

Animal Legal Defense Fund Mentorship Program – Code of Conduct

Expectations

The Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) Mentorship Program is committed to providing an inclusive, welcoming, and safe environment for our mentors and mentees. By participating in the Mentorship Program and thereby becoming a part of our community, you are agreeing to abide by this Code of Conduct.

The Mentorship Program has a zero-tolerance policy for harassment or discrimination, including but not limited to harassment or discrimination based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, appearance, religion, immigration status, pregnancy, marital or familial status, military or veteran status, and apparel or food choices, whether or not such conduct is pervasive or severe enough to meet the technical legal requirements of harassment or discrimination. Harassment and discrimination includes but is not limited to: stalking, verbal or physical intimidation, offensive verbal or written comments or images, physical assault and/or battery, harassing or non-consensual photography or recording, disruption of events, shaming or ridicule, bathroom policing, real or implied threats of harm, uninvited or unwelcome physical contact or attention, and sexual harassment, including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or any other unwelcome physical, verbal, visual, or other conduct of a sexual nature. ALDF prohibits bullying of any mentor or mentee, whether or not such conduct meets the technical legal definition of any unlawful conduct. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, abusive, insulting, or inappropriate conduct, including yelling, inappropriate and offensive jokes, unwanted touching or hitting, and threats or implied threats.

If a mentor or mentee is reported or found to have engaged in harassing, discriminatory, threatening, bullying, inappropriate, or unsafe behavior, ALDF retains the right to take any actions reasonable or necessary to keep the Mentorship Program a safe and welcoming environment for all participants. This includes, but is not limited to, expulsion from the Mentorship Program.

This policy should not be construed as creating any duty, obligation or liability on the part of ALDF. It is simply intended to inform all participants in the Mentorship Program of our expectations that their behavior complies with this policy.

Power Dynamics

Mentees in this program are law students navigating the early stages of their career. The mentors' enhanced experience, knowledge, professional status, and professional network can contribute to an imbalance of power.

Additionally, mentors and mentees should remain mindful of how intersecting identities, including race, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, appearance, religion, or immigration status, can impact these dynamics.

Mentors should be particularly aware of the power dynamics that may exist between themselves and their mentees and should take special care to ensure that mentees are treated respectfully.

Consequences for Violations

ALDF reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to remove any mentor or mentee not in compliance with this policy from the Mentorship Program; to remove from a Mentorship Program event anyone not in compliance with this policy; to revoke an invitation to become a mentor or mentee; as well as the right to ban participation in any future Mentorship Program years or events.

Reporting

Any mentor or mentee who believes they have witnessed or been subjected to prohibited harassment or discrimination, bullying, threatening, inappropriate, or unsafe behavior should report it promptly to any of the below.

Animal Law Education & Scholarship Program Director Stacy Lopresti-Goodman,
slopresti@aldf.org, 707-795-2533 x1322

HR Manager Brittany Sweitzer, hr@aldf.org, 707-795-2533

Investigation of Complaints

ALDF may review, assess, or investigate reports made under this Code of Conduct in the manner ALDF determines appropriate under the circumstances. ALDF will make reasonable efforts to maintain confidentiality, but may disclose information as needed to review the report, administer the Mentorship Program, take remedial action under this Code of Conduct, or comply with applicable law. Continued participation in the Mentorship Program is conditioned on good-faith cooperation with any review or investigation. Failing to cooperate, interfering with a review, or deliberately providing false information may result in remedial action, including removal from the Mentorship Program.

If ALDF determines, based on the information available to it, that a participant has violated this Code of Conduct or otherwise engaged in conduct inconsistent with the Mentorship Program, ALDF may take any action it determines appropriate in its sole discretion. Such action may include re-matching participants, limiting contact, suspending participation, removing a participant from the Mentorship Program, or prohibiting participation in future Mentorship Program activities.