



STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE AIT COMMUNITY

American Improv Theatre (“AIT”) was formed to create and grow a community of improvisers in the Bay Area. In order to grow and thrive as a theater and community, we must build a foundation of support, respect, and trust. AIT is firmly committed to providing a safe and respectful place for people to be free to learn and create.

The following Standards of Conduct establish our firm expectations of AIT’s staff, volunteers, students, instructors, and performers in order to protect everybody in our community:

AMERICAN IMPROV THEATRE DOES NOT TOLERATE DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, OR SEXUAL HARASSMENT.

AIT is committed to providing theatrical, educational, and social environments that ensure the equality, dignity, and respect of every AIT student, instructor, staff member, and performer. In keeping with this commitment, **AIT strictly prohibits discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, national origin, disability, veteran or military status, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local laws.** Additionally, we reserve the right to refuse service to anyone.

HARASSMENT & SEXUAL HARASSMENT DEFINED

Harassment means unwelcome written, verbal, or physical conduct that has the purpose or effect of interfering with a person’s ability to participate in or benefit from activities at AIT or makes AIT feel like an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Sexual Harassment means unwelcome written, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature (including but not limited to unwelcome sexual advances and requests for sexual favors) that has the purpose or effect of interfering with a person’s ability to participate in or benefit from activities at AIT or makes AIT an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Sexual Harassment can be verbal (using language of an overtly sexual nature, making sexual comments about a person’s body, making sexual innuendos to a fellow student, artist, or employee, talking or asking about sexual preferences or history, making unwanted advances), non-verbal (looking a person up and down in a suggestive fashion, giving unwanted personal gifts, displaying sexually suggestive visual materials, offensive jokes, gestures, comments, emails, or any social media messaging), or physical (unwanted touching of a person’s clothing, hair, or body, standing close or brushing against a person, giving unwanted massages.)

Sexual harassment also includes sexual assault. Nobody at AIT (management, staff, instructors, students, performers, etc.) may request or require anyone to submit to sexual harassment as a condition of receiving any benefit such as a raise, promotion, or being cast on a team.

Harassment & Sexual Harassment may be subtle, manipulative, and is not always evident. All forms of gender harassment are included. Sexual Harassment also includes sexual assault, which will be reported to authorities.

CONDUCT ON STAGE OR IN CLASSES

AIT is dedicated to providing an open environment where performers and students can create original material, using life experience as well as new ideas and concepts that are continually being explored. It is AIT's standard for all performers and students to approach their work with respect for fellow performers and students, both onstage and off. It is important for all to be comfortable, safe, and empowered to speak up if that is not the case.

Discrimination towards an individual performer/student or any group of people (i.e. race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, etc) is prohibited.

If a performer or student feels uncomfortable in a scene at any time, they should feel empowered to stop it at any time, whether in class, rehearsal, or on stage. AIT will not permit retaliation against a performer or student who makes such a report in good faith and/or participates in an investigation under this policy.

Additionally, it is expected that students, staff, performers, instructors, etc. will not teach or attend classes, participate in rehearsals, or perform on stage while the influence of alcohol or drugs.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Nothing in this policy shall attempt to stifle the freedom of expression we each enjoy, or the spirit of improvisational theater. AIT invites the creative exploration of content, including content dealing with race, gender, sexuality and other taboo subjects as long as it is done in a creative, intelligent manner without malice, hurtfulness, disrespect or mockery.

This being said, freedom of expression will not be considered as an excuse for words or actions that fall under the policies described herein.

REPORTING INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT

ANYBODY who believes they have received or observed inappropriate conduct should email the following:

Christopher Shurland, Esq. shurlandlaw@gmail.com

Upon notification at the above email address, a committee will investigate the allegations, including making private inquiries of all parties and witnesses to the alleged conduct. The committee will report its findings and recommend disciplinary actions, up to and including complete termination of the offending party's affiliation with AIT, as circumstances warrant.

AIT will not retaliate against any person for making a good faith report under this policy.

Making a good faith report in no way affects casting for AIT teams or placement in any position or team at AIT.

Any AIT instructor, staff, performer, or student who retaliates against another for utilizing in good faith the procedures in this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of their affiliation with AIT, as circumstances warrant.

Please note that if AIT learns that a crime has been committed, AIT may be obligated to report that crime to the relevant authorities. Similarly, AIT will comply with any requests for records or information made in connection with any police investigation as required by law, or with any subpoena issued lawfully in any legal proceeding.