

To: IAM Board of Directors
Cc: Christine Masters, Chair, Communications & Outreach Committee
From: Listserv Subcommittee
Date: March 12, 2021
Re: Recommendations Regarding Listserv Guidelines

On February 15 and March 9, 2021, the Listserv Subcommittee met:

- To review the propriety and efficacy of IAM's current Listserv Guidelines; and
- To consider the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) issues raised in recent emails arising out of the Listserv announcement of an award given to an IAM member.

The Subcommittee recognized two primary, non-competing interests:

- To minimize members' receipt of redundant emails which do not advance the practice of mediation
- To encourage widespread IAM conversations about DEI

All Subcommittee members agreed these are independent issues which should be addressed separately.

The Listserv Rules

Initially, the Subcommittee recommends the Listserv Guidelines be re-characterized as Listserv Rules which should be republished along with the Board's decision regarding these Recommendations.

The Subcommittee recommends maintaining the current Rules and establishing progressive consequences:

1. The Listserv Moderator notifies a member of a violation of the Rules;
2. The Listserv Moderator observes a deliberate or repeated violation of the Rules and advises the member that any further violation may result in temporary suspension from the Listserv; and
3. If appropriate, the IAM Executive Committee suspends the member from the Listserv for a minimum of three months.

Protocol for Announcing Awards

The Executive Director (ED) will send via direct membership email (as opposed to posting on the Listserv) all announcements regarding awards or special achievements. This precludes a “Reply” or “Reply All” option. The ED’s announcement will include, in bold font, the following sentence at the bottom of the message:

If you would like to send congratulations to _____, please reply directly to her or him at _____@_____.com (the recipient’s individual email address).

Protocol for Announcing Deaths

Either the Executive Director or any member may post on the Listserv a message concerning the passing of either another member or a leader in the field of mediation. Member responses to such Listserv posts will not be considered a violation of the Rules. The Board may also decide to authorize Listserv posts concerning the passing of a member’s spouse, life partner or child.

In addition, the posting should include, in bold font, the following sentence at the bottom of the message:

If you would like to send condolences to _____, you may reply directly to her or him at _____@_____.com. (the recipient’s individual email address).

Online Community

The Subcommittee recommends consideration of an IAM online community, separate from the Listserv, to facilitate member interaction on various topics of interest (e.g., ethics, business development). An ideal platform would allow members to opt-in for notifications when someone else posts a question or comment in their specific discussion forum. Scott Markus is currently exploring online community options. If the Board decides in favor of an online community with separate discussion forums, we suggest surveying the membership for topics.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

The Subcommittee believes DEI issues should be addressed separately from Listserv management issues.

Some members' recent emails reflect concern about the lack of DEI within the IAM. On a daily basis, IAM members interact with thousands of diverse clients, many of whom share different life experiences. As professional mediators, we should be promoting communication and understanding among our own clients and within our communities and elevating our own awareness of -- and competency in -- managing DEI conversations and issues. IAM should support the Diversity & Inclusion Committee's activities in a concrete way by providing financial support for speakers, training and consultation, important steps in helping our members develop awareness. The Subcommittee understands the D&I Committee is in the process of issuing its own report with specific recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,

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Scott Markus, Chair

Joyce Mitchell