

SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY

Purpose:

The goal of this Article is to empower Agency management and staff to prevent inappropriate interference in scientific work. A culture of scientific integrity supports the use of sound science in Agency decision making. This Article in conjunction with the Agency's Scientific Integrity Policy will be effective in promoting sound science, be good for morale, help with recruitment and retention, and protect staff while accomplishing the mission of the Agency.

This Article covers any employee who collects, generates, uses, or evaluates scientific data, analyses, or products.

Section 1. Reporting Scientific Integrity Concerns

- A. Employees may report scientific misconduct or a suspected violation of the Scientific Integrity Policy to the appropriate EPA official or legal forum (e.g., OSC). Any conduct related to waste, fraud or abuse regarding an allegation of compromised scientific integrity should be reported to OIG. Employees who make good faith reports under this Section shall not be subject to retribution, reprisal, or retaliation by the Agency.


Section 2. Definitions

The Agency's forthcoming Scientific Integrity Policy is expected to include a customized list of definitions to its Scientific Integrity Policy as appropriate to its mission and scope. Changes in these definitions from current Agency policy will be subject to negotiation as required by law, regulation, and this Agreement.

Section 3. Communications/Outside Activities


- A. When an employee attends or otherwise participates in an external event, outside activity or meeting, whether in their official or personal capacity, they must comply with all federal ethics requirements.
- B. Denials for attendance at scientific conferences/meetings during duty time will be provided in writing to the employee upon request.
- C. As part of assigned duties, employees may submit manuscripts for publication in their official capacity consistent with Agency review procedures.
- D. Employees engaged in an outside activity may generally participate in the free flow of scientific information by discussing their work at conferences, meetings, and with the press, provided that they do not misuse their federal positions by inappropriately using their official titles, sharing nonpublic information, or implying that the Agency or the United States government sanctions their opinion. The employees must make clear that they are speaking or participating in their personal capacity only.
- E. When an employee is teaching, speaking, or writing in their personal capacity on a subject that relates to EPA's programs, policies, or operations, then they must abide by 5 CFR 2635.807(b)(1) and applicable EPA Ethics regulations.

FOR THE AGENCY

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