



Baltimore Shakespeare Factory Theatre Standards

Note: Much of what follows is adapted, with the permission of the creators, from the Chicago Theatre Standards.

Mission Statement

The Baltimore Shakespeare Factory Theatre Standards (BSFTS) is a 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**, including, but not limited to, sexual, physical, or based in gender, religion, ethnic origin, or color;
- **Nurturing environments** that allow us to challenge ourselves, our audiences, and our communities; that support risk of mind and body; and that establish the freedom to create theatre that represents the full range of human experience;
- **A common understanding** of practices for the BSF theatre environment; and
- **Peer and organizational support** through a clear resolution path for conflicts or situations that someone may find to be uncomfortable within the BSF environment.

General Implementation Notes

It is the ultimate responsibility of the Artistic Director and the Managing Director to make sure that all members of BSF are given a copy of the BSFTS and that they are understood, monitored, and enforced. "Production content" as described below includes the written script (dialogue and stage directions) and any music, choreography, stage business, or combat established by the director. It is the prerogative of the director to cut, alter, or keep any material from scripts chosen for production.

Responsibilities of the Artistic Director regarding implementation of the BSFTS:

1. Introduce the document to all individuals who guest direct for BSF and make sure it is discussed in depth and understood during the interview for the job.
2. Make sure that all show directors understand their responsibility for distribution and implementation the BSFTS (see "Show Directors Responsibilities" below).
3. Monitor and enforce the BSFTS.

Responsibilities of the Managing Director regarding implementation of the BSFTS:

1. Make sure that all administrative staff and administrative support personnel are given the BSFTS and make sure it is discussed in depth and understood during the interview for the job.
2. Maintain all records that are generated by the BSFTS in a secure location in the BSF office.
3. Make sure that copies of the BSFTS are always available in the office.
4. Provide Show Directors with copies of the BSFTS as needed.
5. Make sure there is always a copy of the BSFTS in the Green Room.
6. Monitor and enforce the BSFTS.

Responsibilities of the Education Director regarding implementation of the BSFTS:

1. Make sure that all personnel hired for any job within the Education Department are given the BSFTS and make sure it is discussed in depth and understood during the interview for the job.
2. Make sure that all members of the education department who come into contact with children are given a set of expectations and policies. These expectations and policies are to be created by the Education Director.
3. Monitor and enforce the BSFTS.

Responsibilities of the Show Director regarding implementation of the BSFTS:

1. Email a copy of the BSFTS to all cast and staff of the production no later than one week before the first text work meeting day.
2. Have printed copies of the BSFTS available on the first day of text work weekend and provide them to any personnel who requests one.
3. Budget time during the first day of text work weekend to explain and answer any questions about the BSFTS and to allow for questions about it.
4. Make sure that a copy of the BSFTS are available in the Green Room at all times.
5. Monitor and enforce the BSFTS.

BSF General Standards

Safety

1. Weapons and other specialized equipment

- should only be handled by those required to do so.
- should be maintained by the choreographer and/or fight captain.
- should be inspected before use by any actors who use the equipment.

2. Auditions

- Any physical contact required for an audition should be disclosed and choreographed.
- Auditioning actors should not improvise violent or sexual contact.

3. Rehearsal

- There should be a reasonably stocked first aid kit available at all times.
- Prior to rehearsing choreography, the choreographer should meet with the director to discuss boundaries.
- Prior to rehearsing choreography, the choreographer should discuss the content of the choreography with the actors.
- A choreography captain should be chosen to ensure that the choreography is rehearsed and doesn't change. The captain should be empowered to notify the choreographer, stage manager, or director of any issues with the choreography.
- Adequate time should be given to teach, rehearse, and adjust all fight and movement choreography.
- Actors should stay within the boundaries of agreed upon choreography.
- The choreographer/fight captain and actors should agree on a vocabulary of safety (e.g., the word "bail" could be used to abandon a movement mid-execution).
- Actors should communicate any injury, discomfort, or fatigue experienced before, during, and after rehearsal.
- Actors are not required to participate in any actions, of any type, that they feel are unsafe. If concerned about a safety issue, the actor should communicate by following the appropriate chain of command in communicating their concerns: the choreographer/fight captain, the stage manager, the show director, the artistic director, the managing director, the board.

4. Performance

- Fight calls must be held before every performance.
- Other choreography calls may be held before all performances, or before specific performances, at the request of the choreographer, actors, or show director.
- Actors should notify the fight captain or choreographer and the stage manager if any choreography is altered during performance.

Harassment

Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Inappropriate actions, insulting remarks, gestures, jokes, innuendoes, taunting, or posting/displaying materials about a person's gender, gender identity, sexual identity, racial or ethnic background, color, place of birth, citizenship, ancestry, or religion;
- Persistent unwanted questions or comments about a participant's private life outside the boundaries of consent established in rehearsal;
- Persistent unwanted verbal or non-sexual physical contact intended to intimidate or threaten.

Sexual Harassment may include but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendoes, taunts, or gestures, about a person's body, attire, gender, or sexual orientation, outside the boundaries of consent or production content;
- Negative stereotyping of race, gender, gender identity, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, or other status protected by law outside the boundaries of consent or production content;
- Any unwanted or inappropriate physical content such as touching, kissing, massaging, patting, hugging, or pinching outside the boundaries of consent or production content;
- Unwelcome inquiries or comments about a person's sex life or sexual preference outside boundaries of consent or production content;
- Leering, whistling, or other suggestive or insulting outside the boundaries of consent or production content;
- Inappropriate comments about clothing, physical characteristics, or activities outside the boundaries of consent or production content;
- Posting or displaying materials, articles, or graffiti that is sexually oriented outside the boundaries of consent or production content;
- Requests or demands for sexual favors, especially those that include, or imply, promises of rewards for complying (e.g., job advancement or opportunities) and/or threats of punishment (e.g., refusal of job advancement or opportunities) for refusal outside the boundaries of consent or production content;
- Attempting to engage in sexual behaviors offstage that are choreographed for the stage;
- Repeated invitation/suggestion to take the relationships of a sexual nature beyond the stage;
- Using the text of the production in a manner which would violate the standards if it were not part of the production process;
- Improvising sexual content without expressed consent.

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.

Concern Resolution Path (CRP)

The goal of the Concern Resolution Path is to provide a documented communication pathway to address issues in a production or within the organization. The CPR seeks to inform participants what to do and who to address with serious issues, and to dispel the fear of reprisal for reporting issues of safety, harassment, or other serious concerns.

It is important that everyone in the organization understand that Baltimore Shakespeare Factory seeks to resolve concerns early, before participants or the production are put at risk and before the concern escalates.

Communication

- The CRP should be verbally explained and provided in writing at the first rehearsal and 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 green room.
- Participants should be encouraged to report their concerns in writing for recordkeeping purposes.

Recordkeeping

- The Managing Director 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.

Implementation Notes

- The Managing Director should complete a CRP with the names and contact information of all individuals who will serve on the path for each production.
- The CRP is a tool to help create communication pathways to prevent and resolve issues, NOT to create divisions. To that end, nothing in the BSFTS 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, and the process for reporting those concerns to others on the path.

Role of the Stage Manager Regarding the BSFTS

- The stage manager (SM) is traditionally the primary communication conduit between

participants and producers as well as between actors and directors, and so plays a crucial role in executing the CRP.

- The SM should know and follow the BSFTS and CRP.
- Work with and communicate with the Non-Equity Deputy.

Non-Equity Deputy (NED)

- Each cast will be instructed to elect a Non-Equity Deputy (NED) on the first day of rehearsal.
- If a getting acquainted period is necessary, the NED may be chosen by the end of the first week.

The NED should

- provide contact information and availability to personnel for consultation outside of the rehearsal/performance space/hours.
- serve as a liaison between the cast, crew, stage manager, and all BSF personnel for issues brought to their attention by participants.
- protect anonymity whenever possible.
- use the CRP to report concerns and communicate the resolution of such concerns to fellow participants as appropriate.
- engage the CRP if the stage manager 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 to 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 the Scope of the NED:

- 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 OF THE BSFTS CPR

LEVEL ONE:

Many concerns can be resolved through direct conversation among 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. At this level, no written documentation is needed; however, if the situation is not solved at Level One, then documentation created at subsequent levels will include the details

of any and all previous action that was taken to resolve the situation.

LEVEL TWO:

If a situation is not resolved at Level One, each the following individuals should be notified to escalate the situation to Level Two:

- Non-Equity Deputy
- Stage Manager
- Director

At Level Two, all three individuals listed above should be informed of the situation. For example, if a participant informs the NED of a situation, then this needs to be placed in writing and the SM and Director are informed, even if the situation was resolved through the intervention of the NED. The role of the three individuals listed above is to facilitate the resolution of the conflict. A written statement of the situation is to be submitted to the Managing Director (MD). Written statements will be kept on file, even if no further action is needed, and this documentation will be shared with the Artistic Director and the Board of Directors (or its delegated committee).

The NED, SM and Director must unanimously agree that a concern has been resolved at Level Two, or should be escalated to Level Three.

LEVEL THREE:

If a situation is not resolved at Level Two, each the following individuals should be notified to escalate the situation to Level Three:

- Artistic Director
- Managing Director
- Board of Directors

These individuals will have the authority and responsibility to resolve issues not resolved prior to reaching this stage. They will consult as a group, and be advised by legal counsel as necessary, in determining a resolution.

All written materials produced as part of Level Three will be kept on file.