal the previous sanction.

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185 **4.3 No Retaliation:**

186 The Collaboration strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against individuals who report
187 violations of the Code of Conduct or participate in the investigation process.

188 A deliberate false accusation or retaliation is itself a serious violation and will be subject
189 to disciplinary action.