



# Riot Act, Inc. Theatre Standards

Based on Chicago Theatre Standards  
Adopted March 2020

## Table of Contents

<b>Declaration of Purpose</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Definitions</b> .....	<b>4-5</b>
<b>The Process</b> .....	<b>5-6</b>
<b>First Day Implementation Notes</b> .....	<b>6-7</b>
<b>Concern Resolution Path (CRP)</b> .....	<b>7-9</b>
The Goal .....	7
The Standard .....	7
What is a Concern Resolution Path? .....	7
Structure.....	8
Communication.....	8
Record Keeping.....	8
Legal Remedies.....	9
Implementation Notes .....	9
<b>The Role of the Stage Manager Regarding the TS</b> .....	<b>9-10</b>
The Goal .....	9
The Standard .....	9-10
Required Disclosures .....	10
<b>Non-Equity Deputy (NED)</b> .....	<b>10-11</b>
The Goal .....	10
The Standard .....	10-11
Roles and Responsibilities.....	10-11
Outside NED's scope.....	11
Implementation Notes .....	11
<b>THE STANDARDS</b> .....	<b>11-27</b>

<b>Auditions</b> .....	11-13
The Goal.....	11
The Standard.....	11-13
Audition Notices and Invitations .....	11
Auditions .....	11
Requires Disclosure.....	12
Explore it Further .....	12
Implementation Notes and Suggestions.....	13
<b>Agreements</b> .....	13
The Goal.....	13
The Standard.....	13
Requires Disclosure.....	13
Explore it Further .....	13
Implementation Notes .....	13
<b>Understudies</b> .....	14-15
The Goal.....	14
The Standard.....	14
Requires Disclosure.....	14
Explore it Further .....	14
Implementation Notes .....	14-15
<b>Basic Health and Safety</b> .....	15-16
The Goal.....	15
The Standard.....	15
Requires Disclosure.....	16
Explore it Further .....	16
<b>Audience and Front of House</b> .....	16-17
The Goal.....	16
The Standard.....	16-17
Pre-Production .....	16
Preview Performances .....	16
Performances.....	17
<b>Dressing Rooms</b> .....	17-18
The Goal.....	17
The Standard.....	17-18
Explore it Further .....	18

<b>Choreography: Nudity, Intimacy, Violence, Movement, and Physical Theatre</b> .....	18-23
The Goal.....	18
The Standard.....	18-20
Facilities .....	18-19
Equipment, Weapons, and Specialized Costumes .....	19
Preproduction and Auditions .....	19
Rehearsals.....	19-20
Performance .....	20
Specific Considerations - Stage Violence .....	21
The Goal .....	21
Implementation Notes .....	21
Specific Considerations – Intimacy and Nudity .....	21-23
The Goal .....	21
Preproduction and Auditions .....	21
Rehearsals.....	21-22
Technical Rehearsals (Tech).....	22
Performances.....	22
Consent.....	22
Requires Disclosure .....	23
Explore it Further.....	23
Specific Considerations – High-Risk Physical Theatre.....	23
The Goal .....	23
<b>Sexual Harassment</b> .....	23-26
The Goal.....	23
The Standard.....	24
Sexual Harassment in a Theatrical Workplace .....	24-26
<b>Diversity, Inclusion, and Representation</b> .....	26-27
The Goal.....	26
The Standard.....	26-27
Explore It Further.....	27
<b>Alcohol and Other Drugs</b> .....	27-28
The Goal.....	27
The Standard.....	28

## **Declaration of Purpose**

Arts environments require risk, courage, vulnerability, and investment of our physical, emotional and intellectual selves. Riot Act, Inc. has a history of authenticity and risk on our stages. We are proud of that legacy and seek to nurture spaces with strong safety nets that support that ethos without compromising a visceral and authentic experience for artists and audiences.

When creative environments are unsafe, both the artist and the art can be compromised. Spaces that prize “raw”, “violent”, and otherwise high-risk material can veer into unsafe territory if there are no procedures for prevention, communication, and response. Without these procedures, artists are afraid to respond to abusive or unsafe practices, particularly in a situation of power differential between the people involved. Artists worry that speaking out could ruin a show or harm their reputation, they do not want to let their colleagues down. When subjected to extreme abuse, they even sometime leave the artform behind, cutting their careers short. We believe that even in the absence of high-risk material, having protocols and procedures in place to prevent abuse, harassment, and coercion allow us to maintain work integrity, a safe and respectful environment, and ultimately allow everyone involved to bring their best work to the table.

This document seeks not to define artistry, prescribe how it is created or valued, or stand as a legal document. Its purpose is to create awareness and systems that respect and protect humans in art fostering safe places to do dangerous things. We seek to adopt similar standards created by theater practitioners in Chicago and throughout the nation. It is meant to be flexible and accommodate as many types and styles of theatre, organizations of diverse structures, budgets, and environments as possible.

The overriding tenets are communication, safety, respect, and accountability.

We seek to foster awareness of what artists should expect. By adopting these standards, Riot Act, Inc. states its intention to live and work by them and therefore create a safe and respectful artistic working environment.

## **Definitions**

**Actor** – A performer in a live theatrical production

**Casting Authority** – An individual or individuals who determine which actors are cast in a production.

**Participant** – Someone who is engaged by a producer to participate in, administer, or support making theatre. This includes actors, designers, directors, production staff, box office staff, board members, volunteers, donors, and anyone else involved in the work of the theatre.

**Production** – A Theatrical undertaking that results in one or more public performances.

**Producer** – The person or organization responsible for mounting a production.

**We/Our** – This document is designed to be administrated by producers. Sections are written from the prospective of the producer. For example, “We recognize our responsibility...”

**The Goal** – each standard will be introduced with a goal where a problem can be solved. Rather than creating a prescriptive action for every situation, a “goal” may be achieved in several different ways. The overarching “goal” is to create a participant-friendly space that values communication, safety, respect, and accountability.

**The Standard** – A general description of the collected suggestions of how to accomplish each goal. One might understand these as collected wisdom that is common practice in professional theatre spaces. These “suggested solutions” are geared for all budgets, size, performance venues, style, etc.

**Requires Disclosure** – Disclosure assists prospective participants to make informed decisions when accepting auditions and offers and know what to expect before they walk into the room for the first time. Disclosure also helps the producer assemble willing, able, and informed participants. If elements of the TS (Theater Standards) are not achievable (if a rehearsal is outside without access to drinking water, for example), conditions should be **disclosed** to all participants. Some standards have a “requires disclosure” section which serve to identify know elements that, if they cannot be provided, should be disclosed.

**Explore it Further** – This document seeks to suggest cost-free solutions. Suggestions that require money or other resources, appear in “explore it further” subsections.

## **The Process**

Adopting the Theater Standards (TS) is a process that engages every level from season-selection through strike. The process requires a balance where the TS is present without stifling creativity or causing participants to fee hesitant or distracted. One extreme would be filing the document away in a drawer and forgetting about it until a problem arises. The other extreme would be a policed environment in which the document becomes a tool for punishment or judgement. While each organization should strive to make the TS work in their own space, a few things to keep in mind:

1. The TS should be discussed at every level of the company, including company and board meetings. Everyone from the Board Chari to administrative staff to ensemble members to visiting participants should be encouraged to read the document, understand the company’s commitment to its adoption, and any responsibilities each participant may have.
2. The TS should be discussed as early as season selections meetings and pre-production meetings. Many problems can be avoided when safety issues are a regular part of pre-production discussions. For example, if a company cannot afford safe rigging, it should avoid plays that require aerial work. If a company cannot afford a fight or intimacy

choreographer, than plays with onstage violence and intimacy should be avoided. The TS is a tool for discussion to ensure that organizations that adopt it work within their financial means and expertise.

3. Prospective stage managers should be informed that this document is in place with enough time for them to review the document and discuss the additional procedures and responsibilities.
4. The casting authority has an important role to play and should be well versed in the TS, particularly the auditions section.
5. The TS requires a thorough discussion on the first day of rehearsal. This is when participants with no exposure to the TS will first encounter it. Taking time (suggested at least 30 minutes) to discuss the TS will increase the chances of successfully implementing the TS. Getting off on the right foot is essential to the process and the First Day Implementation Notes designed to help.
6. TS protocols throughout the rehearsal process, particularly for high-risk content.
7. Many elements of the TS come into play during tech. Taking the time to visit safety, privacy, and other TS elements helps prevent problems before they happen.
8. The TS offers suggestions for prevention and responses to issues throughout the run.
9. The company should be ready to address concerns. This document seeks to prevent some issues, but given the document encourages those with concerns to come forward, conflict resolution techniques are recommended to be incorporated into the way the company runs.

### **First Day Implementation Notes**

Creating a script for first rehearsals can make sure that all of the important points are covered. This script should be delivered by one or more representatives of the company (ie. the Artistic Director, Stage Manager, Director, assigned company member, etc.) See appendix for a First Rehearsal Script example including Oops/Ouch approach for handling issues when they arise.

Most important things to communicate at First Rehearsal:

1. Tell the company why you've chosen to adopt the TS.
2. Distribute the Concern Resolution Path (CRP)  
The CRP documents communication pathways for resolving concerns before they get out of hand, to inform participants who to talk to if issues arise, to avoid repeated unsafe practices, and to mentor those who violate boundaries. The CRP and Non-Equity Deputy are designed to provide confidential reporting channels that support and protect

everyone, including the person(s) that create a concern. *Gossiping with those outside the reporting channels or creating an atmosphere of “heroes and villains” can result in an inability to use the document to mentor and resolve issues peacefully. There are gray areas on stage. People can get hurt physically and/or emotionally without a “bad guy”. In every possible situation, the CRP should be used to mentor participants and nurture a positive and safe environment.*

3. Discuss the Non-Equity Deputy (NED)

The NED is a confidential liaison (reporting channel) between participants, the stage manager, and others on the CRP. The NED does not decide who’s right or wrong or even necessarily solve problems. The NED makes sure communication paths are open. The NED is selected by the participants of each production by the end of the first week of rehearsal and is, whenever possible, not an ensemble member or employee of the producer. More specifics are in the section dedicated to NED.

4. Point out the areas of the TS that are particularly pertinent to the production.

If there are high-risk elements in the production (sexual content, flights, nudity, etc.) suggest that the participants read those sections of the document in the interest of letting them know that safety protocols have been part of the production planning process.

5. Availability of the Theater Standards Document.

Participants will be emailed a copy of the TS. Additionally, a hard copy will be posted in Riot Act, Inc.’s studio and on the Riot Act, Inc. website. This is a public document that will be provided to anyone who requests to see it.

## **Concern Resolution Path (CRP)**

### **The Goal**

The goal of the CRP is to provide a documented communication pathway to address issues in a production or within an organization. The CRP seeks to inform participants what to do and who to address with serious issues and dispel the fear of reprisal for reporting issues of safety, harassment, or other serious concerns.

### **The Standard**

The CRP should be printed and distributed to all participants and discussed on the first day of rehearsal. They will also be posted on any online groups for the production and posted in the studio. It should be clearly communicated that the producer seeks to resolve concerns early, before participants or the production are put at risk and before the concern escalates.

### ***What is a concern resolution path?***

The CRP provides the names and contact information for members of the organization and production who have agreed to be responsive to reported issues and work to resolve them. It consists of:

- A written, clear, and transparently shared list of procedures for addressing a concern;

- A written, clear, and transparently shared list of people with whom a concern should be addressed;
- A commitment to give reported concerns priority and a reasonable timeline for resolution.

### **Structure**

#### Level One –

We recognize that many concerns can be resolved through conversation with the parties involved. Whenever possible participants should be encouraged to discuss challenges and concerns with one another. Sharing and hearing concerns with openness and respect can prevent situations from escalating further.

#### Level Two –

The following participants should be granted a certain level of authority and trust to determine whether a concern can be resolved at this level or if it needs to be escalated to the next level. All concerns should be reported to Level Three, even if no action is required.

- Non-Equity Deputy (NED)
- Stage Manager
- Production Manager
- Director

#### Level Three –

These participants should be considered the final level of the path, capable of resolving issues that have not been resolved prior to reaching this stage. They are strongly advised to consult with each other and review legal or other implications of any decision or action.

- Artistic Director
- Managing and/or Executive Director
- Board Members

### **Communication**

- The CRP should be verbally explained and provided in writing at the first rehearsal (digitally and/or in print). It should include the name, title, and contact information for every individual on the CRP.
- A copy of the CRP should be posted or otherwise available in the rehearsal and performance spaces.
- Participants should be encouraged to report their concerns in writing for recordkeeping purposes.

### **Record Keeping**

The producer should maintain personnel files, which should include reported concerns. Such files are to be kept confidential and accessible only to the individual(s) responsible for maintaining the files.

### **Legal Remedies**

- In the event of civil or criminal misconduct or liability, the TS are not a replacement for legal advice or action, nor does it stand instead of any local, state, or federal law.
- A violation of civil rights can be reported to the Wyoming Attorney General - <http://ag.wyo.gov/contact-us>

### **Implementation Notes**

- Producers should compile a CRP with the names and contact information of all individuals who will serve on the path for each production.
- The CRP is a tool to help create communication pathways to prevent and resolve issues, not create divisions. The that end, nothing in the TS encourages firing or marginalizing participants for mistakes, a momentary loss of temper, and argument (whether artistic or personal), a single unintentional injury, etc. The CRP is designed to provide pathways to respond to events, behavior, and conditions that create reasonably understood *unsafe* conditions, not *uncomfortable* situations. The function and goal of the CRP should be discussed at the first rehearsal.
- Some of the individuals on the CRP will change with each production, and it should be updated for each production.
- All individuals listed on the CRP should understand their role in resolving concerns, the process for recording concerns, and the process for reporting those concerns to others on the path.
- Creating and using a Concern Resolution Path (CRP) can assist with recordkeeping.
- The individuals listed on the CRP should be provided with resources and/or training in conflict resolution.

## **The Role of the Stage Manager Regarding the TS**

### **The Goal**

The Stage Manager (SM) is traditionally the primary communication conduit between participants and producers as well as between actors and directors; playing a crucial role in executing the TS. The goal of this standard is to respect that the additional responsibilities of the SM compliment the expertise and authority of the SM as a leader and advocate throughout the production.

### **The Standard**

The Stage Manager's responsibilities regarding the TS are:

- Read and be familiar with the TS.
- Know and follow the published CRP.
- Ensure that consent is discussed before scenes of sexual content and/or nudity. Document applicable specifics.

- Document all choreography, including sexual content. The SM should be present for all rehearsals where choreography is rehearsed.
- Allow for the selection of the Non-Equity Deputy (NED) during the first week of rehearsal and include the NED in the safety walk on the first day of tech before actors take the stage.
- Work with and communicate with the NED, particularly regarding any raised concern(s).

### **Required Disclosures**

- SM(s) should be told that TS have been adopted before they commit to a production.
- SM(s) should have access to the script, or known scope of a production, before they agree to participate.

## **Non-Equity Deputy (NED)**

### **The Goal**

The goal of the Non-Equity Deputy (NED) is to create a confidential and per-level liaison and reporting channel between participants and producers. Communicating concerns can be challenging. Participants may have long-standing relationships, aspirations for future collaboration, and/or fear of being labeled as “difficult”. Any of these may dissuade a participant from voicing a concern. The NED can help alleviate this tension.

### **The Standard**

The NED was inspired by Actors’ Equity’s “Equity Deputy”. However, the NED does not report to any outside regulatory body, as the TS is a tool for self-regulation. The NED navigate the TS for participants over the course of a single production; can serve as a reporting channel for an individual participant or an acting company when confidentiality is required or requested, and may serve (alongside the SM) as a first contact when a concern cannot be resolved by and individual.

### ***Role and Responsibilities of the NED***

- Become familiar with the TS, CRP, and any related policies and procedures provided by the producer.
- Help familiarize others with the TS, CRP, etc.
- Provide contact information and availability for consultation outside of rehearsal/performance space/hours.
- Serve as a liaison between cast, crew, SM, and producer for issues brought to the attention by participants.
- Protect anonymity whenever possible.
- Report concerns, both their own and those reported by fellow participants, using the CRP, and communicate resolutions of concerns to fellow participants as appropriate.
- Respond to concerns as quickly as possible (within 24hours whenever possible).
- Shadow the SM on the safety walk-through (see Basic Health and Safety Standard).
- Commit with integrity and empathy to prioritize the safety and wellbeing of participants and discourage efforts (intentional or otherwise) to us the TS to divide or create an atmosphere of “heroes and villains”.

- Engage the CRP if the SM is unable, unwilling, or is the individual of concern.
- Understand that the role is not to solve problems or act in a judiciary role, but serve as a confidential reporting channel and liaison.
- Understand the role is one of service and not a position of power or status.

### ***Outside of the NED's scope***

- The NED should not override the traditional roles of the SM, director, or any other member of the organization.
- The NED should never create divisions or marginalize participants.

### **Implementation Notes (how to select a NED)**

- Each producer should establish a process for selecting a NED. For example, this might include a nominating process with secret ballot at the first rehearsal or shortly thereafter.
- If a “getting acquainted” period is necessary (where participants don’t know one another), a NED may be chosen by the end of the first 7 rehearsals.

## **THE STANDARDS**

### **Auditions**

#### **The Goal**

To help prospective participants make informed decisions about proposed productions’ requirements and expectations. We seek to communicate what we expect of our participants and what those participants may expect of us. For the purpose of this section, “Auditions” include interviews, readings, presentations of prepared pieces, improvisation, singing, movement, or similar activities involved in a casting process.

#### **The Standard**

##### ***Audition Notices and Invitations***

We intend to include the following information in audition notices and invitations:

- Role(s) for which the actor has been called and role(s) that have already been cast
- Any role that depicts a character with a specifically stated disability
- The nature of the activity to be performed at the audition (i.e. sides from the play, choreography, improvisation, monologue, etc.)
- Any potential stage combat or staged intimacy or other reasonably-understood high-risk activities
- An assertion that prospective participants can decline auditions or roles without fear of losing future audition invitations and will not be required to explain reasons for declining.
- Discloser if the audition will be recorded
- The names of the director, casing authority, and producer

### **Auditions**

- We intend to provide a safe space for auditioning including:
  - Smoke-free environment
  - A reasonably clean space with sufficient lighting and a safe temperature
  - Safe surfaces for dance and/or fight calls, if applicable
- We will not ask prospective participants to attend more than three (3) audition calls for a single production.
- Audition calls should be no longer than three (3) hours and should not run later than 10pm
- Required materials including scripts and sides will be provided at the audition.
- We will not ask prospective participants to perform violence or intimate contact as part of the audition without disclosing this expectation as part of the audition notice/invitation
- Physical contact required for an audition should be disclosed and choreographed. Actors will not be asked to improvise violent or intimate contact
- Prospective participants will never be asked to disrobe in an audition. (see Sexual Content and Nudity standard.)
- The casting authority will confirm with prospective participants that they have reviewed supplied materials and are aware of requirements as outlined in the audition notice/invitation.
- Auditions should not be recorded unless specified in the notice/invitation. If recordings are made, there will be written assurance that the recording will be used privately among casting authorities and destroyed/deleted after the completion of casting.
- We will endeavor to make reasonable accommodations to facilitate access such as allowing interpreters, holding auditions in accessible facilities, and providing audition materials in advance to artists with disabilities.
- Disclosers will be clearly posted at all auditions and callbacks (see Sample Audition Disclosure Form)
- No fees to audition will be charged

### **Requires Disclosure**

- If scenes of violence, intimacy, or other choreography will be part of the production.
- If scenes of violence, intimacy, or other choreography will be part of the audition.
- Whether or not understudies will be engaged for the production
- Who will be in the audition room.
- If the audition will be recorded.
- If know, when callbacks are scheduled
- Basic dates for rehearsals and performances

### **Explore It Further**

- Provide the full script with an audition invitation.
- Provide names of the production's design team including choreographers.
- Any inclusivity police will be provided with audition notices/invitations.
- Once casting is complete, everyone who auditioned will be contacted, whether cast or not.

### **Implementation Notes and Suggestions**

- Create a template for audition notices/invitations, helping to ensure nothing important is forgotten.
- Have an Audition Discloser Form available and visible at all auditions to streamline communication and disclosure.
- Include those preparing audition forms in any pre-production meetings/conversations to share necessary information with plenty of time to prepare the forms with accurate information.

## **Agreements**

### **The Goal**

To create an understanding between participants and producers of what is expected throughout the production process in the beginning of the process.

### **The Standard**

We will post in the rehearsal room and provide each participant with a document outlining our mutual expectations for each production. These agreements do not imply that participants are employees but seek to provide information about the terms of the participant's role in the production.

### **Requires Disclosure**

Agreements should include, at minimum, the following disclosures:

- Compensation – the amount and payment schedule of any stipend, honorarium, or other compensation to the participant.
- Responsibilities – a general outline of the responsibilities of the participant
- Schedule – the basic schedule information (start date, rehearsal time of day, proposed hours per week, date/hours of tech, etc.) and the possibility of extensions and additions.

### **Explore It Further**

Having agreements reviewed by a labor attorney can help make sure that the agreements are as clear and comprehensive as possible.

### **Implementation Notes**

- A sample agreement is included in the appendix of this document.
- Producers may customize agreements, or use those they already have, provided they include the information described here and accurately convey the expectations and responsibilities of the participants.

## **Understudies**

### **The Goal**

Being an understudy is a tough job and can be made more difficult if the understudy is not kept in the loop throughout the production process. This standard seeks to provide ways to prepare, include, and inform understudies so they are ready to step in if necessary.

### **The Standard**

The following guidelines can help ensure understudies are effective and productive member of the production and given the opportunity to succeed.

- Understudies will have a written agreement detailing expectations and compensation.
- Understudies will be introduced to the NED and will have the CRP explained to them.

### **Requires Disclosure**

- If understudies will be engaged for the production, it will be disclosed during the audition process.
- Any special skills required (dialects, combat, intimacy, singing, etc.)
- What support the understudies will receive (i.e. work with choreographers, etc.)
- Which role(s) the understudy is expected to cover.
- General rehearsal schedule including when understudies are welcome into rehearsals and when they are expected at rehearsals.
- Whether a put-in rehearsal will be scheduled, if advance notice allows.
- Whether costumes will be provided or if the understudy will wear the same costume as the actor being covered or if the understudy must provide their own costume.
- If an actor leaves a production, whether the understudy will replace that actor or if the role will be recast.
- The complimentary ticket policy.
- The amount of any stipend, honorarium, or other compensation that will be provided.

### **Explore It Further**

- Have understudies shadow actors they will cover during a performance.
- Allow understudies to observe any rehearsal when special skills (dialects, choreography, etc.) are being taught.

### **Implementation Notes**

- Having understudies at the performance venue 30 minutes before each performance will ensure that they are always there when needed. Alternatively, being within a 30-minute travel radius on performance days give understudies more flexibility while still helping to protect the production.
- Provide a date by which understudies are expected to be off-book and performance ready. Have a policy for what happens if the understudy must go on before that date. Will they go on with script or will the performance be canceled?
- In the event a character has audio and/or video in production, (i.e. if a character leaves a voicemail, etc.), back-up recordings featuring the understudies will be made in case they must perform.

- If an archival video recording of the production is made, giving understudies access to the recording can help them prepare for performance.

## **Basic Health and Safety**

### **The Goal**

Performance-day problems are often preventable with careful planning, and we endeavor to create spaces and process for auditions, rehearsals, and performance that are as physically safe as possible.

### **The Standard**

We intend to make health and safety a regular topic at production meetings, and to maintain awareness and procedures that always contribute to a safe environment. We seek to prevent injuries, identify and remedy situations that may be considered unsafe or unhealthy, respond to injuries and medial events, and seek medial attention when required.

We strive to promote basic health and safety practices by providing the following.

- Access to restrooms including toilets, sinks, soap and towels or hand dryers
- Access to drinking water or disclosure of lack of availability
- A reasonable working temperature (avoiding inclement weather or unsafe temperatures outdoors)
- Lighting suitable for the work being done
- Reasonably clean and well-maintained rehearsal space
- Floors and in-building traffic routes that are free from undue obstructions and tripping hazards
- Functional, non-expired fire extinguishers
- A suitably stocked first-aid kit
- An insurance policy that covers on-site injuries
- A plan for costume maintenance and laundry

At first rehearsal and first tech day with actors, a safety walk with SM and NED should include the following.

- Fire exit locations
- Locations of first-aid kits
- Emergency procedures (including contact information for local police stations and the nearest hospital)
- Tripping or safety hazards in the rehearsal settings and constructed stage settings
- Locations of restrooms
- Scenic units, stage floor surfaces, special effects, etc.
- Areas of potential hazard that have or may require glow tape, including the opportunity for performers to point out where they need additional glow tape.

If unsafe conditions are discovered, they will be immediately reported to the SM who will keep a record of concerns and their resolution. The SM will also maintain accident, incident, and first-aid reports and a checklist of first rehearsal and first tech rehearsal walk-throughs.

### **Requires Discloser**

If any aspect of this Standard cannot be achieved because of the nature of the rehearsal or performance space, it will be disclosed to all prospective and active participants. For example, if a rehearsal or performance space is outdoors, participants should be notified in advance so they can wear appropriate shoes and clothing for the conditions. Another example, if a theater cannot supply, maintain, or launder costumes, that should be disclosed at the time of the audition.

### **Explore It Further**

- Rehearsal and performance spaces will comply with town and county building and fire codes.
- Staff within the organization should have first aid and CPR training
- Fire extinguishers will be regularly inspected by a professional
- If individuals are leading participants in physical warm-ups, yoga, or other physical activities, they should have certification or professional training to do so.

## **Audience and Front of House**

### **The Goal**

Audience members are active participants in live performances. In recognizing this, we seek to create an environment in which audiences and artists can collaborate and share a space in a way that is both safe or all involved and conducive to the theatrical experience designed by the production's creative team.

### **The Standard**

Productions are mounted in a wide range of venues, environments, and types of interaction with audiences. This standard defines them as:

- A **traditional audience environment** is understood to be a performance that takes place in a theatre where the audience space and the performance space are defined and primarily separate from one another. In traditional environment, actors are not typically expected to directly interact with the audience.
- A **non-traditional audience environment** includes, but is not limited to, site-specific theater, performances with direct audience interaction, promenade theatre, and performances where actors move through and/or interact with the audience.

### ***Preproduction***

The type of audience environment will be disclosed to the participants at the time of auditions or as soon as it is known.

### ***Preview Performances***

Nontraditional audience environments may require that special attention be paid to the preview process in order to create the desired audience interaction.

## **Performances**

To the extent feasible, without disturbing artistic integrity of a production, the nature of any audience interaction or other nontraditional audience environment will be communicated to audience members before the performance begins. This allows the audience to be willing participants in the production and can help to prevent unexpected audience behavior during performances. It will also allow audience members to make informed choices based on need and comfort level.

For all public performances, including previews, the producer should designate an individual to oversee the box office and front of house operations. This individual is expected to:

- Attend at least one run-through or tech rehearsal prior to the first performance
- Inform the SM of any audience conditions that may impact the performance.
- Conduct a pre-performance meeting with any and all ushers and front of house staff prior to every show to cover:
  - Building safety requirements and emergency plans
  - Audience configuration
  - Expectations of audience engagement
  - A prevention and response plan for frequent unacceptable audience behaviors (ie. Intoxication, inappropriate interactions with actors, distracting behavior, etc.)

## **Dressing Rooms**

### **The Goal**

Performers need time and space to prepare for performances. The space provided for preparation should be safe, respectful, and whenever possible, private.

### **The Standard**

Even in the smallest of spaces, privacy and concentration are important when preparing for performance. We endeavor to create a dressing room environment where all inhabitants recognize these values and participate in fostering a safe place for artists to prepare.

- Children under the age of 18 will be given private dressing room accommodations whenever possible.
- Reasonable accommodations will be made to respect individual modesty, and designated space will be provided for participants to change clothes and prepare for their performance. This space will be referred to as a dressing room, even if it's not an entire room.
- Non-actors (except for SM, Director, and wardrobe staff) will not be allowed in the dressing room 30 minutes before a performance begins and 30 minutes after the performance ends. In the event that is not possible, communication between the dressing room inhabitants and those who need to pass through is encouraged to establish the least intrusive way to share the space.
- Where costumes are used, a clothing rack and hangers will be provided.
- Recordings of any kind and posting any recordings or photos online will not be permitted in the dressing room without consent of all individuals present.

- Reasonable accommodations will be made to respect the preferences of all participants sharing the dressing room, particularly with regard to the discussion of review or who may be in the audience, etc.
- Inhabitants of the dressing rooms will respect the property and personhood of all fellow inhabitants by limiting their use of perfumes, smelly or messy food, and distracting behavior such as talking loudly on cellphones, playing music without consulting everyone else, wandering around naked, or similar activities.
- Any concerns related to the dressing rooms should be resolved (a) between its inhabitants, (b) with the consultation of the NED, or (c) according to the CRP.

### **Explore It Further**

- Dressing room space should accommodate a reasonable amount of participants' personal belongings.
- While it is always advisable to leave valuables at home, provisions will be made for a reasonable quality of "valuables" to be collected before and returned after each performance.
- Where separate dressing and restrooms are available for men and women, actors will be allowed to occupy the dressing room in accordance with their gender identification.

## **Choreography: Nudity, Intimacy, Violence, Movement, and Physical Theatre**

### **The Goal**

Some forms of theatre and styles of movement carry with them a greater risk of harm than others. The goal of this section is to outline considerations specific to these forms of high-risk theatre including onstage violence, intimacy, nudity, physical theatre, and other choreographed movement. These forms share many of the same considerations, while some considerations are form specific. The shared considerations also apply to other forms of physical theater including dance and other forms of choreography. This section serves as a guide for all of these forms.

### **The Standard**

In audition notices, auditions, offer discussions, agreements, understudy participation, rehearsals, tech, and performances, we intend to create a safe and respectful environment for all participants. We believe communication, safety, respect, accountability, artistic freedom, collaborative integrity, and personal discipline to be the cornerstones of this atmosphere.

### **Facilities**

The following will be provided in all rehearsal and performance spaces in which high-risk theatre takes place:

- First Aid Kit, including cold packs
- Accident report forms
- Water
- Telephone for emergencies (can be cell phones)
- Adequate on- and off- stage lighting

- Temperature control
- Ventilation
- Space for warm-ups
- Floors and surfaces that are clean, well maintained, and appropriate for the activity
- Padded and/or glow-taped corners and hazards
- Proof of liability insurance

### ***Equipment, Weapons, and Specialized Costumes***

All specialized equipment and costumes will be:

- Suitable for the required choreography
- If applicable, installed by a qualified rigger
- Inspected/maintained by a trained technician before each use
- Inspected by any actors who use the equipment before each use
- Handled only by those assigned to do so
- Stored properly and safely

### ***Preproduction and Auditions***

A designer or choreographer will be engaged for any production that includes weapons, hand-to-hand combat, sexual violence, specialized movement techniques, or similar high-risk activities.

- The designer/choreographer may or may not be the production's director or an actor in the production, so long as the role is clearly communicated to all participants.
- The designer/choreographer will be engaged as early in the production process as possible and be included in production and design meetings when feasible.

At the time of auditions, prospective participants will be notified:

- The nature of any specialized movement or physical theatre (i.e. weapons, physical combat, intimacy, tumbling, aerial acrobatics, dance, yoga, etc.) acknowledging that concepts may change.
- The name and professional experience of the designer/choreographer if possible.

At the time of auditions, prospective participants will be asked to provide accurate descriptions of their physical abilities, limitations, injuries, etc., as they relate to possible choreography.

### ***Rehearsals***

- The designer/choreographer will be introduced to the cast at the first rehearsal or as soon as possible.
- A schedule for rehearsing all choreography will be established and followed.
- Adequate time will be allocated for stretching and warm-up before all choreography rehearsals.
- Adequate time will be given to teach, rehearse, and adjust all choreography and/or movement.
- Adequate time will be allocated at the end of rehearsals for cooling down, asking questions, and/or voicing concerns.
- Before work starts, the actors, director, choreographer, and stage manager will agree to the requirements of the planned activity. Participants will conduct a boundaries check-in prior to each rehearsal and performance.

- Participants are responsible for staying within the agreed-upon boundaries. Any changes must have consent from all participants in the rehearsal.
- A choreography captain (usually a cast member with experience in the form of physicality) will be chosen to ensure that rehearsed choreography does not change unintentionally. The captain will be empowered to notify the stage manager, director, and/or designer/choreographer of any issues with the choreography.
- Choreography will be recorded (in writing or video) so that performers, directors, SM, and captains have a reference to maintain choreography.
- Time will be allocated at the beginning of each rehearsal and performance to run through all choreography. Calls will be conducted in a distraction-free appropriately lit space.
- Performers will communicate any injuries, discomfort, or fatigue experienced before, during, or after rehearsals.
- A 10-minute break will be provided for every 80-minutes of physical work.
- The director/choreographer and actors will agree on a vocabulary of safety (i.e. the work "button" could be used to abandon a movement mid-execution.)
- Regular rehearsal reports will be sent to the designer/choreographer and will include any notes regarding any adjustments that need to be made or if problems develop.
- A comfortable working temperature will be maintained in the rehearsal space. The nature of the choreography will be considered when establishing the temperature (i.e. warmer for nudity, colder for intense physical activity.)

### ***Performance***

- Choreography calls will occur before each performance and will take place in a focused environment free of distractions and interruptions.
- Performance reports will include designers/choreographers, noting any issues that arise and any actor injuries (related to choreography or not).
- Performers will have a communication plan with SM to report (on the day it occurs) any inappropriate or potentially unsafe changes in the choreography and/or use of equipment or weapons.
- A comfortable working temperature will be maintained in the performance space. The nature of the choreography will be considered when establishing the temperature (i.e. warmer for nudity, colder for intense physical activity.)
- The SM will check in with fight/intimacy captains before and after performances, confirming that choreography is maintained, and consent/boundaries have not been overlooked.
- Participants will conduct a boundaries check-in prior to each rehearsal and performance. Boundaries will always be respected unless consent is given for the boundaries to change.
- If any choreography is altered during a performance, actors will notify the SM and/or NED as soon as possible.

## **Specific Considerations – Violence**

### ***The Goal***

Onstage violence can be a shove, a slap, the use of weapons, elaborate fight sequences, sexual violence, and more. We believe performers should not routinely incur pain, bruises, or other injuries while enacting any violence. Our intention is to prepare for and mitigate the risks of onstage violence to create a safe environment in which to take artistic risks.

### ***Implementation Notes***

- It can be helpful to assign a fight captain, who is not involved but has experience in stage combat, so that the fight captain can observe the choreography from the outside.
- SM should have a good line of sight for any stage combat choreography to monitor and discuss any changes during the run of the show.

## **Specific Considerations – Intimacy and Nudity**

### ***The Goal***

Intimate/sexual content and nudity require careful consideration early in the season selection process. Artists in scenes with intimate/sexual content and/or nudity take great personal risk. Our goal is to allow them to take that risk in an environment that is safe, supportive, and comfortable as possible. Intimate/sexual content and/or nudity will only be included in a production when it can be done responsibly according to the following recommendations. We seek to replicate the conditions, detail, documentation, and accountability traditionally employed for stage combat for any scenes of intimate/sexual content and/or nudity.

### ***Preproduction and Auditions***

- Intimate/sexual content and/or nudity will not be required or requested at any audition.
- Actors performing in the nude must be at least 18 years old and will provide proof of age at the auditions.
- Actors who will be asked to perform intimate/sexual content and/or nudity as part of a production will sign a consent to performing intimate/sexual content and/or nudity at the time of the audition or first rehearsal.

### ***Rehearsals***

- Prior to rehearsing scenes with intimate/sexual content and/or nudity, the actors, director, choreographer, and stage manager, will discuss the content and create consent for the rehearsal. Participants will build consent and discuss boundaries before rehearsing scenes with intimate/sexual content and/or nudity. An exit word (i.e. “hold” or “button”) will be established for all rehearsals with intimate/sexual content and/or nudity.
- Initial intimate/sexual content and/or nudity rehearsals will be closed rehearsals with only participants involved in the scene present. Intimate/sexual content and/or nudity will only open to others following agreement by all participants involved in the scene. The SM will be present for all rehearsals where intimate/sexual content and/or nudity is rehearsed.

- SM will document the terms of consent and all details of intimate/sexual content and/or nudity.
- Actors performing nude scenes will be allowed to wear robes or other coverings when not rehearsing or performing. Coverings should be worn whenever actors are not performing or rehearsing (i.e. in dressing rooms, wings, etc. A dresser or crew person will be available to offer a covering such as a robe immediately when the nude actor exits the performance or rehearsal area.
- Actors will have the option to decline intimate/sexual content and/or nudity added after the audition disclosure.
- Nude actors will not be photographed or recorded on video at any time during rehearsal, tech, or performance without written consent. Any recordings of nudity will be kept for archival purposes only and will not be distributed publicly.

### ***Technical Rehearsals (Tech)***

- Nudity during technical rehearsals will be limited to times when it is absolutely necessary. Flesh colored clothing or a robed may be worn when nudity is not required.
- Technical rehearsals will be closed to visitors during scenes involving intimate/sexual content and/or nudity.
- The SM will remain vigilant in identifying and resolving potential physical hazards for nude actors, such as splinters and rough edges.

### ***Performances***

- Only participants whose presence is required will be present in the wings or any backstage area with view of the stage. Gawkers will be dispatched.

### ***Consent***

We believe that building consent among participants is an important part of creating an atmosphere of trust and communication. We intend to recognize the following practices when building consent among participants:

- A consent-building conversation/exercise will specify the range of contact that is acceptable (i.e. boundaries include general boundaries or no mouth kissing, etc.). General boundaries are defined as no fingertips or palms touching genitals, buttocks, nor female breast tissue. Consent will be established for every rehearsal and every performance.
- Boundaries and consent may change, either narrowing or broadening, but any boundary changes will be communicated before rehearsals and/or performances. Consent is always revocable and changeable.
- There will be opportunities to discuss potential boundary/consent violations at the end of each rehearsal and performance.
- The agreed structure of intimate contact will be maintained once a show is in production.
- Actors will inform the SM and their scene partner(s) if they are sick. Alternate choreography will be defined for sick days.

***Requires Disclosure***

- Intimate/sexual content and/or nudity will be disclosed in notices and invitations to auditions.
- Precast actors and/or hired designers will be advised of intimate/sexual content and/or nudity prior to accepting their roles.
- Designers will receive disclosure of intimate/sexual content and/or nudity and known design requirements.

***Explore it Further***

- When intimate/sexual choreography and/or nudity is required, prospective participants will be auditioned using non-sexual choreography to determine physical control.
- Discussions around sensitive requirements and how they will be handled will begin during pre-production.
- Intimacy designers and choreographers will be engaged for the production and included in pre-production.
- The producer will standardize communication and protocols with directors requiring intimate/sexual content and/or nudity.
- If a full script is available to prospective participants, language similar to the following should be included: “Please read the script carefully and confirm that you are comfortable working with this material. You are welcome to bring questions about consent to the audition process. Your level of comfort with the content of the script will not impact your casting consideration for future productions.”
- Robes will be provided and regularly laundered for all actors who will appear nude.
- Actors, directors, and choreographers will have equal status in devising scenes with intimate/sexual content and/or nudity.
- A time limit for rehearsing intimate/sexual content and/or nudity will be established and communicated to all participants.
- Backstage areas and dressing rooms will provide reasonable accommodations for modesty/privacy.

**Specific Considerations – High-Risk Physical Theatre****The Goal**

High-risk Physical Theatre uses performance techniques that carry with them greater chance of injury than traditional theatre practices. This includes but is not limited to acrobatics, tumbling, performing with silks or other equipment, performing on or in motorized set pieces, using weapons, and stage combat. This work will be undertaken with extra attention, equipment, and precautions required to do the work safely. Safety will be the number one concern.

**Sexual Harassment****The Goal**

We seek to understand sexual harassment as it pertains to theatre, provide procedures to prevent it, and outline recourse if/when it occurs. We recognize the potential for harassment in rehearsal, during performance, and outside the theatre among participants, staff, board, and

audience members. We acknowledge theatre environments can court confusion about the difference between chemistry, artistic freedom, and harassment. We believe participants can be bold and live “in the moment” of theatrical material while maintaining choreography, fellow participants’ safety, and agreed-upon boundaries.

### **The Standard**

Clear boundaries will be established and agreed upon among all participants involved in rehearsals, performance, classes and workshops, and other programming. Boundaries are particularly essential in scenes depicting violence, sex, intimacy, and/or abuse.

For reference, according to the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), sexual harassment is as follows:

It is unlawful to harass a person (an applicant or employee) because of that person’s sex [sic]. 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 [sic]. 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 [sic].

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 environments or when it results in an adverse employment decision (such as a 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.

The EEOC covers “employees” only, not contractors or volunteers. For that reason, the standard seeks to provide a definition of sexual harassment in the theatrical workplace for participants not covered by the EEOC laws and other regulations, and to provide an understanding of and sensitivity to the nuances of a theatrical workplace.

*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 identity, racial or ethnic background, color, place of birth, citizenship, ancestry, creed, or ability
- Persistent unwanted questions or comments about a participant’s private life outside the boundaries of consent established in rehearsal
- Posting or displaying materials, articles, graffiti, etc., which may cause humiliation, offense, or embarrassment on prohibited grounds that are outside the parameters of the

production. A production about pornography, violence, or racism may involve such images in the rehearsal space or a dramaturgy packet, but such images are inappropriate for open display in dressing rooms, bathrooms, or other similar places.

***Sexual Harassment in a theatrical workplace:***

In a theatrical context, harassment can be additionally defined as one or a series of comments or conduct of a gender-related or sexual nature outside the boundaries of consent of production content, which is known or ought reasonably be known to be unwelcome/unwanted, offensive, intimidating, hostile, or inappropriate. It is worth noting that the higher the emotional/sexual risk a production asks of its artists, the greater the diligence of each member of production and artistic staff is needed to foster an environment of emotional safety.

- Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to:
  - Unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendoes, or taunts about a person's body, attire, gender, or sexual orientation 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.
  - Any unwanted or inappropriate physical contact such as touching, kissing, massaging, patting, hugging, or pinching outside the boundaries of consent or production content.
  - Unwelcome inquiries or comments about a person's sex life or sexual preference outside the boundaries of consent or production content.
  - Leering, whistling, or other suggestive or insulting sounds outside the boundaries of consent or production content.
  - Inappropriate comments about clothing, physical characteristics, or activities outside the boundaries of consent or production content.
  - Posting or displaying materials, articles, or graffiti that is sexually oriented outside the boundaries of consent or production content
  - Requests or demands for sexual favors, especially those that include, or imply, promises of rewards for complying (i.e. job advancement) and/or threats of punishments for refusal (i.e. denial of job advancement or opportunities) outside the boundaries of consent or production content.
  - Attempting to engage in sexual behaviors offstage or outside the rehearsal area that are choreographed for the stage
  - Suggesting an actor who appears naked onstage or in rehearsal is not allowed physical boundaries and/or privacy backstage or in the dressing room and/or not respecting those boundaries
  - Intentional failure to observe the dressing room standards laid out in this document
  - Inviting an actor to rehearse sexual content outside of scheduled rehearsals
  - Repeated invitation/suggestion to take relationships of a sexual nature beyond the stage.
  - Using the text of a production that is sexual, violent, threatening, or offensive into offstage discourse.
  - Improvising sexual content without expressed consent.
- Participants have the right to be free from:
  - Sexual solicitation or advance made by a person in a position to confer, grant, or deny a benefit or advancement outside the production content

- Reprisal or threat of reprisal for the rejection of a sexual solicitation or advance where the reprisal is made by a person in a position to grant, confer, or deny a benefit or advancement outside production content.

Any of the behaviors outlined here have the potential to create a negative atmosphere for individuals or groups. It should be noted that a person does not have to be a direct target to be adversely affected by a negative environment. It is understood that creative atmospheres are not always “emotionally sanitary” – they can safely be bawdy, profane, vulgar, and challenging. We assert that having (a) a practice of building consent and (b) an environment that allows for response to clear boundary violations can broaden our opportunity to be challenging and fearless in our work.

Concerns about harassment, safety, or negative environment should be reported using the Concern Resolution Path (CRP), starting with level one whenever possible. All concerns will be treated with the utmost respect for the safety and well-being of all participants.

## **Diversity, Inclusion, and Representation**

### **The Goal**

Theatre engages the full spectrum of humanity. Telling the stories of complex human experience often includes representation of violence, racism, homophobia, abuse, and other challenging content. We seek an ethical atmosphere when engaging in this content, work with diverse groups of participants, and particularly when producing culturally sensitive work. These theatre standards do not dictate content, casting, design, or other production elements but seeks to create respectful, safe, and equitable environments.

### **The Standard**

We make the following commitments to all participants who work with us:

- When part of the planning or audition process, prospective participants have the right to make inquiries about how their cultural personhood will be used within the production, particularly when the work will be devised (when there is no script at the time of the audition). Inquiries will receive a thoughtful response and will remain confidential.
- Sometimes a potential participant discovers in the course of auditioning that they are uncomfortable with production elements as they relate to their personhood. Potential participants have the right to decline casting offers without fear of reprisal such as losing future opportunities. The participant need not disclose or explain why they chose to decline the offer.
- Whenever possible, diversity and inclusion will be considered both in casting and in assembling production design teams. In particular, culturally specific work will seek production personnel who can speak to that cultural experience.
- During the rehearsal process, participants should voice concern if they feel uncomfortable with the use of their cultural personhood, which may include:
  - Costume pieces that can reasonably be understood as culturally demeaning, which were not disclosed at audition/casting, and were not expected or explained in a reading of the script or other available materials.

- Staging (culturally based violence or abuse, as an example) which was not disclosed at the time of audition/casting
- Accents or dialects to underscore a cultural representation not disclosed at the time of audition/casting
- Make-up that can reasonable be described as “black face”, “brown face”, or similar portrayal not disclosed at the time of audition/casting
- When staging scenes of cultural violence, or other culturally charged narratives and language, we will follow the same practice of consent building outlined in the Specific Considerations – Intimacy and Nudity section of this Standard. This type of performance will be disclosed at the audition and the emotional risk associated will be recognized throughout the process.
- We seek to address concerns with generosity and humility through the channels of the CRP as outlined in this document.

### **Explore it Further**

Producers will seek opportunities to intern, mentor, include, and professionally engage participants of all color, abilities, and cultural backgrounds for all levels of the organization.

## **Alcohol and Other Drugs**

### **The Goal**

Riot Act, Inc seeks to create an environment which is safe to create and explore physically, emotionally, and intellectually within the realms of theatrical process. To that end, we hope to provide a drug-free, healthy, and safe environment. Sobriety during rehearsals, performance, classes, workshops, and other parts of the creative process is imperative.

### **The Standard**

We ask the following of all participants:

- All participants arrive to all rehearsals and performances and work in a appropriate mental and physical condition to participate in a satisfactory manner, free from alcohol and drugs.
- No participants will be allowed to possess, distribute, or sell illegal drugs while in the rehearsal, performance, or workspace.
- We will not dictate how participants spend their time or what they consume outside of the rehearsal and production process. We do ask that they make responsible choices which will not interfere with their ability to participate (i.e. do not drive drunk, avoid being arrested for drug possession, etc.).
- Respect other participants and their right to a sober participant partner(s) to create the safest atmosphere possible.
- Respect other participants personal decisions regarding alcohol and other drugs.
- Over the counter drugs, such as headache medicine or cold medication, may be used, possessed, or shared with other participants as needed.
- Legal use of prescribed medication is permitted as long as it does not impair the participant’s ability to work effectively and safely and does not endanger others.
- Participants are encouraged to report any concerns regarding alcohol and drugs to the SM, NED, director, or following the CRP.

Violations may lead to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination. Such violations may also have legal consequences and may be reported to legal authorities.