THEATRE DENTON
Volunteer Harassment and Misconduct Policy
Effective Date: October 13, 2026
Approved by: Theatre Denton Governing Board
Supersedes: Volunteer Harassment Policy approved January 10, 2023

1. Purpose
Theatre Denton is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and harassment-free environment for all persons participating in Theatre Denton activities. Therefore, Theatre Denton has zero tolerance for harassment, sexual harassment, threats, intimidation, violence, or other serious misconduct. At the same time, Theatre Denton is a community theatre organization and is not a law-enforcement agency or a professional investigative organization. Theatre Denton will not attempt to determine whether a person has committed a criminal offense. Allegations of criminal conduct should be addressed by the appropriate law-enforcement authorities. This policy establishes how Theatre Denton will respond to allegations while protecting the safety and dignity of everyone involved.

2. Scope
This policy applies to all Theatre Denton volunteers and participants, including board members, directors, producers, cast members, crew members, committee members, and event participants, while participating in Theatre Denton activities or representing Theatre Denton.

3. Prohibited Conduct
Harassment includes repeated or habitual behavior that causes distress, creates a reasonable concern for personal safety, or causes physical or emotional harm.
Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- threats or acts of violence;
- intimidating or threatening actions or statements;
- unwelcome physical contact;
- sexual harassment or sexual misconduct;
- excessive or abusive verbal conduct;
- slurs or discriminatory jokes;
- stalking or repeated unwanted contact;
- inappropriate conduct involving a minor;
- retaliation against a person who makes a complaint or participates in the handling of a complaint; and
- other conduct that materially interferes with a person's ability to safely participate in Theatre Denton activities.

A single incident may constitute prohibited conduct when the nature of the conduct warrants it. Harassment or misconduct does not require malicious intent. Theatre Denton will consider the effect of the conduct as well as the circumstances in which it occurred.

4. Reporting
A person who believes that this policy has been violated may report the matter to the Theatre Denton Managing Director or the Theatre Denton Governing Board Vice President for Diversity

and Inclusion. A report may be made verbally or online. Anonymous reports will be accepted. A person does not have to make a police report in order to make a complaint to Theatre Denton. However, when an allegation involves conduct that may constitute a criminal offense, Theatre Denton will encourage the reporting person to contact appropriate law-enforcement authorities. Nothing in this policy prevents or discourages any person from contacting law enforcement, emergency services, or other governmental authorities at any time.

5. Criminal Allegations

When Theatre Denton receives an allegation that may constitute a criminal offense, Theatre Denton will not attempt to determine whether a crime occurred or whether an individual is criminally responsible. Theatre Denton may advise the reporting person to contact law enforcement and, where appropriate, may itself contact law enforcement when required or reasonably necessary. Theatre Denton may cooperate with a law-enforcement investigation, subject to applicable law. Theatre Denton will rely upon the findings and determinations of appropriate law-enforcement or judicial authorities when making a final determination concerning alleged criminal conduct. A decision by law enforcement not to investigate, arrest, charge, or prosecute a person does not necessarily establish that the conduct did not violate Theatre Denton's non-criminal standards of conduct. Conversely, an allegation or arrest does not by itself establish that a Theatre Denton policy violation occurred.

6. Temporary Administrative Separation

When a serious allegation is made, Theatre Denton may determine that temporary separation of the individuals involved is necessary to protect participants, maintain a safe environment, or avoid interference with a law-enforcement investigation. Such separation may include temporarily removing one or more individuals from a production, rehearsal, committee, event, or other Theatre Denton activity. When circumstances warrant, Theatre Denton may temporarily remove both the reporting person and the person accused from the affected activity. Such temporary separation is an administrative safety measure and is not disciplinary action. It does not mean that Theatre Denton has determined that either person is responsible for misconduct. Theatre Denton will make reasonable efforts to structure any temporary separation so that a person who reports misconduct is not treated as though they have done something wrong or subjected to unnecessary disadvantage because they made a report.

Theatre Denton may modify or end temporary separation when circumstances change, when law enforcement advises that it is appropriate, or when the matter is otherwise resolved.

7. Theatre Denton Does Not Conduct Criminal Investigations

Theatre Denton recognizes that it does not have the expertise, authority, or resources to conduct criminal investigations. Accordingly, Theatre Denton will not undertake fact-finding for the purpose of determining criminal guilt or innocence. Theatre Denton may nevertheless take limited administrative steps that are reasonably necessary to:

- protect participants;
- prevent retaliation;
- maintain a safe production environment;
- prevent interference with a law-enforcement investigation;
- enforce ordinary Theatre Denton rules; or

- determine appropriate administrative arrangements while an outside investigation is pending.

These administrative actions are not a substitute for a criminal investigation.

8. Complaints That Do Not Involve Criminal Conduct

Not every violation of this policy constitutes a criminal offense. When a complaint concerns conduct that is inappropriate or violates Theatre Denton standards but does not appear to involve criminal conduct, Theatre Denton may address the matter administratively. Theatre Denton is not required to conduct a formal investigation of every complaint. Depending upon the circumstances, Theatre Denton may:

- address the conduct directly with the individuals involved;
- issue a warning or direction concerning future conduct;
- establish conditions for continued participation;
- change production assignments or schedules;
- require that individuals not communicate directly with one another except when necessary for Theatre Denton activities;
- remove an individual from a particular production or activity; or
- take other reasonable administrative action.

When the facts are disputed and Theatre Denton determines that it does not have the ability or resources to make a reliable determination, Theatre Denton may decline to make a factual finding and may instead take whatever prospective administrative measures it believes are necessary to maintain a safe and functional environment. Theatre Denton is not required to determine the accuracy of statements in every disputed complaint in order to take reasonable steps to protect participants.

9. Retaliation

Retaliation is prohibited. No person may retaliate against another person for:

- making a good-faith complaint;
- reporting suspected misconduct;
- contacting law enforcement;
- participating in the handling of a complaint; or
- providing information concerning an allegation.

A knowingly false report made for the purpose of harming another person is not protected by this provision and may itself constitute misconduct.

10. Confidentiality

Theatre Denton will make reasonable efforts to protect the privacy of individuals involved in a complaint. However, Theatre Denton cannot guarantee complete confidentiality. Information may need to be disclosed to persons who have a legitimate need to know, including individuals responsible for maintaining safety, administering a production, consulting with legal counsel, or cooperating with law enforcement.

11. No Determination of Criminal Guilt

Nothing in this policy authorizes Theatre Denton, its board members, directors, producers, or volunteers to determine that an individual is guilty of a criminal offense.

Questions of criminal responsibility are matters for law enforcement and the courts.

Theatre Denton retains the authority to determine whether an individual's conduct is consistent with Theatre Denton's standards for participation, subject to the limitations described in this policy.

12. Corrective Action

When Theatre Denton determines that a violation of this policy or other Theatre Denton rules has occurred, it may take corrective action appropriate to the circumstances.

Corrective action may include, but is not limited to:

- counseling or a warning;
- restrictions on participation;
- removal from a particular production or activity;
- suspension of participation privileges; or
- termination of the person's right to participate in Theatre Denton activities.

Theatre Denton will consider the seriousness of the conduct, the safety of participants, any applicable law-enforcement findings, and the person's compliance with Theatre Denton rules when determining appropriate action.

13. Minors

When an allegation involves a minor, Theatre Denton will comply with all applicable reporting requirements and will take immediate steps reasonably necessary to protect the minor.

Nothing in this policy limits or replaces any mandatory reporting obligation imposed by Texas law.

14. Annual Review

The Theatre Denton Governing Board will review this policy annually and revise it as necessary.

Adopted: October 13, 2026
Board President: Norm Pomerance
Managing Director: Mike Barrow