

HOT Policy and Code of Conduct

Complaint Handling Process

Adopted by the HOT Voting Members, 5 May 2016

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Preamble

Due to feedback from voting members, the previous process for handling Code of Conduct (CoC) complaints needs to be revised. The new procedure was drafted by the HOT Governance Working Group.

Purpose

HOT has a [Membership Code of Conduct](#). The goal of this procedure is to provide mechanisms for enforcement for our community standards. HOT US Inc. (HOT) takes its responsibility to maintain an open, welcoming, safe community for all the voting members and the wider HOT and OSM communities seriously. The Board of Directors, at the request of the Chairperson of the Voting Members and in collaboration with the Voting Members themselves, has adopted the following procedures for handling HOT Code of Conduct complaints.

Membership Committee

A Membership Committee (MC) comprised of HOT US Inc. Voting Members will operate as follows:

1. The MC will consist of 7 Members from a pool of members who have agreed to serve on the MC. The Board will select the 7 Members at the beginning of the new board term.
2. The MC will consist of 5 Voting Members and 2 Board members.
3. The MC will exist until it is replaced by the Board, usually at the beginning of the next Board term. The term will be up to and including 1 year.
4. Each complaint case will assigned a Case Committee (CC) of 3 MC members: 2 voting members and 1 board member.
5. All MC and/or CC decisions that require a vote will be decided by majority vote of the whole relevant committee: CC for cases and MC for other business.

6. The entire CC must be present for any business to be conducted, or proxy votes established with the Chair of the Membership.
7. Any voting member who wishes to serve on the Membership Committee (MC) may do so but must:
 - a. Provide their name to the Board in advance to let them know they are willing to serve on the MC.
 - b. Agree to set aside all past interactions with voting members involved in any coc complaints they are asked to evaluate.
 - c. Only evaluate the complaint(s) put before them.
 - d. Agree to commit the required time to evaluate the complaints in a quick timeframe.
 - e. Abide by the decisions of the MC.
 - f. Maintain confidentiality of the persons involved in any MC process.
8. MC members involved in a CoC complaint will recuse themselves from considering of that/those complaints and may be replaced by the Board.

Procedures for Handling Code of Conduct Complaints

Code of Conduct complaints will be handled by the Membership Committee in accordance with these procedures:

Filing a Concern

1. Before filing a CoC complaint, reasonable effort should be made to resolve any conflicts among voting or community members directly between those involved by following the HOT Conflict Resolution guidelines.
http://wiki.openstreetmap.org/wiki/Humanitarian_OSM_Team/Working_groups/Community/HOT_Resolution_Process
2. Code of Conduct complaints should be submitted via email to the complaints@hotosm.org email address. Anything submitted to that address is available to the current Chairperson of the Voting Members, the Board and the current Membership Committee. All complaints will be considered confidential.
3. CoC complaints must be filed within 5 days of becoming aware of the issue. Complaints filed outside of the 5 day limit may be considered at the MC's discretion.
4. You also contact the Chairperson of the Voting Members, a Board member or the Executive Director for a complaint.
5. CoC complaints should contain the following:
 - a. Name of the person making the complaint
 - b. Name of the person the complaint is being made against
 - c. What part of the HOT Code or HOT Code of Conduct you feel the member is violating.

- d. A description of what behavior or action you feel is a violation of the CoC, including the date(s) or if it is ongoing.
 - e. Why you feel the conduct is a violation of the HOT Code or CoC.
 - f. A description of how you have tried to resolve this issue before coming to the Membership Committee.
 - g. Any supporting documents (emails, blog posts, direct messages, etc) relevant to the complaint.
 - h. All initial complaints will be considered highly confidential and will not be shared outside the confines of the Membership Committee, Board and Chairperson of the Voting Members.
6. CoC complaints against an individual may only be filed once per incident by the same person making the complaint.
 7. More than one person may file a complaint about the same issue.

Complaint Handling Procedures

1. The Membership Committee will review the complaint within 7 days.
2. If the Membership Committee feels more information is needed, it will request that information and/or contact the parties involved. This is entirely up to the Membership Committee to determine.
3. The MC may decide to group similar incidents into one complaint.
4. The Membership Committee will, by majority vote, decide if the complaint is accurate and a violation of the HOT Code or Code of Conduct has occurred or is ongoing.
5. Any CoC complaint not evaluated by the MC within 15 days will be passed to the Board of Directors for resolution at their next regular meeting after receiving it.
6. If the Membership Committee agrees the complaint is accurate, it will ask the Chairperson of the Voting Members to write a letter describing the conduct that was/is inappropriate and request the member to immediately stop the behavior and/or not repeat it. This letter will be sent to the person the complaint is made against, disclosed to the voting membership, and kept on file in HOT's membership related records. In more serious cases, the MC may write a letter to the Chairperson and the Board, requesting the considering of more serious sanctions. The Board will take up this deliberation at the next regular meeting or, in particularly serious cases, schedule a special meeting. The Board is empowered to determine a sanction in proportion to the serious of the case, which may include taking away privileges, removing the member from committees, and recommending a vote on the expulsion of a member.
7. If the complaint is not sustained, the original complaint will not be disclosed to the Voting Membership.

Acting Unilaterally

If the conduct related to a CoC complaint is ongoing (such as someone engaging in harassment via any HOT communication channel, at any HOT related event or field work), or involves a threat to anyone's safety (e.g. threats of violence), any MC member, Chairperson of the Voting Members, Board member or the Executive Director may act immediately (before reaching consensus) to end the situation. In ongoing situations, any of the above listed people may at their discretion to employ any of the tools available to the organization, including bans and blocks.

If the incident involves physical danger, any of the above mentioned people may -- and should -- act unilaterally to protect safety. This can include contacting law enforcement (or other local personnel) and speaking on behalf of HOT US Inc.

In situations where one of the above listed individuals acts unilaterally, they must report their actions to the MC, Board and Executive Director for review within 24 hours.

Appeals process

The issuance of cease and desist letters may be appealed in accordance with the HOT Bylaws.