



NYPDL Code of Conduct 2024-25

Equity complaints may be submitted via [this Google form](#)

Our Equity committee can be reached at:

- Margot: margotnorman34@gmail.com or (610)-606-8399
- Amber: ambersafir@students.berkeley.net or (510)-847-2564
- Maliha: 26thomas@friendsseminary.org or (646)-498-2663
- Zoe: zoe_manges@horacemann.org or (646)-420-0900

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about the contents of this document, please do not hesitate to reach out to our equity director at margotnorman34@gmail.com

Our Mission

The NY Parliamentary Debate League seeks to provide a safe and educational environment for interested students to debate topics that are relevant, enjoyable and informative. We do not tolerate harassment or discrimination on the basis of gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, or any other factor from students, judges, or teachers. We are committed to making tournaments as safe as possible in order to ensure that every member of our community feels welcome at NYPDL tournaments. While we take many precautions to avoid equity violations, we must be prepared for when issues do arise at our tournaments. Our equity committee impartially listens to testimonies when potential equity violations occur and assesses and resolves these issues.

Punishments for these violations can include, but are not limited to, an official warning, a loss in a round, removal from the tournament, or — in the case of repeated offenses — a ban from attending future NYPDL tournaments. If debaters do not attend debater equity earlier in the current semester and then proceed to commit an equity violation, their offenses will be taken more seriously. Furthermore, we do not condone cheating of any kind. More information on

what qualifies as cheating within the NYPDFL, and how our equity committee addresses it, can be found [here](#).

What Qualifies as an Equity Violation?

Equity Violations Against the Individual

- We have a zero tolerance policy for remarks that could reasonably be construed as attacks on one's personal characteristics/identity (*ad hominem* attacks)
 - Arguments should focus solely on the topic at hand, not the identities of those in the round.
- Debaters are expected to use the proper pronouns when referring to people in the round, and to not do so repeatedly or as the result of negligence is an equity violation.
- Debaters should not create a condition that unnecessarily endangers the health or safety of other persons, i.e. by revealing sensitive information about them or their history.
- Debaters are to be kind and respectful to everybody they interact with during a tournament.

Equity Violations Against the Group

- Any argument that maliciously targets a group of people as a whole will not be tolerated.
- These include but are not limited to:
 - Arguments that could potentially be viewed as racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, classist, or ableist, even if no one in the round falls under the categories of those impacted by these rhetorics
- Any usage of generalizations or stereotypes about groups of people is unacceptable at our tournaments and will be treated as such
 - Debaters should not attempt to vilify or create an atmosphere of condemnation against a certain group or person.
 - Debaters should not assume that certain demographic groups have intrinsic characteristics.

- Debaters should not assume or standardize the amount of pain a certain action against any marginalized group causes.
- Essentially, debaters should not assume or assert any broad generalizations about any group
- Importantly, even if debaters are members of a given group, they should avoid feeding into stereotypes or making assumptions and comments that may offend other members of the group; they should remember that they don't know everything about others' lived experiences, and that jokes, comments, and examples that they are fine with could easily be triggering to debaters, judges, and spectators in the room.
- While making an argument about a marginalized group, we encourage all debaters to operate as if a member of that group was present and listening to the argument

Any debater or judge that believes an equity violation has taken place, even if they are not included in the points outlined above, should bring it to the attention of equity. We encourage not only debaters, but also judges to file equity violations if they believe that one has occurred.

What do I do if I witness an equity violation?

- Every tournament will have at least one equity officer sitting out to handle all equity questions, equity violations, and anything else that equity would otherwise handle. They will work closely with the equity team to determine a course of action and will be the primary point of contact for all equity complaints.
- If a violation occurs during a round, and it is not so severe that it impedes upon the teams' ability to finish the round, judges and debaters should allow the round to play out and, also, report the violation to the equity committee, who will address it promptly.
 - In the case of a violation so serious that there is absolutely no possible way to finish the round in a manner safe for all parties involved: contact equity immediately, they will enter the room and figure out how to proceed.

- If a team witnesses a problematic argument or comment made in an otherwise fine debate, they are encouraged to call it out and explain why it is harmful during their speech, if they feel comfortable.
- If a debater witnesses an equity violation from a judge, they should report it to equity as well as speak out, if they feel comfortable.
- When violations occur outside of a debate setting, we encourage any witnesses to promptly report the issue to the equity committee.

How Are Equity Violations Reported?

- If you believe that you have seen an equity violation during a tournament, regardless of whether it is outlined above, we encourage you to reach out to the equity officer present at the tournament to review the issue, even if you are hesitant or unsure about whether it constituted an equity violation.
 - A link to a Google form that can be used to report important details about a violation is provided at the top of this document.
 - Additionally, if you would prefer to contact the equity committee directly, their contact information is provided at the top of this document. Individuals who encounter an equity issue at an NYPDL tournament should reach out to the lead equity officer or, if they are uncomfortable doing so for any reason, one of the other three listed above.

The League greatly appreciates feedback on our tournaments and training materials, and we especially welcome any thoughts or suggestions for our Code of Conduct. If you feel that the Code is missing a necessary section, or that any part of it could be better phrased, please do not hesitate to contact the equity director or one of our equity officers. You can also fill out the league's tournament feedback form, linked [here](#).