

Members Code of Conduct



Approved & Adopted by Committee 13/10/22

This Code of Conduct sets out how we as members of NFP will respect each other and collaborate for the benefit of our fellow members.

We are committed to maintaining a friendly and welcoming environment that is free from discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying. This Code of Conduct sets out the behaviour that we expect from our members and volunteers, and behaviour that is not acceptable and could lead to disciplinary action.

All volunteers and members must be respectful of the Players property and hired venues. Please help to keep our areas clean, tidy and professional.

How we treat each other

Volunteers and members are expected to be polite, courteous and respectful towards one another and to audience members / visitors and to honour all commitments they have made to NFP.

We will treat everyone with equal respect. We recognise that we are all individuals and we all think and act differently and that diversity is our richness.

We recognise the value in each of our roles and each other's skills as individuals or as teams and treat all member's inputs or skills with equal value and respect.

We will all behave as responsible adults in a polite and courteous manner and should expect to be treated as such. We don't want a culture where people cannot touch each other to express support or in comradery. But we recognise that some people do not want to be touched and that's OK.

We all have a responsibility to show each other respect throughout our interactions with one another. We will schedule rehearsals with fair notice, we will be punctual, we will be present when called and engage fully.

We will not show favouritism and we will allow space for all opinions. We all share a responsibility for each other's wellbeing within the Society. We all spend a lot of time together and we will make an effort to enhance each other's experience as a member of NFP.

We are all capable of making mistakes or acting outside of the values of our Code of Conduct, but we will endeavour to rectify the mistakes we have made. We will not be too proud or stubborn to apologise. We will also accept apologies and not hold grudges.

Rehearsal Environment

We will be respectful to the Director and creative team at all times. We will accept the decisions of the Director/casting committee with good grace. We are all entitled to work in an environment that

is free from harassment in any form. If something makes you uncomfortable, you have the right to ask for it to stop. If others appear to feel differently that does not mean that you are in the wrong. It is what makes you feel uncomfortable that matters. You should not be made to feel uncomfortable for asking people to treat you in a respectful manner.

If you raise something, it is reasonable to expect your fellow members to seek to amend their behaviour.

We do not believe shouting is ever OK. If we have a concern or issue, we have a responsibility to bring it up with a member of the Committee or an appropriate person. We all appreciate how helpful technology is and in particular are very reliant on our phones. We agree that using a phone to do emails/texts/social media messaging during a rehearsal is inappropriate and disrespectful. If we are waiting for a particularly important phone call or message, we will advise the person leading that rehearsal of the particular circumstances and will take the phone call outside the rehearsal room

How we interact with others

We pride ourselves on our friendly welcome to anyone participating in a NFP show in any capacity. We often work with external service providers (directors, musical directors, lighting engineers, sound engineers) and expect them to read this statement and respect it whilst they are working with us. We think humour is vital and it plays a large part in creating a happy, healthy environment but we will be mindful that one person's "banter" may be another person's embarrassment.

Discrimination

We aim to ensure that all members and volunteers who provide services to NFP receive equal treatment irrespective of:

- gender (including gender reassignment)
- marital or civil partnership status
- sexual orientation
- race, colour, ethnic or national origins
- religion or belief
- pregnancy
- disability

All our casting decisions will be made without discrimination against any of the characteristics listed above and based on the actors' skills in portraying the roles being cast.

There are two broad forms of discrimination under UK legislation: direct and indirect discrimination. Direct discrimination generally constitutes less favourable treatment because of one or more of the characteristics listed above.

Indirect discrimination generally occurs where a provision, criterion or practice which may appear neutral and apply equally to all, in fact inadvertently puts a group of people who share one or more of the characteristics listed above at a disadvantage in comparison with others.

Discrimination may also occur as a result of victimisation, harassment or bullying.

If you consider that you are disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 and that this prohibits or limits your involvement at NFP, please speak to any member of our Committee who will discuss with you any adjustments that could reasonably be made that would enable you to

participate as you would like. NFP hires rehearsal and performing spaces and so may discuss and pass requests onto venue owners for their consideration and implementation (without sharing sensitive or confidential data of individual member(s)).

Harassment

Harassment generally consists of unwanted conduct (based on one or more of the above characteristics) which has the purpose or effect of:

- violating a person's dignity; and/or
- creating an intimidating, hostile, unsafe, degrading or offensive environment.

It is irrelevant whether the alleged harassment is intentional or not.

The following are examples of harassment. This list is intended as a guide and is not exhaustive:

- physical conduct – unwanted touching, patting, pinching, assault, coercion for sexual favours or physical threats;
- verbal conduct – unwelcome advances, critical nicknames, innuendo, insults or abusive language;
- non-verbal conduct – the display or sharing of pornographic or suggestive pictures, offensive or abusive gestures, objects or written material (other than in connection with a production for artistic purposes);
- bullying – offensive, intimidating, insulting, humiliating or demeaning behaviour which attempts to undermine an individual.

Sexual Harassment

It is never appropriate to verbally sexually objectify anyone's body in a rehearsal room or theatre. It is never appropriate for an actor to be made to feel vulnerable through nudity, undress or costuming. It is never appropriate to send overly personal or suggestive communications to a junior.

Neither is it acceptable for unsolicited communications of an aggressive or sexual nature to be sent to another non-consenting member. It is never appropriate to initiate unwanted intimate physical contact. It is never appropriate for someone in a junior role to be asked by someone in a senior role to work outside rehearsal hours in their private home without other members of the cast being present, parental consent and with due regard to the maximum working hours for that age group.

Where acts of sexual harassment are deemed serious, persistent or are repeated despite them being "called out", NFP will take action, including the engagement of external agencies to investigate the matter. NFP reserves the right to sanction an individual including cancellation of membership. Sanctions will vary depending on the circumstances of each case. Every complaint brought formally to Committee attention will be properly investigated.

Members are to refrain from the following activities, which if committed may result in action under this Policy:

- Assault
- Theft
- Fraud or other financial wrongdoing
- Use of drugs or persistent drunkenness or disorderliness
- Criminal damage to property
- Rudeness or lack of consideration or respect for others

Complaints Procedure

We want members to feel empowered to deal with less serious matters in your own way, but we realise that this is not always easy. You have the right to expect the assistance of the Committee in dealing with serious issues, or with less serious issues that can't be resolved. You will not be criticised for raising matters which others may feel are trivial. What you do or don't find acceptable is a matter for you, not for others. We will communicate with others in order to solve problems and discuss issues. We do not have a culture of blaming or shaming.

If you think you have been a victim of any form of discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying and would like to make a complaint, in the first instance please put this in writing to the Secretary.

Matters relating to sexual conduct and physical assault will be immediately passed to the relevant authorities (Police, Social Services) for them to take forwards and the member suspended while this occurs.

The Secretary (or other committee member as the Chair directs) will conduct an initial investigation into the allegations. If the Secretary is the Director of the production concerned or the person accused, the Chairman will assign another member of the Committee to undertake the investigation. If the complaint is about the Chairman, the Treasurer will undertake the duties of the Chair. The Secretary/Investigator will make a formal report to the Chairman on the circumstances, likely to include a statement from each party and any remedial action which has already occurred (such as an apology). The Chairman will then discuss with the parties (who both have the right to be accompanied, should they wish) and direct any resulting actions (such as apology, period of suspension from the Society etc), or if the circumstances are disputed then the Chairman will oversee an enquiry/hearing, accompanied by at least two other members of the Committee (not including the Secretary/Investigator and not directly involved in the circumstances). The Panel will speak to each party and any witnesses in turn (possibly separately), they will discuss the circumstances and decide by majority vote upon the recommended actions.

These recommendations will be presented to the Committee for approval.

Penalties may include requiring a member to give an undertaking, to cover the cost of loss or damage (such as to property), suspension, condition on membership or cancelling membership.

Members being suspended or having their membership cancelled will not automatically qualify for a refund of their un-used membership fees. The decision on refund of membership fees (or extension of membership period into the next charging period) will be made by the Committee, with regard to the recommendation(s) of the investigation panel.

The member may appeal (in writing) once to the Committee, which choose to uphold the decision or adjust or vary the penalty.

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure it still reflects our collective view.