**News from National**

**Code of Conduct**

On an annual basis, and sometimes more frequently, the board of directors examines the National Federation of the Blind Code of Conduct and makes revisions based upon feedback we receive, thoughts of how best to implement the code on a practical and operational basis, and best practices that emerge in other organizations. On December 5, 2020, the board approved revisions that are now reflected on the code of conduct page <https://www.nfb.org/about-us/history-and-governance/code-conduct>.

The current revisions clean up some language, tighten up the application of this policy to employees and contractors of the organization, and emphasize the multiple ways that grievances might be filed and dealt with by the leadership in consultation with the Code of Conduct Committee.

I strongly urge you to read this update to ensure you completely understand it. We have a call for all affiliate presidents on December 17. If any of this is not clear or you have any questions, please send them in advance of that call, if you can, and we will make sure they are addressed on the call. I also urge you to share the link with your boards and chapter and division leaders so they can refresh themselves on the code.

Please remember these things about our code of conduct.

* While affiliates are asked to carry out the work of the movement consistent with this code to create the most welcoming and inclusive environment possible, some people may still feel uncomfortable bringing issues to the leadership of a given affiliate. Under no circumstances should anyone be discouraged from reporting potential violations through the national code of conduct process.
* Leaders of the Federation should never discourage individuals from involving law enforcement when they feel that is appropriate and necessary.
* Federation leaders should recognize that certain situations, such as potential violations related to minors, may require mandatory reporting to law enforcement in your state. When in doubt, please contact the national Code of Conduct Committee for assistance at coc@nfb.org, or by calling our dedicated voicemail box at 410-659-9314, extension 2475.
* Federation leaders must take extra care to ensure that all members understand the importance of the code and the ability of members to file grievances. When Federation leaders take actions like making jokes about what is or is not a violation of the code of conduct, it creates the perception that issues are not taken seriously. Please be a strong example of what is intended by the code and ensure that your words, as well as your actions, reflect the values of our movement and our code of conduct. Moreover, the code of conduct should never be used as a weapon to advance personal agendas or settle scores with other members.

In the next month the code of conduct page will be updated with a Frequently Asked Questions page to address questions about the code, the process of investigations, and the priority of keeping information confidential to protect those who may have been harmed by the actions of others. If there are questions you often answer about the code, please send them to our code of conduct email address so we can incorporate them. And if you have recommendations regarding tools or other training that would help you more effectively reinforce and reflect the organization's code of conduct, please send those to coc@nfb.org.

### **Open-House Gathering–Share with Prospective Members:**

On Sunday, December 13, at 8:00 p.m. eastern, the National Federation of the Blind is hosting an open-house gathering for people to learn about becoming members of the Federation. Share with prospective members this opportunity to learn more from leaders about the Federation and why membership is crucial. Sign up by emailing membership@nfb.org or calling 410-659-9314, extension 2509.

### **Accessibility Boutique:**

The National Federation of the Blind is hosting an accessibility boutique that will cover accessible smart home products. The boutique will be held on Tuesday, December 15, 2:00-3:30 p.m. eastern, via Zoom. Smart home products are designed to help control items in your home, from security to entertainment. Take advantage of this free opportunity to learn the latest tips and tools. [Register for the Smart Home Accessibility Boutique today](https://www.nfb.org/programs-services/center-excellence-nonvisual-access/trainings/accessibility-boutiques/accessibility-boutique-registration).

### **Upcoming Event–Smart Cities Summit:**

The National Federation of the Blind Smart Cities Summit is a one-day online event on Thursday, January 28, 2021. The goal is to bring policymakers and technology developers together to collaborate and create accessible infrastructure for smart cities. Review the agenda and [register for the Smart Cities Summit](https://www.nfb.org/programs-services/center-excellence-nonvisual-access/trainings/smart-cities-summit) today!

### **Scholarship Program–Start Applications Now:**

Every year, the National Federation of the Blind awards more than $120,000 to blind scholars across the fifty states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico in recognition of their achievements and professional aspirations. Each scholarship winner is awarded based on their academic excellence, community service, and leadership. The application process is open and we encourage students to start the process now. Review the [scholarship application checklist](https://www.nfb.org/programs-services/scholarships-and-awards/scholarship-program/scholarship-program-application-checklist) and the [scholarship program FAQs](https://www.nfb.org/programs-services/scholarships-and-awards/scholarship-program/scholarship-program-faqs). Share this opportunity that invests in the future of blind people. Learn about the eligibility and requirements of the [2021 scholarship program](https://www.nfb.org/programs-services/scholarships-and-awards/scholarship-program) and start the application process now.