

ePIC Code of Conduct Policy

Version 2.1 - July 2026

Updated after the ePIC Charter Revision (May 2026)

This document outlines expectations for ethical professional behavior that all members of the ePIC collaboration must follow and how any violations of this code of conduct will be addressed. These expectations are based on the values of the ePIC collaboration.

1. Statement of Values:

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

2. Applicability:

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

3. Professional Conduct and Collaboration Culture ~~Expectations for Professional Behavior:~~

Professional behavior is essential and all Collaboration members are responsible for fostering a respectful, productive and collaborative environment. Therefore, all collaboration members are expected to **complete and stay current with the Professional Conduct and Collaboration Culture Training**, ~~maintain their Expectations for Professional Behavior Training~~ which will be developed by the Collaboration Culture Committee (CCC) ~~DEI~~ committee specifically for the ePIC collaboration. This requirement includes completing the initial **Professional Conduct and Collaboration Culture Training** ~~Expectations for Professional Behavior Training Course~~ within one year of adopting this policy or within six months of joining the Collaboration. As the collaboration and society evolves, additional training may be

38 implemented by the CCC DEI committee but will not exceed more than 1 required
39 training course per year. Such training will be designed to address the needs of the
40 Collaboration and will be offered several times throughout the year and at various times
41 via an online format.

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

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

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

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

75 4. Addressing Violations of the Code of Conduct

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

80

81 4.1 Reporting Violations

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

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92 4.2 Handling Violations

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

102

103 A. Assessment:

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

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114 B. Interim Measures:

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

122

123 C. Resolution and Disciplinary Action:

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

126 Three tiers of possible actions are foreseen:

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

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

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

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

147 **Tier 3.** In very serious cases, actions may be necessary that require the entire
148 Collaboration Council to weigh in, and the case may need to be escalated to the CC
149 Chair for action under the Collaboration Charter procedures. The motion to escalate can
150 be made by any member of the hearing committee or CCC committee. After deliberation
151 among the Spokesperson's Office, Collaboration Council Chairs and the CCC
152 Committee, the decision about escalation is then subject to a simple majority vote
153 among all members of the CCC committee, the Spokesperson's Office and the

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

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

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166 D. Appeals

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

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190 4.3 No Retaliation:

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

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