

RHN NETIQUETTE GUIDELINES

These guidelines outline the conditions for membership on the RHN list. Continuing membership is contingent upon respect for these guidelines. Please read these guidelines and the section on Conflicts carefully.

RHN is an unmoderated list. The membership elected to monitor list activity as a group, rather than giving the responsibility for moderation to one or more individuals. However, in the case of prolonged conflict or repeated complaints about repeated serious violations of netiquette, the listserv and/or steering committees may intervene.

Emails posted to the RHN Yahoo Groups email discussion list by individual members of RHN do not necessarily reflect the views of RHN or the views of other RHN members.

GENERAL

1. Messages should be relevant to the group.

It is a good idea for new members to read list mail initially to get a sense of the list/group. The RHN list focuses on LGBT health and wellness information, education, advocacy, and services. It is used for announcements, to request or share information, and sometimes, although less so, for discussion.

2. Please read the basic information about RHN you received on signing onto the RHN list or contact the Listserv Committee before posting a question about how the list works.
3. Be very careful about advertising. Advertising is discouraged. Repeated use of the list to promote basic programs and services and likewise to promote businesses is considered advertising.
4. If possible when forwarding attachments, include the information in the body of your message too, since not all members can receive attachments from RHN.
5. Please include accessibility details when posting information about events.
6. Try limiting emails to 5 per week. The volume of list mail is growing as the membership grows. Be aware how much you are posting.
7. RHN is a closed list. Do not forward emails or member information to non-members without permission from the author. (This does not apply to public information or announcements.)
8. It's not possible to unsend messages once sent. The RHN list archive stores messages for a very long time. Don't say anything that might come back and haunt you years from now.

9. **Private email does not belong on the network list.** This has been a source of repeated complaints. DO NOT post messages intended for an individual unless they have value for other listmembers. If using 'Reply to Sender' in response to list mail, check whether the original sender's name appears in the To: line of your reply. RHN members are responsible for the correct operation of their email systems to avoid such problems.

COMMITTEE LISTS

1. Several dedicated lists support RHN committee members' discussions about committee business in order to reduce the volume of mail on the larger network list. Generally speaking, committee discussions belong on committee lists.
2. The RHN Netiquette guidelines apply to communication on committee lists. RHN committees are responsible for the adoption of Netiquette Guidelines and for their distribution and application on committee lists. The Listserv Committee will support Committee Chairs in this if necessary.

CONFLICT

1. Although some discussion is supported by the RHN list, lengthy, heated, conflictual discussion is not well tolerated. If you find something offensive and have politely posted your concern about it, delete further messages if the offensive comments continue.
2. Personal attacks are not permitted. Do not personalize issues or target specific individuals when discussing issues. Insults and negative characterizations of individuals could be grounds for the suspension of membership.
3. Don't get involved in or respond to Flame Wars. The fact that someone has experienced a personal attack on the listserv is not an excuse to respond in kind.
4. Do not send complaints naming individuals to the network list. If you feel the guidelines have been violated several times, **and** attempts to correct this on the RHN list have not been successful, you could as a last resort contact a member of the listserv committee.
5. Harassment and discrimination are not permitted. Sending harrasing messages is not only unacceptable, it may be illegal.

FORMATTING

1. When replying to a message, it is helpful to quote a few lines so it is clear what you are responding to.
2. Make sure the Subject line of messages gives an idea of the content of messages so members can delete messages they are not interested in.

3. When forwarding mail or replying to a message, remove headers and footers and irrelevant parts of posts to reduce unnecessary length, and show consideration for your readers. For example, remove information from the Subject line of messages, such as the name of other lists and repeats such as *Fw: Fw: Fw:*. Do not send messages with the *Show Full Headers* feature turned on.
4. Spelling mistakes are more the rule than the exception. Questioning spelling is not good netiquette, and unnecessary unless it occurs in a critical place, like a mis-spelt URL

RESPONDING TO SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF NETIQUETTE

The List Serve Committee has the obligation and the right to suspend subscribers for serious violations of the above guidelines. A suspension could be immediate and it could result in permanent unsubscription from the group.

Complaints will be shared with members of the listserv committee and possibly also with the RHN Steering Committee. Where necessary, action will be taken consistent with the guidelines, using a process that attempts to be respectful of those involved. A description of the process follows.

- If the listserv committee agrees that a serious violation has occurred, the individual involved will be asked offlist to respect the guidelines in future postings to the list.
- If the violation continues or is serious enough, the member in question may be warned that if the violation in question continues, their membership could be suspended.
- If the violation continues after this, and majority votes of both listserv and steering committees support suspension, the individual's membership will be suspended indefinitely. This action will be taken offlist.

RHN's Netiquette Guidelines were developed by the Listserv Committee with input from the membership, in response to requests from the list membership and repeated complaints about list activity. Listserv Committee members who developed the guidelines were: Brian Konik, Linda Green, Richard Hudler, and Nick Mulé.

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