

ETHICS COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

(Adopted March 17, 2022)

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF
WOODTURNERS**

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OF WOODTURNERS

Turning to the Future

ETHICS COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

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The Ethics Committee (hereinafter known as the Committee) was created to investigate all alleged violations of the American Association of Woodturners' (AAW) Code of Ethics, Conflict of Interest Policy, and the Anti-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy, and to ensure adherence to legal standards and ethical norms. The Committee is composed of non-Board AAW members.

ETHICS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- a. The Board will appoint a non-Board member to be chairman of the Committee at their November Board meeting for a term of one year, beginning the following January.
- b. The newly appointed Committee Chairman will recruit members to serve on the Ethics Committee for a period of one year, beginning in January.
- c. Board members cannot serve on the Committee while a member of the Board.
- d. The Board President will assign one Board member as Board Liaison to the Committee. The Liaison will not be a member of the Committee, but will act as a liaison between the Committee and the Board. The Liaison will not have voting rights or be considered part of a quorum for the Committee.

ETHICS COMMITTEE DUTIES

- a. Review complaints brought to its attention by the Board or an AAW member.
- b. Investigate all alleged violations of the Code of Ethics, Conflict of Interest Policy, and Anti-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy.
- c. Submit written reports of the Committee's findings to the Board, which may include a recommended resolution.
- d. Meet at least once annually to review the Code of Ethics, Conflicts of Interest Policy, and Anti-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy, and recommend changes if needed to the Board. All changes must be approved by a majority vote of the Board to become effective.
- e. Perform other duties as the Board might assign to the Committee.

PROCEDURE FOR FILING A COMPLAINT

Any member of the AAW may file a complaint with the Ethics Committee or the AAW Board regarding an alleged violation(s) of the Code of Ethics, Conflict of Interest Policy, or the Anti-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy, by an AAW member, employee or Board member. If filed with the Executive Director or the Board, it shall be given to the Board Liaison to send to the Ethics Committee.

ETHICS COMPLAINT

When an ethics complaint is filed:

- a. It should be sent to the AAW Executive Director, and the Board Liaison for the Committee. They will refer the matter to the entire Board.
- b. If the Executive Director, the Board Liaison, or a member of the Ethics Committee is the one with the conflict, the complaint should be sent to the Board President.
- c. The Board will determine if the complaint should be referred to the Ethics Committee.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

If a Conflict of Interest Approved by the Board

If a transaction is a conflict of interest, it is possible for it to be approved by the Board under certain circumstances. All of the following must be observed for approval to be granted:

- a. A possible conflict of interest is fully disclosed and the Board determines if a conflict does exist.
- b. The Board, in the event of an existing conflict, decides whether the contemplated transaction may be authorized as just, fair, reasonable and in the best interest of the AAW.
- c. If the conflicted transaction is approved by the Board as just, fair and reasonable to the AAW, the findings of the Board shall be made a part of the minutes of that Board meeting.
- d. The person with the conflict must be excluded from the discussion and approval of such transaction;
- e. A competitive bid or comparable valuation must exist.

If a Conflict of Interest is Not Approved by the Board

- a. If the conflicted transaction is not authorized, the matter will be referred to the Ethics Committee for their investigation and a possible recommended resolution.
- b. Once the Board has received the Committee's report, a decision will be made by the Board. The Board is the final arbiter of the decision, and their concern must be the welfare of the AAW and the advancement of its purpose.

Anti-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Complaints

Complaints alleging discrimination or sexual harassment will follow the same procedures outlined in the Ethics Complaint section.

ETHICS COMMITTEE ACTIONS

Once a complaint has been referred, the Committee will:

- a. Obtain a statement setting forth facts from the personal knowledge of the complainant.
 1. This statement should include a list of the alleged violation(s) and have any available supporting documentation attached.

2. No hearsay statements can be used in the investigation, and if any such statements are received they will not be considered.
 3. Only statements by individuals with personal knowledge of the alleged violation(s) will be used.
- b. Provide the subject of the complaint with a summary of the allegation(s).
 - c. Allow the subject of the alleged violation(s) to respond to the complaint.
 - d. Prepare a written report of the Committee's investigation in a timely manner, which may include recommendations to the Board. Deliver the report to the Board through the Board Liaison.
 - e. The Committee report shall address each violation of the policy alleged in the original complaint.
 - f. If the subject of the complaint is a member of the Committee, the member shall refrain from participation in the investigation, preparation of the report and recommendations to the Board.
 - g. The report of the Committee shall remain confidential.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Until a decision is made with regard to the matter, and the Board approves release of the information, every complaint shall be kept strictly confidential:

- a. By the complainant, or anyone submitting supporting evidence.
- b. Members of the Ethics Committee.
- c. Board members.

Publication or dissemination of the complaint by any involved party, shall constitute an independent violation of the Code of Ethics by that party.

No statements shall be posted anywhere regarding the complaint while the complaint is under investigation. This will allow the unbiased review and resolution of the complaint. Any such action would impede the investigation process, potentially skew opinions and could cause irreparable damage to the complainant and the AAW.

BOARD ACTION AFTER COMMITTEE REPORT

- a. Discuss the Ethics Committee's report as soon as practical after receipt of the Committee report.
- b. Permit the subject of the complaint to respond in detail to the Board regarding the matter in question.
- c. The Board discussion will be conducted in an open meeting, with full disclosure, discussion and written minutes.
- d. If the issue involves AAW personnel, a Board Director or a member, the Board reserves the right to examine and act on the matter in executive session.
- e. If a Director is the subject of an ethics complaint they may not participate in deliberations or otherwise vote on a course of action.

- f. Following the discussion the Board, by a simple majority vote, will take one of the following actions:
 - 1. Dismiss the allegation or infraction of the Code of Ethics.
 - 2. Direct the subject of the complaint to remedy the situation within a specified time frame, followed by a Board review of the requested action.
 - 3. Censure the subject of the complaint.
 - 4. Terminate the employment of the employee.
 - 5. Remove the Director or committee member from their position under provisions outlined in the Bylaws.
 - 6. Refund a member's annual dues and remove their name from the membership roll.
 - 7. Any other action that will be determined by the Board.
- g. In all matters, the Board of Directors is the final arbiter.