



College Statement of Policy

As issued by the College Executive Board

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

The patient-physician relationship is a critical component in the provision of care for women, and it requires a high level of trust and professional responsibility. This important relationship is damaged when there is either confusion regarding professional roles and behavior, or a clear lack of integrity that allows sexual exploitation and harm.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists affirms the inappropriate and unethical nature of sexual misconduct, as addressed in several ACOG documents. ⁽¹⁻⁴⁾ Sexual misconduct on the part of physicians is an abuse of professional power, violates patient trust, and jeopardizes the well-being of patients. The ethical prohibition of sexual misconduct is forceful, and its application in medical practice is essential.

¹Sexual misconduct. ACOG Committee Opinion No. 373. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. *Obstet Gynecol* 2007;110:441-4. Available at: <https://www.acog.org/Clinical-Guidance-and-Publications/Committee-Opinions/Committee-on-Ethics/Sexual-Misconduct>. Retrieved February 12, 2019.

²American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. ACOG meetings anti-harassment policy. Washington, DC: ACOG; 2018. Available at: <https://www.acog.org/-/media/About-ACOG/Leadership-and-Governance/ACOG-Meetings-Anti-Harassment-Policy.pdf>. Retrieved February 13, 2019.

³American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Code of professional ethics of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Washington, DC: ACOG; 2018. Available at: <https://www.acog.org/-/media/Departments/National-Officer-Nominations-Process/ACOGcode.pdf>. Retrieved February 13, 2019.

⁴American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Guidelines for women's health care. 4th ed. Washington, DC: American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; 2014.

Approved by the Executive Board February 2019