

Pear People Policy

Updated 4/7/2019

Those of us who have worked at the Pear over the years are proud of our legacy as a warm, friendly, safe space where artists can work together harmoniously to create exciting, intelligent, imaginative theatre. We have instituted this Pear People Policy (PPP) to support and protect people who work at the Pear. Further, we have instituted a Concern Resolution Path (CRP) to assist our people when an issue does come up.

This policy statement is based in part on a document produced by notinourhouse.org, creator of the Chicago Theatre Standards, which were developed from the input from a large and experienced group of theatre producers and artists working together in the Chicago area. These standards are now used by many theatres nationwide.

The PPP is intended to clarify expectations within our environment in order to facilitate communication, respect, safety, and accountability. Our goal is to make this a safe space both in its physical environment and inter-personally. We actively support diversity. We all deserve to have an environment that is free of hazards, abuse, harassment and bullying.

The Process

This PPP involves a process that is shared and endorsed by, and for the benefit of, people working at the Pear, either regularly or in a single production. The Pear People Policy is here to:

- Identify, correct and avoid dangerous conditions or unsafe practices in the facility
- Resolve concerns before they get out of hand
- Inform people who work at the Pear about whom to speak to confidentially about any concerns
- Mentor and monitor those who violate boundaries. In theatre, as in any environment, people can be hurt physically or emotionally without there being a clear-cut person to blame. One goal of the PPP is to enable the theatre to mentor parties so they can learn from mistakes, wherever possible

To help us anticipate potential issues, it should be read, discussed and understood by:

- Pear board of directors and steering committee members
- Pear volunteers (including house managers)
- the director(s) of each production
- the actors, designers, stage managers and all those involved in each production

We ask people working at the Pear to respect and follow the processes described in this policy statement. Taking issues outside the reporting channels either in person or via social media damages the ability of the Pear to safeguard all involved and to resolve concerns peacefully.

Basic Health and Safety

At the Pear, we have endeavored to create spaces that are physically as safe as possible. We seek to prevent injuries, identify and remedy situations that might be considered unsafe or unhealthy, and respond to injuries and medical events, and seek medical attention when required.

The Pear provides:

- A smoke-free environment
- A clean and well-maintained rehearsal area with reasonable work temperature and lighting
- Three bathrooms, including a private one for cast members
- Functional fire extinguishers throughout, and suitably stocked first-aid and sewing kits in the dressing room
- State-required insurance (Workers' Comp) that covers on-site injuries to salaried employees and those receiving stipends for a given show; unpaid volunteers are not covered, however, and should make sure they have their own coverage
- Emergency procedures
- Glow-taping and other mitigations of areas of potential hazard

If unsafe conditions are discovered, they should be immediately reported to the stage manager (SM), who should keep a record of concerns and their resolution. The SM should also maintain Incident Reports about such communications (see Appendix).

If any of these health and safety protections is unsatisfactory, it should be reported to the SM.

Dressing Room Comfort

The space provided for actor preparation before a performance should be comfortable and respectful of everyone's needs. We have tried to create a clean dressing room environment where all inhabitants recognize these values and respect one another, their privacy, and their possessions. We ask that people using the Pear dressing rooms keep the following in mind:

- Reasonable accommodations should be made to respect individual modesty. An actor bathroom allows for individuals to change costumes in private, if so desired.
- Disruptive behavior in the dressing room by any party is inappropriate. If need be, actors can request intervention by the SM.
- Costumes need to be hung on the clothing rack when the performance is concluded
- Recordings/photography made in the dressing room will not be permitted without the prior consent of all individuals present.
- The preferences of all those sharing the dressing room should be respected, including those regarding the use of scents, hairspray, smelly foods, and loud noises (talking, music, etc.) and the sharing of reviews.
- Any concerns related to the dressing rooms should be resolved first among the actors, and if that is not feasible, according to the CRP, beginning with SM involvement.

Stage Combat and Other Choreographed Actions

The following should be provided/attended to whenever high-risk physical theatre takes place:

- Time and space for warm-ups
- Clean floors and other surfaces
- Padded/protected/glow-taped corners and hazards
- Cold packs available in refrigerator

The following safety procedures for stage combat will be observed:

- The SM shall inspect and maintain all weapons before each use and safely store them away from the public.
- A fight choreographer will be engaged for any production that includes weapons, hand-to-hand combat, violence, specialized movement techniques, or similar high-risk activity. This person will be engaged as early in the production process as possible and be included in production and design meetings whenever feasible. (This person may be the director or stage manager, with appropriate skills.)
- Adequate time should be given to teach, rehearse, and adjust all choreography or movement techniques.
- The actors, director, choreographer, and SM should agree to the requirements of the planned activity. Participants are then responsible for staying within those agreed-upon boundaries.
- Choreography may be recorded (in writing or on video, if appropriate) for reference in maintaining the choreography.
- Time should be set aside at the beginning of rehearsal and before performances to run through choreography. These calls are particularly important before running the show. Calls should be conducted in a distraction-free, appropriately lit space.
- Actors should communicate with the SM about any injury, discomfort, or fatigue experienced before, during, and after rehearsals.
- The director/choreographer and actors should agree on a safe word, such as “hold” to be used during difficulties.
- Regular rehearsal reports should be sent to the choreographer and should include notes if any adjustments need to be made to the choreography, or if any problems develop.

Sexual Content / Nudity

Sexual content and nudity onstage involve great personal risk on the part of the actors, who should be supported in taking that risk by a safe, comfortable and sensitive environment. We propose the following guidelines to achieve this goal:

- Sexual content or nudity should not be required or requested at any audition.
- Actors performing in the nude must be at least 18 years old, and should provide proof of age at the audition.
- Actors whose roles in a production involve SC/N should confirm their consent to such performances on accepting the role.
- Prior to rehearsing scenes with sexual content or nudity, the actors, director, choreographer, and SM should discuss the content and ensure consent for the rehearsal. Participants should discuss boundaries before rehearsing these scenes, and, as with stage combat, a “safe word” should be established.
- Initial rehearsals involving sexual content or nudity should be closed, with only those participants involved in the scene present. Rehearsals of these scenes should be opened only after agreement among the SM, director, and actors involved. The SM should be present at all such rehearsals.
- Actors performing nude scenes should be allowed to wear robes or other coverings when not rehearsing.
- The actors should determine the range of contact that is acceptable (e.g., anything but bikini area, kissing always with closed mouth, etc.). The boundaries may change over the rehearsal process with the actors’ agreement.
- Actors should have the option to decline to perform scenes involving sexual content and nudity if these scenes are added after audition disclosure.
- Nude actors should never be photographed or recorded on video at any time during rehearsal, tech, or performance.
- Nudity during technical rehearsals should be limited to those times when it is absolutely necessary. Backstage areas and dressing rooms should provide reasonable accommodations for modesty/privacy.
- The SM should resolve potential physical hazards for nude actors, such as splinters and rough edges of scenery.
- Actors should inform the SM and their scene partner(s) if they are sick (sore throat, cold sore, etc.), and alternate choreography should be defined for sick days.

Sexual and Other Discriminatory Harassment

We seek to recognize sexual harassment when it occurs in the theatre, provide procedures to prevent it, and outline remedies if it occurs. We recognize the potential for harassment in rehearsal, during performance, and outside the theatre.

According to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

It is unlawful to harass a person (an applicant or employee) because of that person's sex. Harassment can include "sexual harassment" or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.

Harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, however, and can include offensive remarks about a person's sex. For example, it is illegal to harass a woman by making offensive comments about women in general.

Both victim and the harasser can be either a woman or a man, and the victim and harasser can be the same sex.

Although the law doesn't prohibit simple teasing, offhand comments, or isolated incidents that are not very serious, harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in an adverse employment decision (such as the victim being fired or demoted).

The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or someone who is not an employee of the employer, such as a client or customer.

Discriminatory harassment in a broader sense includes, but is not limited to:

- Inappropriate or insulting remarks, gestures, jokes, or innuendoes or taunting about a person's gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or identity, racial or ethnic background, color, appearance, place of birth, citizenship, ancestry, creed, or ability
- Persistent unwanted questions or comments about an individual's private life outside the boundaries of consent established in rehearsal
- Posting or displaying items that may cause offense or embarrassment on prohibited grounds that are outside the parameters of the production. (This is apart from elements required in the production.)
- Comments or actions related to sex or gender outside the boundaries of consent or production content, which reasonably is expected to be unwelcome/unwanted, offensive, intimidating, hostile, or inappropriate. This includes any unwanted or inappropriate physical contact such as touching, kissing, massaging, patting, hugging, or pinching outside the boundaries of consent or production content.

- Negative stereotyping of race, gender, gender identity, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, ability, or other status protected by law outside the boundaries of consent or production content
- Inappropriate comments about clothing, physical characteristics, or activities outside the boundaries of production content
- Requests or demands for sexual favors, especially those that include, or imply, promises of rewards for complying (e.g., job advancement opportunities) and/or threats of punishment for refusal outside the boundaries of production content
- Attempting to engage an actor to rehearse choreographed sexual content outside of scheduled rehearsals
- Repeated suggestions to take relationships of a sexual nature beyond the stage
- Improvising sexual content without expressed consent

A person does not have to be a direct target to be adversely affected by a negative environment. Concerns about harassment, safety, or a negative environment should be reported using the Concern Resolution Path, and all concerns should be treated with the utmost respect for the safety and well-being of all participants.

Gray Areas

We also acknowledge that there may be instances when one individual objects to certain behaviors as inappropriate while the other individual regards these as benign and normal. If the parties cannot come to a consensus, then moderation/intervention of the SM is warranted.

If the individual continues to be uncomfortable with such behavior, the other individual must respect his or her wishes by refraining from such activity going forward.

Violation of this policy is a serious matter that is grounds for the Board to terminate employment.

Workplace Intimidation / Bullying

The Pear Theatre must remain free from hostile or offensive behavior. Bullying, threats, intimidation, harassment, attempted or actual violence will not be tolerated.

Any act or threat of physical violence by or against any member of the company or other person is grounds for the Board to terminate employment.

Verbal hostility of an interpersonal nature not described above (that is, it is not sexual, racial, religious, etc.) is a less clear-cut matter. We understand that arguments ensue and tempers can flare in any situation. Individuals engaged in a verbal conflict need to respect one another's emotional state. If one party requests that the interaction stop or be postponed, the other person must comply immediately. If the other person persists, the SM is authorized to intervene. This activity should then be reported by the SM to the next level of the CRP.

Drugs/Alcohol

People involved at the Pear, both on and offstage, must work together mindfully and collaboratively. They are expected to behave professionally and respectfully with one another. Theatres can be challenging places. Being under the influence of judgment-impairing substances can contribute to physical accidents as well as clouded reasoning during conflict-prone interactions.

For these reasons when working or volunteering at the Pear Theatre, all members of the Company must remain fully free from any judgment-impairing substance. This includes volunteers and others serving concessions. We occasionally have designated social events where alcohol is served. At such events, people must drink responsibly.

Violation of this policy is a serious matter that is grounds for dismissal.

For the safety and welfare of all, offenses may be reported to the SM or through the CRP.

Concern Resolution Path (CRP)

The purpose of the Concern Resolution Path is to provide a documented communication pathway to address issues. The CRP is meant to guide people working at the Pear regarding what to do about problems and whom to communicate them to, and dispel the fear of reprisal for reporting issues of safety, harassment, bullying, or other concerns.

Copies of this CRP will be available in the dressing room, with a summary posted on a wall, as well as printed out in a binder in the dressing room.

An overview will be explained on the first day of rehearsal. It should be clearly communicated that we seek to resolve concerns early, before participants are put at risk.

The CRP lists the people who have been designated to respond to reported issues and work to resolve them. The CRP is structured hierarchically, starting with the individuals directly involved in the matter, and escalating through levels as necessary through Pear CRP members up to the board of directors:

Level One – We sincerely hope that most concerns can be resolved if the parties who are involved talk to each other, respectfully sharing challenges and concerns, thereby keeping the situation from escalating further.

Level Two – If the individuals cannot resolve the matter themselves, the stage manager (SM) and/or director of the production are tasked with respectful mediation of the concern. The SM/director should report details of the issue to Level Three, even if no further action is required. Either may write a brief account of the issue. If the SM or director is involved in the matter, the concern should go to the next level.

Level Three – The artistic director (AD) represents the next step in the CRP. If the artistic director is a party in the matter or otherwise cannot resolve the concern, it will be sent to the next level, with the AD's written statement. All concerns that rise to Level Three should be reported to Level Four, even if no action is required.

Level Four – The CRP committee is the next level for escalation. This committee consists of two long-term but non-board Pear veterans and one rotating member of the Pear board of directors. The committee should try to be the final arbiter in the process of resolving the concern. It will also write its own statement about the issue. All concerns rising to Level Four should be reported to Level Five, even if no further action is required. However, if further deliberation is necessary, the committee is the only entity empowered to forward the matter to the Pear board.

Level Five – The Pear board of directors is the final level for resolution of the concern. The Pear board will review any documents that have been produced. It may also ask for the chance to interview either or both of the parties involved.

Resolution measures can include, among other actions, the following:

- Inviting both parties involved in the matter (if appropriate) to present their respective points of view, either in-person or via written statements
- Writing a recommendation for mandatory action applying to the parties involved. This may include mentoring one or both parties
- In extreme cases, the board may terminate the party determined to be at fault

Participants may report their concerns in writing for recordkeeping purposes. Such files are to be kept confidential.

The CRP is a tool to help create communication pathways to prevent and resolve issues, **not to create divisions**. It is not intended to marginalize or punish participants for a mistake, a momentary outburst of temper, an argument, or a single, unrepeatable unintentional injury, etc.

If a complaint includes allegations of civil or criminal misconduct or liability, and so may require legal advice or action, please inform us. However, the Pear is not responsible for contacting or hiring a lawyer.

Unless the concern involves one or more individuals on the CRP level structure, it is the Pear's expectation that the individuals will aim to resolve their concerns and differences at the lowest possible level.

Suggested Conflict Avoidance Techniques

Take the High Road

Praise in public; criticize in private.

"I" Statements

The use of language that calls out the shortcomings of the offending party is rarely as effective as describing how their words or deeds affect your feelings. Example: "You're a bad person." vs "When this happened, ***I felt hurt.***"

Ouch and Oops

The following is an effective technique to signal whether you feel that someone has spoken inappropriately. If one person says something that another person finds hurtful or offensive, the other person says "Ouch!" This signals to the first person that he or she was out of line, and so the first person then says "Oops!" to indicate this recognition and regret. If someone realizes not in the moment but later on that the comment was an "Ouch," he or she can speak to the SM, who will then tactfully address the matter.

A single "Ouch"-worthy comment is not the sort of concern that we envision as a matter for the CRP. However, this issue could become greater and worthy of more attention if the first person persists in making such comments, despite knowing they evoked offended reactions.

Rehearsal and Performance Protocols

Audition Invitations and Notices

The PPP is meant to ensure the cordial and professional treatment of actors auditioning for a Pear production. The Pear believes in diversity and inclusion and promotes nontraditional casting defined as the casting of minority actors in roles where race, ethnicity, or gender is not germane. To this end, the following information will be included in audition notices and invitations:

- Open role(s) and roles for which the actor is called
- Role(s) that already have been cast
- Any role that depicts a character with a specifically stated disability
- When possible, the nature of the activity to be performed at the audition (i.e. prepared memorized monologues, cold or prepared scene readings, choreography, improvisation, etc.)
- Any potential instances of significant physical contact, stage combat, feats of physical daring, nudity, partial nudity, sexual content, or other reasonably-understood high-risk activities. We will not ask prospective participants to disrobe at an audition.
- Disclosure in the unlikely event that the audition will be recorded
- the names and contact information for the SM and Director
- The maximum timespan of the audition
- The date of callbacks (if feasible)

Actors who are invited to callbacks will be notified prior to the callback date. Actors who attend callbacks will be informed of their status in a timely manner.

Prospective participants may decline audition invitations or casting offers without fear of losing future opportunities, and will not be asked to explain their reason.

The First Rehearsal

The PPP will be briefly explained to the actors, designers, and other personnel working on a production at the first rehearsal. They will be told that the Pear has a CRP that allows people to have their concerns addressed in a safe and respectful way.

If there are high-risk elements in the production (e.g., unique set safety, sexual content, combat, challenging movement, nudity) company members will be informed that safety measures are part of the planning process.

Stage Manager and Director Responsibilities

The stage manager is traditionally the main conduit between the elements of a production, particularly between actors and directors. The SM and director for each production will read and be familiar with the PPP, and know the CRP structure and follow it.

The Pear expects the SM to generate and submit an Incident Report for any accident, serious illness, or crime during any rehearsal or performance (including those involving audience members), as well as any CRP to the director or the next appropriate tier on the CRP. These should be included in the rehearsal / Performance Report.

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