

# MassCUE Fall Conference 2024 Code of Conduct Introduction

Our Mission, at this and every MassCUE event, is to Educate, Connect, and Inspire. In order to create an environment conducive to that, MassCUE is dedicated to providing an inclusive and welcoming conference experience for everyone. As such we do not tolerate harassment, discrimination, or exclusion of conference participants in any form, including but not limited to race, religion, religious garments, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, physical abilities, physical appearance, body size, or technology choices. Participants at MassCUE 2024 Fall Conference are expected to act respectfully toward others in accordance with this code of conduct.

MassCUE 2024 Fall Conference is a community conference intended to be a space where professionals in the educational sphere come to be inspired after learning, connecting, and collaborating over best practices in edtech and education.

We value the participation of each member of the MassCUE community and want all attendees to have an enjoyable and fulfilling experience. Therefore, all attendees are expected to show respect and courtesy to others throughout the conference and at all conference-related events, whether officially sponsored by MassCUE or not.

All attendees, speakers, exhibitors, organizers, staff, and volunteers at this or any MassCUE event are required to conform to the following Code of Conduct. Organizers will enforce this code throughout the event. We encourage anyone who experiences or witnesses a violation of the code of conduct to report it to the Care & Support Team. Any persons removed from the conference for violation of the code of conduct will not be issued a refund and attendance at future events may be denied. Corrective action will be determined at the sole discretion of the Care & Support Team and Executive Director.

It is up to all of us to do our part to Level the Playing Field and we thank you for helping make this and every space a place that embodies MassCUE for All.

# Concise Version: MassCUE Fall Conference 2024 Code of Conduct

MassCUE is dedicated to providing a inclusive and welcoming conference experience for everyone and does not tolerate discrimination, exclusion, or harassment of conference participants in any form, including but not limited to:

race	gender	physical abilities
religion	gender identity	physical appearance
religious garments	gender expression	body size
age	sexual orientation	technology choice

During the conference and while interacting with conference attendees, virtually or in-person, we expect all communication to be appropriate for a professional audience of varying backgrounds. Sexual, racialized, or discriminatory language -including “jokes” - and imagery is not permitted at the conference venue, including during talks, workshops, parties, or on social media.

**We encourage anyone who experiences or witnesses a violation of the code of conduct to report it to the Care & Support Team or complete the Conduct Concern Form. [Link to the Conduct Concern form.](#)**

Individuals violating these rules may be asked to leave the conference, will not receive a refund, and may be barred from future events as determined by the Care & Support Team and Executive Director.

Be careful in the words that you choose. Be mindful of the impact of your language. Remember that sexist, racist, and other exclusionary jokes are offensive and do not serve to promote an environment of inclusivity. Before you speak or act, use this familiar acronym to guide behavior. Pause and THINK. Is my comment or behavior:

- True
- Helpful
- Inspiring
- Necessary
- Kind

We respect each individual’s agency to clothe themselves as they see fit. We simply request that time and place be taken into consideration. Thank you for making this event a space that embodies MassCUE for all!

# Expanded Version: MassCUE Fall Conference 2024

## Code of Conduct

Participants will be asked to stop any harassing behavior and are expected to comply immediately.

Harassing behavior includes, yet is not limited to:

- offensive or unwanted verbal, digital, and/or physical communication related to the categories above,
- deliberate intimidation,
- stalking,
- following,
- photographing,
- recording,
- causing sustained disruption of conference activities,
- sexual advancements including inappropriate physical contact, remarks, and unwelcome sexual attention.

Participants will be asked to stop any discriminatory behavior and are expected to comply immediately.

Discriminatory behavior, whether intentional or unintentional, is the prejudiced and unjust treatment of a person or group, especially as it pertains to the categories above.

Participants will be asked to stop any exclusionary practices and are expected to comply immediately.

Exclusionary behavior is the unnecessary and intentional ostracization of a person or group from meaningful participation.

### Care & Support Team Contact Information

If you observe or are personally being harassed, discriminated against, excluded, or have any other concerns, please complete our Conduct Concern Form or contact Care & Support Team.

If requested, a representative from the Care & Support Team or the Executive Director will help participants contact the venue security, provide escorts, or otherwise assist those experiencing harassment to feel safe for the duration of the conference.

## 1.2 Encouraged Behaviors

- Be welcoming. MassCUE strives to be a community that welcomes and supports people of all backgrounds and identities. Some examples of behavior that contribute to creating a positive environment include: ○

## Inclusive language;

- Asking for and using preferred pronouns
- Gender inclusive language
  - People, y'all, folks
- Person first language
  - E.g. A person experiencing homelessness
- Explain!
  - Don't assume understanding of idioms, adages, and acronyms; if you choose to use them, explain them.
  - Remember something common for you may not be common for someone else: don't assume a shared experience
- Be considerate and patient
- Assume best intentions
- Allow people to present authentically even if it is different from your approach or expectation
- Make space for other voices
- Be Curious: Actively seek to acknowledge, respect, and understand fellow community members.
  - Respect for differing viewpoints and experiences;
  - Empathy towards other community members;
  - Ask (clarifying) Questions
    - Any decision you make may affect others, and those consequences should be taken into account. While critique is a natural and important part of our culture, good critiques are kind, respectful, clear, and constructive.
- Actively Participate: Enthusiastic discussions, discourse, and being challenged are essential to learning
  - Offer constructive feedback
  - Be Present
  - Actively listen & Seek to understand
    - Listen to understand not to reply
    - What is the value being expressed?
- Intentionally Disagree:
  - Keep an open mind
    - Ask clarifying questions before assuming that a communication was inappropriate
  - Work to resolve disagreements
    - Ask generative questions that will serve to refine understanding, rather than to escalate an issue
  - Address differing views constructively

- When someone contradicts your own perceptions, try to understand where the other person is coming from.
  - Interrogate your personal feelings and beliefs
  - It is okay to change your mind: that's learning
- Maintain your internal compass
  - Choose when and with whom to engage
  - Agree to disagree
  - Take a break
  - Speak from your "I"
  - Say "No."

As we are aspiring to create a welcoming environment, MassCUE does not aim to censor or tone control our attendees.

### 1.3 Behaviors not tolerated

Examples of behaviors not tolerated include, but are not limited to:

- Violent threats or language directed against another person, including deliberate intimidation or harassment (online or in-person);
- Verbal, written, or physical abuse;
- Discrimination of any person or group of persons;
- Exclusion of any person or group of persons;
- Discriminatory jokes and language;
- Conduct or speech which might be considered sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic, xenophobic, ableist, sizeist or otherwise discriminatory or offensive in nature;
- The use of unwelcome, suggestive, derogatory or inappropriate nicknames or terms;
- Disrespect towards others (ex. personal insults, innuendo);
- Physical, verbal, or sexual harassment of any kind;
- Posting sexually explicit or violent material, or including this content in events such as conference presentations, talks, workshops, or parties;
- Posting (or threatening to post) other people's personally identifying information ("doxing");
- Inappropriate attention or contact. Be aware of how your actions affect others. If it makes someone uncomfortable, stop. This includes:
  - Continued unwelcomed one-on-one communication after a request to cease
  - Unwelcome sexual attention
  - Repeated harassment of others. If someone asks you to stop: Stop.
  - "No" is a complete sentence
- Sustained disruptions of community events and discussions

- Advocating for or encouraging any of the above behavior

## 1.4 Scope and Limitations

The Code of Conduct emphasizes marginalized people's safety over privileged people's comfort. The Care & Support Team will not act on complaints covering:

- “Reverse”-isms, including “reverse racism”, “reverse sexism”, and “cisphobia”
- Reasonable communication of boundaries, such as “leave me alone,” “go away,” or “I’m not discussing this with you”
- Communicating in a “tone of voice” that a person doesn’t find congenial

The logistics of physical events, such as the venue, food and beverage options, or failures to meet an individual or group's particular needs, also do not fall under the scope. These matters should be discussed with the event organizers & shared via available conference feedback channels.

## 1.5 How to handle a complaint

Safety is a collective effort. If you witness a potential violation of the Code of Conduct, you are encouraged to report it by completing the Conduct Concern Form or contacting the Care & Support Team. [Link to Conduct Concern Form.](#)

If you do not wish to invoke the reporting process, but you do feel that MassCUE Fall Conference 2024 organizers should be aware of the incident, within the form you can specify that you are seeking “No Action”. Please note: If the Care & Support Team receives multiple No Action complaints about an individual's behavior, they may contact the reporters to inform them and ask if they would like to escalate the incidents for moderation.

### 1.5.1 Attendee procedure for incident handling

In order to ensure procedural fidelity all reports should be made using the Conduct Concern Form or directly to a member of the Care & Support Team. All reports are confidential to the Care & Support Team, Executive Director, and necessarily involved parties.

When reporting the event verbally or in writing, try to gather as much information as available, but do not interview people about the incident. A representative from the Care & Support Team will be available to assist you in writing the report/collecting information.

The important information consists of:

- Identifying information (name) of the participant doing the harassing
- The behavior that was in violation
- The approximate time of the behavior (if different than the time the report was made)
- The circumstances surrounding the incident (events before and after)
- What is needed to make them feel safe in this moment
- Other people involved in the incident including witnesses

### 1.5.2 Procedure for incident handling

Staff must have a solid understanding of our Fall Conference 2024 Code of Conduct policy and what is expected from an attendee that wants to report a harassment incident. All reports should be made directly to the Care & Support Team, Executive Director, or via the Conduct Concern Form. The following procedure is to be completed by a representative from the Care & Support Team or Executive Director.

**1. Incident Report** Try to get as much of the incident in written form by the reporter. If you cannot, transcribe it yourself as it was told to you. The important information to gather includes the following:

- Identifying information (name) of the participant doing the harassing
- The behavior that was in violation
- The approximate time of the behavior (if different than the time the report was made)
- The circumstances surrounding the incident
- What is needed to make them feel safe in this moment
- Other people involved in the incident

**2. Initial Response** Prepare an initial response to the incident. Depending on the severity/details of the incident, the Care & Support Team will follow these guidelines:

- If there is any general threat to attendees or the safety of anyone including exhibitors and staff is in doubt, summon security.
- Offer the victim a private place to sit
- Ask "is there a friend or trusted person who you would like to be with you?" (if so, arrange for someone to get in contact with and bring this person)
- Ask them "how can I help?"
- Provide them with your list of emergency contacts if they need help later
- If everyone is presently physically safe, involve law enforcement or

security only at a victim's request.

There are also some guidelines as to what not to do as an initial response:

- Do not overtly invite them to withdraw the complaint or mention that withdrawal is OK. This suggests that you want them to do so, and is therefore coercive.
- Do not ask for their advice on how to deal with the complaint. This is a staff responsibility.
- Do not offer them input into penalties. This is the Care & Support Team and Executive Director's responsibility.
- Do not discuss the issue with people who do not need to know about it.

**3. Response Planning Meeting** Once something is reported, at least two representatives of the Care & Support Team should meet. The main objective of this meeting is to find out the following:

- What happened?
- Are we doing anything about it?
- Who is doing those things?
- When are they doing them?

**4. Follow-up with alleged harasser** After the staff meeting and discussion, have a staff member (preferably the Board leadership or Executive Director if available) communicate with the alleged harasser. Make sure to inform them of what has been reported about them. Allow the alleged harasser to give their side of the story to the staff. After this point, if the report stands, let the alleged harasser know what actions will be taken against them.

\* Some actions for the Care & Support Team to consider when dealing with Code of Conduct offenders (note that the list below is not a requirement and only applies if deemed necessary based on the report and response planning meeting):

- Warning the harasser to cease their behavior and that any further reports or warnings will result in removal from the event
- Requiring that the harasser avoid any interaction with and physical proximity to their victim for the remainder of the event
- Ending a session that violates the policy early
- Not publishing the video or slides of a session that violated the policy
- Not allowing a speaker who violated the policy to give (further) talks at the event now or in the future
- Removing MassCUE membership
- Immediately ending any event, volunteer responsibilities, and/or



privileges the harasser holds

- Requiring that the harasser immediately leave the event and not return
- Please keep in mind that it is not a good idea to encourage an apology from the harasser.

**5. Follow-up Communication** In order to be transparent while still respecting the privacy of individual attendees, our policy is to make sure that everyone aware of the initial incident is also made aware of the policy infraction and that official action has been taken. However, when speaking to these individuals (those who are aware of the incident, but were not necessarily involved) about the incident keep the details out. Depending on the severity, board leadership, the Executive Director, or their designee may decide to make one or more public announcements. No one other than those outlined above or a delegated authority from the MassCUE leadership should make any announcements or provide any comment.

If some attendees were angered by the incident, it is best to apologize to them that the incident occurred to begin with. If there are residual hard feelings, suggest to them to write an email to the Board leadership of the Executive Director for it to be dealt with accordingly.

**6. Record of Incident** In an effort to identify patterns of behavior, a record of incidents and actions taken is to be preserved for future MassCUE use. Patterns of harassment often occur over multiple years and these records allow future staff and volunteers to react appropriately. Collections of incident records should be kept confidential and communicated fondly to the Care & Support Team, Executive Director, and board leadership as appropriate.

The Care & Support Team, staff, and volunteers who may be aware of the incident are prohibited from speaking to anyone, including other staff, volunteers, and MassCUE members, not directly involved in the resolution and handling of the incident. If it is found that details were revealed, corrective action will be determined at the sole discretion of the Care & Support Team, Board Leadership, and Executive Director.

## 1.6 Credits and additional resources

Credits for the sources and inspiration of this code of conduct go to FOSS4G NA Baltimore 2023 Code of Conduct with support from Froot Consulting and our Board of Directors.