

2024 Ethics Report

Message from the Ethics Officer

2024 was a year of challenges and opportunities for building the foundation for the American Physical Society's Ethics Department. The Ethics Committee members and APS staff collaborated to create an ethical framework rooted in due process (fairness). This framework supports APS' commitment to **transparent and enforceable processes** to respond to complaints. The Board of Directors approved the framework in October 2024, and it is set forth in the **APS Ethics Investigation and Resolution Procedures**, which outline the process to file a complaint, procedures for a thorough investigation, and timely, appropriate corrective action. Our efforts resulted in:

- Proposed revised APS Ethics Standards and Code of Conduct for APS Activities.
- Engaging membership who offered more than 180 comments to these revised policies.
- The Board approved the policies in December 2024.

These changes strengthen the safeguards for responding to ethics complaints and support members in making ethical decisions. I feel a profound sense of gratitude — to the committee, leadership, and the Board, for their role in the development of our ethical foundation. While we celebrate our community's efforts in 2024, there is still work we must undertake together.

In 2025, the Ethics Committee is committed to focusing on building the APS Ethics Learning Center (ELC) as a repository for ethics education tool kits, webinars and other educational resources.

We are piloting an Ombuds Program to exclusively address harassment and discrimination complaints during APS and Non-APS Activities. We will provide resources to equip units to informally address interpersonal conflicts and prevent them from escalating into complaints. If you have questions about this material or would like more information, email nelson@aps.org.

With best wishes,



Patience R. Nelson

Head of Ethics
nelson@aps.org

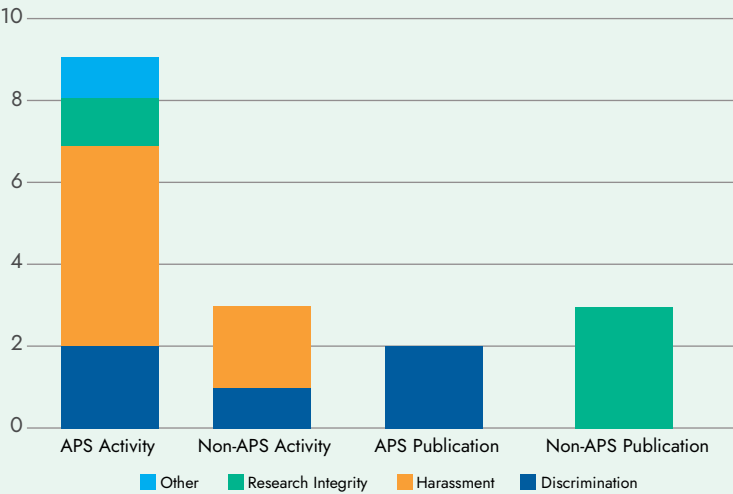
Overview of Ethics Cases

In 2024, the Ethics team responded to a total of 17 formal complaints. Compared to the previous reporting year, CY23, the total number of complaints increased by 31%. Improved tracking and resolution may account for the increase of reported cases. Many cases are dismissed at the preliminary review stage due to insufficient details to support the allegation; a claim outside of the scope of APS review, (meaning a non-allegation); or the complaint is not substantive and would not be a violation of ethical standards. Harassment and discrimination continue to be the most frequent type of complaints filed concerning APS and Non-APS Activities.

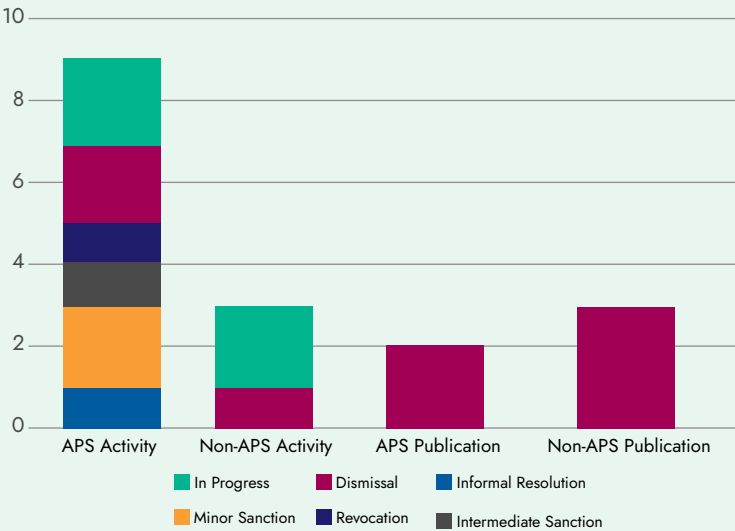
Report on Case Resolutions

This data demonstrates allegations, outcomes of opened cases, and case dismissals.

2024 Cases: 17 Allegations



2024 Cases: 17 Outcomes



2024 Dismissals: 8 Allegations

