

# Readercon Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct is in effect as of 6/4/2024. Readercon's Safety Committee (safecom) and Board of Directors will annually review this Code of Conduct and amend it as needed. "We" and "Readercon" refer to the members of Readercon's committees and corporation.

Readercon wants the conference to be safe and enjoyable for everyone. To this end, everyone with a Readercon membership is required to abide by this Code of Conduct while attending the conference, including while in official Readercon programming and virtual community spaces. In addition, all Readercon Board members, committee members, staff, and volunteers are required to abide by this Code of Conduct during Readercon meetings, on Readercon mailing lists and Readercon-branded social media accounts and forums, while conducting Readercon business (which includes all emails sent from readercon.org addresses), and while discussing Readercon-related matters with other Board members, committee members, staff, and volunteers.

While attending or volunteering for Readercon in any capacity, you agree to help create spaces that are and feel as safe as possible by respecting other people's physical health and physical, virtual, and social boundaries. This Code of Conduct will always be available for review at [readercon.org/safety](https://readercon.org/safety).

## Vaccination & Masking Requirements

Everyone over the age of 2 years is expected to have completed a full primary vaccine series for COVID-19 **prior** to attending Readercon in person, however we will **not** be checking vaccine cards. Boosters are encouraged, not required.

While at the conference, attendees are expected to:

- Wear a KN-95, N-95, KF-94, or surgical mask over your nose **and** mouth while indoors at Readercon to protect our community. Masks of lesser quality will not be permitted (e.g., cloth masks). Anyone who neglects to wear their mask over their nose **and** mouth will be asked to "mask up" by volunteers. We have extra KN-95 masks to distribute as needed, please ask the volunteers in the registration room if you need one.
- Remain masked while in official Readercon programming areas, including the Bookshop.
  - Panelists who wish to remove their mask while speaking during a particular panel or program must ask for consent from their fellow panelists prior to the start of the conference. If this conversation has not taken place, then all panelists are expected to stay masked for the entirety of the panel.
- Eat outdoors or in designated eating areas, where signs will indicate masks are optional.

- Abide by Marriott hotel masking policies in all hotel areas outside of official Readercon programming spaces.

Attendees with medical exceptions to the vaccination or masking requirements above must email a doctor's note to Safety Chair Dr. Rebecca Spizzirri at [becca@readercon.org](mailto:becca@readercon.org) prior to attending Readercon.

## Physical Boundaries

Do not physically harm, threaten, or endanger other people.

Do not touch people, their service animals, or their personal effects — including clothing, assistive devices, and bags — without an express invitation. If you want to invite physical contact, do so verbally or with a friendly gesture, such as holding out a hand for a handshake.

When sharing space with other people, engage in active demonstrations of respect and empathy. For example:

- Leave other people a clear path to the exit.
- Moderate the volume of your voice and the expansiveness of your gestures.
- Maintain an appropriate physical distance.

## Virtual Boundaries

Do not harm, threaten, or endanger other people through words or actions online.

Do not send direct messages or friend requests in social media without an express invitation. If you want to invite direct contact, do so explicitly.

Keep conversation about sexual topics in adults-only channels or in the discussion channels for relevant program items.

Keep images and videos in the channel designated for them.

When sharing a virtual space with other people, engage in active demonstrations of respect and empathy. For example:

- In fast-moving chats, make space for slower typists to chime in.
- When sharing a link, explain what it links to.
- Refrain from correcting other people's typos.
- If using an audio or audio-and-video channel, avoid interrupting or speaking over others.

## Social Boundaries in Both Physical & Virtual Spaces

In all cases where someone has told you or demonstrated that they do not wish to interact with you, or if you believe someone has blocked or muted you in a Readercon virtual space, do not contact them in any fashion — including through an intermediary or another online platform — unless and until they approach you of their own initiative.

Readercon thrives on vigorous debate, but it is not acceptable to verbally attack people. Do not use slurs or make derogatory comments about a person, group, or category of people. This includes comments based on characteristics such as (but not limited to) actual or perceived race, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, physical appearance, age, religion, ability, family or marital status, or socioeconomic class.

Do not post images, videos, or links that contain explicit violence, sexually explicit content, or attacks on a person, group, or category of people.

Do not make threatening or intimidating comments or otherwise create a hostile environment.

Do not make unsolicited sexual comments.

Do not share identifying information about someone who is pseudonymous in conference space.

Do not share another person's contact information, photo, location, or other personal information without their permission.

If you come to Readercon to do business, please do so in a respectful way. Do not ask an industry professional to read an unsolicited manuscript. If you're on a panel or presenting another program item, you may briefly promote your work at the beginning and end; otherwise, do not promote your business or product outside of space designated for that purpose (such as the Bookshop or a self-promotion channel).

Do not solicit donations or support for a cause outside of space designated for that purpose (such as a fan table channel or a bulletin board).

Recommendations of other people's work are welcome, but do not share links to pirated works or piracy sites.

When interacting with other people, engage in active demonstrations of respect and empathy. For example:

- If you don't have direct personal experience or knowledge of the topic under discussion, step back and listen to those who do.
- Be willing to learn new things and admit when you're wrong, including offering apologies.

- Moderate your consumption of alcohol and other intoxicants, and respect those who choose not to partake.
- Obtain ongoing consent for interactions. Pay attention to verbal and non-verbal clues that another person wishes to stop interacting with you; these clues can range from "Gosh, look at the time!" to the other person walking away from you or blocking you. If you're not certain someone is enjoying your company, end the interaction yourself.

## Accessibility

Respect people with disabilities. Make Readercon as accessible as possible. See our [Accessibility Policy](#) for more information.

## In Summary

Just as you do not owe anyone your time, attention, or physical contact, no one owes you theirs. Interacting with people you don't know well can be somewhat like first contact with an alien ambassador, so demonstrate peaceful intentions and do your best to be a credit to the human race.

## Reporting a Problem

To reach Readercon's Safety Team during the conference, day or night, use one of the following options:

1. Call or text (617) 544-0966.
2. Use the #safety channel in the year-round Readercon Discord server to ask for assistance. As the channel is publicly viewable, we encourage you not to provide any details there.
3. Send an email to [safety@readercon.org](mailto:safety@readercon.org).

Use option 2 and option 3 above to reach Readercon's Safety Team at any time outside of the conference event.

If you're making a report about an online interaction, please include screenshots if possible.

For more on how we handle reports, please see Readercon's Safety [Policies](#) and [Procedures](#).