



## Sexual Harassment Policy

The Stand Comedy Club Newcastle has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and will take all complaints of this nature extremely seriously. The purpose of this policy is to support a working environment and venue culture in which sexual harassment is unacceptable. All people working in the venue are covered in this policy including contractors such as door staff.

Should you experience or witness any behaviour that you feel amounts to sexual harassment either towards yourself, another member of staff or a customer we strongly encourage you to report it to any member of staff who will then pass it on to the management team as soon as you can.

### **What is sexual harassment?**

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. It takes place when someone is subjected to unwelcome and unwanted sexual behaviour or other conduct related to their gender.

Harassment is defined by law in the Equality Act 2010 as 'unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual'. In the case of sexual harassment, the relevant protected characteristic is 'sex'.

Behaviour that constitutes sexual harassment includes:

- Unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature, this may be either physical or verbal,
- Inappropriate or suggestive remarks or verbal sexual advances,
- Indecent comments, jokes or innuendos relating to a person's looks or private life,
- Unwanted physical contact such as hugging, kissing or inappropriate touching,
- Requests for sexual favours,
- The display or circulation of pornography or indecent images.

Often, this kind of behaviour may be brushed off by the harasser as 'banter' or harmless flirting. It is important to remember that the impact the behaviour had is the most important factor, it is not so relevant whether the individual intended to cause offence, but rather that offence was caused by the conduct.

### **Witnessing and handling reports of sexual harassment of patrons**

The Stand Comedy Club Newcastle considers it our responsibility to intervene when sexual harassment happens in our premises. If you witness or are alerted to sexual harassment taking place between patrons or between patrons and staff, you should alert the shift supervisor.

Interventions to challenge sexual harassment in our venue include:

- Watching/keeping an eye on the situation
- Speaking with target/victim of sexual harassment
- Speaking with perpetrator of sexual harassment



- Asking the perpetrator to leave the establishment
- Alerting door staff
- Calling the Police

In addition to these, as part of our venue's commitment The Stand Comedy Club Newcastle has a customer's reporting procedure in place. We have a safe area where customers can report (manager's office). Complaints can be made to any member of staff who will then pass it on to the manager on shift. After a report has been made we aim to act straight away while simultaneously offering support to the customer and keeping them updated on any developments.

### **Procedure for reporting sexual harassment between staff**

We understand that reporting sexual harassment can be intimidating, so we aim to make the process as clear and straightforward as possible.

If you choose to report the incident by speaking to [a member of management, it will only be treated as a formal complaint if you make it clear that this is the route you would like to take. We are happy to offer informal advice about the possible action and outcomes open to you and will not force you to take any action you do not feel comfortable with.

Where we believe a criminal offence has taken place, we will advise you to report the incident to the police. If we have serious concerns about your safety or the safety of others, The Stand Comedy Club has a duty to contact the police, but we will do our best to let you know before doing so. If your complaint is subject to an ongoing police enquiry, we will not investigate until the police investigation has run its course.

If we receive more than one complaint of a serious criminal nature; or where we are concerned that an allegation may form part of an ongoing pattern of behaviour that could put other party members or members of the public at risk; we reserve the right to report this matter to the appropriate authorities, including law enforcement. If we do need to do this, we will let you know.

If, after speaking to us, you decide to make a formal complaint; the process will be as follows:

First, we will seek a written statement from you the complainant.

Once we have your statement, and the statements of any witnesses you are able to provide, the respondent will be informed of the details of the complaint made against them. As part of this process, each party will be encouraged to provide any relevant evidence and names of witnesses that support their statement. This process will establish the matters of fact from both sides.

The statements from the complainant, respondent and any witnesses will then be provided to the General Manager of The Stand Comedy Club.



## Confidentiality

Allegations raised regarding sexual harassment will be taken seriously and treated confidentially. The Stand Comedy Club gives an assurance that there will be no victimisation against any worker making a complaint under this policy or against staff who assist a colleague in making a complaint.

Our company's rules on sexual harassment

- **No one has the right to sexually harass our employees.** Any person in our company who is found guilty of serious harassment will be terminated, regardless of rank or position. Also, if representatives of our contractors, freelancers or artists sexually harass our employees, we will demand that the company they work for takes disciplinary action and/or refuse to work with this person in the future.
- **Sexual harassment is never too minor to be dealt with.** Any kind of harassment can wear down employees and create a hostile workplace. We will hear every claim and punish offenders appropriately.
- **Sexual harassment is about how we make others feel.** Many do not consider behaviours like flirting or sexual comments to be sexual harassment, thinking they are too innocent to be labelled that way. But, if something you do makes your colleagues uncomfortable, or makes them feel unsafe, you must stop.
- **We assume every sexual harassment claim is legitimate unless proven otherwise.** We listen to victims of sexual harassment and always conduct our investigations properly. Occasional false reports do not undermine this principle.
- **We will not allow further victimisation of harassed employees.** We will fully support employees who were sexually harassed and will not take any adverse action against them. For example, we will not move them to positions with worse pay or benefits or allow others to retaliate against them.
- **Those who support or overlook sexual harassment are as much at fault as offenders.** Anyone who witnesses an incident of sexual harassment or has other kinds of proof should report to HR.

## How to report sexual harassment

If you are being sexually harassed (or suspect another person is being harassed), please report it to *Eva Mackay HR manager, or your line manager.*] In serious cases like sexual assault, please call the police and inform HR that you plan to press charges. We acknowledge it's often hard to come forward about these issues, but we need your help to build a fair and safe workplace for you and your colleagues.

If you want to report sexual harassment within our company, there are two options:

- **Ask for an urgent meeting with your HR manager or Line Manager** Once in the meeting, explain the situation in as much detail as possible. If you have any hard evidence (e.g. emails), forward it or bring it with you to the meeting.
- **Send your complaint via email.** If you address it to your Manager, please cc HR to the email and attach any evidence or information that can be used in the investigation. HR and your Line Manager will discuss the issue and contact you as soon as possible.



If you report assault to the police, our company will provide any possible support until the matter is resolved. In any case, we will ensure you are not victimised and that you have access to relevant evidence admissible in court, like security video footage or emails (without revealing confidential information about other employees.)