CCMA Member Code of Conduct

Effective Date: April 24, 2026 | Version: 1.0

Plain Language Summary

In short, we expect all individuals to:

- Be respectful, inclusive, and professional
- Refrain from harassment, discrimination, and disruptive behaviour
- Act with integrity and accountability
- Report concerns in good faith

Purpose & Scope

The Canadian Country Music Association® Code of Conduct is designed to:

- Promote respectful interactions among members, vested parties, and the broader community.
- Ensure that all CCMA® organized and sanctioned events, activities, and communications reflect the values of professionalism, integrity, and inclusivity the CCMA is committed to upholding.
- Provide guidelines for addressing concerns or violations of the Code.

This Code applies to:

- **CCMA Board Members**
- **CCMA Volunteers**
- **CCMA Members**
- **CCMA Jurors & Committee Members**
- **CCMA Event Partners**
- **CCMA Event Guests & Attendees**
- **CCMA Sponsors**

The above-listed parties are subject to this Code in connection with, but not limited to, their participation in:

- CCMA-sponsored events (e.g., CCMA Awards, Country Music Week, CCMAU sessions, panels).
- Online platforms and communications (e.g., forums, social media, email).
- Any interactions that represent or impact the CCMA community, including conduct outside of formal CCMA settings where there is a clear and direct connection to CCMA activities, events, or reputation, and where such conduct has a material and demonstrable impact on CCMA activities, safety, or reputation.

Individuals are responsible for their own personal conduct, as well as the conduct of their guests, agents, and representatives who may fall outside the scope of the above list.

The CCMA will review this Code periodically to ensure it reflects evolving values and best practices. Feedback from members is welcomed and encouraged and may be submitted to conduct@ccma.org.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Code, the following terms have the meanings set out below: (a) "**Harassment**" means any unwanted conduct, whether verbal, physical, or virtual, that has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment. (b) "**Discrimination**" means treating a person less favourably on the basis of a protected characteristic, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, age, religion, or socioeconomic status. (c) "**Equity**" means the fair and impartial treatment of all individuals, accounting for systemic barriers and differences in circumstance, with the goal of achieving equal outcomes. (d) "**Member**" means any individual or organization falling within the scope of this Code as set out in the Purpose & Scope section above.

Fundamental Behavioural Standards & Guiding Principles

All members are expected to:

- **Respect Others:**
  Treat everyone with dignity, respect, and professionalism, embracing diversity in all its forms including but not limited to: race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, age, religion, or socioeconomic status. Foster understanding through active listening and constructive dialogue, creating an environment that uplifts and supports all individuals.

- **Promote Inclusivity:**
  Foster a welcoming and inclusive environment in all CCMA-related spaces, amplify underrepresented voices, and use inclusive language and practices in all communications and interactions.

- **Uphold Integrity:**
  Represent the CCMA and its mission honestly and ethically, avoid conflicts of interest, and maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive or private matters.

- **Practice Accountability:**
  Take responsibility for your actions and their impact on others, acknowledge mistakes, and strive for personal and professional growth.

- **Bystander Responsibility**:
  Members are encouraged to safely intervene, where appropriate, or support individuals who may be experiencing misconduct.

Breach of Conduct

The following actions are strictly prohibited:

- **Harassment, Discrimination, Bullying, or Violence:** Any verbal, physical, or virtual abuse, intimidation, or exclusion based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, age, religion, or other protected characteristics.

- **Hate Speech:** Offensive, inflammatory, or demeaning language, gestures, or actions targeting any individual or group.
- **Unethical Practices:** Activities such as plagiarism, misrepresentation, fraud, or violation of intellectual property or confidentiality agreements.
- **Disruption:** Behaviour that interferes with CCMA events, meetings, communications, or activities, creating a negative or unsafe environment for others, including but not limited to repeated interruptions, hostile or aggressive conduct, intoxication impacting safety, or refusal to follow event guidelines.

Behaviour not explicitly listed above may still violate this Code depending on its impact, severity, and context. The CCMA will assess such situations on a case-by-case basis.

Reporting Concerns

All reports will be handled in good faith, with respect for confidentiality and procedural fairness for the parties involved.

If a member experiences or witnesses behaviour that violates this Code, they should report it to CCMA leadership using the following process:

1. **Confidential Reporting:** Submit concerns via the CCMA's designated reporting email at conduct@ccma.org. Reports may be submitted anonymously. All reports will be acknowledged within five (5) business days of receipt. While anonymous reports are accepted, they may limit the CCMA's ability to fully investigate or take action.
2. **Investigation:** The CCMA will investigate all reports promptly, fairly, and confidentially. Investigations may be conducted by designated CCMA representatives or, where appropriate, an external third party. The CCMA will take reasonable steps to ensure that any findings are based on sufficiently reliable information. Investigations will ordinarily be completed within thirty (30) days of the acknowledgment of a report, subject to extension where the complexity of the matter reasonably requires additional time. Timelines are guidelines and may be adjusted as reasonably required. All parties involved will be notified of any such extension.
3. **Resolution:** Upon conclusion of an investigation, the CCMA will communicate its findings and proposed resolution to the relevant parties within ten (10) business days. The person who is the subject of the complaint will be given a reasonable opportunity to respond to the findings before any accountability measure is imposed. Actions may include mediation, education, or disciplinary measures, up to and including membership revocation.
4. **Non-Retaliation**: The CCMA strictly prohibits retaliation against any individual who, in good faith, reports a concern, participates in an investigation, or otherwise exercises their rights under this Code. Any act of retaliation, including exclusion from opportunities, threats, intimidation, or reputational harm, will itself be treated as a breach of this Code and subject to accountability measures.

Accountability Measures

Any person found in violation of this Code will face accountability measures consistent with the CCMA's commitment to Equity (as defined above) and proportionate to the nature and severity of the violation, including but not limited to:

- Additional Training
- Coaching
- Verbal and written warnings
- Suspension
- Revocation of membership

Prior to imposing any accountability measure, the CCMA is committed to a fair and inclusive process that includes: (a) providing the affected party with written notice of the alleged breach and the proposed accountability measure; (b) offering the affected party a reasonable opportunity to respond; and (c) ensuring that decisions are made by individuals without a conflict of interest in the matter. Any individual with a real or perceived conflict will recuse themselves. Final decisions will be made by designated CCMA leadership or a delegated decision-maker. This process applies to all individuals subject to this Code regardless of membership category, and accountability measures will be interpreted consistently with the nature of each party's relationship with the CCMA (e.g., "**Revocation of Membership**" applies to members, sponsors, and other non-employee participants).

Acknowledgment

All individuals subject to this Code are required to acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agree to comply with its terms. Acknowledgment may be obtained through a signed acknowledgment form, electronic confirmation, or such other method as the CCMA may designate. Participation in CCMA events, activities, or platforms constitutes acceptance of this Code in the absence of a formal acknowledgment.

This Code does not alter any existing employment, contractual, or legal rights and obligations.