

**Northern Light Theatre  
Respectful Workplace Policy  
January 2018**

**Goal**

Northern Light Theatre (NLT) is committed to a respectful, positive environment that promotes the well being and values the best of its Employees, Board Members, Volunteers and Event Participants through respect, maintaining high standards of work performance, and professional conduct. NLT strives to accomplish this goal by establishing policies, procedures and training to encourage awareness and skill development to assist in non-conflict resolutions to any issues that may arise.

Discrimination and harassment are mandated by Alberta and federal as unlawful and will not be tolerated.

In order to maintain a respectful workplace, the Northern Light Theatre has developed this policy to promote a fair, collaborate, inclusive and respectful workplace for Staff, Board Members and event participants.

Respect at work is feeling safe and secure about:

- Acceptance: the workplace values you for what you bring, and not what you are.
- Accommodation: the workplace takes reasonable steps to recognise your individual needs and help you do your job well.
- Active engagement: everyone plays a role in continually trying to improve the workplace.
- Clear expectations: how we treat each other in the workplace.
- Diversity and accessibility: the workplace welcomes people similar to you and different from you.
- Effective communication: interacting in a healthy and effective manner in the workplace.
- Effective conflict transformation and dispute resolution: the workplace makes available a variety of processes for changing relationships, behaviours, attitudes and organisational structures for resolving disagreements.

While it is understood that as human beings, there is always a possibility of making a mistake or acting in a manner that may seem inappropriate to others, all work related actions reflect on the individual and the organization. Working in a professional and respectful manner will assist in alleviating offensive behaviour and dialogue.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the Standards of Conduct, the investigation process and the disciplinary process that will be used to address any unacceptable behaviour, unacceptable conduct or work related problems that may impact or influence Staff, Board Members, Volunteers or Event Participants to feel safe.

It is the intent of this policy to follow a course of due process and progressive discipline that fairly and consistently addresses employee behavior, conduct, or performance that is incompatible with the policy. Disciplinary actions will follow a range of corrective and disciplinary actions based on the nature and history of the misconduct or unacceptable performance. Corrective and disciplinary actions must be administered through a prompt and fair process as described in this policy's procedures.

The ultimate goal of this policy and its procedures is to help employees become fully contributing members of the organization. Conversely, this policy is also designed to fairly and effectively discipline and/or terminate employees whose conduct and/or performance does not improve or where the misconduct and/or unacceptable performance is of such a serious nature that a first offense warrants termination.

## **Application and Authority**

This policy applies to all Staff, Board Members, Volunteers and Event Participants to ensure a healthy and non-conflict in the work environment and at all organization related events. It will be the responsibility of each individual to ensure that if there is behaviour that is considered unacceptable to bring the issue to either a member of the Staff or to a Board Member. While interaction with the general public may create situations of stress and conflict, it is hoped that this policy and training will assist with these instances.

## Definitions

**Abuse of Authority** arises when an individual's improper use of power or authority inherent in the position held endangers an employee's job, undermines the performance of an employee or threatens the economic livelihood of the employee or adversely interferes or influences the career of an employee.

**Bullying** is any unreasonable and inappropriate treatment of a person by another or others in a workplace that may include behaviour to intimidate, offend, degrade, humiliate, undermine, exclude or threaten another individual.

**Discrimination** is any act or omission that results in unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people. Differences may be based on age, ancestry, colour, family status, gender, marital status, mental ability, physical disability, place of origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, source of income, or any other ground covered by Alberta's *Human Rights Code*.

**Harassment** is a form of discrimination and includes but is not limited to any unwanted physical or verbal conduct directed to one or more individuals and causes offence or humiliation. As a guideline, an example of a discriminatory or harassing behaviour is making derogatory remarks or compromising invitations that result in a negative or hostile work environment.

**Personal Harassment** involves hostile, obnoxious, intimidating or other disrespectful behaviour, which ought to have been reasonably known to be hostile, obnoxious or intimidating. It is targeted at a person or group of people due to personal conflict and may or may not be related to a prohibited ground.

**Sexual Harassment** means any offensive or humiliating behavior on the grounds of gender or sexual orientation. This includes demands for sexual favors in exchange for rewards or favorable consequences and inappropriate touching. Although consensual relationships (romantic or not) may occur in the workplace, any unwelcomed activity by an individual may still be considered sexual harassment. Generally, sexual harassment is deliberate, unsolicited and one-sided. Anyone can be a victim or a perpetrator of sexual harassment.

**Workplace Discrimination** is defined by the Canadian Human Rights Commission and places an individual at a disadvantage based on a prohibited ground. Discrimination may happen intentionally or inadvertently and results in barriers to workplace equality because it blocks access to equal opportunities.

## **Examples**

Respectful behaviour includes but is not limited to:

- Abide by applicable rules, regulations, policies, and bylaws. Address any dissatisfaction with or violation of policies and procedures through appropriate channels.
- Be responsible stewards of material and human assets to achieve excellence and innovation.
- Demonstrate commitment to continuous personal and professional learning and development.
- Demonstrate commitment to a culture where all employees cooperate and collaborate in using best practices to achieve high quality work-related outcomes.
- Encourage and support all employees in developing their individual conflict management skills and talents.
- Have an open and cooperative approach in dealings with employees, recognizing and embracing individual differences.
- Leaders should model civility for others and clearly define expectations for how employees are to treat each other and be responsive to complaints when they are brought forward.
- Recognize that differing social and cultural standards may mean that acceptable behaviour to some may be perceived as unacceptable or unreasonable to others.
- Respect and value the contributions of all members of our community, regardless of status or role in the organization.
- Respond promptly, courteously, and appropriately to requests from others for assistance or information
- Treat employees with respect, civility, and courtesy.
- Use conflict management skills together with respectful and courteous verbal communication to effectively manage disagreements among employees.
- Work honestly, effectively, and collegially with employees and others.

The following are examples of disrespectful behaviour that will not be tolerated:

- Deliberate exclusion, isolation, or alienation of an employee from normal work interaction (i.e. intentionally excluding employee from meetings).
- Deliberately not speaking to someone causing some to be ostracized.
- Deliberately withholding information that employees need to exercise their role or access to benefits, training, or entitlements.
- Demonstrating racial, gender, sexual orientation, or cultural bias.
- Discounting the accomplishments of employees or stealing credit for their success or accomplishments.
- Engaging in any pattern of disruptive behaviour or interaction that could interfere with the workplace or adversely impact the quality of services.
- Excessive and unfounded monitoring.
- Intimidating a person, verbal abuse, threats, belittling or humiliation.
- Making actual or threatening inappropriate physical contact.
- Making comments or engaging in behaviour that is untruthful or directed as a personal attack on the professional conduct of others.
- Making insulting or humiliating comments about the performance of an employee, in public, private, or in any inappropriate manner or venue, such as email.
- Making, telling or transmitting jokes that are intended to be or reasonably perceived by others to be crude or offensive.
- Making threats of violence, retribution, litigation, or financial harm.
- Objectionable behaviour designed to torment, pester or abuse another individual.
- Refusal to work with a person.
- Retaliation of any type.
- Setting unachievable and unrealistic work expectations.
- Shouting at an employee, publicly or privately.
- Shouting or engaging in speech, conduct, or mannerisms that are reasonably perceived by others to represent intimidation or harassment.
- Spreading unsubstantiated rumours, gossip or innuendos that are not true.
- Tampering with personal items or work related equipment.
- Teasing, name calling, ridiculing, or making someone the subject of pranks or practical jokes.
- Throwing instruments, tools, office equipment, or other items as an expression of anger, criticism, or threat, or in an otherwise disrespectful or abusive manner.
- Undermining employees or deliberately impeding a person's work by including encouraging others to gang up on them.
- Unreasonably refusing an employee's request to take personal leave.
- Unwarranted or undeserved punishment.
- Using profanity.
- Using racial or ethnic slurs.
- Using sarcasm or cynicism as a personal attack on others.
- Using threatening or abusive language, profanity, or language that is intended to be or perceived by others to be demeaning, berating, rude, or offensive.

## Responsibilities

All individuals covered in this Policy have a responsibility to ensure that the working environment is free from discrimination and harassment. Key responsibilities include refraining from actions and behaviors that might constitute discrimination or harassment as well as any other reasonable involvement to achieve the objectives of this policy. Individuals are responsible to act immediately upon any situation involving discrimination or harassment.

## Confidentiality

To protect the interest of all individuals involved in any process involving reported incidents or formal written complaints of discrimination or harassment, confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process to the extent practicable and appropriate under the circumstances and as permitted by law.

## Reporting

Any individual covered by this Policy that has experienced discrimination or harassment at work or any work related event should be proactive and be encouraged to act before the behavior becomes repetitive by informing the harasser that their behavior is inappropriate and ask them to stop. If the harassment continues or the individual does not wish to bring the matter directly to the alleged harasser, the person should report the interaction to either Staff or a Board Member. The individual may either verbally report the issue or make a formal written complaint.

## Complaint Process

**Informal complaint:** Any reports to either Staff or a Board Member will be taken seriously and investigated immediately. If it has been determined that inappropriate behaviour has occurred and the individual who brought forward the issue does not wish to make a formal written complaint, the Staff or Board Member will discuss the situation with the harasser.

**Formal complaint:** If a formal complaint is filed, an investigation will be conducted with all parties. Allegations will be presented to the harasser to allow them to respond. Once all responses and the investigation are completed, a formal finding report and recommendations will be submitted to the Staff and Board for review.

**Resolution:** If there are findings of discrimination or harassment, appropriate discipline (up to and including termination) will be applied. These documents will either place within the Employee's file or recorded in documentation at the Board level should the harasser be a Board member. If no harassment is found, once all parties have been informed of the findings, all documentation will be placed in Human Resources files.

Retaliation will not be tolerated and will result in an individual being disciplined.