



Talisman Theatre Company

Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy & Procedure

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POLICY INTRODUCTION

The Talisman Theatre Company is committed to promoting a harmonious space for all members, customers, employees and contractors. We have a strong commitment to our values and want to ensure that everyone is treated fairly with respect and dignity. The Talisman Theatre recognises that bullying and harassment can seriously threaten an individual's general health, safety and well-being. We are determined to promote an enjoyable environment where bullying and harassment are not tolerated. The Talisman Theatre is committed to identifying and eliminating all forms of harassment, intimidation and bullying. This policy is designed to offer practical advice to all members, customers, employees and contractors to help prevent bullying and harassment occurring, and to know how to report issues so that they can be dealt with accordingly. This Policy applies both within the Talisman Theatre and at Talisman-associated events such as meetings, conferences and Theatre-related social events, whether on the premises, off site or online.

The aim of this policy is to help promote a culture in which bullying and harassment is known to be unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The policy aims to provide guidance to members, customers, employees and contractors of The Talisman Theatre by defining bullying and harassment, and clarifying how to make a complaint, report concerns, and assist in an investigation without fear of reprisal and to help us to promote an open and trusting culture.

The Talisman Theatre has separate Policies and Procedures for Children (Under 18) and for Vulnerable Adults. If the subject of the Bullying or Harassment falls into one of these categories, then the appropriate specific Policy/ Procedures must be followed instead.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- For the purpose of clarity within this policy, Trustees, Officers and Members of the Talisman Theatre Company shall hereafter be referred to collectively as 'The Talisman Theatre'.
- Trustees – Nigel Elliott, Dik Thacker, Stephen Duckham and Phillip Bowser.
- Members – Any persons who hold a current membership subscription to the Talisman Theatre Company or who is an Honorary Member or Honorary Life Member.
- Officers – Elected Members of The Talisman Theatre Executive Committee



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DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour which, through the abuse or misuse of power, makes the recipient feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated or threatened. Power includes both personal strength and the power to coerce others through fear or intimidation. Bullying is often a form of harassment and can undermine an individual's self-confidence, competence and self-esteem.

As with harassment, bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct. Physical conduct includes perceived horseplay, touching, pinching, and pushing as well as grabbing, shoving, punching and other forms of physical assault.

In addition to the manner in which people speak to and about one another, written material and pictures (including those disseminated by interactive and digital technologies) can be used to bully. These include emails, text messages, film clips and photographs taken using cameras in mobile phones as well as content uploaded onto websites.

Non exhaustive examples of bullying include:

- Shouting at, being sarcastic towards, ridiculing or demeaning others
- Making physical or psychological threats
- Constantly changing goals/targets in order to cause someone to fail
- Making inappropriate and/or derogatory remarks about a member's performance in their production role
- Abuse of authority or power by those in positions of seniority
- Unjustifiably excluding members from meetings, communications, Productions and other activities

As stated, this is not an exhaustive list – if what you are experiencing does not fall within the list and you are not sure if it constitutes bullying or not, you may discuss this with the Safeguarding Officer or Chairperson first.

What does not constitute bullying:

- The legitimate and fair criticism of a member's performance or behaviour at The Talisman Theatre so long as this is delivered with due respect
- The giving of reasonable instructions even when the member disagrees
- Being asked to respond to allegations as part of a complaint
- The proper instigation of complaints in accordance with our Policies
- A reprimand from a trustee or appropriate officer for negligent, inappropriate or unprofessional behaviour.



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DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

Harassment is any unwanted physical (including sexual), verbal or non-verbal conduct which has the purpose or effect of affecting a member's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Physical conduct ranges from touching, pinching, pushing or brushing past someone to grabbing, shoving, punching and other forms of physical/sexual assault.

In addition to the manner in which members speak to and about one another, written material and pictures (including those disseminated by interactive and digital technologies) can be used to harass. This includes emails, text messages, film clips and photographs taken using cameras in mobile phones as well as content uploaded onto websites.

Harassment commonly, but not exclusively, targets the sex, sexual orientation, marital status, gender reassignment, race, religion, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, HIV positive/AIDS status or age of the victim.

A single incident of unwanted or offensive behaviour to one individual can amount to harassment.

Non exhaustive examples of harassment include:

- Unnecessary or unwanted physical contact, which the offender might perceive to be "horseplay", and which can include the invasion of personal space, touching or brushing against another worker's body as well as assault or coercing sexual relations
- Unwelcome sexual behaviour, which might be perceived by the offender to be harmless flirting, and which may involve suggestions, advances, propositions or pressure for sexual activity
- Suggestions that sexual favours may further an employee's career or that refusal of sexual favours may hinder it
- Continued suggestions for social activity within or outside The Talisman Theatre after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome
- Inappropriate behaviour whether in the form of offensive or intimidating comments or gestures or insensitive jokes or pranks
- The display or circulation of offensive pictures, objects or written materials which, for example, may be considered pornographic or offensive to particular ethnic or religious groups; unwanted conduct or conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating an individuals' dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment on the grounds of their sex, race, sexual orientation, disability, religion or age including abuse or insults about cultures, customs, appearance or dress.
- Ignoring or shunning a member, for example, by deliberately and unreasonably excluding them from a Production, conversation or social activity.



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As stated, this is not an exhaustive list – if what you are experiencing does not fall within the list and you are not sure if it constitutes harassment or not, you could discuss this with the Safeguarding Officer or Chairperson in the first instance.

What does not constitute Harassment?

- Occasional conflict between individuals whether in the theatre, studio or outside. Members are expected to have a professional attitude to this kind of interpersonal conflict and to use their skills to resolve these situations.
- Single unintended incidents that the perpetrator stops when informed of the effect their behaviour is having. However, some extreme single incidents will still be defined as harassment and may be subject to this policy.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TALISMAN THEATRE - ALL MEMBERS

Everyone has a clear role to play in creating a climate of activity in which bullying and harassment is unacceptable. Members can contribute to preventing bullying and harassment through awareness and sensitivity towards the issue and by ensuring that standards of conduct for themselves and for others do not cause offence.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TALISMAN THEATRE - SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS AND/OR CHAIRPERSON

The Safeguarding Officers and Chairperson are responsible for challenging any bullying or harassment of which they are made aware, regardless of that person's position or role within the theatre

The Safeguarding Officers, Chairperson, Trustees and Officers have a duty to explain The Talisman Theatre's Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy to all those that use The Talisman Theatre's facilities and to take steps to promote the policy.

The Safeguarding Officers and Chairperson (with the assistance of Trustees and Officers as appropriate) are expected to be responsive to any complaints about bullying or harassment and to provide clear advice on the procedures; and maintain the confidentiality of both parties unless the procedure dictates otherwise, and take steps to ensure that there is no further problem after an allegation has been lodged.

The Safeguarding Officers and Chairperson are expected to ensure there are systems in place to let all on The Talisman Theatre premises know that The Talisman Theatre will not tolerate physical or verbal abuse towards its members. This will ideally be in the form of publishing this policy on the Talisman Theatre Company notice board and website.

Members who believe that they are being subjected to harassment or that they are being bullied should not hesitate to use the procedures set out below ...



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A member who witnesses or experiences bullying or harassment is required to report it immediately to a Safeguarding Officer or Chairperson. They may also report any issues to the Director or Stage Manager involved in a production at The Talisman Theatre, if the alleged bullying or harassment takes place within the rehearsal or performance periods of that production – but should follow this up by reporting it to a Safeguarding Officer or Chairperson.

INFORMAL PROCEDURE FOR INCIDENTS OR SUSPICIONS BULLYING OR HARASSMENT

What to do if you have been bullied or harassed:

If you consider that you are being bullied or harassed and you feel able to, you should initially attempt to resolve the problem informally, explaining clearly to the person responsible that their behaviour is not welcome and that it offends you or makes you uncomfortable.

If this is too difficult or embarrassing for you to do on your own, you should seek support from a Safeguarding Officer, Chairperson or (if involved in a production) the relevant Director or Stage Manager, who will provide confidential advice and assistance to members who believe they have been bullied or harassed and will offer to assist in the resolution of any problems, whether through informal or formal means.

If you are in any doubt as to whether an incident or series of incidents which have occurred constitute bullying or harassment, then in the first instance you should approach a Safeguarding Officer, Chairperson or (if you are currently involved in a production) the relevant Director or Stage Manager confidentially, on an informal basis. They will be able to advise you how your concerns should be dealt with.

If it is not appropriate or possible to resolve matters informally or, if after informal steps have been taken, the conduct continues, you should follow the formal procedure set out below.



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FORMAL PROCEDURE FOR INCIDENTS OR SUSPICIONS BULLYING OR HARASSMENT

What to do if you have been bullied or harassed:

The informal procedure may not be appropriate due to the nature of the harassment or bullying or because you do not feel able to talk directly to the person creating the problem. In these cases or where the informal procedure has been unsuccessful, you should raise your complaint in writing with a Safeguarding Officer or Chairperson whose role is to achieve a solution, wherever possible, and to respect the confidentiality of all concerned.

As a general principle, the decision to progress a complaint rests with you. However, The Talisman Theatre has a duty to protect all members and may be obliged to pursue a complaint independently if, in all the circumstances, it is considered appropriate to do so. This may necessitate proceeding in line with the Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures or the Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

LETTER OF COMPLAINT

The details you should include are:

- The name of the harasser or bully
- The nature of the harassment or bullying
- The date(s) and time(s) when the harassment or bullying occurred
- The names of any witnesses
- Any action taken so far to attempt to stop the harassment or bullying

INVESTIGATION

After receipt of the letter of complaint, the Safeguarding Officer or an appropriate member of the Trustees will develop an appropriate solution to the issue. This may range from mediation between victim and perpetrator, to revoking membership of the perpetrator.

CONFIDENTIALITY

If you are in any doubt as to whether an incident or series of incidents which have occurred constitute bullying or harassment, then in the first instance you should approach a Safeguarding Officer, Chairperson or (if involved in a production) the relevant Director or Stage Manager confidentially, on an informal basis. They will be able to advise you how your concerns should be dealt with.



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PROTECTION FOR THOSE MAKING COMPLAINTS OR ASSISTING WITH AN INVESTIGATION

Members who make complaints or who participate in any investigation conducted under this policy in good faith will be protected from any form of intimidation or victimisation as a result of their involvement.

Any member who believes they have been subjected to any such intimidation or victimisation should seek support from a Trustee as listed on Page 2.

REVIEW

This policy and procedure will be regularly monitored by the Trustees and Officers of the Talisman Theatre Company and will be subject to annual review by the Safeguarding Officers.

Issued Date:	11/4/2021
Next Review Date:	10/04/2022
Review Completed by:	Dik Thacker
Approved by Trustees of The Talisman Theatre Company on:	11/04/2021
Approved by the Officers of The Talisman Theatre on:	11/04/2021

CONTACTS

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