

1. **HOW NOT TO BE AN ASSHOLE: PHYSICAL ALTERCATION, THREAT, SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT POLICY** *(Adopted 5/22/2016)*

1. **Introduction:**

1. Nickel City Housing Cooperative believes all human beings should respect people's expressed identity and boundaries and how they want that to be acknowledged. This includes respecting pronouns, chosen names, respecting someone's presentation, gender expression or lack thereof, this includes and is not limited to race, sex, national origin, disability, differently abled, sexual orientation, or other statuses protected by state or federal law.
2. Nickel City Housing Cooperative has a no tolerance policy in terms of violence of physical, mental, sexual, threatening or harassing nature.
3. It is our intention to create a space where all parties are given tools to manage conflict and create a safer space for current and future generations. We aim to strive towards a safe space and work towards making all spaces safer.
4. In the case that there is an incident, these are the procedures to be followed so that all parties of the immediate/greater community can be protected and grow in hopes for positive outcomes. It is important to note that these procedures are not steps but strategies ranging from low level intervention to higher level intervention as the risk factors increase. All situations are different and therefore should have different strategies used to manage so that the community and the individual are protected and supported. It is up to the individual(s) involved to determine the level of intervention, although the Community may encourage or advise alternative actions. The only exception to this is in a Severe Incident (to be defined later), although all incidents are serious and should be treated as such. In this way, these are the strategies to not be an asshole.

2. **Definitions:**

1. **Safer Space:** A community of people continually working towards improving the physical and mental space of the community to respect the boundaries of all persons.
2. **Consent:** An agreement between participants for any action to proceed. This agreement is only consensual if both parties are able to make the agreement.
3. **Physical altercation (assault, battery):** Any action or attempt to physically harm an individual or group, including but not exclusively, assault and battery.
4. **Harassment:** This may be any action that targets an individual or groups that is disruptive to the working or living environment of that individual or group. This includes threats, stereotypes and depictions, hostility towards a group or individual based on their race, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or other status protected by state or federal law.

5. **Sexual Violence Harassment:** Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
6. **Sexual Violence Assault (rape, groping, kissing, etc):** is defined as physical sexual acts engaged without the consent of the other person, or when the other person is unable to consent to the activity, including groping, kissing, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and rape.
7. **Overseeing Dragons:** A third person or group that facilitates and aides the conflict resolution process. The Vibes Coordinator, the Board Member, or the chosen individual or groups will be regarded in this context and this context only as the Overseeing Dragon(s).
8. **Unicorns:** The individual or group that initiates the Don't Be an Asshole Policy conflict resolution process.
9. **Werewolf(ves):** The individual or group that is otherwise involved within the process (i.e. those who are not unicorns or an overseeing dragon).
10. **Severe Incident:** A severe incident refers to violence in any form to any individual or group, including but not exclusively, rape, assault, stalking, targeted property destruction and molestation.

3. Procedures:

1. **When an incident occurs** the Unicorn has the option to utilize these strategies:
 - A. Any party (mythological or not) at any time has the option to request all behavior (harrassment/offensive/assholeish as defined above) to stop. The recipient(s) of said request must then immediately cease said behavior.
 - B. Report to an Overseeing Dragon(s) and have the Overseeing Dragon(s) discuss the incident with the werewolf(ves) in private. The unicorn(s) may or may not be present at their will.
 - C. A member review can be called if other strategies do not work.
 - D. Put a party of werewolves or unicorns up for Termination of Membership from the organization.
 - E. Continual trends or infractions of the Don't be an Asshole Policy will result in a member review or a Termination of Membership.
2. **Reporting Process:** Any person, member or non-member, (unicorn) who wants to report an infraction, should contact the individual house's Vibes Coordinator, a Board Member, or a group of their own choosing to summon the Overseeing Dragon(s). They need not be present in any of the procedures for their own safety. The Overseeing Dragon(s) will discuss the policy with the Unicorn(s) and Werewolf(ves) and discuss their choices of action. If need be, it will be the Overseeing Dragon(s)'s responsibility to initiate a Member Review or Termination of Membership in the

stead of the Unicorn(s). In instances of a Severe Incident, the Board will immediately be notified and initiate the immediate review and termination of membership.

3. **Severe Incidents** must have an emergency review, with a vote for a Termination of Membership of the aggressor no later than 24 hours from the incident's occurrence or reporting of the occurrence.
4. **Legal Action:** NCHC ensures the right to protect its members, the members of the greater community, and the corporation with legal actions for reparations as according to New York State law.
5. **New and Prospective Members:** When a new member enters the housing corporation, they must review the Don't Be an Asshole Policy and sign that they have read it. The House Membership Coordinator, or someone designated by the House Membership Coordinator, must talk them through the policies to ensure that they understand before signing. Furthermore, the Don't Be an Asshole Policy should be reviewed during a Prospective Member's Interview as part of the membership process.

4. Documentation of Incidents:

1. NCHC will record all incidents of Member Review and Termination of Membership.
2. These documents will remain internal and not be made public to ensure member privacy.

5. Post-Incident Procedures:

1. Immediately after the incident, the organization must ensure that the Werewolf(ves) and Unicorn(s) are in a place (literal and/or figurative) where they have access to resources and a space where they feel safe. This can be done by any member or person within the greater community.
2. It is the responsibility of the Overseeing Dragon(s) to direct all involved parties to utilize communal resources such as peer advocates, therapeutic interventions or crisis hotlines. It is not the Overseeing Dragon(s)'s responsibility to make sure that resources are utilized by any party.
3. Secondary victimization reduction efforts should begin with an open forum where one can vent their concerns. During this open forum, it is the responsibility of the board members to remind all affected persons of the resources available to them. This meeting should be attended based on an individual's comfort level, and therefore not mandatory. As an example, if there is an emergency member review and a person has their membership terminated, after that meeting, any interested parties can reconvene immediately or another day for processing and discussion.
4. Retroactively studying the circumstances leading to the incident can help prevent future incidents. These are to be noted and discussed at a house level and if need be,

brought to the board for policy changes organizationally or kept private and internally as in house policies.

6. **External Resources for All Parties.** The Community will encourage all persons to contact external resources in case of any events to help maintain their safety and personal health. Several of these resources are listed below.

1. Suicide Prevention and Crisis Services: (716) 362-0270
2. Crisis Services : (716) 834 2310, 24 hour hot line: (716) 834-3131
3. Hearing Impaired Crisis Services line: 711
4. Spectrum Transgender Group: (716) 465-8736
5. GLBT National hotline: 1 888 843-4564
6. RAINN (Rape Abuse Incest National Network): 1 800 656-HOPE

7. **Hypothetical Situations as examples.** Use a unicorn.

1. Once Upon A Time, Sparkles Fantastic the Unicorn walked into the wondermoth kitchen. They were preparing their breakfast of marsh mallow sprouts and rainbow cider when Bertle the Turtle entered the room, slowly. Bertle turned to Sparkles Fantastic and said, “Nice Horn.” Sparkles Fantastic felt uncomfortable and said so. Bertle the Turtle laughed and said, “Oh come on, Sparkles Fantastic, I’m just joking. Don’t be so... wait for it... horny.” Sparkles Fantastic excused themselves and went to Manny the Manatee and said, “Hey, Bertle said something about my body that made me uncomfortable, and I confronted them but they still made jokes. I’m not comfortable with confronting them again. I know that you’re on the board, and I was wondering if you could help me out and have a conversation with them.” Manny nodded and said, “I’m really sorry that this happened to you, but I’m leaving for work. I know that Sphanx-you-very-much the Sphynx has gone through this before. Can I talk to them to talk to Bertle?” Sparkles Fantastic sighed in relief and said, “Yeah, I’d really like that. Thank you to Sphanx-you-very-much.” Manny went to Sphanx-you-very-much who went to Bertle who was very apologetic and said that they would stop the behavior immediately. They understood that they were making the space uncomfortable. They also said that they wanted to apologize to Sparkles Fantastic. In the end, everyone returned to the kitchen for a kitchen dance party, having followed the “Don’t be an asshole policy”. The End.

8. **Continuing Education:**

1. This Community has a commitment to continual trainings and educational opportunities.
2. Trainings should be based on improving safer spaces, including but not limited to diversity trainings, trans ally trainings, communication trainings, racial justice training, and mental health.

3. It is important to attend Vibes Meetings as a part of improving house relations to create an atmosphere for continuing education.