**HOUSE POLICY UPDATE TEMPLATE**

***(Insert venue specific opening statement* )**

This document will support and advise employees of the recommended approaches when an incident is reported to a staff member, or they become aware of an incident or believe there is a likelihood of an incident occurring and all the necessary steps that must be taken to ensure safety and wellbeing for all patrons. We want to equip you all with everything we can to minimise these experiences as part of your time in our venues as staff and as patrons. We want you to be able to respond to these kinds of incidents and be aware of the different levels of harassment and how to gauge a response to instances of intimidation, discrimination, general and sexual harassment, and assault.

**Basic Definitions**

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct – verbal, cyber forms or physical – of a sexual nature.

Sexual assault is any type of sexual contact or behaviour that that make a person feel uncomfortable, frightened, or threatened and occurs without the explicit consent of the recipient. Under the *Criminal Code* (WA), indecent assault is a criminal offence, and this will include touching of a sexual nature without a person’s consent.

**Staff Responses**

What to do when: A patron is pushing the boundary of what we deem to be acceptable.

* Staring or leering
* Unnecessary familiarity, such as deliberately brushing up against someone or physical invasion of space
* Suggestive comments, jokes, insults, or taunts of an anti-social or sexual nature
* Repeated questioning after receiving no compliance in conversation
* Verbally abusive and/or threatening behaviours (name calling, raised voices, standing over people who are sitting down)

Outline the situation to a manager or a security guard for their opinion a follow up of confirmation of action taken should be communicated to the staff member.

**What to do when you witness physical assault or sexual assault.**

(Forced intercourse inclusive of non-consensual kissing and fondling are the most likely incidents to occur in venues)

* Alert security and management (whoever is closest to you at the time, other colleagues can alert management and security if you cannot do so yourself at the time)
* Eject the **perpetrator** from the venue. Prior to this, the perpetrator’s identity must be sought and recorded in the incident report log.
* Record all details of the incident in the allocated form.
* Security and police can be engaged due to seriousness of incident, communicate with victim on this.

**What to do when a patron alerts you that an incident has occurred previously.**

* Tell the individual that you will get a manager immediately and ask them to come with you.
* Manager to follow procedural responses as per incident report framework.

**What NOT to do:**

• Failure to respond immediately and/or being dismissive or downplaying the seriousness of an incident

• Blame the victim for what has happened, or justify the perpetrator’s behaviour

• Eject the **victim** from the venue

• Refuse to eject the **perpetrator** from the venue

• Doubt or disbelieve a victim or witness' experience

• Failure to engage security and police upon the victim’s request (or automatically in the case of a serious incident) and or/ record details of the incident, including destroying records or video/audio footage of an incident.

**Procedural Response:**

Informal Action examples:

• The victim confronting the harasser personally or with friends

• Friends or partners addressing the incident with the perpetrator

• Individuals alerting security of the antisocial behaviour but not formalising a complaint

• Security or management asking individual/s to refrain from doing what they are doing to avoid an eviction

**Formal Action Examples:**

Individual/s making an official request to remove the individual via a complaint to a security guard or manager.

Using the organisation’s internal complaints procedures and resources (incident reports) post incident.

The way that complaints will be handled should be documented in the policy or in a separate complaints procedure.

People who are accused of discrimination or harassment have the right to be informed of the nature of the allegations and respond to the allegations in a confidential manner. If the complaint is found to be unsubstantiated, an alleged harasser may be entitled to an apology or some other type of acknowledgment by management and removal of all records of the matter from relevant files.

**Signage**

Signage is useful in conversation with patrons especially if they are intoxicated or abrupt in nature. You can tap the sign and repeat how they are in breach of the house / door policy.

For example:

“We reserve the right to refuse entry “

“We have a zero- tolerance policy towards intimidating behaviours, you will be heard and assisted"

Signage is used to remind people that the venue cares about their safety and is there to consult on any issue arising in the venue, it is not used to intimidate patrons or cause further issues. Venues can tailor their signage to suit the nature of their venue, and the unique issues that are faced.