

# **1 Harassment**

## **1.1 Purpose:**

The Powerhouse Theatrical Society is committed to providing a secure and comfortable environment, through relationships built on mutual respect, and to ensuring an environment for its members that is free from harassment and/or the fear of harassment. Every member has the right to expect to be treated fairly and with respect always.

It is the intent of the Powerhouse Theatrical Society to take every reasonable measure to ensure that no member is subject to unwelcome verbal, emotional or physical conduct, from whatever the source. Harassment in any form violates fundamental rights and personal dignity and integrity.

## **1.2 Definition:**

Harassment is defined as any unwanted physical, sexual, or verbal or written conduct that offends or humiliates, or is intended to humiliate by its nature. Harassment has the effect or is calculated to interfere with an individual's performance. It results in creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Harassment can consist of a single incident or several incidents that occur over a time. Individuals have a right to be treated with respect. The Society, in exercising its responsibility, will endeavor always to provide a safe and healthy environment which is supportive of both productivity and the dignity of every person-

## **1.3 Policy Statement:**

Harassment is a form of discrimination. Harassment occurs when a person or group is subjected (often repeatedly) to unwelcome comments or behaviors that is insulting or demeaning, or is otherwise offensive. Common examples of harassment include name calling, telling offensive jokes, and making offensive gestures.

Harassment is harmful because it attacks the dignity and self-respect of the victim. It may negatively affect both the victim's ability to perform their duties and the work environment. In B.C., it is illegal to discriminate against or harass a person because of their:

- race;
- colour;
- ancestry;

- place of origin;
- religion;
- marital status;
- family status;
- physical or mental disability;
- sexual orientation;
- age (19 and over);
- criminal conviction (in employment only);
- political belief (in employment only);
- lawful source of income (in tenancy only).
- sex (includes pregnancy, breastfeeding, and sexual harassment);
- Human Rights

#### Examples of Harassment:

- jokes based on gender, sexual orientation, or racial stereotypes;
- comments that make fun of or belittle or insult people because of their sex, pregnancy, or race;
- physical or mental disability;
- racist, sexist, or anti-gay publications or graffiti displayed;
- any unwelcome behavior, such as starting rumors, intentional ignoring, verbal, emotional or physical abuse.

#### Examples of Sexual Harassment include:

- unwelcome sexual suggestions or requests;
- unwelcome touching or physical contact;
- staring at or making unwelcome comments about someone's body;
- That might reasonably be expected to cause offense, embarrassment or humiliation to any employee/volunteer or,
- That might reasonably be expected to be perceived by the employee/volunteer as placing a condition of a sexual nature on employment or on any opportunity for training or advancement.

#### **1.4 Procedures:**

In the case where a member is harassed, the member is to contact the Producer/Director/Stage Manager/ Board Delegate thus names "delegate", with whom they feel comfortable discussing with, through written statement.

That delegate will then Keep a record of the complaint, including date, time of occurrence, location, what happened, witnesses, etc... for presentation to the Board secretary within 48hrs of complaint being lodged.

The statement will be reviewed by the Board at a Board Meeting in consultation with outside professionals (lawyer, psychiatrist, police, etc) as needed. Appropriate action will be taken if required. Depending on severity, the President will call a Board meeting when appropriate.

Once reported, the Board of Directors will begin an investigation, or bring in appropriate parties to investigate, and all necessary steps will be taken to resolve the problem in an impartial and confidential manner. The investigation MUST include statements from BOTH parties, plus witnesses when available. When appropriate and in consultation with outside professionals (ex, Police) if needed, the alleged harasser will be told that there is a complaint and the name of the complainant.

If the investigation yields evidence to support the complaint, the harasser will be disciplined, and appropriate documentation will be kept. Disciplinary action will vary depending on the severity of the harassment, whether the harassment was intentional or unintentional, whether the offense is an isolated case or other cases of harassment are identified, and other mitigating or aggravating circumstances. Discipline may range from education and counseling to written warnings and suspension within the Bylaws and Societies Act.

All complaints will be treated seriously. All information obtained during the investigation will be confidential.

### **1.5 Resolution Policy:**

The Goal of Powerhouse Theatrical Society is Restoration, Inclusiveness and Harmony. To this end:

1. Where possible, mediation with an internal or external mediator will be attempted first. During this mediation, the complainant must tell the person firmly that their actions or comments are unacceptable and ask them to stop.
2. A written warning by the Board, with discussion with a Board member will occur with the offender
3. Written and verbal notice of discipline will be given

Discipline may include but is not limited to: Educational courses or programs, removal from a production, removal from the building, probation, suspension, or disallowed renewal of membership. The discipline should be aimed at being restorative instead of punitive.