

# UNITED STATES AIKIDO FEDERATION

## ETHICS GUIDELINES

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The United States Aikido Federation (USAF) is an organization whose members are dedicated to practicing and preserving the martial art of Aikido.

The USAF recognizes that the roles of its members encompass a broad range of activities. These Ethics Guidelines (these Guidelines) represent an effort to set minimum standards of member conduct within the framework of these activities. Responsible conduct on the part of our membership maintains the integrity of the USAF.

These Guidelines clarify the nature of the responsibilities of members to each other and to the general public, and represents a method by which the members of the USAF can govern and discipline themselves. These Guidelines set forth for all members a clear set of standards, values and objectives that form the backbone of the USAF's philosophy. These Guidelines apply to all members, but holds senior ranking members and instructors to higher standards than beginners.

The following are the key areas that are essential to promoting Aikido in the United States in a manner consistent with the values that we share.

### **A. Integrity and Responsibility of All Members**

Members should act with due regard and respect to their colleagues, instructors, sempai, and kohai, as well as toward other martial arts and martial artists. Members should take personal responsibility for their own conduct and should not, in their official capacities, engage in activities in which they are subject to a potential or actual conflict of interest. Violations of these Guidelines should be resolved through either informal or formal channels, such as the dispute resolution procedures described in Section G, below.

### **B. Integrity and Responsibility of Instructors**

Instructors should uphold the values and ethics of the USAF, including integrity and impartiality. Instructors should protect the health, safety and welfare of their students. Instructors should encourage and support the learning process of their students and demonstrate the best possible standards of the discipline and art of Aikido. They should demonstrate respect for the student as an individual and adhere to their role as a guide and teacher. Instructors should avoid exploitation of students for personal advantage and should make every effort to assure that evaluation of students reflects true merit. Instructors should be aware of and sensitive to the power differential inherent in a teacher-student relationship.

### **C. Competence**

The USAF is known for its high technical standards and the competency of its instructors and members. Instructors should accurately represent their competence, training and level of experience. Instructors have an obligation to carefully prepare for all teaching duties and to engage in continuing education.

**D. Moral and Legal Standards**

The USAF prohibits discrimination, exploitation, or harassment based on race, age, handicap, gender, sexual preference, religion, socio-economic status or national origin. The actions of all members have an impact not only on the members of the Aikido community but on the public's perception of Aikido. Accordingly, members should not engage in these discriminatory activities.

**E. Sexual Harassment**

No members should engage in sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is sexual propositioning, physical advances, or verbal or non-verbal conduct that is sexual in nature, that occurs in context of instruction and training of Aikido and that either: (1) is unwelcome, offensive, or creates a hostile environment, and the teacher knows or is told this; or (2) is sufficiently severe or intense to be abusive to a reasonable person in the context.

**F. Public Information and Advertising**

Honesty is a key value of Aikido and therefore, members should conduct themselves in an honest and truthful manner in matters regarding credentials, attendance at camps and seminars, training with instructors, and in all materials prepared and/or disseminated by them or under their control. The USAF name, logo and or seal, each of which is the property of the USAF, may be used only as set out in the USAF Policy On Use of Intellectual Property.

**G. Dispute Resolution**

The USAF strongly believes that informal dispute resolution between parties is best. If informal conflict resolution between parties is not possible or appropriate, a formal procedure may be followed. The process to file a complaint for violation of these Guidelines is as follows:

1. Discuss the complaint with your Chief Instructor for guidance and recommendation.
2. If the complaint involves the Chief Instructor, contact the General Secretary at the address below. You will be referred to a member of the Dispute Resolution Committee to discuss the complaint.
3. If the issue remains unresolved, a formal complaint may then be made in writing and sent to the Dispute Resolution Committee at the following address:

United States Aikido Federation  
49 Maple Street  
Litchfield, CT 06579

I ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THE FOREGOING ETHICS GUIDELINES AS A POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES AIKIDO FEDERATION AND WILL POST OR PUBLISH THESE GUIDELINES WITHIN MY DOJO.

By: \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)  
On Behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ (Print name)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Dojo)

**As adopted by USAF Board of Directors, February 15, 2007**