

Rocky Mountain Artists' Safety Alliance

Community Standards for Theatre

Working Document: August 2021

This document is authored by multiple representatives of Colorado performing arts companies, artists, and administrators who volunteered their time, experience and expertise in an attempt to develop a unified front and coalesced expectations of best practices for all those participating in theatrical work within the Rocky Mountain region. We began our process in 2018, taking cues from Chicago's Not In Our House movement, and we are grateful to Laura T. Fischer who joined our coalition in Boulder to launch our community's broader conversation. In the following years, a revolving group of individuals from throughout the community contributed to this document's formation, but we are especially grateful to Lia Kozatch who represented the Colorado Theatre Guild, and Amanda Berg Wilson who represented the Catamounts; both of these individuals were consistently engaged while we crafted the following document. Their input as we revised this document was invaluable.

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Declaration of Purpose

The Rocky Mountain Artists' Safety Alliance recognizes that in the US, live theatre production has been a space traditionally dominated by a white cultural identity group and, consequently, effort at establishing equality has been historically imbalanced, and the theatre industry's efforts in establishing equity have historically been characterized by words without supporting actions. The goal of this document and its practices is to shift the cultural identity attention from mere gestures of inclusion to a deeper understanding and recognition, and to create relationships with other identity groups outside of the established dominating white culture.

We recognize that theatre artists from non-dominant identity categories navigate the theatre industry and art form differently. An individual's Identity may be connected to any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture. It can be related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality, race, gender, history, language, temporary abledness, and sexuality, to name a few. We are committed to building relationships with groups outside of traditional white majority authority, to learn from each other and be transparent about the historical imbalance of power and advantage that can make creative environments unsafe.

We also recognize that individuals' boundaries may be rooted in physical, social, cultural, emotional, personal, or professional needs. Boundaries differ based on individuals and circumstances, and should be respected, even when they are not shared.

With this in mind, we recognize that when creative environments are unsafe for any individual or identity, both the artist and the art can become 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 when necessary, response. Too often, artists have been afraid to respond to abusive or unsafe practices, particularly where there is a power differential between the people involved. Artists have been afraid that speaking out will ruin a show or harm their reputations. We believe that having pathways for response to unsafe conditions and harassment help to maintain the integrity of the work, its participants, and the organization.

This document seeks not to define artistry, prescribe how art is created, value one kind of work over others, or stand as a legal document. It seeks rather to create awareness and systems that respect and protect the human in the art – to foster safe places and practices so that artists may safely endeavor to do dangerous things. It is the result of input from a large and experienced group of theatre producers and artists. It is meant to be flexible and to accommodate as many types and styles of theatre, organizations of diverse structures, budgets, and environments as possible.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is responsible for enforcing anti-discrimination laws, but many theatre participants are not covered by EEOC protections. Actors who work under an AEA contract enjoy limited protections and opportunities for registering complaints, but only if the participant is a member of the union and the issue is covered in the AEA rulebook. Moreover, certain kinds of conduct can be harmful even though they are not technically unlawful. We seek to foster awareness of what artists should expect, and what companies can strive to provide in their spaces, when EEOC and AEA do not apply.

The overriding tenets of this document are: communication, safety, respect, and accountability.

The practices outlined in this document are voluntary, cost-free, and not subject to enforcement by any outside body. Organizations that adopt this document, and participants who work with these organizations, endorse the intention to support safe environments by reading the document and following its procedures and protocols. All involved are encouraged to call attention to situations when these intentions are not being met by using the reporting channels herein.

Purpose of the CST:

The Community Standards for Theatre is a voluntary tool for self-governance that seeks to nurture communication, safety, respect, and accountability of participants at all levels of theatrical production. Its mission is to create:

- Spaces free of harassment. We define harassment as unwanted and/or inappropriate coercive verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual acts and behavior.
- Nurturing environments. We define nurturing environments as saturated with safety, trust, and accountability so that the environment imbues participants with the ability to feel supported in facing challenges, engaging with risk of mind and body, and establishing the freedom to create theatre that represents the full range of human experience.
- A common understanding of practices for theatre environments, including written, reproducible standards available at no cost.
- Peer support through mentorship and collaboration through online communication and community outreach.

Who is this document for?

Non-Union theatres: Non-union theatre companies were the inspiration for this document. They traditionally have the fewest regulations and support services. They are also where many theatre artists develop their craft and their professional ethics.

Union theatres: Those who work in Union theatres, particularly those that do not meet the EEOC's standard of a "workplace" are not protected by EEOC laws. The CTS is a tool for self-regulation that can allow small union theatres to assert professional expectations in their space

Large union theatres: While many large, institutionalized theatres have HR departments and are covered by EEOC law, this document seeks to provide procedural preventions of unsafe conditions, industry-specific discussion of sexual harassment and other elements that are not covered in the current AEA rulebook.

Theatre schools: Whether a college, a for-profit acting school, high school theatre club or other learning environment, these standards can help emerging artists learn what is expected of them, and what they can expect from potential environments they may engage in.

Parents: For parents who have children considering a career in the arts, these standards can support conversations about professional behavior, boundaries, and expectations. Too often when emerging artists find themselves in an abusive or otherwise environment, they have said "I didn't know who to talk to," or "I just thought that's the way things go." One intention of this document is to educate prospective arts participants of what a safe environment can look like.

Disclaimer

This document is a nonbinding set of principles. It reflects the current state of a continually evolving interest to establish standards in theatre spaces, particularly theatres that do not have human resource departments or other institutionalized mechanisms to prevent and respond to unsafe environments and harassment. This document is not an agreement or contractual document. It is not intended, either by its explicit language or by implication, to create any obligation or to confer any right. It is not intended to change any person's legal, employment, or contractual status or relationships. Rather, it is intended as a vehicle by which organizations can demonstrate their desire to apply standards, preventions, and resolution procedures that are identifiable, reproducible, uniform, and shared

among a wider theatre community. By indicating their endorsement of the CTS, organizations publicize the intention herein to existing and potential participants, rather than entering into a legally binding commitment. Notwithstanding the foregoing, nothing in the CTS should be construed to prevent a theatre company or producer from affirmatively incorporating the standards set forth here into their agreements or other legal documents and thereby to imbue some or all of these standards with legal force. This document is an on-going collaboration of a growing community of organizations interested in adopting it. It will continue to develop as more experience with the document develops.

How to Use This Document

The following sections seek to define terms created for this document, provide a timeline for how the document is used from season-selection through strike, share wisdom from companies that have piloted the document, and offer suggestions for how to get off on the right foot when introducing the document on the first day of rehearsal.

Definitions

Actor An individual who has been cast to perform in a live production.

Casting Authority The individual or individuals who determine which actors are cast in a production.

Diversity The process of welcoming, acknowledging, and celebrating all social and cultural identities within working spaces, communities, and creative endeavors.

Equity The pursuit of frameworks that allow all participants to be heard with impartiality and treated with fairness, while acknowledging hierarchies historically present in the theatrical production process.

Inclusion Action taken to establish and maintain thoughtful and reciprocal relationships with individuals, members of the creative team, and the community.

Participant Someone who is engaged by a producer to participate in the creation of a performance. This includes actors, choreographers, designers, directors, production staff, box office staff, board members, volunteers, donors, and anyone involved in the work of the theatre.

Production The conglomerate of efforts which result in one or more public performances.

Producer The person, company, or organization responsible for mounting a production.

We/Our Sections are written from the perspective of the producer. For example, "We recognize our responsibility to..." can be read as, "We, the producers, recognize our responsibility to..."

Terms Created for this Document

The following terms and their meanings are used within each Standard of this document.

The Goal: Each standard will be introduced with a goal; wherein a “creative problem” can be “solved.” Rather than creating a prescriptive action for every situation, a “goal” can be achieved in many different ways. The overarching goal is to create a participant-friendly space that values communication, safety, respect, and accountability.

Expectations: A list of collected suggestions that may assist in ensuring that the aforementioned goals are accomplished and maintained. These might be understood as collected wisdom, and most are common practice in professional theatre spaces, but we have taken care to include even the most commonly understood expectations for the benefit of those who are new to our industry, our community, or who are otherwise not as familiar with the workings of these spaces. These suggested solutions are geared for all budgets, size, performance venue, production style, etc.

Requires Disclosure: Disclosure assists prospective participants to make informed decisions when accepting auditions and offers, and helps participants physically, mentally, and emotionally prepare for circumstances by knowing what to expect before they walk into the room for the first time. Disclosure also helps the producer assemble willing, able, and informed participants. In the event that elements of the CTS 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 known elements that, if an organization cannot provide, should be disclosed. These items are not in the larger section as they might require money, or staff, and therefore do not meet the goal of the CTS to be usable for organizations of all budgets.

Explore it Further: In the interest of engaging producers at every budget level, this document seeks to suggest cost-free solutions. Suggestions that require money or other resources (sprung flooring, for example), appear in “Explore It Further” subsections.

Implementation Notes: During the Pilot Year, successful strategies for implementation were collected and are shared in these sections. It is understood that these sections may grow with more experience with CTS in spaces where it is used.

The Process

Adopting the CST is a process that engages every level of a producing organization from season selection through strike. This process requires a balance wherein the CST is present without stifling creativity or causing participants to feel hesitant or distracted. One extreme would be filing the document away in a drawer and forgetting about it until a problem comes up. The other extreme would be a policed environment in which the document becomes a tool for punishment or judgment. Each organization should strive to make the CST work in their own space. A few things to keep in mind:

- The CST should be discussed at every level of the company, including company and board meetings. Everyone from the Board Chair 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.

- The CST should be discussed as early as season selection 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 choreographer, then a play with onstage violence might not be in the cards. The CST is a tool for discussion to guide organizations in ensuring safety within their financial means and/or expertise.
- Prospective stage managers should be informed that this document is being used with enough time for them to review the document and discuss the additional procedures and responsibilities.
- The casting authority has an important role to play, and should be well versed in the document, particularly the audition section.
- The CST requires a thorough discussion on the first day of rehearsal. This is when participants with no exposure to the CST will first encounter it. Taking the time (a suggested minimum of 30 minutes) to discuss the CST in the first rehearsal will increase the chances of success with the CST. Getting off on the right foot is essential to this process and the First Day Implementation Notes is designed to help.
- CST protocols throughout the rehearsal process, particularly for high-risk content.
- Many elements of the CST come into play during tech. Taking the time to visit safety, privacy, and other CST elements helps to prevent problems before they happen.
- The CST offers suggestions for preventions and responses to issues throughout the run.
- Theatres should be ready to address concerns. This document seeks to prevent some issues, but given that the document encourages those with concerns to come forward, it's recommended that theatres avail themselves of conflict resolution techniques.

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 producing theatre. See the Appendix section of this document for a First Rehearsal Script example, including an Oops/Ouch approach for handling issues when they arise.

Here are some of the most important things to communicate at the First Rehearsal:

Tell the company why you've chosen to adopt the Community Standards for Theatre.

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 the Non-Equity Deputy are designed to provide confidential reporting channels that support and protect everyone, including the person/s that create 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 there being a "bad guy." In every possible situation, the CRP should be used to mentor participants, and nurture a positive and safe environment.

Discuss the Non Equity Deputy (NED).

The NED is a confidential liaison (reporting channel) between participants, the stage management team, and others on the CRP. The NED does not decide who's right and wrong, or even necessarily solve problems, but helps to ensure that 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 available in the section of this document dedicated to the NED.

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

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

*Producers are not asked to distribute hard-copies of the entire document, but please tell the company that they can read the document in its entirety online at www.rockymountainasa.org. (to be available shortly)

Concern Resolution Path (CRP)

The Goal

The CRP is not intended to dictate means of addressing all personal friction. Rather, the goal of the CRP is to provide a documented communication pathway to address physical and mental safety, harassment, or other serious concerns in a production or within an organization. The CRP seeks to inform participants what to do when they face serious issues, whom to address with such issues, and to put in place a framework that dispels the fear of reprisal for reporting issues of safety, harassment, or other serious concerns.

Expectations

The CRP should be printed and distributed to all participants and discussed on the first day of rehearsal. 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 (CRP)?

The CRP provides 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 persons with whom the 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 One concerns are characterized by interpersonal irritation, one-time infractions, potential misunderstandings, and disagreements.

Potential steps to be taken at Level One include:

- The individuals involved resolve the conflict themselves
- The individuals involved seek assistance from the NED, SM, or Director and are thereafter able to resolve the conflict

Level Two

Level Two concerns are those circumstances in which an individual's attempts to resolve the conflict was unsuccessful for any given reason, or circumstances in which unwanted behavior has been repeated. 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 sent to the next level. All concerns should be reported to Level Three, even if no action is required. At Level Two, an individual is expected to reach out to one of the following participants to seek assistance:

- Non-Equity Deputy
- Stage Manager
- Production Manager
- Director

At Level Two, a mentor relationship ought to be established to assist the parties involved in finding resolution. A Level Two-specified individual from the list above will help identify and contact potential mentors, establishing an agreement with the mentor to continue education, redirection, and check-ins with the individual who has instigated the concern. The mentor should report progress to the NED, who will document actions taken.

Level Three

Level Three concerns are characterized by their continuing nature or severity, and Level Three issues have already been attempted to be resolved at Levels One and Two. 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.

- Artistic Director
- Managing and/or Executive Director
- Other individuals legally responsible for the organization, including Board Members or equivalent

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 record keeping 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.

The NED should maintain a journal or notebook, recording all concerns brought to the NED. Each entry ought to include the date and approximate time at which the NED was contacted, names of the person(s) reporting the concern, names of all those involved, and actions taken thus far. These notes should not be shared with other cast or crew members aside from those to whom the NED reports at Level Two and Three. These notes ought to be shredded when the conflict is resolved, or maintained if legal remedies are pursued.

Legal Remedies

In the event of civil or criminal misconduct or liability, the CTS is not a replacement for legal advice or action, nor does it stand instead of any local, state or federal law.

Implementation Notes

Producers should create a flowchart outlining the names and contact information of all individuals who will serve on the path for each production so individuals feel competent and confident in following expected procedures in reporting violence, harassment, and safety concerns. Some of the individuals on the CRP will change with each production, and it should be updated for each production. Theatres may adapt the CRP to reflect their staffing structure.

The CRP is a tool to help create communication pathways to prevent and resolve issues, not create divisions. To that end, nothing in the CST encourages firing or marginalizing participants for mistakes, a momentary loss of temper, an 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.

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 CRP can assist with record-keeping.

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 Community Standards

The Goal

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

The Standard

The Stage Manager's responsibilities with regards to the CST are:

- Read and be familiar with the CST
- Know and follow the theatre's published CRP
- Ensure that consent is discussed before scenes of sexual content and nudity and document applicable specifics
 - Document all choreography, including sexual content. Stage Management must be present for all rehearsals when 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

Requires Disclosure

SMs should be told if an organization has adopted the CST before they commit to a production.

SMs 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 peer-level liaison/reporting channel between participants and the producer. Communicating concerns can be challenging. Participants often have long-standing relationships, aspirations for future collaboration, or a fear of being labeled “difficult.” Any of these might dissuade a participant from voicing a concern. The NED can help to alleviate this tension.

The Standard

The NED was inspired by Actors’ Equity’s “Equity Deputy,” but the NED does not report to any outside regulatory body. The NED navigates these standards and the CRP to assist 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 also serve (alongside the stage manager) as a first contact when a concern cannot be resolved by an individual.

Role and Responsibilities of the Non-Equity Deputy (NED):

- Become familiar with—and familiarize others with—the CST, CRP, and any related policies and procedures provided by the producer
- Provide contact information and availability for consultation outside of rehearsal/performance space/hours
- Serve as a liaison between the cast, crew, stage management, and producer for issues brought to attention by participants
- Protect anonymity whenever possible
- Report concerns, both their own and those reported by fellow participants, using the CRP, and communicate the resolution of such concerns to fellow participants as appropriate
- Respond to concerns as quickly as possible (ideally within 24 hours)
- Shadow the SM on the safety walk-through (see the Basic Health and Safety Standard)
- If working in an environment where temperature cannot be controlled, the NED should work with the SM to lead the cast and crew in coming to a consensus regarding the range of working environmental conditions
- The NED should clearly document all decisions regarding environmental expectations and weather-based guidelines for rehearsal and performance
- Commit with integrity and empathy to prioritize the safety and wellbeing of participants and discourage efforts (intentional or otherwise) to use the CTS 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 their role is not to solve problems or act in a judiciary role, but serve as a confidential reporting channel and liaison
- Understand that their role is one of service and not a position of power or status

Outside of the NED’s Scope

The NED should not override 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 week.

The NED is selected to establish a peer-level reporting process to interrupt potential power dynamics, and therefore can be any member of the acting ensemble or any non-actor not involved with administrative duties.

Auditions

The Goal

This section aims to clarify expectations for participants and producing entities alike. We seek to communicate industry expectations so that all artists and producers in our community can be unified in understanding and expectations, despite age, background, or level of experience and expertise. For the purpose of this section, auditions may constitute interviews, readings, presentations of prepared pieces, improvisation, singing, movement, or similar activities involved in a casting process.

Expectations:

Audition Notices and Invitations:

Because disclosure promotes a sense of safety, informed decision making, and emotional and physical preparation on behalf of participants, our community asks that all producing entities include the following information in all audition notices and invitations:

- Role(s) for which the actor is called, and role(s) that already have been cast
- Any role that depicts a character with a specifically stated disability
- Directorial decisions regarding roles which will be portrayed differently than suggested in the script, including the reasoning of implementation of stereotypes in performance
- The nature of the type of work for which participants are auditioning, including indications of the implementation of devising, immersive settings, audience contact, etc. within the scope of the project
- The nature of activities to be performed at the audition (i.e., sides from the play, choreography, improvisation, monologue, etc.)
- Specific disclosures of the nature of stage combat, feats of physical daring, nudity, partial nudity, sexual content, or other reasonably--understood high--risk activities participants will be asked to demonstrate during the audition
- An assertion that prospective participants can decline auditions without fear of losing future audition invitations
- Disclosure if the audition will be recorded, as well as details about the storage and sharing of said recordings

- Disclosure of the format of performance and archival; if the performance will be recorded, streamed, etc
- The names of the director, casting authority, choreographer, designers, producer(s), and other known members of the creative team with whom the participant will be expected to interact

Auditions:

We intend to provide a safe space for the audition, including:

- A smoke-free environment
- A reasonably clean space with sufficient lighting and safe temperature
- A safe surface for dance or fight calls, if applicable
- An absence of unasked-for and uncoordinated fight choreography, or intimacy
- 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 11pm
- Required materials (scripts and sides) should be provided at the audition
- For the safety of all participants, undisclosed and not previously choreographed intimacy, nudity, and violence will not be permitted during auditions
 - Furthermore, we will clearly state the expectation that participants do not initiate violent or sexual contact—or the simulation thereof—that has not been specifically requested and choreographed for the purposes of the audition
- We will not ask prospective participants to disrobe at an audition. (See the Sexual Content and Nudity standard)
- The casting authority should confirm with the prospective participant that they have reviewed the supplied materials and are aware of the requirements as outlined in the audition notice or invitation
- Auditions should not be recorded unless specified in the notice or 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 when necessary, holding auditions in accessible facilities, and providing audition materials in advance to artists with disabilities
- Disclosures should be clearly posted at all auditions and callbacks (See the Sample Audition Disclosure Form)
- We will not charge prospective participants a fee to audition
- Prospective participants may decline audition invitations or casting offers without fear of losing future opportunities, and will not be asked to explain their reason

Requires Disclosure

The following must be disclosed to participants ahead of the audition:

- If scenes of violence, sexual content, or other choreography will be a part of the audition
- Whether or not understudies will be engaged for the production
- Who is in the audition room
- If an audition will be recorded, how long recordings will be kept, how and with whom they will be shared, and when they will be deleted
- If known, when callbacks are scheduled

Explore It Further

The following practices are additionally recommended if possible:

- Provide the full script with audition invitation
- Provide the names of the production's design team, including choreographers
- If the producer has an inclusivity policy, it should be provided with audition notices or invitations
- Once casting is complete, producers should notify those who were called back, but who were not cast

Implementation Notes

Try creating a template email posting for audition notices and invitations. This will help ensure you don't forget anything important.

An Audition Disclosure Form visible at all auditions can streamline communication and disclosure.

Engage Casting Director in any meetings/conversations to share necessary information with enough time to prepare audition disclosures with accurate information.

Agreements

The Goal

To create an understanding between Participants and Producers of what is expected throughout the production process at the beginning of the process.

Expectations

We will provide each participant with a document outlining our requests, obligations, and 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 a minimum, the following disclosures:

- Compensation—the amount and payment schedule of any stipend, honorarium, or other compensation to participants
- Responsibilities—a general outline of the responsibilities of the participant
- Schedule—the basic schedule information (start date, whether the rehearsals will be the day or evening, proposed hours--per--week, dates/hours of tech) and the possibility of extensions
- Creative team will be notified of all post performance conversations as soon as possible, but no less than 1 week prior to the performance
- Photo call notifications should be no less than 1 week prior to performance
- Notification of extension of runs will be made no less than 1 week prior to original scheduled closing

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

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

The job of an understudy is tough, and the job 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 save the day.

The Standard

Engaging understudies is strongly encouraged. The following guidelines can help ensure that they are effective and productive members of the production, and given an opportunity to succeed:

- Understudies should have a written agreement detailing expectations regarding time commitments, responsibilities, and compensation
- Understudies should be introduced to the NED and should have the CRP explained to them
- Understudies should have ample time and opportunity to learn all required choreography and high-risk activities with which they may be asked to engage

Requires Disclosure

- If understudies will be engaged for the production (disclosed at auditions)
- Any special skills required (dialect, combat, singing, sexual content and nudity, etc.)
- What support the understudies will receive (work with dialect coach, choreographer/s, for example)
- Which role(s) the understudy is expected to cover
- General rehearsal schedule including (in a general sense) when understudies are welcome into rehearsals
 - Whether a put-in rehearsal will be scheduled, if advance notice allows
 - Whether costumes will be provided, or if the understudy wears the costumes of the actor being covered, or if the understudy is expected to supply their own costume
 - If an actor leaves a production, whether the understudy will replace that actor or 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 the actors they are covering during a performance.

Allow understudies to observe any rehearsals when special skills (dialects, choreography, etc.) are being taught.

Implementation Notes

Requiring understudies to be at the performance venue 30 minutes before each performance will ensure that they are always there when needed. Alternatively, being on call and within a 30-minute travel radius on performance days gives 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 has to go on before that date. Will they go on with a book or will the performance be cancelled?

In the event a character has audio and or/video in production, (If a character leaves a voicemail, for example), backup recordings featuring the understudies should be made in case they go on.

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

Basic Health and Safety

The Goal

With careful planning, we endeavor to create spaces and processes for auditions, rehearsals, and performances that are as physically, emotionally, and psychologically safe as possible.

The Standard

We intend to make health and safety a regular topic of conversation, and to maintain awareness and procedures that contribute to a safe environment at all times. This includes updating awareness of scientific developments and following all state/local health and safety standards. We seek to prevent, identify, and remedy situations that might be considered unsafe or unhealthy. Furthermore, we intend to respond to physical and emotional crises with appropriate attention and resources when required.

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

- Updated information regarding national, state, and local health and safety standards to all participants
- Toilets and sinks, with soap and towels or a hand dryer
- Access to clean drinking water or disclosure of lack of availability
- ADA compliance and willingness to provide accommodations for participants with specific health needs
- Compliance with all safety and health guidelines from local governance and accommodations for participants with specific health concerns
- A reasonable working temperature (avoiding inclement weather or unsafe temperatures outdoors)
- A reasonable working space including proper ventilation, to accommodate the specific needs of the production and the size of the participant group
- Lighting suitable for the work being carried out
- Transparency regarding duration and timing of work and break periods
- Reasonably clean and well-maintained rehearsal space
- Floors and traffic routes that are free from undue obstructions and tripping hazards
- Functional, non-expired fire extinguishers
- A suitably stocked first-aid kit, including personal protective equipment including gloves, masks, and sanitizing agents
- Transparency regarding insurance coverage for the space and for participants

- An insurance policy that covers on-site injuries
- A plan for maintenance and sanitation of costumes and props
- A plan for safety-minded set maintenance and upkeep

At the first rehearsal and first tech day with actors or upon changes in the safety circumstances, a safety walk with the SM and present company should include:

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

If unsafe conditions are discovered, they should be immediately reported to the stage manager, who should keep a record of concerns and their resolution. The SM should also maintain:

- Accident, incident, and first-aid reports
- A checklist of first rehearsal and first tech rehearsal walk-throughs

Requires Disclosure

If any aspect of this Standard cannot be achieved because of the nature of the rehearsal or performance space, it should be disclosed to all prospective participants prior to commitment, and changes in circumstances should be disclosed to all active participants as soon as possible.

Explore It Further

- Rehearsal and performance spaces should comply with the local jurisdiction's building, fire, and permit codes
- Staff within the organization should be trained in first aid and CPR
- Fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, and emergency lighting should be regularly inspected by a professional
- It is recommended that individuals leading yoga or other physical exercises should have certification or appropriate professional training to do so, and that other individuals leading warm-ups lead activities that they are appropriately prepared to facilitate

Sexual Harassment

The Goal

We seek to understand sexual harassment as it pertains to the theatre, provide procedures to prevent it, and outline recourse when it occurs. We recognize the potential for harassment in rehearsal, during performance, and outside the theatre among participants, staff, board, and audience members. While we acknowledge theatrical environments

can court confusion about the difference between chemistry, artistic freedom, and harassment, we firmly believe that participants can be bold and can live “in the moment” of theatrical material while maintaining choreography, fellow participants’ safety, and agreed upon boundaries.

The Standard

Clear boundaries should be established and agreed upon among all participants involved, both in rehearsals and performance, particularly in scenes depicting violence, sex, intimate contact, abuse, or gestures of intimacy.

- These boundaries may change, and should be re-established and re-clarified frequently.

For reference, according to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), sexual harassment is described 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.*

- Although the law doesn’t prohibit offhand comments or teasing, harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in an adverse employment decision (such as the victim being fired or demoted).
- Although the law describes harassment as aligning with a “person’s sex,” this document also applies to gender identity, sexual orientation, and all aspects of an individual’s personhood and lived experience, to include race and appearance (as in comments of fetishization).

Note: 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.

Note: The EEOC covers “employees” only, not contractors or volunteers. For that reason, this standard seeks to provide a definition for sexual harassment in the theatrical workplace for participants not covered by 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, 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 which may cause humiliation, offense, or embarrassment outside the parameters of the production. A production about pornography, violence, or racism may involve such images in the rehearsal space or in a dramaturgy packet, but such images are not appropriate for open display in dressing rooms, bathrooms, or other similar spaces**

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 or production content, which is known or ought reasonably to 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 staffs is needed to foster an environment of emotional safety.

Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to the following, when occurring outside of the scope of participants’ established boundaries of consent, the production’s dialogue and choreography, or production content:

- Unwelcome or inappropriate remarks, jokes, innuendoes, taunts, or suggestive/insulting sounds made in reference to a person’s body, physical characteristics, attire, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, or other aspects of their personal identity
- Stereotyping of race, gender, gender identity, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, ability, or other status protected by law
- Any unwanted or inappropriate physical contact such as touching, kissing, massaging, patting, hugging, or pinching
- Unwelcome inquiries, suggestions, or comments about a person’s sex life, personal life, sexuality, or sexual preferences

- Posting or displaying materials, articles, or graffiti that is sexually oriented
- Requests or demands for sexual favors, especially those that include, or imply, promises of rewards for complying (e.g., job advancement opportunities) and/or threats of punishment for refusal (e.g., denial of job advancement or opportunities)
 - Attempting to engage in sexual behaviors that are choreographed for the stage outside of established rehearsal and performance spaces
 - Suggesting an actor who appears naked onstage or in rehearsal is not allowed physical boundaries and/or privacy, and/or not respecting said boundaries and/or privacy
 - 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 in offstage discourse
 - Improvising sexual content without expressed consent

All participants have the right to be consistently free from repeated or unwanted sexual solicitations, especially those tied to benefits, advancements, rewards, reprisals, or threats to either personhood or profession.

Any of the behaviors outlined above have the potential to create a negative environment 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 practice of establishing and respecting personal boundaries of consent and maintaining an environment that facilitates responses to boundary violations can broaden our opportunity to be challenging and fearless in our work.

Concerns about harassment, safety, or a negative environment should be reported using the concern resolution path (starting with level one wherever possible), and all concerns should be treated with the utmost respect for the safety and well-being of all participants.

Audience and Front of House

The Goal

Audience members are active participants in live performance. In recognizing this, we seek to create an environment in which audiences and artists can collaborate and share a space that is both safe for all involved and conducive to the theatrical experience.

Expectation

We recognize that theatre takes place in a wide range of venues, environments, and types of audience and for purposes of this document we will define traditional audience environment and nontraditional audience environment.

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

- A traditional audience environment takes place in a venue where the audience space and the performance space are defined and primarily separate from one another. In a traditional audience environment, actors are not typically expected to directly interact with the audience.
- A nontraditional audience environment include—but is not limited to—site-specific theatre, performances with direct audience interaction, immersive theatre, and performances where the actors or audiences move throughout and/or interact with each other.

Pre-production: The type of audience environment should be disclosed during pre-production, at the time of audition, or as soon as determined.

Preview Performances: Preview performances for productions are strongly recommended.

- For safety purposes within nontraditional audience environments, additional attention and experimentation with playtesting and preview performances may be necessary.

Performances: To the extent feasible, without disturbing the artistic integrity of the production, the nature of any audience interaction or other nontraditional audience environment should 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 the performance. It will also allow audience members to make an informed choice based on their needs and comfort level.

Content Warnings: Physical and health triggers ought to be clearly disclosed (ex: strobe lights, fog, splatter zone and other sensory triggers).

Considering the emotional and mental safety of audience and participants, please carefully determine what thematic content warnings to include, and how to include them (ex: sexual assault, acts of violence, and other content triggers).

Front Of House Operations: For all public performances, including previews, the producer should designate at least one individual to oversee the box office and front of house operations. This individual should be expected to:

- Attend at least one run-through or technical rehearsal prior to the first audience.
- Inform the stage manager 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 (drunkenness, inappropriate interactions with actors, use of cell phones, talking during the performance, vaping, etc.).

Post Performances: Producer will communicate to audience when community conversations are scheduled to take place after performances.

Dressing Rooms

The Goal

Performers need time and space to prepare for their performance. The space provided for this preparation should be safe, respectful, and wherever possible, private.

The Standard

Even in the tiniest of spaces, privacy and concentration are important when preparing for performance. We will 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 should be given private dressing room accommodations whenever possible.

- Reasonable accommodations should be made to respect individual modesty, and designated space should 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 (with the exception of the SM and wardrobe staff) should not be allowed in the dressing room during the time between 30 minutes before the 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 should be provided.
- Recording by any means, and posting any recordings or photos online, should not be permitted in the dressing room without the prior consent of all individuals present.
- Reasonable accommodations should be made to respect the preferences of all participants sharing a dressing room, particularly with regard to the discussion of media reviews and/or who might be in the audience.
- Inhabitants of dressing rooms should respect the property and personhood of fellow inhabitants by limiting their use of perfumes, smelly or messy food, and behavior such as talking on cell phones, playing music (without consulting dressing room mates), or other 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 should be made for a reasonable quantity of "valuables" to be collected before and returned immediately after each performance. The SM will coordinate with the production team, venue, and producing entity to establish and communicate practices for storing valuables. The stage management team will follow the practices established by the venue and producing entity, but the SM is not personally responsible for ensuring the safety of items during performance.
- All efforts need to be made to provide dressing rooms that are in accordance with actor gender identification. Actors should be allowed to occupy the dressing room in accordance with their gender identification. Actor desires related to dressing rooms should be communicated openly ahead of time with Director, Costumer, and SM.

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion

The Goal

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

The Standard

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

- When invited to audition, prospective participants have the right to make inquiries about how their lived experience (personhood) will be used within the production, particularly when the work will be devised (when there is no script at the time of audition). Inquiries will receive a thoughtful response and will remain confidential aside from relevance to the specific production.

- 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. It is not the participant's responsibility to explain why they chose to decline an offer.
- Whenever possible, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion should be considered both in casting and in assembling production and design teams. In particular, work that explores a specific lived experience should seek production personnel who can speak to that experience.
- During the rehearsal process, participants should voice concern if they feel uncomfortable with the use of their lived experience (personhood?), which may include:
 - Costume pieces that can reasonably be understood as culturally demeaning, which were not disclosed at audition/casting, and could not have been expected by a reading of the script or otherwise available materials.
 - Staging (culturally based violence or abuse, for 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 auditions/casting.
 - Make-up that can reasonably be described as "black face," "brown face," "yellow face," "red face," or similar portrayal, which was not disclosed at the time of audition/casting.
 - Unrealistic expectations of any individual's body
- 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 Sexual Content and Nudity standard. Disclosure of this type of performance will be made 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 should seek opportunities to intern, mentor, include, and professionally engage participants of color and alternately abled bodies at all levels of their organization.

Choreography: Nudity, Violence, Movement

The Goal

The goal of this section is to outline considerations specific to forms of higher-risk and specialized performance, including but not limited to onstage violence, intimacy choreography and nudity, heightened movement, etc.

The Standard

Higher-risk performances require clear communication at all stages of the process, beginning with pre-production meetings and audition notices and continuing throughout final performance, strike, and post-mortem. In audition notices, auditions, offer discussions, agreements, understudy preparation, rehearsals, tech, and performances, we intend to create a safe and respectful atmosphere for all participants. We believe that communication, safety, respect, accountability, artistic freedom, collaborative integrity, and personal discipline are the cornerstones of effective production processes. These cornerstones should be present from the beginning to the end of the process.

Facilities:

As previously stated, the following should be provided in all rehearsals and performance spaces; especially those in which high-risk physical theatre takes place.

- First-aid kit, including cold packs
- Access to the producing entity's accident reporting system (whether paper or online)

- Water
- Telephone for emergencies
- Adequate on-and off-stage lighting
- Safe temperature range (refer to AEA standards for specifics)
- 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 should be:

- Suitable for the required choreography and movement
- Installed by a qualified rigger and/or appropriate professional
- Inspected and maintained by a trained technician before each use
- Inspected by any actors who use the equipment before each use
- Handled only by those required to do so

Preproduction and Auditions

- A movement specialist or choreographer should be engaged for any production that includes weapons, hand-to-hand combat, intimacy, intimate violence, specialized movement techniques, or any similar high-risk activity.
- The movement specialist should be engaged as early in the production process as possible and be included in production and design meetings whenever feasible.
- This movement specialist/choreographer may or may not be the production's director or an actor in the production, so long as the individual is qualified to fulfill this responsibility and their role is clearly communicated to all participants.
- For the safety of all participants, undisclosed and not previously choreographed intimacy, nudity, and violence will not be permitted during auditions.

At the time of audition, prospective participants should be notified about:

- The nature of any specialized movement or physical theatre (i.e. weapons, physical combat, intimate violence, tumbling, aerial acrobatics, dance, yoga, etc.) acknowledging that concepts may change;
- The name and professional experience of the movement specialist/choreographer if possible.
- Prospective participants should be provided the opportunity to identify reservations related to specific high-risk activities involved in this production, including but not limited to:
 - Staged intimacy
 - Staged violence
 - Onstage nudity

Prospective participants should be provided the opportunity to identify (not expected to explain in detail) their physical abilities, limitations, injuries, and/or personal safety concerns as they relate to the possible choreography.

Rehearsal

- The movement specialists and/or choreographers should be introduced to the cast at auditions, first rehearsal, or as soon thereafter as possible.
- The choreographer or movement specialist should provide clear warm-up expectations to be followed in their absence.
- A schedule for rehearsing all choreography should be established and followed.
- Adequate time, space, and guidance should be allocated for stretching and warming up individually and as an ensemble before all choreography rehearsals.

- Adequate time and space should be given to teach, rehearse, and adjust all choreography or movement techniques.
- Adequate time should be allocated at the end of rehearsal for cooling down, asking questions, and voicing concerns.
- Before work starts the actors, director, choreographer, and stage manager should agree to the requirements of the planned activity (kiss, slap, dance, etc.). Participants are then responsible for staying within those agreed-upon boundaries.
- A choreography captain (typically a cast member with experience in the form of physical theatre being taught) should be chosen to ensure that the choreography is rehearsed and doesn't change unintentionally. The captain should notify the stage manager or designer/choreographer of any issues with the choreography.
- Choreography should be recorded by all participants and stage management in writing (and on video, when appropriate) so that stage managers, performers, and choreography captains have a reference for maintaining the choreography.
 - If video is utilized, participants will be informed as to the use, storage, distribution, and destruction of said footage.
- Time should be set aside at the beginning of rehearsal to run through choreography. These calls are particularly important before running the show. Calls should be conducted in a distraction-free, appropriately lit space.
- Actors should communicate any illness, injury, discomfort, or fatigue experienced before, during, and after rehearsals.
- A 10-minute break should be provided after every 80 minutes of physical work.
- The director/choreographer and actors should agree on a vocabulary of safety (i.e. the word "bail" could be used to abandon a movement mid-execution).
- Regular rehearsal reports should be sent to the movement specialist/ choreographer and should include notes to the movement specialist/choreographer if any adjustments need to be made to the choreography, or if any problems develop.
- Safe working temperatures should be maintained in the rehearsal space (refer to AEA standards for specifics). When possible, the nature of the choreography should be considered when establishing this temperature (warmer in the case of nudity, cooler in the case of highly physical activity, for example).

Performance

- Choreography calls should occur before every show, and should take place in a focused environment free of interruptions or distractions.
- Performance reports should include the movement specialists/choreographers, noting any issues that arise and any actor injuries (whether related to the choreography or not).
- Performers should have a communication plan with the stage manager to report (on the day it occurs) any inappropriate or potentially unsafe changes in the performance of choreography and/or use of equipment or weapons.
- A safe working temperature should be maintained in the space. When possible, the nature of the choreography should be considered when establishing this temperature (warmer in the case of nudity, cooler in the case of highly physical activity, for example).
- The stage manager should check in before and after performances with each actor involved in the choreography, confirming that the choreography is maintained and consent/boundaries have not been overlooked.
- If any choreography is altered during performance, actors should notify the Stage Manager 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 that performers should not routinely incur pain, bruises, or other injury while enacting violence. Our

intention is to prepare for and mitigate the risks of onstage violence to create a safe space in which to take artistic risks.

Implementation Notes

- It can be helpful to assign a fight captain who is not involved in the fight choreography, so that the fight captain has the opportunity to observe the choreography from the outside (off-stage during performances, if possible).
- The stage manager should have a good line of sight to any fight choreography so that they can monitor and discuss any changes during the run of the show.

Specific Considerations: High-Risk Physical Theatre

The Goal

High-risk physical theatre uses performance techniques that carry with them a greater chance of injury than traditional theatre practices. This includes but is not limited to acrobatics, tumbling, performing on silks or other equipment, and performing in motorized set pieces. This type of work should not be undertaken without the extra attention, equipment, and precaution needed to do so safely.

Implementation Notes

- For all high-risk physical theatre, it is important to work with an appropriately specialized professional.
- It is important that the SM and other appropriate production personnel verify the safety of the equipment prior to every performance.

Specific Considerations: Staged Intimacy and Nudity

The Goal

Staged Intimacy and Nudity (I/N) require careful consideration as early as the season selection process. Artists in scenes with (I/N) take great personal risk, and our goal is to allow them to take that risk in an environment that is safe, supportive, and comfortable. (I/N) should only be included in a production when it can be done responsibly, with the assistance of an intimacy choreographer, and according to the following recommendations. We seek to replicate the conditions, detail and documentation and accountability traditionally employed for fight choreography for scenes with intimacy and nudity.

Preproduction and Auditions

- I/N should not be required or requested during any audition. Actors performing nude must be at least 18 years old, and should provide proof of age at the audition.
- Actors who will be asked to perform I/N as part of the production must be informed of the nature of the I/N expected and allowed the opportunity to confirm consent, at the time of audition. (See below for more specifics about **consent**)

Rehearsal

- Prior to rehearsing scenes with I/N, the actors, director, choreographer, and stage manager should discuss the content and establish consent and boundaries for the rehearsal. Participants should build consent and discuss boundaries before rehearsing scenes with I/N. A self care cue or safe word (such as “button”) should be established for I/N rehearsals, and use of the agreed upon term should always be respected.

- Initial I/N rehearsals should be closed, such that only participants involved in the scene are present. I/N rehearsals should be opened after agreement by the stage manager, director, and actors involved. The stage manager should be present at all rehearsals where I/N is rehearsed to maintain the documented choreography and any changes made.
- Stage managers should document the terms of consent and details of sexual and I/N choreography.
- Actors performing nude scenes should be allowed to have and wear robes or other coverings when not rehearsing. Said coverings should not be shared, and should be available immediately outside of the performance space at all times.
- Actors should have the option to decline I/N elements added after audition disclosure.
- Nude actors should not be photographed or recorded on video at any time during rehearsal, tech, or performance.

Technical Rehearsals

- Nudity during technical rehearsals should be limited to those times when it is absolutely necessary. Flesh-colored clothing or a robe may be worn when nudity is not required.
- Technical rehearsals should be closed to visitors during scenes with I/N.
- The stage manager and production team should be vigilant in identifying and resolving potential physical hazards for nude actors, such as splinters and rough edges.

Performance

Only participants whose presence is required should be present in the wings or in any backstage space with a view of the stage.

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 or activity should clearly specify the range of contact that is acceptable (e.g., anything but bikini area is within the range, or kissing is always closed mouth, etc.).
- The boundaries may change over the rehearsal process; any change to the boundaries should be discussed and agreed upon by participants. When these changes require changes to choreography, all participants in this choreography and the Stage Manager should record the new choreography.
- There should be an opportunity to discuss potential boundary violations at the end of each rehearsal and performance.
- The agreed-upon choreography of intimate contact should be maintained once a show is in production. Previously established and documented alternate choreography may be utilized if necessary.
- Actors should inform the stage manager and their scene partner(s) if they are sick (sore throat, cold sore, etc.), and alternate choreography should be defined for sick days.

Requires Disclosure

- I/N should be disclosed in notices and invitations and at auditions.
- Precast actors or hired designers should be made aware of I/N prior to accepting their roles.
- Designers should receive disclosure of I/N and known design requirements

Explore It Further

- When intimacy choreography is required for a production, prospective participants can be auditioned using nonsexual choreography
- Discussions around moments of I/N and how they will be handled should begin during pre-production meetings.
- Intimacy choreographer should be engaged for the production and included in pre-production meetings.

- Communication and protocols regarding I/N should be standardized for use among the production team and performing company.
- If a full script is made available to prospective participants, language similar to the following should be included: "Please read the script closely and confirm that you are comfortable working with this material. Feel welcome to bring questions about content to the audition process. Your level of comfort with the content of this script will not impact your casting consideration for future productions."
- Robes and appropriate footwear should be provided and regularly laundered for all actors who will appear nude.
- Actors, directors, and choreographers should have equal status in devising I/N scenes.
- A time limit for rehearsing SC/N should be established and communicated.
- Backstage areas and dressing rooms should provide reasonable accommodations for modesty/privacy