



Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

1. Purpose and Commitment

Olathe Civic Theatre Association (OCTA) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, respectful, and professional environment for all participants, including patrons, performers, volunteers, staff, board members, and guests. Bullying, harassment, and intimidation are inconsistent with OCTA's values and will not be tolerated.

This policy applies to all OCTA-sponsored activities, including rehearsals, performances, meetings, classes, auditions, social events, and online communications related to OCTA.

2. Definitions

Bullying is repeated or severe behavior that is intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or harmful to another person. This includes verbal, physical, written, or electronic conduct.

Harassment includes unwelcome conduct based on protected characteristics (such as race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, national origin, or other legally protected status) or any conduct that creates a hostile or offensive environment.

Retaliation is any adverse action taken against a person for reporting bullying or participating in an investigation. Retaliation is strictly prohibited.

3. Examples of Prohibited Conduct

Prohibited behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal abuse, threats, or intimidation
 - Derogatory comments, slurs, or jokes
 - Yelling, shaming, or public humiliation
 - Physical aggression or unwanted physical contact
 - Sabotage of work or performances
 - Online harassment, gossip, or cyberbullying related to OCTA
 - Abuse of authority or power by directors, board members, staff, or volunteers
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4. Reporting Procedure

Anyone who experiences or witnesses bullying or harassment is encouraged to report the incident as soon as possible. Reports may be made to:

- The Production Manager
- Any Board Member
- The Board President

Reports may be made verbally or in writing. OCTA will make reasonable efforts to maintain confidentiality while conducting a thorough investigation.

5. Board Obligations and Responsibilities

The Board of Directors has a duty to respond promptly and appropriately to any report of bullying or harassment. Upon receiving a report, the Board must:

1. **Acknowledge the report** within a reasonable timeframe (typically within 7 days).
2. **Ensure the safety and well-being** of the affected individuals, including implementing temporary measures if necessary.
3. **Conduct an impartial investigation**, which may include interviews with involved parties and witnesses and review of relevant documentation.
4. **Maintain confidentiality** to the extent possible and protect against retaliation.
5. **Determine findings and corrective actions** based on the investigation, which may include warnings, mediation, training, removal from roles, suspension, or termination of participation.
6. **Document the process and outcomes** in board records while respecting privacy considerations.
7. **Communicate outcomes** to the reporting party and the accused, as appropriate and legally permissible.
8. **Implement preventive measures**, such as training, policy updates, or changes to procedures, to reduce future incidents.

Failure by the Board to act on reports may be considered a breach of fiduciary duty and organizational policy.

6. Consequences for Violations

Individuals found to have engaged in bullying or harassment may be subject to disciplinary action, including:

- Verbal or written warnings
- Required training or mediation
- Removal from a production or volunteer position
- Suspension or expulsion from OCTA activities
- Removal from board or leadership roles (subject to bylaws)

7. Protection Against Retaliation

OCTA strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports bullying or participates in an investigation. Retaliation will be treated as a separate policy violation and may result in disciplinary action.

8. Power Dynamics and Minors

OCTA recognizes the power imbalance that may exist between directors, choreographers, musical directors, stage managers, board members, and participants. Abuse of authority, coercion, favoritism, or retaliation is strictly prohibited.

For minors, OCTA will follow additional safeguards including parental communication, two-adult rule where feasible, and mandatory reporting obligations under Kansas law if abuse or neglect is suspected.

9. Training and Awareness

OCTA will provide periodic training and communication to board members, staff, volunteers, and participants regarding this policy and expectations for respectful conduct.

10. Policy Review and Adoption

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Board of Directors and updated as needed. Adoption of this policy does not replace applicable local, state, or federal laws.

11. Legal and Jurisdictional Considerations (Kansas)

This policy is intended to comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws, including Kansas and Johnson County nondiscrimination and harassment standards. This policy does not create a contract of employment or participation but establishes expectations for conduct within OCTA. OCTA reserves the right to take action consistent with its bylaws and governing documents.

12. Acknowledgment

All board members, staff, volunteers, and participants may be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of this policy.