

## **SAFER SPACES POLICY**

A safer space is a supportive and non-threatening environment where the physical, mental, and emotional safety of the people within it are the highest priority. A safer space encourages respect, open-mindedness, and a willingness to learn from others where people can feel comfortable to express themselves and share experiences without fear of discrimination. We use the word safer to acknowledge that safety is relative, and by acknowledging the experiences of each person in the room, we hope to create as safe an environment as possible. In a safer space, everyone who enters has a responsibility to uphold the values of the space.

The Folk Festival Society of Calgary (FFSC) acknowledges that sexualized and gender-based violence is a pervasive and widespread issue within the music community. We recognize that there is much work to be done to address, respond, and prevent sexualized violence in our community and to build a safer environment for everyone in the music space.

The Folk Festival Society of Calgary is committed to providing a harassment-free space for everyone, regardless sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, disability, physical appearance, age, language, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, or otherwise. The FFSC does not tolerate harassment of patrons, artists, volunteers, affiliates, board or staff in any form. Anyone who violates this safer space policy may be ejected or banned from our event spaces at the discretion of our event supervisor(s) and/or our security team.

This safer space policy applies to all Folk Festival Society of Calgary spaces and programs, including our events, the Calgary Folk Music Festival, Block Heater, Festival Hall and our concert series. The goal of safer spaces is to encourage all participants to work together to prevent or reduce harm, particularly for those who are often the targets of violence and harassment. Oppressive and/or abusive behavior that makes others feel unsafe will not be tolerated.

Such behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive, derogatory, threatening, aggressive, or silencing comments related to gender, gender identity + expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, age, language, body size, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic standing, or otherwise
- Violence, intimidation, stalking, or unwanted following of a person
- Persistent micro-aggressions in the form of comments, jokes, or otherwise
- Inappropriate physical contact without consent
- Unwelcome sexual attention
- Advocating or encouraging any of the above behavior

## **Disclosure**

Please do not hesitate to contact us, at any time, if you have been made to feel unsafe or you witness the above behaviours. All disclosures, anonymous or otherwise, are investigated, discussed, and reviewed by the safer spaces committee or the on-site organizers before action is taken. Any actions and cases will not be discussed publicly.

If you have something to disclose, you can reach us in the following ways:

- Speaking on-site to a staff member, security volunteer or first aid volunteer
- Emailing the organizers at [saferspaces@calgaryfolkfest.com](mailto:saferspaces@calgaryfolkfest.com)
- Disclosing through our online form on our about or contact page (you may disclose anonymously)
- Go to the Safer Spaces location onsite at the Calgary Folk Music Festival at Prince's Island Park

If immediate action is required we will seek out the venue security volunteers/employees, provide an escort, call a taxi, contact police as required, or assist you in any other way. Any in-person conversations will be held in confidence. Any reports will be handled privately and will be acted upon.

Anonymous reports limit our ability to follow up directly and can impact the investigation process and outcomes. However, the safer spaces committee will investigate and take all anonymous reports seriously.

## **Other useful numbers:**

- Emergencies: 911
- Distress Centre 24 hour crisis line: (403) 266-4357
- Calgary Counselling Centre: 1-833-827-4229
- CCASA (Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse) support and information line: (403) 237-5888
- CONNECT Family & Sexual Abuse Network
  - Domestic Violence
    - Calgary: (403)-234- 7233
    - Toll-Free: 1-866- 606-7233
  - Sexual Violence
    - Calgary: (403)-237- 5888
    - Toll-Free: 1-877- 237-5888
- Sagesse Domestic Violence Prevention Society: (403) 234-7337

## **Enforcement**

If a person engages in harassing behavior, the organizers and appropriately trained volunteers retain the right to take any actions to keep the event or space a welcoming environment for everyone. Safety of the person(s) who have been harmed or impacted by violence and/or abuse is our priority. We retain the right to remove and or ban offenders from FFFSC events, spaces and/or programs at the Society's discretion. In the case of removal from a paid event, the ticket will not be refunded.

All reports, anonymous or otherwise, are investigated, discussed, and reviewed by the safer spaces committee or the on-site organizers before action is taken. Any actions and cases will not be discussed publicly.

## **Questions, Concerns, Feedback**

If you have any questions as to enforcement, review process, reporting process or have a suggestion to improve our safer space policy please contact is at [hello@calgaryfolkfest.com](mailto:hello@calgaryfolkfest.com)