



Discrimination, Harassment, and Misconduct Policy and Procedure

Introduction

Taffety Punk Theatre Company (“Taffety Punk”) strives to cultivate an avant-garde and unrestrained creative environment that is characterized by mutual trust and artistic freedom. As a company and a community, we represent, uplift, and embrace humans from all walks of life. Our art is open all artists and audiences, across all races, ethnicities, nationalities, ages, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, physical and mental abilities, parental obligations, socioeconomic needs, and religious or political beliefs.

We recognize that in order to create truly radical – and radically inclusive – art, our people and spaces must be free from all forms of intimidation, oppression, exploitation, humiliation, discrimination, and harassment. All members of our community must work together to create a safe space for each other by treating everyone who joins us on this journey with dignity, decency, honesty, and respect.

To ensure that Taffety Punk remains a supportive and equitable collective, we pledge to implement innovative, progressive, and evidence-based methods for protecting our community from physical and emotional harms and adapting our practices where appropriate and necessary to ensure the safety, transparency, and inclusivity of all Taffety Punk programs.

Purpose

In order to ensure these goals are met, Taffety Punk hereby adopts and pledges to implement consistently this Discrimination, Harassment, and Misconduct Policy (hereinafter “the Policy”). Pursuant to the following guidance, requirements, exclusions, and procedures, Taffety Punk prohibits discrimination, harassment, and other forms of misconduct, based in whole or in part on actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, sexual history, marital status, familial status and responsibilities, personal appearance, disability, genetic information, level of education, political affiliation, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by the laws of the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, or the U.S. government.

Such discrimination or harassment constitutes inappropriate and abusive conduct that runs contrary to the mission of Taffety Punk and the safety of its participants. Failure to comply with and abide by the expectations set forth in this Policy will result in remedial action up to and including termination or prohibition from Taffety Punk programs, activities, and communications.

Covered Entities and Individuals

All persons participating in any event or communication venue that is sponsored by, hosted by, or otherwise under the authority or auspices of Taffety Punk (hereinafter “participants”), including but not limited to all staff, directors, practicing artists, stage managers, choreographers, crew members, house managers, consultants, box office associates, trustees, donors, volunteers, audience members,



independent contractors, and employees of third-parties doing business with Taffety Punk, must comply with all provisions of this Policy and shall take appropriate measures to ensure that all occurrences of prohibited behavior or conduct are reported in a timely manner according to the procedures detailed below.

Covered Venues

Taffety Punk is committed to providing a healthy and respectful environment for everyone involved in bringing its mission to life. Therefore, this Policy extends to any on-site, off-site, or virtual Taffety Punk events, including but not limited to:

- Rehearsals and performances
- Opening/closing night parties
- Video and photo shoot locations
- Fundraising events
- Talkbacks
- Promotional events
- Social events connected to or affiliated with Taffety Punk programs

Prohibited Conduct

Each Taffety Punk participant must exercise their own good judgment to avoid engaging in conduct that may be perceived by others as discriminatory, harassing, threatening, bullying, retaliatory, or otherwise unwelcome or hostile. Conduct or behavior that is prohibited within Taffety Punk-associated programs, activities, communications, and venues includes but is not limited to:

Discriminatory Speech

Disparaging, demeaning, or offensive remarks made about or directed at any individual or group on the basis of actual or perceived race, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, age, religion, marital status, or veteran status, or any other characteristic which is legally protected or is otherwise enumerated herein or referenced in any other policy adopted by Taffety Punk.

Threatening Conduct

Intimidation, threats, or stalking; unwelcome following, photography, or recording; unwelcome or violent physical contact; or any other verbal or physical conduct intended to threaten, intimidate or coerce.

Harassment

Harassment includes any comments or conduct initiated by one person towards another which causes discomfort, distress, and/or embarrassment; has the effect of unreasonably interfering with the person's work; or creates an intimidating, humiliating, hostile or offensive environment for the intended recipient of such comments or conduct or any



other person who has borne witness to such incidents. Harassment also includes “quid pro quo” or “hostile work environment” sexual harassment, as defined by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Verbal harassment generally includes comments that are offensive or unwelcome regarding a person’s nationality, origin, race, color, religion, sex, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, body, disability, or appearance. These comments may include epithets, slurs, negative stereotypes, threats, and sexual advances. Non-verbal harassment is sometimes harder to define or identify, but may include the 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.

All forms of harassment, including sexual harassment and bullying, are prohibited under this policy. Such prohibited harassment may include:

- Inappropriate, obscene, hostile, or discriminatory gestures, comments, stories, jokes, or actions that cause humiliation, mental or emotional distress, or offense;
- Comments and/or jokes about a person’s body, attire, gender, race, sexual orientation, or other protected trait;
- Unwanted touching and/or inappropriate physical contact;
- Unwelcome enquiries or comments about a person’s gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, sexual preferences, or sexual history;
- Unwanted or unwelcome sexual propositions or advances, including insinuating or sexualized remarks;
- Unwanted or unwelcome leering, ogling, or otherwise suggestive, objectifying, or insulting sounds or comments;
- Distribution or discussion of any sexually explicit material that is not narrowly and appropriately tailored to the subject matter or substance of the piece being rehearsed or performed;
- Sending overly personal or suggestive communications without the consent of the recipient;
- Recording, by any means, within a dressing room without the prior consent of all individuals present, whether or not those recordings or photos are posted online or shared with others;
- Promises of social or professional advantage in return for sexual concessions of any kind;
- Any form of intimidation;
- Any direct threats to cause harm or any physical attacks; and



- Insults, threats of force or disadvantage, or displays of physical force.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and is not intended to constitute a full or complete list of possible violations under this Policy.

Retaliation

Retaliation against any individual who complains of or reports behavior or conduct prohibited under this Policy is strictly forbidden and is considered prohibited conduct under this policy. Any allegations of retaliation will be investigated and handled using the same procedures described above. All persons accused or suspected of taking adverse action against an individual who engaged in protected activity under this Policy shall be sequestered from the investigation of such allegations, except insofar as their cooperation is required by Taffety Punk staff or Board members to conduct a fair and impartial investigation of those claims.

Complaint Reporting and Investigation Procedure

Taffety Punk establishes the following procedure for reporting, investigating, and resolving alleged violations of this Policy in a timely, thorough, and impartial manner. All complaints of discriminatory, harassing, threatening, bullying, retaliatory, or otherwise inappropriate or unwelcome behavior shall be taken seriously, treated with sensitivity and appropriate discretion by all participants, and addressed without undue delay. The confidentiality of those involved in a particular incident or complaint and any related investigation shall be respected to the greatest extent reasonably practicable and consistent with Taffety Punk's legal and ethical obligations.

Taffety Punk recognizes that experiencing and processing discrimination, harassment, and misconduct can be complex, and thoughts and feelings around a particular incident may change throughout the reporting and investigation process. Therefore, the advancement of a complaint to the mediation or investigatory stages of this procedure should be agreed to by the complaining party, except where alerting law enforcement or emergency services may be required by law.

Taffety Punk further recognizes that documenting inappropriate conduct is important to track behavioral patterns, even if the complainant does not want to engage in further action related to their complaint. Therefore, we are committed to maintaining a secure record of every complaint submitted or incident reported under this Policy to help identify patterns of behavior.

The following sections detail the procedure for reporting, investigating, and resolving violations of this Policy. Please refer to the attached Flow Chart for a visual representation of the stages described below. (See Attachment A, Flow Chart.)

STAGE 1

Many concerns can be addressed and resolved through direct conversations between the parties involved and we encourage participants to resolve conflicts in this manner, where such resolution is safe



and appropriate.

In many cases, “calling someone in” may be what is needed to resolve a conflict. Therefore, in the event that a Taffety Punk participant observes or experiences instances of bias, discrimination, intolerance, harassment, bullying, or other conduct in violation of this Policy, the participant shall take appropriate measures to calmly, firmly, and respectfully (i.e., without the use of insults or personal attacks) inform the person(s) that their actions are unwelcome, unacceptable, and/or wrong, unless the participant feels intervening in this way would be unsafe for themselves or others.

Alternatively, there may be times when it is safer, more appropriate, or necessary to report such conduct to an individual listed in Stage 2 of this procedure. Nothing in this Policy shall prevent or prohibit an individual from contacting law enforcement or emergency personnel.

STAGE 2

Any individual who feels harassed, discriminated, threatened, bullied or retaliated against by another Taffety Punk participant, or who has observed such conduct or behavior that they believe violates the provisions of this Policy, may file an informal (verbal) or formal (written) complaint with the company’s Managing Director, Artistic Director, Board of Trustees President, or any individual listed in your applicable Acknowledgment Agreement.

NOTE

Please refer to the individuals listed in your Acknowledgment Agreement and contact sheet for the applicable special project or production for an accurate list of individuals to whom you may choose to submit a verbal or written complaint under this Policy. (See Attachment C, Acknowledgment Agreement.)

Moreover, if a full-time or part-time Taffety Punk staff member or Board of Trustees member becomes aware that behavior or conduct in violation of this Policy has occurred, either from personal observation or as a result of a participant complaint, that staff or Board member must immediately report the event to one of the individuals listed above.

If the person filing the complaint (“complainant”) does not feel comfortable disclosing the details of their complaint with any of the above-listed individuals or if the alleged violation occurs outside the structure of a production, the complainant may choose to contact any member of the Board of Trustees.

Formal or informal complaints should include any and all relevant and necessary information and potential witnesses to support the complainant’s allegations. Additional screenshots, photos, videos, or other documentation of the events described by the complaint (i.e., direct or circumstantial evidence), where available, may be attached as exhibits. Taffety Punk encourages, but does not require, complainants to use the attached Complaint Form (See Attachment B, Complaint Form).

STAGE 3

After receiving a formal or informal complaint of a violation of this Policy, the recipient must



immediately refer the complaint to all members of the Board of Trustees who are not involved, referenced, or implicated in the complaint. Those non-conflicted members of the Board of Trustees shall promptly review the complaint and any attached evidence.

NOTE

A conflict of interest may arise where an individual's actual or perceived financial, supervisory, social, or romantic interests, relationships, duties, or responsibilities, may reasonably call into question whether their actions, judgment, and/or decision-making can be objective. In such situations, the individual is expected and may be asked to recuse themselves from the matter to avoid the appearance of personal interest or bias throughout the investigation and resolution of an alleged violation of this Policy.

Within two (2) days of receiving the complaint, two (2) non-conflicted Board of Trustees members shall arrange to meet informally with the complainant in a safe, neutral, and confidential environment to discuss the events detailed in the complaint. The complainant may bring a colleague, friend, or family member to this meeting.

During this meeting, the non-conflicted Board of Trustees members shall ascertain whether the complainant would like to:

- A. Attend an informal mediation session with the person(s) referenced in their complaint, which shall be facilitated by a neutral, mutually agreeable company member to achieve reconciliation and understanding;
- B. Decline to escalate the matter and require Taffety Punk to maintain a permanent record of the complaint (record may be filed anonymously); or
- C. Initiate a formal investigation of the allegations contained in their complaint pursuant to Stages 4 through 8 of this Policy.

STAGE 4

Within five (5) days of receiving the complaint, the non-conflicted Board of Trustees members must notify the person(s) charged with violating the Policy ("respondent(s)") and schedule a mediation session or initiate an investigation of the complaint to determine whether there is a reasonable basis for believing that the alleged violation occurred.

If the complainant chose to attend a mediation session during their Stage 3 informal meeting, the non-conflicted Board of Trustees members shall work to schedule a facilitated conversation between the complainant, respondent, and an objective Company or Board of Trustees member to occur during a mutually convenient time and in a neutral setting as soon as possible. If the parties are unable to come to a mutually beneficial plan for moving forward during their mediation session, the complainant may choose to initiate a formal investigation under this Policy or have Taffety Punk maintain a permanent record of the complaint.



If the complainant chooses to move forward with a formal investigation of the allegations contained in their complaint, the non-conflicted Board of Trustees members shall appoint an ad hoc committee ("Investigative Committee") consisting of three (3) neutral Board of Trustees members, including at least one (1) Company member, to investigate the complaint's allegations according to the procedures outlined in Stages 5 and 6 of this Policy.

NOTE

In the event that all Board members who are also members of the Company are conflicted out of participating in the investigation and resolution of an alleged violation of this Policy, reasonable efforts should be made to appoint a neutral Company member who is not on the Board of Trustees to the Investigative Committee. If these efforts are not successful, three (3) neutral Board members who are not Company members may serve as the full Investigative Committee.

STAGE 5

Within fifteen (15) days of the complaint being filed or the matter being referred to the Board of Trustees, the Investigative Committee shall separately interview the complainant, respondent, and any relevant witnesses, review any submitted evidence, and conclude the investigation by submitting a written report of their findings and final recommendations ("Investigative Report") to the non-conflicted members of the Board of Trustees.

If the Investigative Committee requires additional time to complete a comprehensive and careful review of the evidence and obtain witness testimony, they must submit a timely, written request for an extension of the investigation under this Policy to the non-conflicted Board of Trustees members and receive formal (written) approval prior to ten (10) days after the complaint has been filed.

STAGE 6

Within five (5) days of the conclusion of the investigation, the non-conflicted Board of Trustees members must:

1. Review the Investigative Report;
2. Meet with the Investigative Committee (as well as the direct supervisor(s) of either party, where necessary and appropriate) to discuss their findings and recommendations; and
3. Separately notify the complainant and respondent of the Investigative Committee's findings and any recommended corrective action(s), which may be therapeutic, educational, remedial, or disciplinary in nature.

If it is determined that a violation of this Policy has occurred, the non-conflicted Board of Trustees members shall recommend appropriate corrective action(s). The precise corrective action(s) shall be determined based on the following factors:



- A. The severity, frequency, and pervasiveness of the conduct;
- B. Prior relevant complaints made by the complainant;
- C. Prior complaints made against the respondent; and
- D. The totality of the available evidence (e.g., first-hand knowledge, credible corroboration, photos, videos, screenshots, and other forms of direct or circumstantial evidence).

STAGE 7

Within five (5) days of receiving notice of the findings and recommendations, the complainant and respondent may submit statements challenging the factual basis of the investigation's findings and/or the nature, severity, or duration of any recommended corrective action(s).

STAGE 8

Within five (5) days from the receipt of any statement(s) from the parties, the non-conflicted Board of Trustees members must review the Investigative Report and subsequent party statements and draft a report of their final decision. The company's final decision shall be in writing and must include findings of fact and a statement for or against corrective action.

NOTE

If the recommended action(s) include the termination or prohibition of the respondent, the non-conflicted Board of Trustees members must vote whether to: (1) adopt the findings of fact, and (2) approve the recommended disciplinary action(s). Voting may occur electronically and must be completed within 48 hours of receiving both parties' statements or the conclusion of the 5-day period after providing notice to the parties, whichever is shorter.

The non-conflicted Board of Trustees members shall report the final decision to the complainant, the respondent, and all necessary management staff assigned to the department(s) in which the complainant and/or the respondent work. A record of the final decision shall be maintained in Taffety Punk's permanent files.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent any party from pursuing formal legal remedies or resolution through local, state, or federal agencies or courts.

(Continued on next page.)

Distribution of Policy



This Policy shall be posted in full on Taffety Punk's website and shall be incorporated by reference in every contract Taffety Punk enters into, as well as within the terms and conditions of all Taffety Punk ticket sales and all production programs.

Additionally, every member of the Board of Trustees, production and artistic teams, cast, crew, staff, volunteers, and independent contractors are further obligated to acknowledge that they received and reviewed the foregoing Policy and agree to comply with its requirements and procedures. All aforementioned individuals must sign the attached Acknowledgement Agreement and submit it to the Board of Trustees before they may be allowed to participate in any activities or communications related to any Taffety Punk production or event (*See Attachment C, Acknowledgment Agreement*).

Incident Occurs

Community member observes behavior they believe constitutes **discrimination, harassment, and/or threatening conduct**

STAGE 1

"call in" the person in the moment (where safe and appropriate)

STAGE 2

submit a **verbal or written complaint** to one of the 6 listed individuals

STAGE 3

neutral Board members hold an **informal meeting** with complainant and a friend

STAGE 4

neutral Board members move forward with complainant's **preferred action:**

Investigation

Mediation

No Action

STAGE 5

Investigative Committee of Board members reviews evidence, interviews witnesses

STAGE 6

Investigative Committee completes report of **final findings & recommendations**

STAGE 7

complainant and respondent may **challenge** the report in writing

STAGE 8

neutral Board members decide what **action may be taken**, up to and including termination or removal

