

Sumter Little Theatre (SLT)

Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy

Board, Employee & Volunteer Handbook

Our Commitment

Sumter Little Theatre is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for everyone who works with or volunteers for SLT. We believe creativity thrives in spaces rooted in dignity, professionalism, and mutual respect.

Sexual harassment, discrimination, and retaliation are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

This policy applies to all SLT employees, volunteers, board members, contractors, artists, instructors, interns, and anyone participating in SLT-sponsored activities.

Where This Policy Applies

This policy applies to conduct that occurs:

- During rehearsals, performances, auditions, classes, and workshops
- At meetings, fundraising events, and social gatherings sponsored by SLT
- On SLT premises or at off-site locations
- Through email, phone calls, texts, social media, or other communications related to SLT

Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination

SLT is an equal opportunity organization. We do not discriminate based on any legally protected characteristic, including but not limited to:

- Race, color, or ethnicity
- National origin
- Sex, gender, gender identity, or gender expression
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Religion or creed
- Disability
- Genetic information
- Veteran or military status

All employment, volunteer, casting, training, and participation decisions are made without regard to these characteristics.

Sexual Harassment – What It Is

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that:

- Affects an individual's employment, volunteer role, or participation; or
- Interferes with work or creative activities; or

- Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment can be verbal, physical, visual, or written and may occur between individuals of any gender or position.

Examples (Not All-Inclusive)

- Unwelcome sexual advances or propositions
- Requests for sexual favors
- Sexual jokes, comments, or gestures
- Inappropriate touching, hugging, kissing, or blocking movement
- Comments about someone's body or appearance of a sexual nature
- Displaying or sharing sexually explicit or offensive materials
- Repeated unwanted messages, texts, or social media contact of a sexual nature

Other Prohibited Conduct

SLT also prohibits:

- Harassment based on any protected characteristic
- Bullying, intimidation, or abusive behavior
- Derogatory comments, slurs, or visual displays
- Retaliation against anyone who raises a concern or participates in an investigation

Reporting a Concern

If you experience or witness behavior that may violate this policy, you should report it as soon as possible.

You may report concerns to:

- The Executive Director
- The Board President or Vice President
- Any member of the Board of Directors

Reports may be made verbally or in writing. When possible, include details such as dates, times, individuals involved, witnesses, and a description of the unwanted conduct.

Policy violations can be reported when there is reasonable doubt. You do **not** need to be certain that a violation has occurred to make a report.

Confidentiality

SLT will make reasonable efforts to protect the confidentiality of all individuals involved. Information will be shared only on a need-to-know basis to address the concern and comply with legal obligations.

Investigation & Corrective Action

All reports will be taken seriously and addressed promptly and fairly. SLT will:

- Conduct an impartial investigation
- Provide all parties an opportunity to be heard
- Document findings and outcomes

If a violation is found, corrective action may include:

- Coaching, counseling, or additional training
- Verbal or written warnings
- Removal from a production, role, or volunteer position
- Suspension or termination of employment or affiliation with SLT

SLT may address reported concerns internally and, when appropriate or required, may also refer matters for investigation or corrective action by external parties. This may include consultation with legal counsel or referral to appropriate regulatory agencies or law enforcement authorities. SLT will cooperate fully with any external investigation.

No Retaliation

Retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports a concern or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Retaliation itself is a serious violation and may result in disciplinary action.

Your Responsibilities

All employees and volunteers are expected to:

- Treat others with professionalism, dignity, and respect
- Follow this policy and all SLT guidelines
- Speak up or report concerns when inappropriate behavior is observed or experienced

Those in leadership positions have an added responsibility to model appropriate behavior and act promptly when concerns arise.

Questions

If you have questions about this policy or need guidance, contact the Executive Director or a member of the Board of Directors.

Acknowledgment

All employees and volunteers are required to acknowledge that they have received, read, and understand this policy as part of the SLT Employee & Volunteer Handbook.

**Sumter Little Theatre
Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy
Board, Employee & Volunteer Acknowledgment**

I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Policy contained in the Sumter Little Theatre Employee & Volunteer Handbook.

I understand that compliance with this policy is a condition of my employment, volunteer service, or participation with Sumter Little Theatre. I agree to conduct myself in a manner consistent with the standards outlined in this policy and to report concerns or violations as required.

I understand that violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of my employment, volunteer role, or affiliation with Sumter Little Theatre.

I also understand that this policy does not create a contract of employment or guarantee continued employment or volunteer service.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Role (Board Member, Employee / Volunteer / Contractor / Other):

Date: _____

Approved by the Board of Directors

Sumter Little Theatre

Date: _____