



College Bound Program

Student Safety Policies

Revised 2023

Prohibited Conduct & Behavior

NJ LEEP prides itself on creating a safe space both virtually and in person for students to build healthy relationships and grow not only academically but also as individuals. The NJ LEEP norms center on mutual respect and professionalism. In connection with your participation in NJ LEEP, conduct and behavior deemed inappropriate by NJ LEEP staff, as outlined below, will not be tolerated and is prohibited. As a member of this community, you pledge to uphold these norms. Families will work with their children to ensure that they abide by the NJ LEEP norms.

I. Prohibited Conduct

The following conduct and behaviors are prohibited at the NJ LEEP facility, during NJ LEEP programming, and during any NJ LEEP activities, expressly including during all NJ LEEP virtual programming and activities held through Zoom or any other platform. NJ LEEP also does not condone such behavior outside of programming. Should any conduct occur outside of programming – including, for example, on social media or mobile devices – that substantially disrupts or interferes with programming at NJ LEEP, and should such conduct come to NJ LEEP’s attention through a report, NJ LEEP may in its discretion take appropriate action consistent with these Policies.

Substance Abuse: Underage use, possession, and/or distribution of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, tobacco, or other substances (including marijuana); the use, possession, and/or distribution of illegal drugs, narcotics, and/or tobacco; the use of over-the-counter medications and prescription medications in a manner that is not in compliance with the product’s description and intended use; and the use, possession and/or distribution of prescription medications to or by anyone other than the prescribed user is expressly prohibited. NJ LEEP does not condone substance abuse of any kind, including the underage consumption of alcohol, outside of programming.

NJ LEEP encourages any student that may be struggling with substance use disorder to seek help by reporting to NJ LEEP staff. As a result, in any self-referral or referral by friends, disciplinary measures will be secondary to securing help for the user.

Given the serious safety risks posed by substance abuse, if NJ LEEP becomes aware of evidence that a student is engaged in illegal drug and/or alcohol use, even if it is occurring outside of NJ LEEP programs and activities, NJ LEEP will report that information to the student’s parent(s) or guardian(s).

Weapons/Dangerous Objects: Possession of firearms, knives or blades, or any other object that may be used to kill or cause serious bodily harm to another person is strictly prohibited. Any student who suspects another of possessing a weapon or dangerous object should immediately report it to NJ LEEP staff. The Executive Director may consider making exceptions for certain objects possessed for self-defense purposes on a case-by-case basis. Any request for an exception must come from the parent/guardian of a student and permission must be granted in advance.

Bullying: Bullying of any kind is strictly prohibited. Bullying is any severe or pervasive physical, verbal, or written act or conduct directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably

expected to: (1) make the student reasonably fear harm to their person or property; (2) have a substantial detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health; (3) substantially interfere with the student's academic performance; or (4) substantially interfere with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by NJ LEEP.

Bullying may take various forms, including, but not limited to, one or more of the following:

1. Repeated or pervasive taunting, name-calling, belittling, mocking, put-downs, or demeaning humor
2. Behavior that is likely to harm someone by damaging or manipulating his or her relationships with others, including, but not limited to, gossip, spreading rumors, and social exclusion
3. Non-verbal threats and/or intimidations

Cyberbullying: Cyberbullying is also prohibited. Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including, but not limited to, a transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, or data transmitted by the use of any electronic device, including, but not limited to, a computer, tablet, telephone, cellular telephone, or text messaging device.

Cyberbullying may take various forms, including, but not limited to, the following actions on any electronic medium:

1. Posting slurs or rumors or displaying any defamatory, inaccurate, disparaging, violent, abusive, profane, or sexually oriented material about a student on a website, an app, in social media, or any other electronic platform;
2. Posting misleading or fake photographs or digital video footage of a student on websites or creating fake websites or social networking profiles in the guise of posing as the targeted student;
3. Impersonating or representing another student through the use of that other student's electronic device or account to send e-mail, text messages, direct messages (DM), phone calls, or other messages on a social media website, or impersonating a third party in interactions with another student;
4. Sending e-mail, text messages, DM, or leaving voice mail messages that are mean or threatening, or so numerous as to bombard the target's e-mail account, DM account, or cell phone;
5. Using a camera phone or digital video camera to take and/or send embarrassing photos or "sexting" photographs of other students.

NJ LEEP cannot control the bullying behavior of students through the transmission of information from a computer or electronic device that is accessed at a non-NJ LEEP related location, activity, function, or program. If, however, the out-of-program bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of NJ LEEP, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of all involved students will be contacted, and NJ LEEP will determine the appropriate consequences.

Inappropriate Conduct: Students will not engage in any inappropriate physical contact with any NJ LEEP staff, volunteers or other students, including tickling, wrestling, pinching, sitting on

another person's lap or any touching that may violate another person's personal boundaries. Students will also not engage in any inappropriate virtual contact with any NJ LEEP staff, volunteers or other students. NJ LEEP students in a dating relationship are not to engage in any physical contact while at the NJ LEEP facility, during NJ LEEP programming, or during any NJ LEEP activity.

Harassment: Harassment of any kind is prohibited. Harassment is unwelcome conduct on the basis of a protected characteristic that is so severe or pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a student equal access to the services, activities, or privileges provided by NJ LEEP. Protected characteristics can include race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic. Some examples include epithets, slurs, negative stereotypes, and derogatory writings or images. Harassment can occur in person, over the phone, in writing, and through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including social media and text messaging.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including sex or gender based jokes, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is based on a person's actual or perceived sex or gender and is conduct that a reasonable person would consider so offensive, severe, persistent, or pervasive as to interfere with a student's equal access to the services, activities, or privileges provided by NJ LEEP. Sexual harassment can be verbal, written, graphic, physical or through digital, online, or social media communications. Sexual harassment may occur between persons of any sex/gender, and anyone can be sexually harassed. Harassment on the basis of sex may also occur without sexual advances or sexual overtones when conduct is directed at an individual or group because of their sex or gender.

Another form of sexual harassment, quid pro quo (Latin for "this for that") harassment, occurs when submission to unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature is made, explicitly or implicitly, a condition of a student's equal access to the services, activities, or privileges provided by NJ LEEP, or when rejection of such unwelcome conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student's access to and participation in NJ LEEP programming.

Sexual Misconduct: Sexual misconduct is unwelcome conduct of a sexual or gender-based nature that may adversely and unreasonably interfere with a student's equal access to the services, activities, or privileges provided by NJ LEEP. Sexual misconduct is a form of discrimination and includes acts of sexual assault or sexual harassment as defined herein. Sexual misconduct can occur in person or through e-mail, the Internet, social media, or other technologies. Anyone, regardless of gender, affectional or sexual orientation, actual or perceived, or gender identity or expression, can be the victim of sexual misconduct.

Assault/Sexual Assault: Assault, including sexual assault, is unlawful criminal conduct, expressly prohibited by NJ LEEP. Assault is unwelcome physical contact, including having or attempting to have sexual contact with another individual without consent or where the individual cannot consent because of age or temporary or permanent mental incapacity. Sexual assault includes sexual

intercourse, sexual penetration and sexual touching of the private body parts of another for the purposes of sexual gratification.

Violence: Violence of any kind is strictly prohibited by NJ LEEP. Violence includes physical force or intimidation intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something.

[NJ LEEP Reporting & Investigation Procedure](#)

I. Reporting

If you believe you have been the victim of bullying, harassment or any other prohibited conduct, or if you have observed fellow students engaging in conduct/behavior prohibited by NJ LEEP (for example illegal drug use), we encourage you to report your concerns immediately so that they may be addressed by NJ LEEP staff. Timely reporting of prohibited conduct is important to ensure student safety and maintain an inclusive learning environment.

You may report a concern either in person, over the phone, or in writing to Managing Director of Students, Sergio Seijas, sseijas@njleep.org or 973-699-6579. If, however, you feel more comfortable reporting to a different NJ LEEP staff member or mentor you may do so, and that individual will ensure your concerns are relayed to the appropriate administrators.

NJ LEEP will keep all reports confidential to the extent practicable to protect the parties involved and limit any disruption to NJ LEEP programming.

Reports may also be made anonymously. To make a report anonymously, please complete the NJ LEEP Student Safety Policy Online Reporting Form, which can be found at <https://forms.office.com/r/wVtXwUNy29> . If you choose to report a concern anonymously, however, NJ LEEP's ability to assess, investigate and address the issue may be hindered by its inability to speak with you regarding the report.

II. Investigation & Response

Upon receiving a report, NJ LEEP will, in its discretion, determine (1) whether the report raises concerns regarding prohibited behavior that needs to be addressed and (2) whether a formal investigation is necessary or whether the issue may be resolved through an informal resolution process.

Formal Investigation: NJ LEEP will assign one or more staff members to investigate reports that require a formal investigation. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student(s) involved in the alleged conduct will be notified about the investigation. The investigation is designed to provide both parties a full, equal, and fair opportunity to be heard. The investigator will gather information through interviews with the complainant/reporter, the accused, and relevant witnesses, as well as collect available evidence, including electronic and social media communications, documents, photographs, and communications between the parties. Any student interviewed may have a support person present during the interview(s), but that support person generally may not be a witness or provide substantive commentary during the interview process.

The investigation is meant to be a confidential process. NJ LEEP will protect the privacy of all students involved to the extent practicable. As a result, all students participating in an investigation are also expected to respect the confidentiality of process.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator's findings and any remedial action taken to address the issues raised in the report, will be communicated to the complainant/reporter, the accused, and the parents or guardians of the student(s) involved in the alleged conduct.

Informal Resolution: In some instances, a report may be resolved informally by NJ LEEP staff. NJ LEEP staff may, in their discretion, meet with the complainant/reporter, the accused, and the parents or guardians of the student(s) involved in the alleged conduct, individually or collectively, to discuss the issues raised and the appropriate resolution.

Cooperation: To ensure the safety of NJ LEEP students and maintain the integrity of our programs, all students are expected to cooperate in any investigation or informal resolution in which they are asked to engage. This means that NJ LEEP expects that: (1) students who report concerns will assist NJ LEEP in identifying potentially relevant information and witnesses, (2) students called upon as witnesses will willingly provide truthful and accurate information upon request, and (3) any student accused of prohibited conduct will participate in the process and provide any and all truthful and accurate information they have in support of their position. As stated above, throughout the process, NJ LEEP will protect the privacy of all students involved to the extent practicable.

Failure to cooperate in an investigation or informal resolution process, or any effort by a student to actively obstruct the process, may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from NJ LEEP.

No Retaliation: NJ LEEP strongly prohibits retaliation against any student who, in good faith, reports any prohibited conduct or who assists, or participates in any manner in an investigation or informal resolution process under this Policy.

Retaliation can take many forms and includes intimidation, threats, coercion, discrimination or violence meant to discourage someone from reporting or participating in the process or to punish them for doing so.

If at any time you believe you are being subjected to retaliation for your participation in any investigation or informal resolution process, immediately report your concerns using the reporting mechanisms outlined in this Policy. Any student found to have retaliated against another student may be disciplined, up to and including expulsion from NJ LEEP.

III. Remediation & Discipline

At the conclusion of each investigation or informal resolution process, NJ LEEP will take whatever remedial and/or disciplinary action it deems warranted, which may include, but is not limited to, probation, expulsion from NJ LEEP, formal conversations with the student and parents or guardians, or group assignment changes. In certain circumstances, NJ LEEP may need to make a report to appropriate authorities. In determining the appropriate response/disciplinary action, NJ LEEP will consider the type of behaviors or conduct at issue, the severity, frequency and/or pattern of behaviors, and other relevant circumstances.

Other Safety Concerns

Concerns about Behavior of NJ LEEP Staff and Others: In the event that any student or parent observes any unlawful, suspicious, inappropriate, unsafe or other concerning behaviors on the part of NJ LEEP Staff, Mentors, volunteers, or visitors they should report such behavior immediately using the reporting mechanisms in the Reporting and Investigation Procedure. NJ LEEP will review and respond to all such reports and make every effort maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

Danger to Self or Others: NJ LEEP reserves the right, in its discretion, to take necessary action if it becomes aware of certain behaviors that demonstrate that a student poses a credible substantial risk of harm themselves or to other members of the NJ LEEP community. Some of those behaviors may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Acute decline in physical health;
2. Destructive, threatening, violent, or other disruptive behavior;
3. Any physical or mental health problems that pose a credible substantial risk of harm to the NJ LEEP community as a whole or require intensive monitoring to prevent such danger;
4. Any physical or mental health problems that substantially impede the educational process, or the proper activities or members of the NJ LEEP community.

Where a student exhibits such behaviors, NJ LEEP reserves the right to seek immediate medical attention for the student and take any other appropriate or necessary measures based upon the emergent nature of the situation. In addition, where a student presents an immediate safety risk to themselves or others, NJ LEEP reserves the right to involuntarily remove the student from NJ LEEP programming. A student who is involuntarily removed or takes a voluntary leave of absence for these reasons from NJ LEEP programming may be readmitted to the program upon presenting NJ LEEP with a medical/psychological evaluation demonstrating their readiness and fitness to participate.

Student Dismissal Policy

NJ LEEP assumes responsibility for student supervision at in-person programming:

- For programming held at the NJ LEEP office, from the time when students enter the NJ LEEP office (defined as the interior entrance to Suite 700 at 570 Broad Street, Newark) until they leave the office;
- For programming held at Seton Hall Law School (or another Newark-based classroom location), from the time when students arrive at the main entrance to the building in which NJ LEEP programming is being held until they leave that building;

NJ LEEP is not responsible for students once they have left the NJ LEEP programming site.

NJ LEEP will dismiss students at the end of scheduled programming. If a parent/guardian does not wish to allow their student to be dismissed on their own at the conclusion of programming, they must inform NJ LEEP in writing that their child will be picked up after programming and provide a list of all individuals who are permitted to pick up their child from programming. In the event of an unplanned early dismissal from programming (e.g., for inclement weather), NJ LEEP will send a message to parents/guardians to inform them of the early dismissal.

If an NJ LEEP student remains onsite after scheduled programming dismissal time under the supervision of an NJ LEEP staff member for a specific programming purpose (e.g., tutoring, office hours), NJ LEEP will dismiss the student according to the dismissal procedures for normally scheduled dismissal unless the student's parent/guardian otherwise specifies a different pick-up procedure for late dismissals. If a parent/guardian does not wish to allow their student to be dismissed on their own for a late dismissal, they must inform NJ LEEP in writing that their child will be picked up in the event of a late dismissal.

If an NJ LEEP student is required to be picked up and no authorized individual is present at dismissal time, NJ LEEP staff will contact the parent/guardian to determine if someone is coming to pick up the student. If no authorized individual has arrived within 60 minutes of dismissal time, the NJ LEEP staff may contact the parent/guardian and the NJ LEEP Executive Director to inform them that they are arranging for alternate transportation for the student, via ride share.

NJ LEEP will not dismiss students directly from an off-site event without prior written permission from the student's parent/guardian. For example, if a student is on an NJ LEEP field trip and would like to take public transportation directly home from the field trip site rather than first returning to the NJ LEEP office to be dismissed, the parent/guardian must authorize that in writing in advance.

For any off-site events, as a condition for attendance, the dismissal/pick-up plan for the student will be communicated to and agreed upon in writing with the parent/guardian in advance of the event.

Once students arrive at the NJ LEEP programming site, they will only be permitted to leave before dismissal time (e.g., to obtain food before class, or for lunch break during Saturday class) if their parent/guardian has granted written permission for them to do so. Parents/guardians will be given the option to give permission for this at the beginning of the year.

Student Illness/Medical Emergency Policy

In the event an NJ LEEP student becomes ill or injures themselves while under the supervision of NJ LEEP, NJ LEEP shall immediately notify the student's parent/guardian and seek guidance on the appropriate course of medical treatment.

In the event NJ LEEP staff are unable to contact a student's parent/guardian, NJ LEEP shall then contact those individuals listed on the student's Emergency Contact list (in the order they are listed). Because individuals listed as emergency contacts on the NJ LEEP Permission and Consent Waiver form may be called upon in the event of illness or medical emergency in the event, these contacts must be at least 18 years old.

In the event NJ LEEP staff deem the situation to be a true medical emergency, NJ LEEP staff will immediately call 911 (prior to calling the student's parent/guardian or taking any other steps) to seek emergency medical services.