

Ontario Rheumatology Association (ORA) Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

To be adopted by ORA Board of Directors, Executive Officers and members of the association who are engaged in advancing our professional activities.

1. Be inclusive.

We welcome and support members of all backgrounds and identities. This includes, but is not limited to members of any sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, social and economic class, educational level, colour, immigration status, age, size, family status, political belief, religion, and mental and physical ability.

2. Be considerate.

We all depend on each other to produce the best work we can as an Association. Your decisions will have impact, and you should take those consequences into account when making decisions.

3. Be respectful.

We won't all agree all the time, but disagreement is no excuse for disrespectful behavior. We will all experience frustration from time to time, but we cannot allow that frustration to become personal attacks. An environment where people feel uncomfortable or threatened is not a productive or creative one.

4. Choose your words carefully.

Always conduct yourself professionally. Be kind to others. Do not insult or put down others. Harassment and exclusionary behavior aren't acceptable. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Threats of violence.
- Insubordination.
- Discriminatory jokes and language.
- Sharing sexually explicit or violent material via electronic devices or other means.
- Personal insults of any nature.
- Unwelcome sexual attention.
- Advocating for, or encouraging, any of the above behavior.

5. Don't harass.

In general, if someone asks you to stop something, then stop. When we disagree, try to understand why. Differences of opinion and disagreements will arise. What is important is that we resolve disagreements and differing views constructively.

6. Turn differences into strengths.

We can find strength in diversity. Different people have different perspectives on issues, and that can be valuable for solving problems or generating new ideas. Being unable to understand why someone holds a viewpoint doesn't mean that they're wrong. Don't forget that we all make mistakes, and blaming each other doesn't get us anywhere.

Instead, focus on resolving issues and learning from mistakes.

7. As a general rule

Membership within the association is contingent upon maintaining good standing with The College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Province of Ontario, as well as compliance with the ORA Code of Conduct. Membership will be cancelled if either of the aforementioned conditions are not met.

8. Specific to the ORA Executive and Board of Directors

If an ORA Executive or Board of Directors member is found to not be in good standing with The College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Province of Ontario, or non-compliant with the ORA Code of Conduct, a special ORA board voting meeting will be scheduled. If a majority resolution is passed to remove that director, their office will be automatically vacated.

9. Conflicts of Interest

ORA Board of Directors, Executive Officers, and Committee Chairs will continue to sign a Code of Ethics & Disclosure Form each year. The ORA Governance team, including committee members, are expected to declare potential conflicts of interest prior to meeting with external stakeholders such as industry and government.