

## OVERVIEW

When you fringe with us, you join a community that is vibrant, diverse, inclusive, welcoming, and safe.

We believe in creative safer spaces that celebrate creative risk. We work hard to keep our Festival, venue, and events safe, but we need the help of our community to make that possible. Together, we can create safer spaces where all fringers feel valued.

Ours is a large and caring team comprised of individuals who bring different skills, experience, and understanding to our organization. We are all committed to upholding safer spaces.

**We believe EVERYONE has the right to *fringe* in a safe place where they are welcome and respected.**

**We believe in and support people who have experienced harassment, violence, or discrimination.**

Enclosed find information on our Safer Spaces program, including:

- Definitions;
- Message of Welcome;
- Code of Conduct;
- Anti Harassment, Violence, and Discrimination Policy;
- Safer Space Initiatives;
- Our Safer Space Pledge;
- Artistic Expression in Safer Spaces;
- Reporting a Disclosure or Complaint; and
- Accessing Support.

## DEFINITIONS

- 1. Fringers:** Any person who comes on site to the ATB Financial Arts Barns, the Edmonton International Fringe™ Theatre Festival grounds or partnering venue, or who represents and/or participates in a Fringe Theatre produced event. This includes but is not limited to attendees, patrons, sponsors, donors, vendors, renters, performers, crew members, volunteers, and staff.
- 2. Consent:** A voluntary, ongoing, active, and conscious agreement to engage in the activity in question. Agreement or a “yes” that is obtained through pressure, coercion, force, threats, or by inducing intoxication, impairment, or incapacity is not voluntary 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pursuing an activity to obtain clear, voluntary consent from the other, and to recognize that consent can be withdrawn at any time.

3. **Disclose/Disclosure:** A verbal or written report by any person to a member of the Fringe Theatre community that they have experienced abuse, harassment, or misconduct. Fringe Theatre may initiate an investigation and resolution process and will honour any requests for anonymity by the person making the report.
4. **Complaint:** A written report or statement alleging abuse, harassment, or misconduct by any person to a Fringe Theatre staff under the Fringe Theatre Safer Spaces process for the purpose of initiating an investigation and resolution process.
5. **Discrimination:** 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.
6. **Harassment:** Conduct or comment, either one time or repeating, that:
  - is demeaning, intimidating, threatening, or abusive;
  - causes offence and should have reasonably been expected to offend;
  - serves no legitimate purpose for the environment;
  - is a reprisal or threat of reprisal against an individual for ejecting a solicitation or advance; and
  - undermines authority or respect in the environment, limits opportunities for advancement, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Harassment includes conduct or comments, or the creation of a negative psychological and/or emotional environment that humiliates, excludes, or isolates an individual or group by focusing on their race, colour, place of origin, gender, age, marital status, religious beliefs, citizenship, mental and physical abilities, sexual orientation, or any other prohibited grounds within the Alberta Human Rights Act.

Harassment also includes bullying, which is a form of aggression that may include physical, verbal, or emotional abuse. It can include persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating or insulting behavior, abuse of power, and/or unfair sanctions which make the individual feel threatened, humiliated, and/or vulnerable.

7. **Sexual Violence:** 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.
8. **Sexual Assault:** 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.

9. **Solicitation:** Any comment, behaviour, or act that can be perceived as soliciting sexual favours, or placing sexual conditions onto any persons involvement in an activity, event, promotion, or employment (paid or unpaid) opportunity.
10. **Retaliation:** 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.

## MESSAGE OF WELCOME

**We acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 territory, and that we are beneficiaries of this Treaty of peace and friendship signed in 1876.**

In that spirit, we extend our hands and hearts to the Indigenous nations of the Cree, Nakota, Blackfoot, Dene, Saulteaux, and Metis who have made Edmonton their home long before the building of our city – and to all Indigenous people who continue to make this city their home.

**We embrace the teachings of Tatawaw, a Nehiyawewin phrase meaning *Welcome, there is room.***

In our house, everyone is welcome. Together, we are allies. We are neighbours. We are friends. We celebrate all we have been given, and honour our relationships and shared connections by paying forward all that we can.

We invite you to join us in this work by extending respect and kindness to everyone you meet, supporting them in their unique artistic journey.

**Come share your story with us. *Tatawaw.***

## CODE OF CONDUCT

We ask all Fringers to adhere to the following code of conduct, including any person who comes on site to the ATB Financial Arts Barns, the Edmonton International Fringe™ Theatre Festival grounds or Festival partnering venue, or who represents and/or participates in a Fringe Theatre produced event.

Fringers will not participate in or condone activities that discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, place of origin, gender, age, marital status, religious beliefs, citizenship, mental and physical abilities, sexual orientation, or any other prohibited grounds within the Alberta Human Rights Act.

**Additionally, you will maintain Fringe Theatre, the ATB Financial Arts Barns, the Edmonton International Fringe™ Theatre Festival, and all events produced by Fringe Theatre as a safe place by:**

- Maintaining positive, respectful relationships with fellow community members;
- Acting with honesty and integrity, declining to participate in or condone any activities that may be considered unethical or illegal;
- Avoiding participating in or condoning activities that may put people in harm's way or risk their physical, emotional, or mental wellbeing;
- Practicing active consent when engaging in activities of a sexual nature;
- Supporting people who have experienced or disclosed harassment, violence, or discrimination by reporting any incidents of bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination, or abuse that you witness when you are able;

- Not participating in or condoning in activities that may be bullying, non-consensual, discriminate, harassing, or violent in nature; and
- Maintaining a drug and tobacco-free environment by not utilizing such products on site.

Violation of this Code of Conduct may result being removed from the grounds, and/or banned from participating in future activities related to Fringe Theatre or the ATB Financial Arts Barns.

## **ANTI HARASSMENT, VIOLENCE, & DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

### Overview

We are committed to a respectful, safe environment free from harassment, violence, discrimination, bullying, abuse, and solicitation. All community members are to be treated with respect and dignity. We provide opportunities for everyone to contribute and participate in all events and activities whenever possible.

Participation in activities or behaviors that discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, place of origin, gender, age, marital status, religious beliefs, citizenship, mental and physical abilities, sexual orientation, or any other prohibited grounds within the Alberta Human Rights Act will not be tolerated.

### Strategy

We implement a comprehensive and evolving strategy to create and uphold a safe environment, including:

- Promotes positive, safe, and respectful standards and expectations for conduct;
- Provide training and education related to the prevention of harassment, violence, and discrimination, as well as bystander best practices;
- Audit organizational site, processes, and procedures regularly to identify and remove barriers that inhibit a person's ability to engage safely and respectfully;
- Adopt practices that protect, respect, and support people who have experienced or disclosed harassment, violence, or discrimination;
- Provide an effective and fair procedure for investigating complaints; and
- Always strives to find a resolution that includes the needs of the people who have experienced or disclosed harassment, violence, or discrimination.

### Offensive Attire

Community members are encouraged to be thoughtful about the attire they wear. Attire containing offensive images or words, such as hate symbols or culturally appropriative attire, is not tolerated at Fringe Theatre events or property.

### Reporting

It is the responsibility of a director, manager, or any person within the organization supervising one or more employees/volunteers/artists to take immediate and appropriate action, reporting and following up with any incident of harassment, violence, discrimination, bullying, or abuse that is witnessed, disclosed, or complaint report. Every report must be followed up in a timely manner using the process outlined by Fringe Theatre. (*Reporting process and guidelines outlined on page 6*)

### Violation of Policy

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

### **SAFER SPACE INITIATIVES**

The following are initiatives we've employed to help build a safer space.

#### **1. Safe Walks**

We are available to provide safe escorts to or from any vehicle, venue, or public transportation location within two blocks of the Festival site or ATB Financial Arts Barns any time an event is open. Please ask a staff or volunteer if you would like a Safe Walk escort.

#### **2. Washrooms**

All-gender, stalled washrooms are available in the ATB Financial Arts Barns south of the Studio Theatre. During the Festival, all site portable toilets are single stall and all-gender.

#### **3. Gender Pins**

Pronoun pins are available for free at the box office. These pins can be worn as a way to help other community members call one another by their pronouns.

#### **4. Staff & Volunteer Training**

Staff and volunteers are provided with annual awareness training. Additionally, staff receive training, such as Supporting Survivor education. These sessions offer staff and volunteers practical skills to recognize when and how to help when witnessing harassment, as well as how to support people who have experienced sexual violence.

### **OUR SAFER SPACE PLEDGE**

Creating a safe space requires the commitment, accountability, and support from each person in our community. Below is our pledge to making this a safer space. We encourage you to join us!

#### **We commit to helping maintain a safe space that is inclusive to all, and will:**

- Be mindful that our community is on Treaty Six land, and as such we are all Treaty persons;
- Take an active role in maintaining a safe and inclusive space that embraces all forms of diversity;
- Give individuals and groups who are speaking or performing our attention and respect;
- Listen and learn when the impact of our actions may not match our intent;
- Respect other's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual boundaries;
- Seek out support to the best of our ability when we are in need;
- Be mindful of routes, facilities, and spaces that are designated for persons needing accessibility accommodations and avoid utilizing or blocking them;
- Use a person's correct pronouns;
- Use inclusive language and listen and learn when language used may have been exclusive; and
- Engage in conversations about making our spaces more inclusive; and
- Use respectful language and a calm tone when communicating with others.

## **ARTISTIC EXPRESSION IN SAFER SPACES**

Freedom of artistic expression is a vital component to the fabric of our community. We strongly support the spirit of the Fringe Festival by providing artists opportunities to showcase their work without jury or censor. We support artists and the choices they make on stage.

### Theatre Artists

Artistic content may sometimes include language, characters, situations, and other elements that may be perceived as inappropriate, offensive, or triggering. By purchasing a ticket, audiences are opting to participate in a theatrical experience, including a diverse exploration of stories, vantage points, and delivery.

Artists may not extend this artistic policy beyond a performance. At no time may artistic expression or freedom violate any local, provincial, or federal law.

When possible, each show or event produced by Fringe Theatre provides content warnings and ratings, such as "Parental Guidance suggested," noting the audience that may be best suited for a performance.

Reports related to misconduct occurring during a performance or in relationship to the marketing and publicity of a show will be investigated with an understanding of the context and social cues.

### Street Performers

Street performances and busking are intended for entertainment of general public audiences. Show content is held to a family friendly standard. While the content of a show may push boundaries or offend, we do not tolerate discrimination or harassment within the context of a street performance.

## **REPORTING A DISCLOSURE OR COMPLAINT**

We recognize the difference between a person disclosing information and a person filing a complaint. We respect their right to make their own decision regarding how they choose to report an incident. If public safety is a concern, we may initiate an investigation and will work closely with the person who reported the information, following their wishes as closely as we reasonably can.

### Reporting

Below are the ways a person may notify Fringe Theatre of an incident and file a report.

#### **1. Online Submission**

Any person may file a report by completing our online submission form located at [fringetheatre.ca/saferspace](http://fringetheatre.ca/saferspace).

The form outlines who will receive and read the submission, as well as options for the person to submit anonymously. Additionally, the person can choose whether they are disclosing information or filing a formal complaint.

#### **2. Personal Statement**

Any person may file a report in person by making a personal statement to Fringe Staff or Security. The staff/security will walk the person through any steps required to submit a personal statement, such as whether they wish to remain anonymous, and whether they are choosing to disclose information or file a formal complaint.

### 3. Email

Any person may submit an email to our Safer Spaces committee by emailing [saferspaces@fringetheatre.ca](mailto:saferspaces@fringetheatre.ca).

Please note that anonymous disclosures limit our ability to conduct a thorough investigation.

#### Processing a Disclosure or Complaint

Every disclosure and complaint will be read by the Executive Director, Adam Mitchell ([adam.mitchell@fringetheatre.ca](mailto:adam.mitchell@fringetheatre.ca)), Artistic Director, Murray Utas ([murray.utas@fringetheatre.ca](mailto:murray.utas@fringetheatre.ca)), Communications Specialist, Megan Dart ([megan.dart@fringetheatre.ca](mailto:megan.dart@fringetheatre.ca)), Development Specialist, Erin Voaklander ([erin.voaklander@fringetheatre.ca](mailto:erin.voaklander@fringetheatre.ca)), and Executive Administrator, Dana Buschmann ([dana.buschmann@fringetheatre.ca](mailto:dana.buschmann@fringetheatre.ca)) with an effort to be reviewed within 48 hours of filing. You may also directly email any one of these individuals to submit a report.

Those persons providing their contact information or filing a formal complaint will receive follow up. Personal statements will be attended by a minimum two Fringe Theatre staff for reasons of safety and transparency.

Complaints or disclosures will be taken seriously and investigated to the extent that is reasonably practicable, using the following guidelines:

- Actions assume belief in people who have experienced or disclosed harassment, violence, or discrimination;
- Provide support and resources to persons who have experienced or has been affected by the incident;
- To the best of our ability, ensure the safety and privacy of those affected by the incident;
- Respect and follow the reasonable wishes of the person who experienced assuming no others are in immediate danger;
- When necessary, create a plan for investigation and/or adjudication in collaboration with Fringe Theatre leadership, the person disclosing, and with respect for people who have been affected.
- When necessary, impose interim measures; and
- Always strive to find a resolution that includes the needs of the people who have been affected.

If required, Fringe Theatre may consult senior management and staff, Fringe Theatre Adventures Board of Directors, representatives from community partners (such as the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton), and professional experts (such as doctors, psychologists, and lawyers). In these instances, we will strive to maintain confidentiality and anonymity as we are able.

#### Substantiated Reports

Substantiated reports are defined as being reasonably authenticated by Fringe Theatre. Substantiated reports may or may not include engaging local authorities and/or legal action.

If a report is substantiated, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, as decided by Fringe Theatre. This may include, but is not limited to, formal reprimand, suspension, demotion, dismissal, and/or banning from events, activities, employment, or property.

Additionally, Fringe Theatre may offer steps towards accountability to people who have experienced or disclosed harassment, violence, or discrimination, including but not limited to, an oral or written apology or compensation for lost wages or lost benefits.

Both parties to the incident will be advised, in writing, of the decision.

If either party to an incident believes that the report is not being handled in accordance with this policy they may contact the Executive Director or the Artistic Director. Persons may also file a discrimination complaint with the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

### Resolutions

Interim measures may be imposed on a person alleged to have committed an infraction. The purpose of this is to ensure personal safety, discourage or prevent retaliation or further infractions, protect confidentiality, and to preserve our ability to conduct a thorough investigation. Interim measures must be appropriate and proportionate to the seriousness of the alleged conduct, and as minimally restrictive as possible to achieve their purpose. This may include, but is not limited to removal from events, activities, or the premises for a period of time.

Informal resolutions may also be sought as a course of action. An informal resolution allows the participants a greater measure of control in the process and in the outcomes by having all parties:

- agree to a resolution;
- document the resolution in writing; and
- sign the resolution, demonstrating their ownership for the self-enforced agreement.

Lastly, a formal resolution may be engaged. This may be sought at any time, including if an informal resolution fails.

### Privacy & Confidentiality

All parties to an incident are expected to respect the privacy and confidentiality of all other parties involved, limiting the discussion related to the incident to those that need to know.

### **ACCESSING SUPPORT**

Every person's journey to recovery and wellness looks different, and 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 to you. You can also find a complete list of resources on our website here: <https://www.fringetheatre.ca/saferspace/resources/>.

- 1. Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton (SACE): (780) 423-4121 or [www.sace.ca](http://www.sace.ca)**  
Provides free services, including 24-hour support and information, counselling, court support, diversity and inclusion training, and public education.
- 2. Edmonton Distress Line: 780-482-HELP (4357)**  
The Edmonton Distress Line is a confidential supportive listening service that 24-hour support if you are in distress and want to talk. They are equipped to talk about any topic that is causing you distress, including relationships, mental health, finances, abusive/violent situations, and thoughts of suicide.



**3. Alberta 211: Dial 211**

Alberta 211 is an information and referral service for government and non-profit agencies. If you live in the greater Edmonton area, call 211 to speak with an Information and Referral Specialist.

**4. Edmonton Non - Emergency Police Line: (780) 423-4567**

If it is not urgent, call for support.