



Code of Conduct

The Little Theatre of Alexandria (LTA) is a non-profit community theater based on an all volunteer organization dedicated to providing live entertainment and educational opportunities. Volunteering at LTA is a privilege, and all volunteers are subject to LTA's rules and procedures; specifically, our Code of Conduct outlined in this document.

LTA is committed to fostering a performing arts community where people can work and learn with physical and emotional safety, respect, dignity, freedom from abuse, and ensuring the highest ethical standards. LTA does not tolerate discrimination, bullying, or sexual harassment of anyone or by anyone.

Zero Tolerance for Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying

All employees, contractors, students, and volunteers – including all of those in Theatre leadership, actors, directors, producers, designers, stage crew, front of house and box office volunteers – are expected to value each other regardless of their gender, cultural background, religion, age, sexual orientation, race, national origin, or disability status.

Harassment and discrimination of any kind threatens the underlying safety of our theatre and diminishes our standing in the community. LTA is committed to fostering an atmosphere that is free of unlawful discrimination or harassment based on any protected characteristics.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to

- Invading another person's personal space (e.g., inappropriate/unwanted touch);
- Sending or displaying sexually explicit images, messages, or objects;
- Remarking on someone's appearance, dress, sexuality, or gender identity in a derogatory manner;
- Making comments, jokes, or gestures that humiliate or offend other volunteers;
- Engaging in bullying or threatening behavior (verbal or physical);
- *Quid pro quo* sexual harassment

Misuse of Authority

LTA does not condone any action taken by any person who could be seen as a wielding significant influence, power, or control within the Theatre—such as a producer, director, teacher, or board governor—that leverages their position to improperly influence someone they supervise, oversee, teach, or direct.

Stage Intimacy and Combat

When a production includes intimate contact, actors are expected to abide by the guidance of the director and/or intimacy coordinator. Directors and performers are expected to *go slow; check in verbally; ask permission; remain professional* as these scenes are rehearsed to ensure all participants remain comfortable and safe. Combat scenes should be staged by a trained fight choreographer, and involved in intimate scenes, by an Intimacy Choreographer. Experienced directors may be approved by the Safety Committee to stage such events.

Note: Possession of dangerous, unauthorized, or illegal materials such as explosives, real firearms, weapons, drugs, or other similar items are prohibited on LTA premises.

Minors

LTA takes its responsibility to protect minors participating in its productions and programs very seriously and will report the abuse of minors by adults to legal authorities as required by law. Romantic or sexual relationships between adult LTA participants with anyone under the age of eighteen are by definition abusive, illegal, and prohibited.

It is also LTA's policy to confidentially contact a minor's parent or guardian if we observe behavior or issues that might be of concern.

To ensure the safety of a minor (under the age of 18) while participating in a production, a background-checked chaperoning adult will be available during performances, rehearsals, and in dressing rooms. No adult (except with parental permission) will be alone with a minor behind closed doors. If an adult finds themselves alone with a minor, they are to go to an open area.

If an actor or crew member under 18 is involved in a production, all actors and Artistic Staff whose roles involve direct interaction with the minor will require a background check. This includes but is not limited to all producing and directing staff, SMs and ASMs, choreographers, costume, makeup, and hair staff. The producers will ensure appropriate background-checked chaperones are in place.

If a show has over five children, "wranglers" will be in place with background checks. If a production designer or crew lead recruits a crew member under the age of 18, then that designer or lead must have a background check. Crew members under 18 must work the schedule of the designer/crew lead or be in the presence of a background-checked artistic staff member at all times, ideally a producer, director, SM, or parent.

The Little Theatre of Alexandria's Code of Conduct

Making a Complaint

If you feel you have been unfairly or inappropriately treated, or if you witness behavior during your time at LTA that violates this policy, please notify your producer, director, any LTA Board member, or the LTA safety officers. All complaints will be handled with sensitivity and in a confidential manner.

If your complaint cannot be resolved by your director or producers, it will be escalated to the Safety Committee. The LTA Safety Committee is committed to undertaking prompt, thorough, objective, and good faith investigations of any complaints. In handling a complaint, the Committee will maintain confidentiality for all parties to the extent possible.

Consequences If Found in Violation of This Policy

Depending on the severity or magnitude of an infraction, LTA reserves the right to impose any of the following measures if an individual is found to be in violation of this Code of Conduct:

- Issue a written or verbal warning, receiving adequate assurance that the abuse will not recur.
- Suspend the individual's rights, privileges, and benefits within the Theatre for a specific period.
- Terminate membership and eliminating responsibilities and/or privileges of the offending individual.
- Notify law enforcement in instances of criminal behavior.

Retaliation

LTA prohibits any form of retaliation against anyone who issues a complaint under this policy. Any perceived retaliation—to include formal or informal “blackballing” or exclusion from events that are otherwise open to an individual—should be reported using the above procedures.

Volunteering in any capacity at LTA is a privilege. LTA leadership reserves the right to warn, report, remove, or take other appropriate action against anyone found to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy.

Points of Contact

The house manager or producer on duty is the point of contact for any volunteer or patron during a performance. The director(s), stage manager(s), and producer(s) are the primary points of contact during rehearsals and production work outside of rehearsals.

Safety officers:

Julie Fischer (Chair): (202) 471-0591
Kimberley Crago: (703) 475-6832
Ira Forstater: (703) 474-9589

Rachael Hubbard: (703)
615-7634
Frank Shutts: (202)
431-6239

