Safer Spaces Policy

As an inclusive, innovative, and diverse festival, SkirtsAfire Society is committed to creating a healthy, harassment-free, safer space for everyone involved to work, create, and attend. We welcome people of all ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, and abilities.

SkirtsAfire Society (SkirtsAfire) has developed Policy and Procedures to prevent harassment and violence, and to quickly and effectively respond to any incidents that might occur. This Policy and Procedures is provided to artists and venues along with contracts, and is available on the SkirtsAfire website.

This document will continue to evolve to meet the growing needs of our community. Please direct any questions or concerns to info@skirtsafire.com, and we will respond as quickly as we can.

RESPONSIBILITIES

SkirtsAfire seeks to provide a safer, healthy and rewarding environment for its staff, artists, and audiences. Harassment and violence of any type are not tolerated. Additional responsibilities are below.

A) SkirtsAfire Responsibilities

All directors, managers, and any person who supervises one or more employees will:

- Comply with this Policy and Procedures
- Take precautions to protect the health and safety of staff, artists, and audiences
- Participate in Safer Spaces training, such as the Sexual Assault Center of Edmonton Bystander Intervention training

B) Venue Responsibilities

Creating a safer space includes the physical venue. Venues hosting SkirtsAfire events will:

- Comply with this Policy and Procedures
- Take precautions to protect the health and safety of staff, artists, and audiences
- Ensure staff are adequately trained in identifying and responding to inappropriate behaviour

C) Staff, Artists, and Audience Responsibilities

All staff, artists, and audiences will:

- Treat the venue, staff, artists, and other audience members with respect
- Report cases of harassment or violence to a member of the SkirtsAfire team (see contacts below)

Safer Space Procedures

REPORTING PROCEDURES

If you experience or witness harassment or violence please report it when safe to do so to a member of the SkirtsAfire team at:

- Artistic Producer | Amanda Goldberg | 514 608 4540 | ap@skirtsafire.com
- Managing Director | Brianne Jang | 780 994 7288 | manager@skirtsafire.com
- Board President | Naomi Lawson - Baird | president@skirtsafire.com
- Board HR Committee Chair | Treva Swick | hr@skirtsafire.com

Reporting Procedures If you are rehearsing a MainStage production with SkirtsAfire

- SkirtsAfire works under a Canadian Actors Equity Association agreement for its MainStage Productions which means you have access to their Respectful Workplace Resources found at this link, https://www.caea.com/Portals/0/Documents/HealthSafety/RespectfulWorkplaceGuide.pdf?ver=Sqk8DqYUJZKFcMRP5zX7gQ%3d%3d
- If an incident takes place under a SkirtsAfire contract, SkirtsAfire is responsible for conducting a thorough investigation and notifying Equity of the outcome.
- You can also call the **HAVEN Helpline**, Equity's confidential bilingual 24/7 incident reporting line at 1-855-201-7823

A) If You Experience Harassment or Violence

If you experience harassment or violence:

1. Tell the person that their behaviour is unwelcome and ask them to stop.
2. Keep a record of incidents *(date, times, locations, possible witnesses, what happened, your response)*. You do not have to have a record of events in order to make a complaint, but a record can strengthen your case and help you remember details.
3. Make a complaint. If, after asking the person to stop their behaviour, the harassment continues, report the problem to a member of the SkirtsAfire team listed above, or you can notify Canadian Actors Equity Association through the HAVEN Helpline or by reporting it at HAVENonline.ca

You also have the right to contact the Alberta Human Rights Commission to make a complaint of sexual harassment and you can report any incident of assault that has occurred to the police.

B) If You Witness Harassment or Violence or Someone Discloses to You

If you witness harassment or violence or someone discloses an incident of harassment or violence to you:

1. **Respond to the Situation**

If you are able and feel safe to do so you can:

A. Address the situation head-on and address the problematic behaviour. Calmly explain your concerns and specify what you'd like the person to do instead.
or
B. De-escalate the situation by changing the subject.

If you do not feel able and safe to address the situation, get someone else involved and move on to Step 3. Report the Problematic Behaviour to a SkirtsAfire Team Member.

2. **Support the Survivor**

   Respond with compassion and support. Ask how you can help, and give the option of the survivor accompanying you in reporting the problematic behaviour to SkirtsAfire.

3. **Report the Problematic Behaviour to a SkirtsAfire Team Member**

   If the survivor wishes to report the problematic behaviour, describe what happened, who was involved, and any actions that were taken.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

If a member of the SkirtsAfire team witnesses or is informed of harassment or violence they will:

1. Respond with compassion and support. Ask how they can help, and explore options and supports with the survivor.
2. Keep all complaints strictly confidential within the organization, unless otherwise discussed with the survivor *(e.g. reporting to the police)*.
3. Once the survivor is in a safer space, the team member may bring on another team member to assist with the investigation if the survivor is comfortable.
4. They will gather information about what happened, documenting the information in a written report.
5. The team member(s) may speak to the other person or people to gather information about what happened, documenting the information in a written report.
6. The team member(s) and the survivor will discuss next actions.
7. If further actions are agreed upon with the survivor, the team member(s) may discuss the incident with the SkirtsAfire HR Committee, an agreed-upon third-party, or Equity if the incident happened under an Equity contract.
8. Next actions may include removing a person from the venue or organization, for the remainder of the event, festival, or indefinitely.
9. If the survivor chooses at any point, the organization may defer to the police if a comprehensive investigation is required.
10. SkirtsAfire will notify the HR Committee of the outcome, or the Canadian Actors Equity Association if the incident occured during an Equity contract.

VIOLATION OF POLICY

Safer Spaces Policy & Procedures

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to immediate removal from the site or event, banning from future participation in SkirtsAfire Festival produced events or property, and/or termination of employment or position within the organization.

Definitions

Harassment and violence of any kind are not tolerated at any SkirtsAfire events or festivals. Types of harassment and violence are defined below.

Harassment is any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct that a person knows or should reasonably know will cause offense or humiliation.

Violence is the threatened, attempted, or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological injury or harm.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual behaviour.

Sexual assault is any form of sexual contact without consent. This can include unwanted or forced kissing, fondling, grabbing, touching, vaginal or anal penetration, or oral sexual contact.

Solicitation is any comment, behaviour, or act that can be perceived as soliciting sexual favours, or placing sexual conditions onto any person's involvement in an activity, event, promotion, or employment (paid or unpaid) opportunity.

Sexual violence is any sexual act or act of a sexual nature, or act targeting sexuality, whether physical or psychological, committed without consent. This includes, but is not limited to sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism, distribution of intimate images, inducing intoxication, impairment or incapacity for the purpose of making another person vulnerable to non-consensual sexual activity, and other analogous conduct.

Consent is a freely given, ongoing, active, and clear-minded agreement to engage in the activity in question. Agreement or a "yes" that is obtained through pressure, coercion, force, or threats, or by taking advantage of intoxication, impairment, or incapacity is not freely given consent. Silence or ambiguity do not constitute consent. Additionally, there is no consent when:

- it is given by someone else;
- the person is unconscious, sleeping, or lacks the capacity to consent;
- it was obtained through the abuse of a position of power, trust, or authority;
    - the person does not indicate "yes," says "no," or implies "no" through words or behaviours; and
- the person changes their mind and withdraws their consent.

- It is the responsibility of the person/people pursuing an activity to ensure consent from the other, and to recognize that consent can be withdrawn at any time.

Verbal Disclosure is a verbal report by any person to a member of the SkirtsAfire staff that they have experienced abuse, harassment, or misconduct. SkirtsAfire may initiate an investigation and resolution process and will honour any requests for anonymity by the person making the report.

Written Disclosure is a written report or statement alleging abuse, harassment, or misconduct by any person to a SkirtsAfire staff under the SkirtsAfire Safer Spaces process for the purpose of initiating an investigation and resolution process.

Discrimination is a distinction, whether intentional or not, based on a characteristic or perceived characteristic that has the effect of imposing on an individual or group of individuals burdens, obligations or disadvantages that are not imposed on others, or of withholding or limiting access to opportunities, benefits and advantages available to other individuals in society.
Retaliation is taking, attempting to take, or threatening to take any adverse action or retribution of any kind against anyone involved in a report of harassment, abuse, or misconduct process. This includes, but is not limited to, intimidation, pressuring, harassment made in person, electronically, or through third parties.

ACCESSING SUPPORT

Every person's journey to recovery and wellness looks different. We allow people who have experienced or disclosed harassment, violence, or discrimination to shape that journey, providing support as we are able. Below are a few resources that may be helpful.

If you are in immediate danger, dial 911.

Because of systemic and institutional imbalances of power, you may not feel comfortable or welcome accessing one or more of these crisis resources. We encourage you to seek help from friends and family, a community leader, or a trusted person in your faith or field.

- **Edmonton Police Services**: 780-423-4567
- **Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton (SACE)**:
  - Support & Information Line: 780-423-4121 (9am – 9pm)
  - Alberta's One Line for Sexual Violence: 1-866-403-8000 (9am-9pm. Toll-free long distance and non-English support available)

    - Access chat at www.sace.ca
- **Central Alberta Sexual Assault Support Centre (CASASC)**:
    - 24-hour Crisis Line: call or text 1-866-956-1099
- **Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)**: can be accessed through any emergency room in the city by checking in with the Triage Nurse and asking to see a Sexual Assault Response Team (or SART) nurse.
- **Alberta:** 2-1-1
- **24/7 Distress Line**: 780-482-HELP (4357)
- **Mental Health Help Line**: 1-877-303-2642
- **First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line**: 1-855-242-3310
- **Family Violence Help Line**: 780-310-1818
- **Kids Help Phone**: 1-800-668-6868
- **Child Abuse Hotline**: 1-800-387-KIDS (5437)
- **Children's Mental Health Crisis Services**: 780-427-4491
- **Free Walk-In Counseling**: www.dropinyeg.ca