



**No Strings Theatre Anti-Harassment Protocol**  
**May 2024 revision**

**Objective**

No Strings Theatre strives to create and maintain an environment in which people are treated with dignity, decency and respect. The environment of the organization should be characterized by mutual trust and the absence of intimidation, oppression and exploitation. No Strings Theatre will not tolerate unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind. Through enforcement of this policy and by education of employees and participants. No Strings Theatre will seek to prevent, correct and discipline behavior that violates this policy.

All employees and participants, regardless of their positions, are covered by and are expected to comply with this policy and to take appropriate measures to ensure that prohibited conduct does not occur. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee or participant who violates this policy. Based on the seriousness of the offense, disciplinary action may include verbal or written reprimand, suspension, or termination of employment or position.

Directors, managers, mentors and supervisors who knowingly allow or tolerate discrimination, harassment or retaliation, including the failure to immediately report such misconduct to the HR or Artistic Director are in violation of this policy and subject to discipline.

**Prohibited Conduct Under This Policy**

No Strings Theatre, in compliance with all applicable federal, provincial, and local anti-discrimination and harassment laws and regulations, enforces this policy in accordance with the following definitions and guidelines:

**Discrimination**

It is a violation of No Strings Theatre's policy to discriminate in the provision of opportunities, benefits or privileges; to create discriminatory conditions; or to use discriminatory evaluative standards if the basis of that discriminatory treatment is, in whole or in part, the person's race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information or marital status.

Discrimination of this kind may also be strictly prohibited by a variety of federal, provincial, and local laws. This policy is intended to comply with the prohibitions stated in these anti-discrimination laws.

Discrimination in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including termination.

## Harassment

No Strings Theatre prohibits harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, and will take appropriate and immediate action in response to complaints or knowledge of violations of this policy. For purposes of this policy, harassment is any verbal or physical conduct intended to threaten, intimidate or coerce an employee, co-worker, any person working for or on behalf of No Strings Theatre, cast member, program participant, student, or any person attending a No Strings Theatre performance.

The following examples of harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:

- Verbal harassment includes comments that are offensive or unwelcome regarding a person's national origin, race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, appearance, disability, gender identity or expression, marital status or other protected status, including epithets, slurs and negative stereotyping.
- Nonverbal harassment includes distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, belittles or shows hostility, aversion or disrespect toward an individual or group because of national origin, race, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, appearance, disability, sexual identity, marital status or other protected status.

## Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful employment discrimination and is prohibited under No Strings Theatre's anti-harassment policy. Sexual harassment is defined as "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature ... when ... submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions on employment or other opportunities ..... or such conduct has the purpose or effect of ... creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment."

Sexual harassment occurs when unsolicited and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature:

- Is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or other opportunities.
- Is used as a basis for a decision on employment or other opportunities.
- Unreasonably interferes with a person's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or otherwise offensive environment.

Sexual harassment may take different forms. The following examples of sexual harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:

- Verbal sexual harassment includes innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, lewd remarks and threats; requests for any type of sexual favor (this includes

repeated, unwelcome requests for dates); and verbal abuse or "kidding" that is oriented toward a prohibitive form of harassment, including that which is sexual in nature and unwelcome.

- Nonverbal sexual harassment includes the distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material, including calendars, posters and cartoons that are sexually suggestive or show hostility toward an individual or group because of sex; suggestive or insulting sounds; leering; staring; whistling; obscene gestures; content in letters, notes, facsimiles, e-mails, photos, text messages, tweets and Internet postings; or other forms of communication that are sexual in nature and offensive.
- Physical sexual harassment includes unwelcome, unwanted physical contact, including touching, tickling, pinching, patting, brushing up against, hugging, cornering, kissing, fondling, and forced sexual intercourse or assault.

Courteous, mutually respectful, pleasant, noncoercive interactions between employees that are appropriate and acceptable to and welcomed by both parties are not considered to be harassment, including sexual harassment.

#### *Consensual Romantic or Sexual Relationships*

No Strings Theatre strongly discourages romantic or sexual relationships between a manager or other supervisory person and a person who reports directly or indirectly to that person, because such relationships tend to create compromising conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts. In addition, such a relationship may give rise to the perception by others that there is favoritism or bias in decisions affecting the staff employee/participant. Moreover, given the uneven balance of power within such relationships, consent by the supervisory person is suspect and may be viewed by others, or at a later date by the staff member/participant as having been given as the result of coercion or intimidation. The atmosphere created by such appearances of bias, favoritism, intimidation, coercion or exploitation undermines the spirit of trust and mutual respect that is essential to a healthy work environment. If there is such a relationship, the parties need to be aware that one or both may be moved to a different department or other actions may be taken.

If any employee of No Strings Theatre enters into a consensual relationship that is romantic or sexual in nature with an employee who reports directly or indirectly to that employee, or if one of the parties is in a supervisory capacity to the other party, the parties must notify the artistic director or other appropriate corporate officer, because of potential issues regarding quid pro quo harassment. This requirement does not apply to parties where neither one supervises or otherwise manages responsibilities over the other.

Once the relationship is made known to No Strings Theatre, the organization will review the situation in light of all the facts (reporting relationship between the parties, effect on co-workers, job titles of the parties, etc.) and will determine whether the parties need to be separated or other action taken. Any decision will be made to cause the least possible disruption to the organization.

## **Retaliation**

No hardship, loss, benefit or penalty may be imposed on a person in response to:

Filing or responding to a bona fide complaint of discrimination or harassment.

- Appearing as a witness in the investigation of a complaint.
- Serving as an investigator of a complaint.

Lodging a bona fide complaint will in no way be used against the person or have an adverse impact on their status. However, filing groundless or malicious complaints is an abuse of this policy and will be treated as a violation.

Any person who is found to have violated this aspect of the policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination of position.

## **Confidentiality**

All complaints and investigations are treated confidentially to the greatest extent possible, and information is disclosed strictly on a need-to-know basis. The identity of the complainant is usually revealed to the parties involved during the investigation, and the HR or director will take adequate steps to ensure that the complainant is protected from retaliation during and after the investigation. All information pertaining to a complaint or investigation under this policy will be maintained in secure files within the organization.

## **Complaint procedure**

No Strings Theatre has established the following procedure for lodging a complaint of harassment, discrimination or retaliation. The company will treat all aspects of the procedure confidentially to the greatest extent reasonably possible.

1. Complaints should be submitted as soon as possible after an incident has occurred, preferably in writing to the Artistic Director or Disciplinary Committee. The Artistic Director or Disciplinary Committee Representative may assist the complainant in completing a written statement or, in the event a person refuses to provide information in writing, the Artistic Director or Disciplinary Committee Representative will dictate the verbal complaint.
2. Upon receiving a complaint or being advised by a supervisor or manager that a violation of this policy may be occurring, the Artistic Director or Disciplinary Committee Representative will notify the Disciplinary Committee and review the complaint.
3. The Disciplinary Committee will initiate an investigation to determine whether there is a reasonable basis for believing that the alleged violation of this policy occurred.
4. If necessary, the complainant and the respondent will be separated during the course of the investigation.

5. During the investigation, the Disciplinary Committee will interview the complainant, the respondent and any witnesses to determine whether the alleged conduct occurred.
6. Upon conclusion of an investigation, the Disciplinary Committee will submit a written report of their findings to the organization. If it is determined that a violation of this policy has occurred, the Disciplinary Committee will recommend appropriate disciplinary action. The appropriate action will depend on the following factors:
  - a) the severity, frequency and pervasiveness of the conduct;
  - b) prior complaints made by the complainant;
  - c) prior complaints made against the respondent; and
  - d) the quality of the evidence (e.g., firsthand knowledge, credible corroboration).

If the investigation is inconclusive or if it is determined that there has been no violation of policy but potentially problematic conduct may have occurred, the HR director may recommend appropriate preventive action.

7. Senior management will review the investigative report and any statements submitted by the complainant or respondent, discuss results of the investigation with the Disciplinary Committee and other management staff as appropriate, and decide what action, if any, will be taken.
8. Once a final decision is made by senior management, a Disciplinary Committee Representative will meet with the complainant and the respondent separately and notify them of the findings of the investigation. If disciplinary action is to be taken, the respondent will be informed of the nature of the discipline and how it will be executed.