



Minnesota Theater Alliance



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council

Policy & Practice:

A Training & Conversation about Harassment in the Performing Arts

Agenda

- Welcome and introductions
- Guidelines for discussion
- Tools and templates
- Panel Discussion
- Q&A
- Wrap up

Guidelines for our conversation

- We take care with words. We believe words have power, power to uplift and to discourage.
- Work to speak from only your own experience.
- Avoid using a single example to represent the truth of an entire group.
- Work to accept discord. That is often where the most nuanced truth lies.
- We are in a private moment in which we may be speaking from our hearts, and we need to honor and respect that act of vulnerability and keep what is said in this room.
- Avoid naming specific people or specific theaters.
- We live in the solutions.

A “ A bird does not sing because it has an answer,
it sings because it has a song.” ----Maya Angelou.

Tools and Templates

- Have a path for reporting
- Know the path for reporting
- If possible/comfortable, address it with the person directly
- Take some sort of action*
- Document
- Follow up
- Templates and examples:

<http://www.pahrts.mntheateralliance.org/>

What is PAHRTS?



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About



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About PAHRTS: In 2014, the Minnesota Theater Alliance (MTA) received support from the Mardag Foundation to create and implement The Performing Arts Human Resources Toolkit Series (PAHRTS). The goal was for PAHRTS to be a catalyst for our performing arts community to evaluate our HR practices, discover systemic barriers, design innovative approaches for improvement; to help provide organizations with tools they need to evaluate their values, culture, structure; and to implement meaningful change.

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Respect in the Workplace policy example

Example

Date: _____

RESPECT IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY For all cast and creative team members

Welcome to _____. We want to provide the best possible working environment for each of our employees, one that is based upon collaboration and respect.

In our ongoing work, we strive to create a culture of respect in all areas of the theater. We are committed to maintaining a professional workplace that respects the dignity of every individual. Treating others with respect and dignity ensures a healthy and productive work environment free from discrimination, disrespectful and inappropriate behavior, harassment, retaliation, sexual harassment and violence. Any form of harassment is prohibited and will be taken seriously.

While we recognize that the nature of theater is to examine topics that are controversial, complex and even provocative, those who work in the theater have a right to be free of the threat or presence of any type of discrimination and harassment.

Background:

In our work, we strive to create a culture that is safe for all. Harassment may occur because of a person's gender or sexual orientation; however harassment also may occur around race, age, religion, national origin, or disability. Harassment can be either done (in conduct) or said (in comments). Conduct or comments become harassment when they are offensive and unwelcome to others. Conduct or comments may be harassment even though the person doing or saying them thinks they are making a joke, or has the permission of all others involved. Please note: People do not always show when they are offended. If you are uncertain whether your conduct or comments will be offensive, the best practice is to refrain. We ask that employees recognize that intention is not the same as impact, and to first consider the impact that your actions or comments may have on others.

Examples of Harassment:

Examples of harassment may include but are not limited to:

- Unsolicited verbal sexual comments, suggestive comments or repeated propositions
- Bullying, which is a persistent pattern of mistreatment from others that causes harm (e.g. spreading rumors or gossiping, ostracizing or negatively using influence to control another person's conduct)
- Sexist remarks about an individual's body, manner or sexual activities
- Petting, pinching or unnecessary touching
- Subtle pressure for sexual activity
- The display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, including nude photographs
- Unwanted staring or leering

Template for documentation of issues:

Template to document issues:

Date:

Name:

Items of concern:

Specific examples and dates they occurred:

What outcome do you seek? (What does success look like?)

Next Steps: How and when should I follow up with you?

Date of follow up:

Viewpoint: 5 Ways to Strengthen Your Anti-Harassment Complaint Procedure

By Jonathan A. Segal

Jan 9, 2018

As employers [revisit their anti-harassment policies](#), they also should finetune their complaint procedures. Without a robust complaint procedure that employees trust, an anti-harassment policy is not worth the paper on which it is written.

1. Make Clear Who Can Bring Complaints

Complaint procedures should not be limited to employees who have experienced harassment. Employees who witness inappropriate conduct should be able to file reports as well.

Make clear that employees can report sexually or other harassing conduct even if it is not unlawful. One stray comment that degrades another's gender may not constitute unlawful harassment, but it is harassing conduct that should not be tolerated. As with the anti-harassment policy, the complaint procedure should focus on what is unacceptable, and therefore prohibited, even if it is not unlawful.

One sexist joke—rather than a barrage of sexist remarks—is not unlawful. But employees should know that such jokes are entirely unacceptable.

The anti-harassment policy and complaint procedure must apply to racial, ethnic, religious and other forms of harassing conduct, not just sexual. Make clear how they apply to discrimination, retaliation and failure to accommodate too.



Workplace Harassment Resources

- [Case Studies](#)
- [Compliance Resources](#)
- [Training Resources](#)
- [Tools & Forms](#)
- [Investigation Resources](#)
- [SHRM's Perspective](#)

Quiz: [Is It Sexual Harassment?](#)

2. Have Multiple Points of Contact

For the complaint procedure to be effective, employees cannot be required to report their concerns only to their supervisor. After all, a supervisor may be the person engaging in harassing conduct.

At a minimum, employees should be given the opportunity to consult with supervisors or HR. But employers may wish to broaden the pool of potential points of contact.

Consider offering anonymous reporting from an independent third party, similar to hotlines that public companies provide for whistle-blowers.

If an employer uses an external reporting vehicle, consider to whom the external reports will be communicated internally. If the report goes to only one company employee, he or she could bury it. Employers are well-advised to ensure that complaints made externally are reported to multiple people internally.

Kate's story

- A creative way to solve a problem

Dear Student Patrons,

Hi. My name is Kate Eastman. You don't know me yet, but you'll meet me soon. I am playing the character Juliet in the play 'Romeo and Juliet'. The rest of the cast and I are so excited for you to see the play. Whether you enjoy it or not, my only hope is that you have some kind of experience, and are able to think and talk about it afterward.

One thing, though. I'm gonna give you a heads up. You're going to see a lot of me in this play. You're going to see my bare shoulders. You're going to see my bare back, because I change onstage. You're going to see me in a bra. This may be exciting for you or it may make you uncomfortable or it may be old news. What I am saying is that part of my job in this play is to reveal my body. I get partially naked to help tell a story. This is my choice. I want you to keep that in mind. This is my job.

We've done this show a few times for teenagers like you and your classmates, and it has been, for the most part, a joyful and exciting experience. The one thing that has been tough for me, and that is getting tougher, is that I'm getting cat called every time I come onstage. I get hollered at, whistled at, I hear lewd comments as I'm speaking my lines. I'm playing a fifteen year old girl falling in love for the first time, discovering what it is to want someone for the first time, and yes, that involves becoming aware of my body and of sex, on stage, in front of you. Again, this is my job.

I'm not trying to police your experience - I want you to respond honestly to what you are seeing. I want you to like the things you like and hate the things you hate. But I also want you to hear the play. It may seem harmless to you to tell a girl to smile, to whistle in appreciation, to say something sexual at a vulnerable moment. I need you to know that an unwanted remark like that feels like a slap. It's a form of violence. When I can't be heard onstage because my words are drowned out by catcalls and the responses to those catcalls, what that communicates to me is that my words - the contents of my mind and heart, which I am offering to you - do not matter. It tells me that I am just a body, a thing for consumption. It's not just me - any time you do that to any woman or girl, you are telling her that she doesn't matter. You are making her small, telling her to take up less space in the world.

You may be thinking "Well, if you don't want the attention, you shouldn't play the part," or "You should put more clothes on" or "You shouldn't do sexual things." NO. I have a right to my body, to share it with you in the way that I choose, to walk through the world in it in a way that makes me feel good. You are not entitled to it. It's not yours. I made choices to play Juliet in the way that I do - free and comfortable in her body, aggressive, sensual, bold - because I believe that women and girls must take up as much space as possible, and that we are allowed to be as complicated and messy as we want to be.

You may see catcalling and similar behavior all the time, you or your friends may engage in it and get away with it, but these behaviors support rape culture where victims are blamed for the violence others inflict on them. It is so common that it's the type of behavior others will let you get away with and not say something, but it hurts everyone. So it is up to you to be responsible for yourself. It's up to you to be better.

All I am asking is that you take a moment to put yourself in my shoes, to think just for a moment before you speak. Ask yourself how you would like to be treated. We are all people. I am just as much of a person as you. Remember that I am doing my job. I hope that you will listen to the play, and take something home with you. I hope that you will choose to be your better self. I know you can.

With respect and love,

Kate

Panel Discussion

Laura Adams

Tammy Cohen

Lizzie Gardner

Caroline Palmer

Tom Ringberg

Pogi Sumangil

Q&A

- How can we work together as a theater community to foster the culture we want?

Additional Resources:

- #NotInOurHouse
- Fair Play (for Improv) www.fairplaymn.wordpress.com
- Gender Justice www.genderjustice.us A NONPROFIT LEGAL & POLICY ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION DEVOTED TO ADDRESSING THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF GENDER INEQUALITY.
- Schaefer Haleen www.schaeferhaleen.com LEGAL RESOURCE
- Intimacy Directors International
www.intimacydirectorsinternational.com



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Thank you!!!!

Please visit the MN Theater Alliance website for additional resources.