

Introduction

The Lansing Area Vintage Computer Club (LAVCC) is dedicated to providing a safe and harassment-free experience for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, neurodiversity, body size, race, age, or religion.

We do not tolerate harassment of members or guests in any form. Sexual language and imagery are not appropriate. Members violating these rules will be given a written warning or banned at the discretion of the LAVCC Admin/Moderation Team, and non-members may be asked to leave and not return.

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Intent

This policy highlights to members key behaviors in LAVCC's culture: expectations of Admins/Moderators, members, and non-members/visitors/guests, as well as behaviors we will not tolerate. It also aims to establish a clear and fair procedure for responding to valid member or visitor concerns. In addition, it clarifies the process for communicating these concerns.

This policy exists because informal handling of harassment repeatedly fails to protect people. LAVCC chooses clear documentation and predictable enforcement to reduce harm, prevent favoritism, and ensure concerns can be addressed without placing the burden on individuals.

Extent

Applies to all members of LAVCC and any guests accompanying members engaging in or attending activities within a host venue or its immediate vicinity. This policy also extends to all events, both formal and social, attended by LAVCC members.

What is considered harassment?

Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Offensive comments related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, mental illness, neuro(a)typicality, physical appearance, body size, age, race, or religion.
- Unwelcome comments regarding a person's lifestyle choices and practices, including those related to food, health, parenting, drugs, and employment.
- Deliberate misgendering or use of 'dead' or rejected names.
- Gratuitous or off-topic sexual images or behavior in spaces where they're not appropriate.
- Physical contact and simulated physical contact (eg, textual descriptions like “*hug*” or “*backrub*”) without consent or after a request to stop.
- Threats of violence.
- Incitement of violence towards any individual, including encouraging a person to commit suicide or to engage in self-harm.
- Deliberate intimidation.
- Stalking or following.
- Harassing photography or recording, including logging online activity for harassment purposes.
- Sustained disruption of discussion.
- Unwelcome sexual attention.
- Pattern of inappropriate social contact, such as requesting/assuming inappropriate levels of intimacy with others.
- Continued one-on-one communication after requests to cease.
- Deliberate “outing” of any aspect of a person's identity without their consent except as necessary to protect vulnerable people from intentional abuse.
- Publication of non-harassing private communication.

- Advocating for, or encouraging, any of the above behavior

Harassment is (generally repetitive) behavior that disturbs and upsets others. Be mindful around people you don't know that well: they may not appreciate off-color jokes. Be mindful around people you do know: they may have circumstances you don't know about. Apply common sense, resolve conflicts like adults, and avoid passive-aggressive behavior.

Enforcement / Consequences

- If asked to stop any harassing behavior, members and guests are expected to comply immediately. Not complying increases the seriousness of the offense.
- If any member or guest engages in harassing *or other unacceptable* behavior, the LAVCC Admin/Moderation Team retains the right to take agreed-upon actions to keep LAVCC a welcoming environment for everyone, *up to and including* banning the offender from the space.

See “*Consequences*” section below.

- Event organizers may take action to redress anything designed to, or with the clear impact of, disrupting the event or making the environment hostile for any participants.

LAVCC Events and Shared Spaces

- This anti-harassment policy applies to all LAVCC members, attendees, guests, vendors, and representatives of organizations participating in LAVCC events or activities, whether in-person or shared online spaces.
- Individuals or organizations may be removed from an event or barred from future LAVCC activities at the discretion of the LAVCC Admin/Moderation Team for violations of this policy.
- When LAVCC events involve partner organizations or companies, those entities are responsible for ensuring their representatives comply with this policy. Organizations whose representatives engage in harassment or repeated misconduct may be asked to leave or may be excluded from future participation.

Consequences

- The preferred method of escalating reports of harassment is:
 - **Informal Warning:** Email / in-person notification that behavior has to change.
 - **Formal Warning:** A formal write up describing behavior that is unacceptable
 - **Ban:** For repeat behavior (ignoring rules) or particularly egregious offenses.

Last Straw Policy

- If you have two or more **Formal Warnings** for non-harassment offenses (including those which contain an expiration date), a **Formal Warning** for harassment acts as a “last straw” and results in an instant ban.
- Following a **Formal Warning** for harassment, any additional offense meriting a **Formal Warning** will result in an instant ban.

Informal Warning

This is a [**documented**] notice delivered either by email or in person, preferably as close to the time of the offense as possible. This is the preferred first step in the disciplinary process, and may be upgraded to formal warning or a ban at the LAVCC Admin/Moderation Teams’ discretion.

The intent of an informal warning is to let someone know that, while plausibly not intentional, their behavior is **not OK**, and must not continue. An informal warning should be followed up with a quick email to (lavcc.org@gmail.com) to loop everyone in, and provide a paper trail.

Formal Reprimand

Issued more serious unintentional offenses, for intentional offenses that don’t quite merit a ban (heat of the moment type outburst), or for repeating an offense for which an informal warning has already been given. Formal warnings may have no expiration date, and could remain on record indefinitely.

A formal warning is a signed document with the following:

1. The offending behavior(s) and time(s) they occurred.
2. The specific rules being broken or general harassment catch all if non-applicable.
3. Specific conditions for your continued membership to mitigate re-offending risk:
 - a. Immediately cease the offending behavior.
 - b. May involve time or location restrictions.
 - c. May include restrictions on non-essential or non-emergency contact with specific individuals or groups.
4. If warranted, a time at which the Reprimand “expires”, assuming there are no further offenses before then, relating to the points above.
5. A notice that any further breaches of harassment policy will result in a ban.
6. Your signature - certifying you understand the implications of this document.
7. Note: refusal to sign this document will simply get you a ban.
8. Signature(s) of LAVCC Admin/Moderator Team Member(s).

Banishment

A member may be banned by a vote of the LAVCC Admin/Moderation Team, for whatever reasons they deem sufficient. However, here are some general guidelines for when a member should be banned for harassment:

- A second (harassment offense) warranting a formal (written) warning from the LAVCC Admin/Moderation Team, or three or more formal warnings total [*See Last Straw Policy*].
- Continuing to harass after any "No" or "Stop" instruction.
- A pattern of harassing behavior, with or without warnings.
- A single serious offense (e.g. punching or groping someone).

A document similar to a formal warning will be prepared and retained by the LAVCC Admin/Moderation Team. This document is valid whether or not it is signed by the offender. Individuals who are banned from LAVCC may be denied participation in future LAVCC events or activities. If a banned individual remains present at an event after being asked to leave, LAVCC Admins/Moderators may coordinate with venue staff or event partners to request removal in accordance with venue policy. Any determination of trespassing or involvement of local authorities is subject to venue rules and enforcement. No refunds of any kind will be given.

Reporting

If someone makes you or anyone else feel unsafe or unwelcome, please report it as soon as possible. Harassment and other code of conduct violations reduce the value of our space for everyone. We want you to be happy within a LAVCC space, in-person or online. People like you make our space a better place. You can make a report either personally or anonymously.

No single Admin or Moderator controls enforcement outcomes, reports involving an Admin/Moderator will be reviewed by other Admins/Moderators not involved in the incident.

Anonymous Report (Form forthcoming)

You can make anonymous reports using this google form: (Insert Form Here)

This form is effectively an anonymous email to the (lavcc.org@gmail.com) group along with select administrators. If possible please include the name(s) of the offending person(s) or a physical description, the time(s)/date(s) and the nature/seriousness of the offense.

While it is potentially distressing to describe what happened, the LAVCC Admin/Moderation Team needs information to determine what course of action to take, ranging from giving the offending party an informal warning to knock it off, to denying future participation, or even informing LAVCC Admin/Moderators & volunteers to prevent the individual from accessing the space once LAVCC leadership has formally requested their removal, with the understanding that this may vary depending on venue policy. We can't follow up an anonymous report with you directly, but we will fully investigate it and take whatever action is necessary to prevent a recurrence.

Personal Report

Email (lavcc.org@gmail.com) directly or talk to a LAVCC Admin or Moderator.

When taking a personal report, we will ensure you are safe and cannot be overheard. We may involve other event staff to ensure your report is managed properly. Once safe, we'll ask you to tell us about what happened. This can be upsetting, but we'll handle it as respectfully as possible, and you can bring someone to support you. You won't be asked to confront anyone, and we won't tell anyone who you are.

Guidelines for taking a report:

Any Admin, Moderator, Volunteer (or member if they feel comfortable doing so) can issue a verbal warning to another member/guest that their behavior violates the space's anti-harassment policy.

Warnings should be reported to (lavcc.org@gmail.com) as soon as practical. The report should include:

1. Identifying information or description of the offending person(s)
2. The time you issued the warning
3. The behavior that was in violation
4. The approximate time of the behavior (if different than the time of warning)
5. The circumstances surrounding the incident
6. Your identity
7. Other people involved in the incident

When receiving a report from someone experiencing harassment you should record what they say and reassure them they are being taken seriously, however avoid making specific promises about what disciplinary actions the LAVCC Admin/Moderation Team will take. Ask for any other information if the reporter has not volunteered it (such as time, place) but do not pressure them to provide it if they are reluctant.

Even if the report lacks important details such as the identity of the person taking the harassing actions, it should still be recorded and passed along to the LAVCC Admin/Moderation Team. Do not pressure the reporter to take any action if they do not want to do it. Respect the reporter's privacy by not sharing unnecessary details with others, especially individuals who were not involved with the situation or non-volunteer/LAVCC Admin/Moderation Team.

Stopping a Presentation / Class / Event

Presentations or similar events should not be stopped for one-time gaffes or minor problems, although an LAVCC Admin/Moderator should speak to the presenter afterward. However, volunteers and members should take immediate action to politely and calmly stop any presentation or event that repeatedly or seriously violates the anti-harassment policy. For example, simply say "I'm sorry, this presentation cannot be continued at the present time" with no further explanation.

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