



NATIONAL SPEAKERS ASSOCIATION

Code of Ethics and
Professional Behavior

the code

VALUES:

- > ABUNDANT GENEROSITY
- > ELEVATING EXCELLENCE
- > INTENTIONAL LANGUAGE
- > HONORABLE INNOVATION
- > UPLIFTING HUMANITY



Code of Ethics and Professional Behavior ***Adopted November 21, 2024***

The purpose of the National Speakers Association **Code of Ethics and Professional Behavior** (hereafter “NSA Code”) is to establish and maintain the National Speaker’s Association (NSA) brand, reputation, and public confidence in the professionalism, dedication, and integrity of both the individual members of NSA, and the Association itself.

NSA’s five core values of Abundant Generosity, Elevating Excellence, Intentional Language, Honorable Innovation, and Uplifting Humanity remain integral to the success of both NSA and the individual professional speaker.

Therefore, these five core values provide the overarching framework for the NSA Code. All members of NSA subscribe to this NSA Code as a condition of membership, with the firm belief that each member aspires to uphold the values, reputation, and legacy of NSA. By doing so, members recognize the necessity to preserve and encourage fair and equitable practices among all who are engaged in professional speaking.

Violations of the NSA Code are determined in accordance with the NSA Bylaws and NSA Policies and Procedures. Any action taken by NSA shall be binding and final upon the NSA member and without recourse to NSA, its officers, members, or staff.

The NSA Code sets forth both an organizational commitment and an individual membership pledge. For purposes of the NSA Code, and in alignment with the NSA value of Uplifting Humanity, NSA maintains an overarching commitment to safety first and always. By virtue of being an NSA member, you agree to abide by the NSA Code. The NSA Committee on Ethics and Professional Behavior (hereafter “CEPB”) under the direction of the NSA Board of Directors, shall be responsible for the enforcement of the NSA Code.

Article I – Abundant Generosity

NSA recognizes the value of sharing knowledge, supporting one another, and fostering a spirit of community. NSA members promote a culture of giving, sharing expertise, and honor success through philanthropy and the “Spirit of Cavett,” knowing that generosity strengthens the entire profession. NSA members pledge to:

1. Exhibit a culture of generous giving and sharing of expertise, following the founder’s example of learning, growth, and prosperity in the “Spirit of Cavett.”
2. Commit to sharing their skills and expertise within NSA or an NSA Chapter, or with a charity or community of their own choice and celebrate philanthropic achievements of their colleagues.

Article II – Elevating Excellence

NSA celebrates, recognizes, and teaches excellence in speaking, featuring diverse and industry-leading examples of excellence, and committing to lifelong learning and improvement. NSA members uphold the highest standards of quality in their work to advance the reputation and standards of the speaking profession. NSA members pledge to:



1. Deliver services of the highest quality, prepared thoroughly, and designed to meet the needs of clients and audiences.
2. Engage in lifelong learning and skills development, pursuing professional growth opportunities.

Article III – Intentional Language

NSA commits to communicate with thoughtful language, honor the power and impact of words, and recognize intentional language reflects respect, transparency, and truthfulness, enhancing trust with audiences, colleagues, and the public. NSA members pledge to:

1. Communicate honestly, representing their qualifications, expertise, and services clearly and accurately.
2. Uphold high ethical standards, maintain truthfulness in all business matters and engage in practices that bring credit to the speaking profession, remaining ever mindful of the power of words and their impact.

Article IV – Honorable Innovation

NSA embraces the evolution needed to fulfill ever-changing needs, respects individual rights to creative works, and inspires original expression. NSA Members creatively adapt and innovate in ways that honor their audiences and the NSA Code with dignity and respect. NSA members pledge to:

1. Maintain confidentiality of clients, agents, and fellow speakers' business or personal matters so long as maintaining the privacy respects with the health and safety of fellow members and upholds the overarching values of NSA.
2. Respect the materials, titles, or themes, giving credit for the intellectual property of others and only using with permission.

Article V – Uplifting Humanity

NSA seeks to encourage positive change, inspire audiences and colleagues to be the best versions of themselves, and foster diversity, equity, justice, inclusion, and belonging. NSA members commit to using their platforms to promote dignity, respect, and social cooperation. NSA Members pledge to:

1. Maintain collegial relationships based on respect, courtesy, dignity, and high ethical standards.
2. Engage in behavior that demonstrates equity or fairness to all, regardless of age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, creed, color, sexual orientation, physical or emotional ability, religion, national origin, or other human differences.



Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Who is subject to an NSA Code complaint?*

When joining **NSA**, all members agree to abide by the NSA Code as a continuing condition of membership. Members, vendors, guests or other relevant parties and non-member event attendees also agree to an NSA Code. It is because of this obligation that a complaint may be filed against a member or non-member, vendor, guest, or attendee.

2. *Who may file an NSA Code complaint?*

Any person, whether a member of NSA or not, having reason to believe that a member or event attendee, guest, vendor, or staff, or contractor acted in violation of the NSA Code may file a Complaint.

3. *How does an NSA Code complaint get filed?*

A copy of the form may be found below and on the NSA website. You may also contact the NSA CEO or NSA Code Committee Chair for the appropriate forms and complaint procedures. The complaint must:

- Be submitted on the form provided;
- Be signed by the complainant;
- State the facts surrounding the complaint and specify the code(s) or provision(s) violated;
- Be filed within one year of the incident or within one year after the facts become known.

4. *How does the Committee process the complaint?*

After the complaint is received by the NSA CEO, the CEO and the Code Committee Chair determine if the allegations would be a violation of the NSA Code. The decision to dismiss a complaint at this stage is final. If not, the complaint is dismissed and the complainant notified. If so, it proceeds either to mediation or investigation. It only proceeds to mediation if both parties agree to participate in mediation. If both parties do not agree to participate in mediation, or the matter remains unresolved after mediation, it proceeds to investigation. See NSA Code Flowchart Appendix.

If legal action is pending, the complaint may be suspended.

5. *What is the difference between mediation (self-determination) and investigation (third-party determination)?*

Mediation is a process in which the Complainant and Respondent determine the outcome with the help of a mediator or neutral person, i.e., the parties determine the outcome themselves. The mediator facilitates a conversation to help the parties increase understanding and determine if they can resolve it themselves. The mediator remains neutral and does not give advice or make decisions. If the Complainant and Respondent choose the mediation process and are unable to reach a resolution, the matter is referred to the CEPB for investigation.

The CEPB investigates and determines the outcome.

6. What disciplinary action may the CEPB impose?

Disciplinary action may consist of one or more of the following:

1) Letter of Reprimand, 2) Probationary Membership Status, 3) Membership Suspension, 4) Prohibition of use of NSA Certifications and Designations (i.e., CSP, CPAE, Cavett Award), 5) Removal from Leadership positions, 6) Removal or Prohibition from attending NSA events, 7) Designation of Not in Good Standing, and/or 8) Prohibition from consideration of assuming a Leadership position 9) Prohibition from presenting at NSA events.

7. What if I'm not happy with the CEPB's decision?

If either party is dissatisfied with the decision of the NSA CEPB Committee, either may request a Review Hearing. A respondent is bound by the decision and any disciplinary action unless and until the Review Panel reaches a different conclusion. However, a temporary waiver may be available in case of hardship.

8. Where and when are the hearings held?

The NSA Board Review Panel ("Review Panel") determines a time and place for the hearing and notifies the complainant and respondent. Review panels gather as needed. The parties involved must be present in-person or virtually. If either party refuses to attend, the Review Panel will make a decision accordingly. The decision of the Review Panel is final and binding.

9. Why would a complaint be dismissed without mediation or investigation?

A complaint will be promptly dismissed for one or more of the following reasons:

- Failure to specify provision of Code violated;
- More than one year has elapsed since facts were known or could have been known in the exercise of reasonable diligence;
- Complainant is a third party to the circumstances except with respect to complaints initiated by the CEPB
- Respondent is not currently a member of NSA or was acting as a vendor to other speakers; and/or
- The matter presented is a legal dispute which is best handled through the court system.