

# Readercon Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct is in effect as of **6/7/2026**.

Readercon's Safety Committee (safecom) and Conference Committee (concom) 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's concom 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 any part of the hotel or 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).

## Masking & Vaccination Requirements

Readercon has set these policies to protect the more vulnerable members of our community. As masking in public spaces becomes less common, those who are especially vulnerable become increasingly isolated. We want Readercon to be a place where they feel safe to be in public.

**In order to accommodate members of the Readercon community with specific healthcare needs, we have decided to continue with a comprehensive masking policy.**

We know that these choices may not match an individual's preferences. If you have purchased a membership and are unwilling to follow these requirements, please contact [registration@readercon.org](mailto:registration@readercon.org) for a refund.

## Masking Policy

Masking is required in Readercon's physical spaces for all attendees over the age of 2 years. These policies describe when & where masks are required.

- Attendees are expected to wear a KN-95, N-95, KF-94, or surgical mask over their nose and mouth while in designated Readercon indoor physical spaces. Masks of lesser quality will not be permitted (e.g., cloth masks). Anyone not wearing a mask over their nose and mouth will be asked to "mask up". We will have masks available to anyone who needs one.
- Attendees who have a medical reason not to mask can obtain a waiver. Contact [Safety@readercon.org](mailto:Safety@readercon.org) **before the conference** for details.

- Attendees are expected to always remain masked while in indoor conference areas, including the Bookshop. **Brief** unmasking to take a drink is permitted – hydration is important!
- We may designate specific areas *and events* as mask-optional. There will be signs, and these events will also be noted in the program. Unless you see a sign *specifically* noting mask-optional, please assume you must be wearing a mask while in **Readercon convention spaces**.
- **Masking is optional during the designated Lunch Break in the Bookshop so that our dealers can eat.**
- **Con Suite is mask optional. Kaffeeklatsches are either mask optional or permissible to remove the mask briefly to eat or drink (see individual KK schedules). Green Room and Staff Operations permit brief mask removal to eat or drink.**
- We understand that the speech of masked panelists can be more difficult to understand. Panelists should confer **prior** to the start of their panel about whether or not to remain masked. (If this has not taken place, then all panelists are expected to stay masked for the entirety of the panel.)
- **Because these jobs require physical effort in July heat, masking is optional during Load-In and Load-Out in the Con Suite and the Bookshop if there is sufficient separation between people.**
- Attendees are expected to abide by Marriott hotel masking policies in all hotel areas outside of official Readercon programming spaces.

Attendees who refuse to wear a mask over their nose and mouth (and do not have a waiver) will be in violation of Readercon's Safety policies. Readercon reserves the right to take whatever actions necessary to keep attendees safe, including expulsion from the con or a permanent ban.

### **Vaccination Policy**

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. We will **not** be checking vaccine cards. Boosters are encouraged, not required. A vaccinated community helps to protect those who cannot be vaccinated.

### **Physical Boundaries**

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

Do not touch people or their personal effects — including clothing, assistive devices, bags, and service animals — 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](#).