

# Themed Entertainment Association (TEA)

## Code of Conduct Policy (approved)

*effective January 1, 2022*

### **Purpose**

Opportunities for in-person networking are a core benefit of TEA membership. They are critical to how TEA helps bring together all facets of the community to learn, discover, discuss, network and celebrate.

### **Expected Behavior**

TEA is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, inclusive, and productive environment for all our Participants (attendees, volunteers, board members, sponsor representatives, venue/host employees and TEA staff members. TEA places a high value on teamwork and ethical conduct. As an organization, we follow the laws and regulations that govern us, and as a Participant, we expect you to do the same. Your conduct at meetings and events and your conduct connected to your affiliation with TEA is also a direct reflection of TEA. Because you represent us, the community's impression of you will often be their impression of our entire organization.

### **Unacceptable Behavior**

TEA has a strict policy against discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and unprofessional and disrespectful conduct of any type.

Our policy prohibiting harassment and unprofessional conduct apply to all persons involved in the operations of the organization. It covers harassment and unprofessional conduct of any Participant, or any person who has a business, service, or professional relationship with TEA.

Conduct prohibited by this policy is unacceptable in any organization-related setting, such as:

- During events and meetings
- During organization-related socializing
- While communicating with participants or third-parties in person, via email or other electronic medium (including social media), or via telephone
- While engaging with TEA's members-only intranet
- Any other organization-related setting

You are expected to meet and maintain our standards for behavior. Although there is no way to identify every possible violation of TEA's Code of Conduct, the following is a partial list of violations and examples of such:

- Harassment (both sexual and non-sexual), such as:
  - Making sexually suggestive comments, jokes, advances, or offering benefits in exchange for sexual favors
  - Posting, passing around or displaying sexually suggestive or obscene objects
  - Gender-based harassment including harassment by someone of the same sex as the victim

- Any abusive conduct that a reasonable person would find hostile, offensive, and unrelated to a Participant's legitimate organization interests
- Discrimination, such as:
  - Treating an individual differently based on their age, race, sexual orientation, disability, gender or other personal characteristics
  - Slurs, jokes, and comments based on the factors listed above
  - Behavior that results in unfair disadvantages based on the features listed above
- Retaliation, that includes:
  - Retaliation against an individual because they have complained about harassment, discrimination, retaliation, abusive conduct, or unprofessional behavior
  - Retaliation against an individual who has participated in an investigation based on a complaint regarding violations of TEA's Code of Conduct
  - Even if the original allegations are determined to be unfounded, if retaliation has occurred as a result of a complaint, appropriate corrective action will be taken
- Acts that are illegal based on the laws of the country in which the incident occurred
- Violence or threats of violence, such as:
  - Fighting
  - Throwing things
  - Horseplay
  - Practical jokes
- Weapons of any kind at meetings or live events
- Use of any controlled substance while engaged in organization-related activities
- Unprofessional conduct includes, but is not limited to:
  - Offensive, abusive, or vulgar language or materials
  - Bullying or intimidation
  - Engaging in acts of dishonesty, fraud, theft, or sabotage
  - Slanderous, or malicious acts
  - Any behavior that poses a safety, health, or security risk
  - While expressing your personal opinions, identifying yourself as representing TEA or its views, unless you are expressly authorized to do so by an organization official
- Refusal to comply with lawful instructions

### **Addressing Grievances**

Upon completing an investigation of the alleged violation, where warranted, appropriate corrective action will be taken to eliminate the unacceptable behavior and deter it from occurring in the future. Corrective action may include, but is not limited to:

- Official warnings
- Expulsion from the particular event or meeting
- Immediately ending any volunteer responsibilities and privileges the violator holds for that event or meeting
- Banning the violator from volunteering or participating in future events, either indefinitely or for a certain period of time
- Removing and banning the violator from membership in the organization

## **Complaint Procedure**

All Participants are responsible for creating and maintaining a positive environment. If you believe you have been a victim of or witnessed discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or unprofessional behavior, it is important that you take steps to address it immediately so that complaints can be promptly addressed.

If you are comfortable doing so, and you do not feel threatened in any way, talk to the person whose behavior is bothering you and ask the person to stop. If the behavior occurs at a TEA-sponsored event and you need help, report the behavior to the on-site event management staff or regional Board member who can be identified by their official TEA name badge, or to the venue security personnel. If you believe a crime has been committed, please contact local emergency services.

Regardless of whether you seek help at an event or not, it is **imperative** that you report any discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or unprofessional conduct through TEA's confidential electronic reporting system, as soon as possible after the incident. TEA prefers that you use the electronic reporting system because it is available 24/7 from anywhere globally. If, for some reason you cannot report the behavior using TEA's online incident reporting system, please call TEA's confidential U.S. toll-free telephone number: 1+800-225-7757. To maintain confidentiality for all parties, complaints must be reported either through the online reporting system or via the toll-free number. **Do not register complaints in any other forums.** You will be asked to provide as many details of the incident as possible, such as:

- Identifying information (name badge, appearance) of participant who violated the Code of Conduct
- The behavior that was in violation
- The location and approximate time of the behavior
- The circumstances surrounding the incident
- Other people involved or witnessing the incident
- Your desired outcome in reporting the incident

A prompt, thorough, and objective investigation of the complaint will be conducted by an impartial and qualified person. Documentation will be maintained to ensure reasonable progress. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved and, where necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge. Reasonable conclusions based on the evidence collected will be reached and the complaint will be closed in a timely manner.

If violations of the Code of Conduct Policy are found as a result of an investigation, TEA will administer appropriate corrective action as described in the "Consequences of violating TEA's Code of Conduct" section above.

## **Expectations of Confidentiality**

To the extent possible, the investigation of a complaint and any subsequent action taken in response to the complaint will proceed in an atmosphere of confidentiality. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action. Individuals who have raised complaints should immediately make a further complaint should the conduct reoccur.

The practice of confidentiality extends to the accused as well as to the complainant and any witnesses to the alleged violation. Complaints should not be shared in any forum other than through the official reporting mechanisms. Complainants are expected to report any alleged misconduct using TEA's confidential electronic reporting system or by telephone call to TEA's confidential reporting hotline. To protect the privacy of the complainant, and the accused, TEA expects that the information included in these reports will be kept confidential and not shared with any individuals not directly connected to the alleged incident.

**TEA's Scope of Authority**

TEA's authority to investigate and address alleged misconduct extends solely to its own meetings and events. TEA does not have the authority to receive nor act on complaints regarding other organizations' events in which TEA Participants do not have a direct involvement. Complaints outside of TEA's scope of authority should be addressed to the organization that is or has sponsored the meeting or event where the alleged misconduct took place.

**By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of Themed Entertainment Association's (TEA) Code of Conduct Policy. I also acknowledge that I have read and understand the contents and will abide by this policy.**

Signature:

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Print Name:

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