

EDMONTON YOUTH ORCHESTRA POLICIES, PRINCIPLES, & PROCEDURES

MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY (Revised August 9th, 2021; April 17, 2023)

PRINCIPLES:

1. EYO Policies:

Treat all persons fairly and respectfully.

Are non-discriminatory and non-intrusive.

Incorporate open, honest, timely, and appropriate communication with membership.

Stay current with legal requirements and society expectations for the protection of EYO members.

Provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy.

Are available for viewing by all EYO members and the public.

Provide clear written expectations for conduct and the handling of complaints.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Edmonton Youth Orchestra fosters a musical community founded on the fundamental dignity and worth of all its members (and other participants). The organization will not tolerate any form of physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, or psychological abuse, nor any form of neglect or harassment.

The Edmonton Youth Orchestra protects the safety, security, and reputation of its members by requiring high standards of respectful and responsible behaviour by everyone affiliated with the organization and its members at all times.

To ensure both privacy and safety of participants, the EYO will have safeguards in place that endeavor to remove the possibility of private interaction between individual board members, volunteers, staff, contractors, and adult orchestra members with both adult and minor members of the Orchestra.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to the conduct of EYO board members, volunteers, staff, contractors, or adult orchestra members that occurs during EYO rehearsal times, concerts, and organized activities, whether at the customary rehearsal space or other venues.

Personal conduct that occurs outside of Orchestra break times and/or outside designated rehearsal space or supervised areas is not covered by this policy.

DEFINITIONS:

- Adult members are defined as members 18 years of age and older.
- Minor members are defined as members 17 years of age and younger.
- Physical Abuse is defined as but not limited to the use of intentional force that can result in physical harm or injury to an individual. It can take the form of slapping, hitting, punching, shaking, pulling, throwing, kicking, biting, choking, strangling or the abusive use of restraints.
- Sexual Abuse involves any sexual activity where consent is not or cannot be given. This includes sexual contact that is accomplished by force or threat of force, regardless of the age of the participants, and all sexual contact between an adult and a child, regardless of whether there is deception or the child understands the sexual nature of the activity. Sexual contact between an older and a younger child also can be abusive if there is a significant disparity in age, development, or size, rendering the younger child incapable of giving informed consent. The sexually abusive acts may include sexual penetration, sexual touching, or non-contact sexual acts such as exposure or voyeurism.”¹
- Emotional Abuse is defined as but not limited to a chronic attack on an individual’s self-esteem. It can take the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, berating, intimidating, isolating, hazing, habitual scapegoat, blaming.
- Verbal Abuse is defined as but not limited to humiliating remarks, name calling, swearing at, taunting, teasing, continual put downs.
- Psychological Abuse is defined as but not limited to communication of an abusive nature, sarcasm, exploitive behaviour, intimidation, manipulation, and insensitivity to race, sexual preference or family dynamics.
- Neglect is defined as but not limited to any behaviour that leads to a failure to provide services which are necessary such as withdrawing basic necessities as forms of punishment, failing to assess and respond to changes in health status and refusing or withdrawing physical or emotional support.
- Harassment is defined as but not limited to any unwanted physical or verbal conduct that offends or humiliates, including gender-based harassment. It can be a single incident or several incidents over time. It includes threats, intimidation, display of racism, sexism, unnecessary physical contact, suggestive remarks or gestures, offensive pictures or jokes. Harassment will be considered to have taken place if a reasonable person ought to have known that the behaviour was unwelcome.

MEMBERS POLICY:

¹ Taken from: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Preventing child sexual abuse within youth-serving organizations: getting started on policies and procedures.* 2007. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/preventingchildsexualabuse-a.pdf>

Individual board members, volunteers, staff, contractors, or adult orchestra members are not permitted to be alone in a designated EYO rehearsal or concert space with minor members of the Orchestras, without at least one other adult present.

- Board members, volunteers, staff, or contractors, except the General Manager, Music Director and President are not permitted to have contact information, such as cell phone numbers, of members of the Orchestras, other than for their own family members, unless expressly permitted by a parent or guardian (for minor members) or the adult member. Orchestra membership lists may be shared with board members, but member contact information will be removed.
- Board members, volunteers, staff, and contractors are not permitted to have contact with members of the Orchestras through social media, such as Twitter or Facebook or other apps, at any time, other than with their own family members, unless expressly permitted by a parent or guardian (for minor members) or the adult member.

VULNERABLE SECTOR CHECKS:

All board members, staff, contractors, and volunteers who interact directly with orchestra members or who have access to data related to members are required to have current Vulnerable Sector checks, to be renewed every two years.

PROCEDURE:

1. Any allegations of physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, or psychological abuse, neglect or harassment that are witnessed by, or communicated to, the General Manager, Music Director or a board member are to be referred to the President as soon as possible, or the Vice President in lieu.

2. Allegations of physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, or psychological abuse, neglect or harassment. will be brought forward by the President or Vice President in lieu, at an emergency Board Executive meeting or teleconference for discussion, as soon as reasonably possible, at which time a decision will be made regarding next steps. These steps could include any or all of the following:

- Calling an emergency board meeting
- Including individual board members and other experts in discussions, at the discretion of the Board Executive
- Creating an Ad-Hoc Committee to pursue an investigation and make recommendations
- Interviewing individuals or potential witnesses about the allegations
- Engaging legal resources
- Engaging police or other law enforcement resources
- Engaging other specialized resources as deemed necessary
- Temporarily removing Orchestra membership and privileges from individuals
- Other steps deemed appropriate at the discretion of the Board Executive

- The allegations, Board Executive actions, and status of the incident will be shared at the next regularly scheduled board meeting (In-camera, if appropriate).

3. When it is determined that there is an immediate threat to an orchestra member or members, the Music Director, General Manager, or a board member has the right and responsibility to take immediate and necessary action to resolve the incident. This could include contacting the police or campus security, as appropriate. In the event of an incident, the President or General Manager must be informed as soon as possible. If the General Manager is informed, he or she will advise the President immediately, or the Vice President in lieu.

5. The EYO Board will be informed by the President at an appropriate time. In the event that the ad-hoc committee recommends a course of action or discipline with respect to the board, employment, contractual, or volunteer status of an individual, the EYO Board will be asked to formally ratify the recommendation. Confidentiality will be maintained within the board.

6. Legal, law enforcement, or other resources may determine that an immediate course of action is required, to which the ad-hoc committee must defer. In this event, the board will be notified personally by the President at an appropriate time. Confidentiality will be maintained within the board.

7. The President or Vice President in lieu will speak on behalf of the Edmonton Youth Orchestra in response to any external legal, law enforcement, media or other inquiries. The President may allow or appoint another person affiliated with the Edmonton Youth Orchestra to speak on behalf of the organization.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION:

All current and new Board members, volunteers, staff and contractors must confirm they have read, understand and will abide by this policy by signing and dating a copy of the approved policy. Paper or digital copies will be kept on file by the General Manager.

INSURANCE:

The Edmonton Youth Orchestra Board will be responsible to confirm that appropriate member abuse insurance coverage is in place to protect the Edmonton Youth Orchestra and all Board members, volunteers, staff and contractors from legal risks.

POLICY REVIEW PROCEDURE:

This policy document will be reviewed annually by the board at the first meeting after the Annual General Meeting, or more frequently, as required due to feedback from board members, the General Manager, or the Music Director

- The President will co-ordinate any reviews and proposed changes
- The board may change this policy at any time at their discretion
- Any board member, the General Manager, or the Music Director may initiate a board discussion of this policy at a board meeting, or ask to include it on the meeting agenda.

POLICY REVIEW DATE: TBA

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 26th, 2020

REVISION HISTORY: June 11th, 2020 (added 'except the General Manager, Music Director and President' under contact information section of the Minor Members Policy and the Adult Members Policy).

Feb 9th, 2021 (addition of definitions, policy statement revised, addition of policy implementation and insurance sections)

Aug 9th, 2021 (tightened criteria for Vulnerable Sector Check requirement)

Apr 17, 2023 (addition of "minor" to statement top of page 3)

CONNECTION TO BOARD POLICIES: EYO policies will be reviewed annually by the EYO