

DANCE ONTARIO

ANTI-RACISM, ACCESS AND EQUITY POLICY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

This policy was approved by DANCE ONTARIO Association Board of Directors at their meeting on 9 November, 2001.

A: STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

DANCE ONTARIO Association's mandate is to advance and promote all forms of dance in the province of Ontario. The Association has been recognized for its achievements in bringing the work of artists in diverse forms to broad based audiences. The Association's Head Office is located in the City of Toronto that is made up of people from diverse communities and equity-seeking groups.¹ DANCE ONTARIO Association recognizes the changing nature of the population and provides access to its services accordingly. DANCE ONTARIO Association is committed to acting as a positive force in eliminating barriers where they may exist without causing undue hardship to the organization.

DANCE ONTARIO Association will:

- ensure that diverse communities across Ontario have equitable access to its services, resources and decision-making.
- be non-discriminatory and promote the goals of anti-racism, access and equity; and
- take reasonable steps and make accommodations to ensure its services, programs and decision-making reflect the community it serves.

DANCE ONTARIO Association prohibits discrimination or harassment and protects the right to be free from hate activity based on age, ancestry, citizenship, creed (religion), colour, disability, ethnic origin, family status, gender identity, level of literacy, marital status, place of origin, membership in a union or staff association, political affiliation, race, receipt of public assistance, record of offences, sex, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristic by or within DANCE ONTARIO Association.

¹ For the purposes of this policy, equity-seeking groups include Aboriginal/First Nations people, women, people with disabilities, racial minorities, the socio-economically disadvantaged, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered persons.

Definitions

Anti-racism: a set of practices and systems designed to eliminate racism. Racism includes racist ideologies, prejudiced attitudes, discriminatory behaviours, structural arrangements and institutionalized practices resulting in racial inequality as well as the fallacious notion that discriminatory relations between groups are morally and scientifically justifiable.

Access: the ability of or extents to which communities or residents can attain needed services and achieve full participation in the planning, development, administration and delivery of those services. Access includes client access and organizational access.

Equity: practices designed to remove systemic barriers to equality of outcome by identifying and eliminating discriminatory policies and practices.

Discrimination: the act of treating a person unequally by imposing unequal burdens or denying benefits, rather than treating a person fairly on the basis of individual merit. Discrimination is usually based upon personal prejudices and stereotypical assumptions related to at least one of the grounds set out in this Policy. It is not necessary to have an intent to discriminate under the Code. Workplace rules, policies, procedures, requirements, qualifications or factors may not be directly or intentionally discriminatory but may nonetheless have an adverse effect. This may create barriers to achievement and opportunity.

Harassment: a course of conduct of comments or actions that are unwelcome or should be known to be unwelcome. A person has the right to be free of humiliating or annoying behaviour that is based on one or more grounds in the Code.

B: POLICY AND ACTIONS ON ANTI-RACISM, ACCESS & EQUITY

Governance

DANCE ONTARIO Association is committed to achieving representation of the diversity of the Toronto community and the province of Ontario in general on its Board of Directors and committees by ensuring that it has an equitable and transparent nominations process, that this process is communicated to all members, and that members are committed to outreach beyond the current membership if necessary to achieve this goal.

1. DANCE ONTARIO Association's policy on an equitable and transparent nomination process will be communicated to the members of the organization prior to initiating the nomination process. To ensure that the board represents its diverse membership, Board members will contact groups or individuals outside the organization where necessary.

2. **DANCE ONTARIO** Association is open and accessible to all persons working in the dance sector and membership fees are low.
3. **DANCE ONTARIO** Association communicates to its diverse membership quarterly through its newsletter and promotes the events, schools, classes, workshops of all its members through its Hotline and website www.danceontario.ca
4. **DANCE ONTARIO** Association's intent is that its membership reflects the cultural diverse dance forms of the city and province.

Employment

DANCE ONTARIO Association is committed to achieving representation of equity seeking groups on its staff by ensuring that members of equity seeking communities have equitable access to employment. This includes recruitment, selection, staff development, performance evaluation, retention, promotion, termination.

1. All job postings will clearly indicate that **DANCE ONTARIO** Association has in place a policy of anti-racism, access and equity.
2. **DANCE ONTARIO** Association is committed to developing and retaining working partnerships to ensure equal representation.
3. **DANCE ONTARIO** Association is committed to maintaining an environment where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect and are free from all forms of discriminatory treatment, behaviour or practice. Discrimination, harassment, violence, and any other form of discriminatory practices will not be tolerated by **DANCE ONTARIO** Association. Discrimination does not have to be intentional. It can result from practices or policies that appear to be neutral but, in reality, have a negative effect on groups or individuals based on race, religion, gender, etc.
5. **DANCE ONTARIO** Association's anti-racism, access and equity policy will be provided to all staff members.
6. **DANCE ONTARIO** Association's anti-racism, access and equity policy will be posted at the Head Office location.

Services

DANCE ONTARIO Association is committed to ensuring that its services and programs are accessible to diverse communities where no undue hardship to the organization will result. This involves review of current outreach, communications, program planning and evaluation, to make accommodations and ensure that the goal is being met within budgetary considerations.

1. **DANCE ONTARIO** Association's outreach and communication mandate is targeted to include diverse communities.
2. **DANCE ONTARIO** Association is committed to presenting performances in venues that are accessible by wheelchair where no undue hardship to the organization will result.
3. **DANCE ONTARIO** Association monitors its membership base to assess the success of their initiatives regarding equal representation.

In addition, **DANCE ONTARIO** Association will take into consideration provision of services to disadvantaged individuals, low-income persons, families in poverty, and equity-seeking communities.

1. **DANCE ONTARIO** Association is committed to maintaining membership fees at a modest level in order to accommodate low income members.
2. **DANCE ONTARIO** Association offers pay what you can showings of its only performance event.

Training and Education

DANCE ONTARIO Association is committed to ensuring that those involved in the delivery of services and programs have the knowledge, understanding and skills to work with and provide services to members of diverse communities, particularly equity-seeking communities.

DANCE ONTARIO Association will undertake to provide training as required to ensure that those involved in the delivery of services have necessary skills to work with a diverse community.

Information and Communications

DANCE ONTARIO Association is committed to ensuring that all of its communications, including information on its services and programs, are accessible to diverse communities to the point of undue hardship to the organization.

DANCE ONTARIO Association will follow Human Rights guidelines on the communication of information on its services and programs to ensure that they are accessible to diverse communities.

C: HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Definitions

Complainant: the individual alleging the discriminatory treatment or behaviour

Respondent: the individual against whom the allegation of discrimination is made.

Employee: for the purpose of this policy, the term employee includes employees, volunteers, contractors and consultants working with DANCE ONTARIO Association.

Avenues of Complaint

Complaints will be dealt with by the Executive Director. Where appropriate, the Executive Director will consult with the Chairperson of the Board. All situations in which the Executive Director has been named in a complaint will be dealt with directly by Chairperson of the Board.

Right to Complain

Individuals have the right to complain about situations they believe to be discriminatory or harassing in nature.

This policy prohibits reprisals against employees because they have complained or have provided information regarding a complaint. Alleged reprisals are subject to the same complaints procedures and penalties as complaints of discrimination.

Reporting a Complaint

Although individuals may first choose to make a verbal complaint, a written summary of the incident will be required.

Complaints should be reported as soon as possible. If the complaint is delayed beyond three months, the complainant should outline the reason for the delay in reporting the incident(s).

A letter of complaint should contain a brief account of the offensive incident(s), when it occurred, the person(s) involved and the names of witnesses, if any. The letter should be signed and dated by the complainant.

Investigation

Within three working days of receiving a complaint, the Executive Director and/or Chairperson of the Board of Directors must initiate the investigation process.

As soon as possible after receiving the complaint, the Executive Director will notify the individual(s) being named in the complaint.

All individuals named in the complaint have a right to reply to the allegations against them.

Individuals named in the complaint as witnesses will be interviewed.

Settlement and Mediation

With the consent of the complainant and the respondent, the investigator may attempt to mediate a settlement of a complaint at any point prior to or during an investigation.

Every effort will be made to reach a settlement satisfactory to the complainant and the respondent.

Confidentiality

All individuals involved with a complaint must ensure the matter remains confidential.

The investigator will release information only on a need-to-know basis. Whenever possible, investigation reports are presented in a summary format without the names of witnesses.

Findings and Recommendations

Once the investigation is complete, the investigator will prepare a written report summarizing investigation findings.

Final Decision

The individual(s) who filed the complaint and those named in the complaint have the right to review and comment on the investigation findings with the Executive Director or the Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

Remedy

A response to a founded complaint could include remedial action ranging from:

- requiring the respondent to provide a verbal or written apology;
- giving a verbal or written reprimand with a copy to the respondent's personnel file;
- dismissal of the respondent.

If the findings do not support the complaint, DANCE ONTARIO Association might:

- make a recommendation for training or better communications; or
- recommend that no further action is necessary.

It may be that no action is taken against the respondent, but there might be a need for some management or systemic activity.

A person who is found to have made a frivolous or vexatious complaint may be subject to disciplinary action.

Timeframe

Complaints should be reported within three months of the incident. If the report is made after three months, an explanation of the delay should accompany the complaint.

Complaints will be dealt with in a timely manner.

Records

When remedial action requires discipline of an employee, a record of the disciplinary action will be placed on an individual's personnel file. All other records of the investigation will be kept separate and apart from the personnel file.

Ontario Human Rights Commission

This internal procedure is available to individuals to resolve complaints of discrimination. Parties also have recourse to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, however, once a grievance is filed with OHRC, the internal procedure is not an option.