NumFOCUS Code of Conduct Working Group Response Procedures

This document summarizes the procedures used by the NumFOCUS Code of Conduct Working Group to enforce the Code of Conduct.

Summary of processes

When the Working Group receives a report of a possible Code of Conduct violation from or involving a NumFOCUS Project, someone attending an event or meetup, or in a NumFOCUS online forum, it will:

1. Acknowledge the receipt of the report.
2. If necessary, gather more information directly from the reporting person by speaking/texting with the reporter.
3. Evaluate conflicts of interest.
4. Call a meeting of Working Group members without a conflict of interest.
5. Evaluate the reported incident.
6. Suggest a specific modification of behavior or course of action to prevent the inappropriate behavior from being repeated.
7. Propose consequences for the reported behavior.
8. Vote on the proposed modified behavior or course of action and consequences for the reported person.
9. Follow up with the reported person.
10. Decide further responses.
11. Follow up with the reporter.
    a. Keep the reporter informed throughout the process, particularly in situations when it takes a significant amount of time.

Acknowledging the report

Reporters will receive an emailed acknowledgment of the receipt of their report within 24 hours.

Assessing Conflicts of Interest

A Code of Conduct Working Group member with a conflict of interest will withdraw from the incident discussion and from voting on a response to the report.

Examples of conflicts of interest include:

- The reporter or reported person is a manager of a Working Group member.
- If a member has a romantic or platonic relationship with either the reporter or the reported person, it's fine to participate if they are acquaintances.
- The reporter or reported person is a member's metamour. (This is a term used in the poly community; the short definition is [here](#), and a longer description is [here](#)).
- The reporter or reported person is a Working Group member's family member.
- The reporter or reported person is a member's direct client.
- The reporter or reported person works closely with a Working Group member. This could be someone on their team or working on the same project.
- The reporter or reported person is a maintainer who regularly reviews the member's contributions.

Working Group members do not need to state why they have a conflict of interest, only that one exists. Other Working Group members should not ask why the person has a conflict of interest.

Evaluating the report

The Working Group will evaluate the report by assessing the following criteria:

Scope

- Is this a Code of Conduct violation? Is this behavior on our list of inappropriate behavior? Is it borderline inappropriate behavior? Does it violate our community norms?
- Did this occur in a space within our Code of Conduct's scope?
- Was the impact direct or indirect?

If the incident occurred outside the community but negatively impacts a community member's mental health or physical safety, the incident may be in scope if no action is taken.

Private conversations in community spaces are also in scope.

Risk

- Does this incident include sexual harassment?
- Does this pose a safety risk? Does the behavior put a person's physical safety at risk? Will this incident severely negatively impact someone's mental health?
- Is there a risk of this behavior being repeated? Does the reported person understand why their behavior was inappropriate? Is there an established pattern of behavior from past reports?

Proposing a course of action or modification of behavior

The Working Group will strongly suggest a specific modification of behavior or course of action to prevent the inappropriate behavior from being repeated. The Working Group will also discuss what actions may be taken if the reported person disagrees with the suggestions.

What follows are examples of possible courses of action or modifications of behavior towards the reported person for incidents that occur under the scope of the Code of Conduct. This list is not all-inclusive.

- The reported person does not use specific language
- The reported person does not join in on specific types of discussions
- The reported person does not send private messages to a community member
- The reported person does not join specific communication channels

Proposing consequences

If warranted, the Working Group will propose appropriate consequences in response to the reported incident. What follows are examples of possible consequences. This list is not all-inclusive.

- Nothing, if the behavior was determined not to be a Code of Conduct violation
- A verbal or emailed warning
- A final warning
- Temporarily removing the reported person from the online community
- Removing the reported person from administrator or moderator rights to community infrastructure
- Removing a reported volunteer from their duties and responsibilities
- Removing a reported person from the leadership of relevant organizations
- Removing a reported person from membership of relevant organizations

Voting

Some Working Group members may have a conflict of interest and may be excluded from discussions of a particular incident report. Excluding those members, decisions on modifications of behavior or courses of action, as well as consequences, will be determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the NumFOCUS Code of Conduct Working Group.

Following up with the reported person

The NumFOCUS Code of Conduct Working Group will work to draft a response to the reported person. The email should contain:

- A description of the person's behavior in neutral language
- The negative impact of that behavior
- Any suggested modifications of behavior or courses of action
- Any consequences of their behavior

The working group should not state who reported this incident. They should attempt to anonymize any identifying information from the report. The reported person should be discouraged from contacting the reporter to discuss the report. If they wish to apologize to the reporter, the working group can accept the apology on behalf of the reporter.

Determining further action

If the reported person provides additional context, the NumFOCUS Code of Conduct Working Group may need to re-evaluate the modifications of behavior or consequences.

Following up with the reporter

A person who makes a report will receive a follow-up email stating what action was taken in response to the report. If the working group decided no response was needed, they should provide an email explaining why it was not a Code of Conduct violation.

The follow-up email should be sent no later than one week after receiving the report. If deliberation or follow-up with the reported person takes longer than one week, the Working Group should send a status email to the reporter.

Documentation and Privacy Policies

There may be different places where information about Code of Conduct reports may be accessible:

- Personal email of NumFOCUS Code of Conduct Working Group members
- Archives of committee mailing lists
- Logs from committee online chats
- Shared online documents, such as Google Docs or Next Cloud documents

In all cases, documents and notes should only be available to working group members without conflict of interest in the report. This requires communities to choose documentation tools that will meet their privacy needs.

NumFOCUS Code of Conduct Working Group shared email address

The NumFOCUS Code of Conduct Working Group should be reached through a single email address. It is recommended that the committee use an alias that forwards emails to individual members.

Using a mailing list is not recommended. Mailing lists typically archive all emails, which means new committee members gain access to all past archives. They can deliberately or accidentally see past reports where they have a conflict of interest. To prevent potential conflicts of interest, it is recommended not to have a mailing list archive.

NumFOCUS Code of Conduct Working Group online discussion

A NumFOCUS Code of Conduct Working Group may have an online, real-time discussion forum like Slack, Zulip, or IRC. If the online chat platform allows, it is recommended to set the committee channel so history is unavailable to new committee members who join the channel.

When a report comes in and a discussion needs to happen online, the Working Group must avoid conflicts of interest. In the chat channel, state, 'We have a report that involves [REPORTED PERSON].' Refrain from saying who the reporter or witnesses were if the report was sent to an individual Working Group member. Ask which members do not have a conflict of interest and add those members to a group discussion separate from the working group channel. If a working group member does not respond, do not add them to the new group discussion. If a member finds a conflict of interest exists because of who reported or witnessed the incident, they should recuse themselves from the discussion.
CoC Working Group members should not use bots or IRC bouncers to log the group discussions. All discussions and decisions documentation should be in online, shared documentation.

If no online real-time discussion forum is used, working group members without a conflict of interest will discuss the case in a separate email thread. If no member has a conflict of interest, and the working group email is an alias, the working group may reply to the alias to discuss the issues.

Shared Documentation

The NumFOCUS Code of Conduct Working Group should keep two types of shared documents:

- A spreadsheet with the status of open and closed cases
- A separate document for each report

Status Spreadsheet

The spreadsheet with the status of open and closed cases should have the following format:

Safety risk?	Risk of repeating?	Status	Code Name	Date & Time	Actions needed	Resolution
Yes	Yes	Ongoing	home shelf	07/07 8:30am and 07/08 12:30pm	Team is on the lookout for reported person	Temporary ban for the remainder of the event, reevaluate attendance for next year
No	Maybe	Resolved	stunned bulb	07/07 8:00pm	-	Verbal warning

Resolutions and notes should be vague enough that enforcement team members with a conflict of interest don't know the details of the incident. Use gender-neutral language when describing the reported person in the spreadsheet.

Report Documentation

Each report should be assigned a code name using an online random phrase generator. The code name should be used in the document's title. Only working group members without a conflict of interest should have access to the report documentation.

Report documents should include:

- A summary of a verbal report or the text of an emailed report. Use neutral, nonjudgmental words to describe the behavior. Where possible, separate the behavior of the reported person from the impact on the reporter.
- A summary of committee discussions, including whether the report is in scope
- Proposed behavioral modification plan
- Proposed consequences for the reported behavior
- A summary of verbal discussions or the text of email discussions with community moderators, administrators, registration, or other event organizers about the proposed consequences and behavioral modification plan
- A summary of verbal discussions or the text of email discussions with the reported person
- The text that was sent to follow up with the reporter

All discussion summaries should include the dates they took place.

Privacy Concerns

Online tools like Google Docs have some common privacy pitfalls. Instead of turning link sharing on, always share the document with committee members who don't have a conflict of interest. This prevents people outside of the committee from accessing the documents.

Another common issue is that when a folder is shared with the whole committee, even if a person doesn't have edit or view access to an individual report, they can still see the document's title. This can give information away, such as the person who made the report. Some communities use initials in the report title instead. That can still reveal information, making it hard to discuss report status in public spaces (such as an event). The working group may want to assign a code name to each report and reference that name in the report title and status spreadsheet. You can use an [online random phrase generator](#) to create the code name.

When onboarding new working group members, they should be provided with a list of names of people who have been reported in a Code of Conduct incident. The new member should state whether they have any conflicts of interest in reviewing documentation for those cases. If not, they will be given edit access to the report documents.

Changes to the Code of Conduct

When discussing a change to the NumFOCUS Community Code of Conduct or enforcement policies, the NumFOCUS Code of Conduct Working Group will follow this decision-making process:

- **Brainstorm options.** Working Group members should discuss any relevant context and brainstorm possible options. Providing constructive feedback without getting sidetracked from the main question is important. Brainstorming should be limited to 3-7 days at most.
- **Vote.** Proposed changes to the Code of Conduct Working Group will be decided by a two-thirds majority of all voting members. The current members can always be found on the NF website in the Code of Conduct and on the Code of Conduct page
- **Board Vote.** Once a working draft of the Code of Conduct and procedures is in place, the Code of Conduct Working Group shall provide the NumFOCUS board with a draft of the changes. The NumFOCUS Board will vote to accept or reject the changes.

Current list of voting members

TBA

Attribution

This procedure was adapted from the Python Software Foundation Code of Conduct Working Group Enforcement Procedures, which was itself derived from:

- The PyCon Code of Conduct is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License.
- Ada Initiative's guide titled "Conference anti-harassment/Responding to Reports" is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License.
- Audrey Eschright of Safety First PDX provided the impact vs risk assessment framework, licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Share-Alike 3.0 Unported License by Audrey Eschright of Safety First PDX.
- Otter Tech created the Code of Conduct template under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License.