

# **Westie Underground – Code of Conduct**

## **Purpose**

Westie Underground is dedicated to fostering a respectful, welcoming, and safe dance community.

Everyone has the right to enjoy activities free from maltreatment, harassment, or discrimination.

Our goal is to protect the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of every participant, ensuring a culture of respect and integrity.

## **Core Principles**

1. **Respect and Dignity** – Treat all individuals with kindness, fairness, and professionalism.
2. **Safety First** – Prioritize physical and emotional safety at all times.
3. **Zero Tolerance for Maltreatment** – No form of abuse, harassment, or discrimination will be accepted.
4. **Inclusivity** – Recognize and value diversity in all its forms.
5. **Shared Responsibility** – Everyone is responsible for maintaining a safe and positive environment.
6. **Fair and Trauma-Informed Response** – All reports will be handled with care, respect, and impartiality.

## **Scope**

This Code applies to:

- All members, directors, instructors, volunteers, students, contractors and attendees.
- Any Westie Underground activity, on or off site, including online spaces.
- Situations where conduct outside Westie Underground impacts the community or its reputation.

## **Prohibited Behaviours**

The following are strictly prohibited. These categories may overlap, and behaviour will be judged by its nature, not its label.

1. Psychological Maltreatment – Verbal abuse, humiliation, intimidation, body-shaming, spreading false rumours, or intentionally ignoring or isolating someone.
2. Physical Maltreatment – Hitting, unsafe contact, dangerous training practices, forcing painful positions without purpose, withholding food, water, or medical care, or encouraging participation while injured.
3. Neglect – Failing to provide safe conditions, adequate supervision, or consideration of an individual's needs.

4. Sexual Maltreatment – Any non-consensual sexual contact, coercion, sexual harassment, sharing sexual images without consent, or a power imbalance to influence personal relationships.
5. Grooming & Boundary Violations – Building inappropriate personal relationships, inappropriate private meetings in non-public spaces, inappropriate gift-giving, or unsafe sharing of facilities.
6. Discrimination – Unequal treatment or harassment based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or other protected grounds.
7. Aiding, Abetting, or Failing to Report – Helping, encouraging, or ignoring prohibited behaviour when you know or should know it is happening.
8. False Allegations – Knowingly making false reports.
9. Interference with Investigations – Withholding evidence, intimidating witnesses, or breaching confidentiality.
10. Retaliation – Punishing or disadvantaging anyone for making a good-faith report or participating in an investigation.
11. Impairment or intoxication - It is prohibited to attend an event or function organized by Westie Underground while impaired by alcohol or drugs.

## **Reporting**

- Anyone can report prohibited behaviour, whether they experienced it or witnessed it.
- Reports should be made promptly to a designated contact.
- Reports must describe the behaviour; the investigation will determine if a violation occurred.
- Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible.
- False reports made in bad faith are a violation of this Code.

## **Sanctions**

Possible consequences include:

- Verbal or written warnings or apologies
- Education or remedial training
- Loss of privileges or probation
- Suspension or eligibility restrictions
- Permanent ban from Westie Underground activities
- Other measures deemed appropriate

Sanctions will be proportionate to the behaviour and may consider:

- Severity and impact of the behaviour
- Presence of a power imbalance or position of trust
- Prior history and patterns of behaviour
- Risk to others if the person remains in the community
- Willingness to accept responsibility and cooperate

- The views of those directly affected

## **Key Definitions**

- Consent – Voluntary agreement to participate in an activity by someone with legal capacity.
- Power Imbalance – When one person has greater authority, influence, or control over another, making it harder for the other to refuse or object.
- Vulnerable Participant – Someone at increased risk of harm due to age, identity, disability, or other factors.

By participating in Westie Underground activities, you agree to uphold these standards, speak up when concerns arise, and help create a positive, safe, and inclusive environment for everyone.