

THE PUBLIC THEATER CODE OF CONDUCT

The Public Theater is committed to providing a conscious, healthy and respectful work environment for everyone involved in bringing its mission to life.

We recognize that the effects of racism, sexism and other systemic biases are deeply embedded in our national culture, including in the theater world. As an anti-oppressive organization, these behaviors are contrary to who we are and what we aspire to be. The purpose of this document is to help us all work together in new ways to create a workplace where we all feel safe and are given the respect we deserve—where our differences can be celebrated.

The work to provide a conscious, healthy and respectful work environment can be challenging, but it is something that every employee of The Public Theater must take seriously. And because the spaces in which we work are broad – encompassing administration, auditions, rehearsals, technical work, late nights, parties, public facing frontline work, and more—we must acknowledge, and not exploit, the blurred boundaries between work and social spaces.

This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with The Public Theater's Policy Against Discrimination and Harassment. All employees are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is free of bias, prejudice, discrimination, and harassment at all times. Failure to abide by the expectations set forth in this Code of Conduct and in all Public Theater policies may result in appropriate discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

The Code of Conduct is about helping us all to be a responsible member of The Public Theater community and committing to treating each other well. We all make this commitment together and we will all get there together by supporting this commitment with our actions.

In order to ensure sustainable change, all of us must:

- Understand that in this country, many of our current practices are built on the foundation of institutionalized oppressive systems. At The Public, we are constantly working on dismantling these systems and the behavior that perpetuates them. As a member of The Public, we ask that you:

- Know bullying and address bullying when you see it.

- Know sexual harassment and address sexual harassment when you see it.

- Know racism and address racism when we you it.

- Know homophobia and address homophobia when you see it.

- Know transphobia and address transphobia when you see it.

- Know ableism and address ableism when you see it.

- Know ageism and address ageism when you see it.

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Know xenophobia and address xenophobia when you see it.

Know all forms of discrimination and harassment and address it when you see it.

- Be aware that many assumptions are grounded in cultural or other stereotypes. Changing our behavior requires that we stay open to seeing the world in new ways.
- Examine our current practices (meeting formats, communication standards, etc.) where oppressive behavior or bias is slipping in, and suggest methods of improvement.
- Create a liberated and supportive environment, a “brave space,” where people can feel safe to share their concerns and experiences.
- Make sure that everyone at The Public Theater knows who they can talk to if they encounter an instance of discrimination, harassment, or other oppressive behavior.
- Understand and uphold reporting standards and guidelines for employees, contractors, and guests.

What does oppressive behavior look like?

Oppressive behavior is any behavior that marginalizes or diminishes your colleagues.

The list of potentially inappropriate behaviors below is not all-inclusive, but it is meant to provide you with examples.

INAPPROPRIATE PHYSICAL CONTACT

- If in doubt, don’t do it. If someone pulls away or asks you to stop it—STOP IT. Hugging and touching can imply a sense of intimacy that is not shared.
- Ex. Touching a coworker’s hair without verbal consent
- Ex. Placing a hand on a coworker’s shoulder without verbal consent

INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

- Using slurs or derogatory slang of any kind.
- This includes slurs or derogatory slang that is used within the context of a play we are working on. If you are not an actor that has been assigned to say those words, don’t say it.
- Colleagues and co-workers are not girls, boys, gals, babes, sweeties, or honeys. Address people by their chosen names and pronouns.
 - Colleagues should not be subject to a judgmental gaze or commentary on clothing, bodies, sexiness, racial attributes, weight, prettiness, or personality characteristics.
 - Co-workers are here to do a job, and not to brighten your day. As such they do not need to hear “smile more,” “lighten up” or “calm down.”
 - Co-workers are here to work, not to discuss your or their personal lives or to engage in flirtatious behavior. You can be friendly and caring, but discussion about intimate lives should be saved for a different place and time.

DISMISSIVE & DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIORS

- Purposefully using the wrong pronouns for someone, especially after they stated their pronouns.
- Interrupting or talking over people in discussions can be a form of bullying. This behavior dismisses people’s opinions as not worthy to be heard or explored.
- Taking unearned credit for work done by someone else diminishes a colleague’s stature in front of others. Giving public credit for work well done is a respectful way to acknowledge contribution.
- Shaming or public outbursts can be threatening and have no place at The Public Theater.

The Public Theater’s Policy Against Discrimination and Harassment also provides examples of conduct that may constitute discrimination or harassment and that is strictly prohibited.

When someone tells you that you are engaging in oppressive behaviors, take their concerns seriously and correct your actions as appropriate.

If necessary, both parties may need to immediately stop action and step away to allow for an appropriate reset. In addition, individuals are encouraged to bring concerns to the attention of The Public as discussed in the “So What’s Next?” section of this document.

How to handle inappropriate behavior:

There are several ways to respond when you experience discriminatory, harassment, or other inappropriate behavior, including “**calling someone in**” and “**calling someone out**.”

Call in: If a colleague does something that you find inappropriate, pulling them to the side and take the time to foster an open and honest conversation about what transpired.

Call out: If a colleague does something that you find inappropriate, addressing the issue outwardly, including bringing it to the attention of people listed in the “So What’s Next?” section of this document. If you feel comfortable, you can respectfully address inappropriate conduct in front of others, especially if you believe it will protect yourself and/or your colleagues from further harm.

In many cases, you may find that that “calling someone in” can be what is needed to solve a conflict. However, there may be times that you may need to “call someone out” and reach out to the people listed in the “So What’s Next?” section of this document. Feel free to choose the method that works best for you. Know that you may always report a concern or complaint regardless of whether you have first advised someone privately that their behavior is inappropriate.

We acknowledge that

Oppression of any kind is about the **abuse of power**.

Every one of us has a critical responsibility to hear and recognize the impact of our own actions.

When we receive feedback that we have (even unintentionally) made someone uncomfortable, we commit to looking inward, becoming even more self-aware, and appropriately adjusting any problematic behavior immediately.

So what’s next?

The Public Theater is committed to responding to your concerns in a timely, thorough, and impartial manner. Employees wishing to report a concern or complaint regarding discrimination, harassment or retaliation as described in the Policy Against Discrimination and Harassment should utilize the procedures set forth in the Reporting Procedure section of that policy, namely to reach out to Human Resources.

If you experience any of the behavior addressed in this Code of Conduct or in The Public Theater’s Policy Against Discrimination and Harassment, you are strongly encouraged to reach out to anyone on the list below with whom you feel comfortable and they will talk with you and put together a plan of action to address it.

Direct supervisor or Show Team (line producer, production manager, or company manager).

Stage Manager or AEA Deputy.

- Jeremy Adams, Managing Director: jadams@publictheater.org, 212.539.8702
- Human Resources Team: humanresources@publictheater.org
- Yuvika Tolani, Associate Producer, ytolani@publictheater.org

The Public Theater is committed to treating all complaints seriously. Therefore, all issues raised will be treated sensitively and with appropriate discretion by the representative you approach. Confidentiality will be respected to the greatest extent practicable consistent with The Public's obligation to properly investigate and resolve concerns.

Because of the sensitive and personal nature of these incidents, we ask that any individuals who are not directly involved in the investigation and/or resolution respectfully limit discussion and that all individuals refrain from engaging in rumors, gossip, or speculation.

This Code of Conduct is a living document and will be periodically updated.

Updated 08/31/2021

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