



Ensemble Member Handbook

Welcome!

Thank you so much for being a vital component of Finest City Improv.

This handbook was created to inform you of important information you'll need as a key member of the Finest City Improv Community and as a House Team Member. All new performers should read this handbook thoroughly and keep it for reference. Every effort is made to keep this information up to date. However, policies and procedures are subject to change without notice, at Finest City Improv's discretion.

Improvisation is the art of spontaneous creation. Great improv is engaging, surprising, thought-provoking and sometimes very funny. When we step off stage, the training and preparation that we have had does not leave us. It influences every aspect of our lives. **Improv has made us happier people and we have dedicated our lives to sharing this art form with others because of this.** Saying "Yes! And..." in life—to yourself and to the opportunities and challenges that arise—is how we create and embrace opportunities in everything we do.

Please review this handbook, sign the attached acknowledgment form, and if you have any questions please call me at (619) 306-6047.

I hope that our relationship with you is a long lasting and mutually beneficial one. Have fun and keep striving to produce the finest improv shows in San Diego!

Amy Lisewski

CEO and Artistic Director

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ABOUT FINEST CITY IMPROV

Finest City Improv was founded by Amy Lisewski to fulfill a need for a home base for long-form improvisational theater in San Diego. After years of traveling to (and living in) Los Angeles to study and practice improvisation at Second City and IO West, she decided to bring the best of LA to San Diego. Starting with two teams and two shows per month at temporary locations in 2011, she quickly grew FCI to a permanent theater with shows four nights per week, a full offering of improv classes and workshops for all levels, and a community of improvisers on dozens of new teams. With her background in business, she collaborated with former Second City Communications Producer Rachel Romanski to create a highly regarded applied improvisation program to bring improv principles and practices to San Diego businesses.

Our Core Focus

We entertain, inspire, and bring joy to people with our talent and passion for improv and its transforming effects.

Our Core Values

Cultivate fun, happiness, and a little weirdness in everything and everyone.

Improv has made us happier people. We have chosen to spend our lives living, breathing, and sharing improv with others because it is how we stay funny, happy, and delightfully out of the normal comfort zones. **Every audience member, student, client, and team member will be delightfully surprised by the degree to which we to help them discover more joy in their lives with what we do.**

Ensemble first.

The only star in an improv is the ensemble itself. Our collective impact is greatest when we rely on, help, and challenge each other to be our best. We take a collective bow as a team and accept the applause with pride. We strive to be the most inclusionary, fun, and supportive home to improvisers in San Diego. **We embrace everyone on our team and in our community with a spirit of generosity and respect.**

Creative Risk-Taking

We believe that improv, like other art forms, should be a safe space to make others uncomfortable by taking intellectual, artistic, and personal risks. As highly creative people that push at the boundaries of what is currently “acceptable” we are always at risk for being misunderstood. Therefore, we also believe in first assuming good

intentions when misunderstandings happen or offenses are taken and engaging in direct face to face healthy debate on the merits of these actions.

All performers are asked to join our private Facebook Group for students and performers of Finest City Improv and help to create a thriving, positive and helpful online community for our students, guest performers, and fans!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/337137096435645/>

FCI HOUSE TEAM MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

As member of a FCI House Team you are rewarded with...

- Being a member of a dedicated and supported group of improvisers that believe in growing the art of improv.
- Guaranteed weekly or semi-weekly stage time/shows with the dedication of the FCI operations, sales, and marketing team behind every performance.
- Public recognition (lobby and website and other means) and priority billing in our marketing
- Participation in fun team-building, social, professional development, and recognition events
- Great teams of talented and dedicated players to play with on a regular basis
- Priority inclusion in new shows and the opportunity to contribute to them
- Free admission to all regular shows at the theater (space available after paid tickets)
- Invitation to assist with assessment of guest teams and input on show scheduling.

Contribute at: <http://goo.gl/forms/zjh40LX1TE>

- Consistent space for your house team rehearsals (we do have to work around classes but house teams have next priority!)
- Four comps per month for friends and family. Simply have them use their name at the door. The box office tracks these.
- Opportunity to run drop-in classes for pay (after 6 months). Contact Kat if interested!
- 15% discount registration on all training center offerings (master classes, electives, improv classes, etc.) – valid on early-bird and regular registration levels. Use code **HOUSETEAMSROCK!** online
- Opportunities for paid improv gigs for special events (we will contact you!)
- Opportunity to become an instructor in our training center.
- Opportunities to develop new shows and use FCI facilities and stage time to do so. Just let us know your ideas!
- Reduced rehearsal room rentals for your “indie” teams (\$15/hour for any team that you are on)
- A cubby space or similar in the greenroom (if you don't have one yet find a buddy to share with and add your name to it!)

HOUSE TEAM MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES & GUIDELINES

As a member of the Finest City Improv Ensemble, you are a vital part of our success. We will work our butts off to keep things running smoothly and to continue providing a fantastic venue for improv in San Diego. Please help us by keeping your butt fully covered and your head fully in the game.

It's extremely important to us that our theater is a place where everyone feels free to fully express themselves without fear of being made to feel unwelcome or unsafe on account of biological sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, religious affiliation, political affiliation, age, or physical or mental ability (to name but a few). Given the nature of improvisation, we try to balance freedom to explore new, risky, and potentially uncomfortable territory while at the same time respecting your feeling of personal physical and emotional safety. It's a tricky and untidy balance!

We are gathering together to enjoy improvisation, the discovery of unscripted theater. This process involves bringing our humanity to the stage in all its beauty and, sometimes, ugliness. Performing joy and, sometimes, sadness. Love and, sometimes, hatefulness.

Let's be clear: Bigotry has no place in improvisation. However, humanity has all the space in the world, and humans are messy and gloriously fallible. As those qualities may be brought to the rehearsal room and stage, the improv theater cannot be considered a "safe emotional space." It is, however, a brave, intentionally caring space of trust-building.

Improvisers are advised to live our lives and bring that to the stage. As such, our rehearsals and shows and the moments between each will involve moments which may feel hilarious, tragic, angry, loving, hateful, boundary-pushing, boring, mean, fearful, fascinating, totally gross, complex, utterly raunchy, totally stupid, shocking, deeply inspiring ... and so on. There may be wonderful moments of improvised beauty. There may also be dumb sex jokes. As a Finest City Improv ensemble member, you are agreeing to be responsible for being open to all of it.

As house team member you are highly dedicated to...

- Bringing joy to those who walk in our doors -- our highest priority.
- Developing as an artist and striving to be the best improviser you can be for yourself, your teammates, and your audiences.
- Contributing to the success of the theater with your professionalism, great attitude, and dedication.

We all succeed when you ...

- **Have someone's back.** Better yet, everyone's back. Improv is an ensemble process. It's all about each other. We treat others as we want to be treated ourselves. All performers are valued equally.
- **Give it your all** every time you are on stage and in rehearsal. Stage time is a privilege and a gift. Please be punctual and reliable for the sake of your team.
- **Take notes** from your coach/director and never giving notes to team mates.
- **Pitch in** where and when you can to help keep the theater going (i.e. hosting or jumping in with front of house operations when you notice help might be needed). Helping us keep facilities clean and secured.
- **Be a great role model** for students and others in our community. They admire you!
- **Play at the top of our intelligence** and treating our audience like poets and geniuses. There's a whole world of things going on out there beyond boners, gynecologists offices and smoking ganja. Read the news and burn the Union Tribune. Get inspired/agitated/joyful/confused and bring a point of view to the stage. Respect yourself and your fellow players. We are an inclusive and diverse group and welcome all to our theatre. **Respect the audience.** Denigrating social groups just makes you look like a ding-dong. Not the yummy chocolaty kind.
- **Expand your boundaries.** You have the right to define what feels fun and comfortable (and uncomfortable) for you without judgment from others. You have the responsibility for communicating your boundaries in a respectful manner. You also have the right to allow those boundaries to be respectfully expanded.
- **Take risks and be courageous.** You have the right to be treated as a character onstage and a colleague offstage. Onstage, it is assumed that you are playing a character, not yourself. We believe that everyone is unique and has so much to bring to the stage and the classroom. Honoring our own experiences and strengths leads to highly authentic and engaging improv. Honoring others' ideas, particularly when at odds with our own, is courageous and encourages the healthy exchange of ideas.
- **Fail graciously.** We learn from our failures as well as our successes and need both to grow. We hold space for everyone to fail as creative risks are taken and understand that we will all have failures along the way.
- **Add Value.** We live the improv principle of "yes! and..." off stage as much as on stage, specifically treating everything as an opportunity and looking for ways to add value at every moment.

- **Communicate Responsibly** for the sake of the theater and each other. If we feel that our rights have been infringed upon or we have been offended by another member's actions, we will review the full policies and procedures for performers and students and resolve our differences with healthy dialogue in a manner that strengthens the ensemble and Finest City Improv. We are adults that improvise... we know how to communicate with others in a productive manner even in difficult/uncomfortable situations. Public shaming is not productive and we do not engage in or support it.
- **Laugh, darlin', laugh...** You have the right to remain laughing; anything you say can and may be used for comedic purposes. You have the right to have an audience laugh with you; if you cannot afford an audience, FCI will provide one for you. :)

Dress for the Show

Please invite the audience to see your bits on stage, not your naughty bits that should be under your clothing. Wear clothing that is appropriate for the show.

- Shorts, low cut tops, old or stained t-shirts, torn or ripped clothes, banana hammocks, or other excessively revealing clothes are distracting.
- If you're wearing a skirt or dress, please make sure to wear tights or leggings or something (protect your bits).
- Wear shoes (yes, for real) and let's go ahead and see those feet covered (no flip flops or stiletto heels, please.)

In short, if the audience is thinking about what you were wearing, or knows what color your underwear is, you're wearing the wrong thing. As proud as you might be about your rock hard abs or the funny thing on your t-shirt, save it for your photo shoot for the Funny Sexy Improvisers of San Diego Calendar.

Mean It

We of course encourage all performers to seek out every available performance opportunity. That said, when you have been scheduled for shows at FCI, we consider that a handshake. Once we shake on it, **we're counting on you**. Don't leave us hanging. That's just not cool to your ensemble or the theatre. We understand that when scheduled for a weekly show you will sometimes have to miss a show for your families bbq or that much deserved vacation with your lover.

Also, we need your help putting butts in the seats and laughter in the air. **Promote your shows!** Invite your second and third cousins and all your friends and enemies. It is up to all of us to keep these shows going. We are putting a nice budget behind marketing but honestly, word of mouth and a friendly personal invitation are still the most effective ways to get people to shows.

Alcohol Policy

As a theater that will be serving alcohol it is important that we are all onboard with expectations regarding drinking alcohol at the theater, in the green room, the classroom, or anywhere on grounds. It is a serious issue regarding our ABC license and our financial well being.

A) We are NOT funnier when we are drunk. Well, only to ourselves. We understand that some times one drink early in the evening helps you unwind from a stressful day and make new friends. Beyond this “standard,” it is not acceptable on stage. If you are under 21 don’t even think of drinking on site.

B) After the show you may join us in the theatre or lobby to enjoy drinking and watching the shows. Please do not “hang” in the greenroom or classroom. It’s not our bar. It’s for warm-ups and such.

C) All food and beverage service is managed by The Hope (Lafayette Hotel). They are responsible for adhering to their ABC license (liquor license) and are providing trained servers and security personnel to ensure that their license is never put in jeopardy (they are expensive and difficult to get). We are responsible for not doing anything that would put them in jeopardy.

Attendance

Improv is an ensemble process and we rely on each other to get the most out of the time we dedicate to rehearsals. Please be on time for each rehearsal. Missing more than 20 minutes of any rehearsal will be counted as an absence. If you miss more than two rehearsals in a 6-week period, you may be removed from the team.

Facility

- We hold rehearsals on the stage, in the classroom, in the “greenroom”, and sometimes in the lobby.
- When using the classroom for rehearsals, please do not use the office desks or take supplies from this area.
- The **restrooms** are located within the hotel. After 6pm these are accessed by exiting the training center (if in classroom or stage) and entering through the double doors by the Red Fox Room. Please do not use the lobby hallway door. Do not leave any doors unattended when they are unlocked.
- **Please clean up** after yourselves after each rehearsal. Put chairs back where they belong and remove all trash. You are responsible for ensuring that spaces are in good order before leaving.

- **Valuables** - Finest City Improv is not responsible for any lost or stolen articles. If you lose something check the red fabric bin located in the greenroom. If we all help to ensure that doors to the greenroom and classroom remain locked during shows and rehearsals, our belongings are generally safe in the classroom.

A Few Important Rules of Personal Safety

COACHES and TEAM CAPTAINS: Please review the boundaries of personal protection and safety with teammates.

Here are some general guidelines to keep in mind (this is NOT an exhaustive list of what is and is not acceptable. Please refer to Standards of Conduct Section for more information):

As a team, you are responsible for ensuring that you have discussed all of the actions below and whether each is or is not acceptable within your team. Every team will decide on their own level of comfort and safety and is responsible for any new member being on board with the team standards.

- **Refrain from physical contact to neck, head, chest, or genital areas.** Touching someone's face in a scene gently is generally acceptable but holding or twisting their head is unsafe.
- It is extremely difficult to safely simulate hitting, slapping, or other violence in improvisation without stage combat training and practice with the consenting scene partners. Refrain from all actions of this type in class and in your class shows. **Refrain from slapping or hitting anyone.**
- Do not kiss, grope, or fondle scene partners unless your team has agreed that this is acceptable.
- Do not pick up anyone unless they explicitly agree to be picked up.
- Do not pull or grab clothes or hair.
- Never remove anyone else's eyeglasses.
- Do not jump on anyone's back without explicit consent from them.
- Inform your coach and teammates about any physical injuries or limitations prior to class.

Seeing Shows Helps You Grow!

We all grow when we watch shows. As a team, see shows and discuss them. You can also help the theater schedule better and better teams by rating shows using our Google Form.

As a house team member you can see all shows at the theater for free on a space available basis. If you are taking a seat for a show **please make sure to check in with the box office** so that your seat is counted in the system and all paying customers have a seat.

More Opportunities to Perform

Improvisation is a performance art and we want everyone to experience the joy of performing for an appreciative audience as much as possible. There are many more ways to get on stage.

Open Jams! We have open stage time where anyone with a basic understanding of improv can jump in and play. Check our stage schedule for the times as they change throughout the year. Encourage all students to participate!

House Team Mash-ups and Other Special Events

Look for announcements to participate in special shows. We cast these from house team members. Some shows are even paid gigs!

Opportunities to Teach and Coach

After 6 months as a house team member, you can ask to be scheduled to facilitate one of our weekly community classes (drop-ins). You will also be eligible to be considered for teaching a master class or regular class. Drop-in teachers earn \$5 per student.

If you are interested in coaching a house team, let Kat know! Coaching is a great paid gig that helps you grow as a performer.

Discounts

As a house team member you enjoy a 15% discount on all shows, classes, and merchandise. The discount code is HOUSETEAMSROCK!

Also, use your house team member card at Hope46 for 15% off your bill. If you don't have one yet ask Kat.

Listing Your Experience on an Actors' Resume

It is important that for any audition, whether through Finest City Improv or not, that you represent your training and show experience with us correctly and honestly. After completing the core improv program, please list as "Finest City Training Center Graduate." Your house team may be listed as a "mainstage show" and you may list yourself as a "Finest City Improv Ensemble Member" as long as you are an active house team member.

Pitching In!

Work Study positions are generally given priority to our student volunteers but if you would like to run the booth or work at the box office let us know! Volunteer positions come up very regularly and are the easiest way for you to receive discounted tuition. Volunteers are usually

sought to assist with theater operations, show operations, or public events. We need your help! If you are interested in assisting us please let us know. We often put out a call for specific needs and your assistance is vital to our continued growth.

Steering Committee

The FCI house team members are represented by a steering committee that meets with the Artistic Director on a quarterly basis. The purpose of the committee is to help shape the policies, procedures, events, and artistic direction of the house teams. They also help inform the house team members of these policies, procedures, events, and directions. They meet the morning of the quarterly team reviews and additional times when requested.

Team captain's responsibilities before and after rehearsals.

You will be given a key code for the door lock. Do not share this with anyone and please ensure that facility is fully secured when leaving. Do not leave any door unlocked or propped open and unattended.

- Lock all windows.
- Close all blinds.
- Reset chairs.
- Remove any mess left behind.
- Check all doors! Make sure they are fully closed and locked.
- Turn off all lights except ghost light in theater.

HOUSE TEAM REVIEWS AND CHANGES

- House teams are reviewed every 3 months (4 times per year) according to published schedule.
- When you accept a place on a house team you commit to a minimum of 6 months (First 3 months are probationary)
- House teams are reviewed by Artistic Director with input from FCI Director-level staff, team captains, and coaches.
- Information on changes to rosters or teams will be communicated to house team members at least 2 weeks before end of review period.
- Open auditions for house teams (new teams or spots on current teams) are held during each review period and the results of the auditions are factored into the team reviews.
- Current house team members that would like to be considered for other house teams may attend auditions and express their interest.

- Key criteria used in auditions is completion level of FCI classes, experience performing on guest teams, generosity and support shown on stage, stage presence, “yes, anding”, and availability. Other factors may be considered.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

for all performers, students, instructors, staff, and volunteers (collectively “participants”).

Civility

By their very nature, improv theater and comedy are artistic pursuits in which the boundaries of what is deemed socially “appropriate” and/or politically correct are often blurred and subject to interpretation. Words and/or conduct that offend one person may have no effect on another.

Finest City Improv does not endeavor to shield participants from ideas and/or behavior that they may find unwelcome, disagreeable or even offensive; indeed, the free exchange of ideas between participants – even those that some may find objectionable – is vital to the creative process underlying great improv theater. As such, participants should

approach their work with an open mind, and take into the account the diversity of viewpoints, beliefs and backgrounds that make the programs at Finest City Improv such a rich experience.

By the same token, all participants should exercise good judgment when participating in theater activities, and avoid engaging in conduct that rises to the level of abuse, such as targeted attacks directed at a particular individual. As a general rule, Finest City Improv will not intervene to enforce social standards of civility. If, however, you feel that certain conduct has overstepped the bounds of what is acceptable even in an improv theater/comedy setting, you may decline to participate and report the behavior to FCI Staff (currently Amy Lisewski, Kat Brown, or Jesse Suphan). Finest City Improv will investigate the matter and address the issue, as needed. **There will be no retaliation against any participant who in good faith raises a concern, reports an incident and/or participates in an investigation under this policy.** Any participant who believes that he or she has been retaliated against in any manner should report it immediately to FCI Artistic Director(s).

Anti-Harassment Policy

Harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, is strictly prohibited. Finest City Improv will not tolerate harassment by anyone, including instructors, staff, volunteers, students, visitors, vendors, contractors and third parties.

Harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical or visual, that is so severe or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with an individual's participation in

Finest City Improv's programs, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment. Examples of prohibited harassment include, but are not limited to epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes directed at an individual based on his or her personal characteristics, which **do not serve any show or class related function and/or fall outside the bounds of what is acceptable in the theater,** as set forth in Finest City Improv's Civility policy.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment in particular is strictly prohibited. **Sexual harassment encompasses a range of conduct from sexual assault (which is also a criminal act) to conduct such as unwanted touching or persistent unwelcome comments, sexual advances, propositions and/or requests for sexual favors, depending on the specific circumstances and context in which the conduct occurs.** For example, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or sexually directed remarks or behavior constitute sexual harassment when (i) submission to or rejection of such conduct is made, explicitly, or implicitly, a basis for an academic decision or professional advancement, or a term or condition of either; or (ii) such conduct is directed against an individual despite its rejection. On the other hand, sexual innuendo or suggestive comments, gestures or jokes made in the course of a rehearsal or performance may not be considered impermissible sexual harassment, if they serve an educational and/or artistic purpose.

Please note that due to the unique nature of the improv theater/comedy setting, **a person's subjective belief that behavior is offensive, intimidating or hostile does not necessarily render that behavior harassment under this policy.** Rather, the behavior must be objectively unreasonable in light of the surrounding circumstances and context. Such expression will not constitute impermissible harassment unless (in addition to satisfying the above definitions) it is targeted at a specific person or persons, is abusive and/or serves no educational purpose.

Complaint Procedure

Any participant who experiences or witnesses harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment, whether from a fellow student or a faculty member, should feel free to **discuss the problem with FCI Artistic Director(s)** and, if desired, request that they speak informally to the person complained about. **No one at Finest City Improv – whether a faculty member, coach, performer, or a student – may reprimand, retaliate or discriminate against an individual for raising a concern, making a complaint and/or participating in an investigation under this policy.** Any individual who believes that he or she has been retaliated against in any manner should report the matter to FCI Artistic Director(s).

All concerns and complaints will be treated with confidentiality to the extent practicable without compromising the investigation and/or resolution of the matter, and will be investigated thoroughly and promptly. Where possible, Finest City Improv will attempt to resolve the issue informally (for example, by speaking to the alleged harasser and/or counseling the parties). However, this does not preclude more formal corrective or disciplinary action.

Consensual Relationships

It is against Training Center policy for students and instructors to enter and/or engage in romantic and/or sexual relationships with one another while the instructor is teaching the student in a class and/or supervising the student's work at the Training Center.

Consensual romantic and/or sexual relationships between instructors and Training Center students not enrolled in a class the instructor is teaching, while not forbidden, generally are considered unwise and inappropriate. Please note that even where both parties have consented at the outset to a romantic and/or sexual involvement, such consent does not preclude a subsequent charge of sexual harassment against the instructor.

If you are working as a teacher this applies to you. Consensual relationships between performers and/or coaches is not addressed by Finest City Improv policy.

Sexual Assault Policy

Sexual assault is a criminal act that violates the standards of our community and is unacceptable at Finest City Improv. Finest City Improv's Sexual Assault policy applies to students, instructors, staff, and visitors, as well as vendors, contractors and third parties.

Sexual assault is defined as:

- Any intentional or knowing touching or fondling by an individual, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitals, breasts, thighs, or buttocks of the victim
- without the consent of the victim;
- Touching or fondling of an individual by the victim when the victim is forced to do so against his or her will; or
- Any nonconsensual acts involving sexual penetration of the sex organs, anus, or mouth.
- Use of alcohol or drugs may impair an individual's capacity to consent freely and may render an individual incapable of giving consent.
- More information about California's laws regarding sexual assault can be found in the CA Penal Code: http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/.html/pen_table_of_contents.html

Professional Help: <http://www.ccssd.org/get-help/>

Reporting Procedure

Any participant who believes he or she has been sexually assaulted, whether by a fellow student, faculty member or visitor, should report the incident to FCI Artistic Director(s). **The participant is also encouraged to report the incident to the police** and seek medical care as soon as possible. No one at Finest City Improv – whether a faculty member or a student – may reprimand, retaliate or discriminate against an individual for raising a concern, making a complaint and/or participating in an investigation under this policy. Any individual who believes that he or she has been retaliated against in any manner should report the matter to FCI Artistic Director(s).

All concerns and complaints will be treated with confidentiality to the extent practicable without compromising the investigation and/or resolution of the matter, and will be investigated thoroughly and promptly. Depending on the severity of the incident and the individuals involved, Finest City Improv may pursue the matter through internal disciplinary procedures without the cooperation of the victim. Under such circumstances, Finest City Improv will inform the victim of its decision to proceed in this manner.

Violence

Finest City Improv maintains a zero tolerance policy for violence. Acts or threats of physical violence which involve or affect participants or which occur on Finest City property, will not be tolerated. Examples of prohibited threats or acts of violence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Hitting or shoving an individual
- Physically injuring another individual
- Threatening an individual or his/her family, friends, or property with harm, or otherwise engaging in behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury in another person
- Intentional destruction or threatening to destruct Training Center /Finest property
- Making/sending harassing or threatening phone calls, text messages, emails, or postings on social media platforms
- Harassing surveillance or stalking
- Unauthorized possession or use of firearms or weapons

Every student is encouraged to report incidents of threats or acts of physical violence of which he/she is aware. The report should be made to FCI Artistic Director(s). Please note that this policy does not apply to fictitious “threats” or simulated “acts” of violence made in the course of your performing or rehearsing.

Weapons

The Training Center prohibits all persons who enter Finest City Improv property from carrying a handgun, firearm, knife, explosive, or other prohibited weapon of any kind regardless of whether the person is licensed to carry the weapon or not.

The only exception to this policy will be police officers, security guards or other persons who have been given written consent by the Training Center /Finest and/or are permitted by law to carry a weapon on the property.

Violation of this policy is grounds for discipline, including immediate dismissal.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

The use, sale, manufacture, cultivation, distribution, dispensation, possession of illegal drugs or other unauthorized or controlled substances while on Finest City Improv property, or while otherwise engaged in Finest City Improv activities, is strictly prohibited. The term “controlled substances” is defined as any substances that are illegal or controlled by federal and/or state law, including lawful substances (such as prescription drugs) which have been improperly obtained and/or used in violation of their lawful prescription.

Participants are prohibited from having any such illegal or unauthorized controlled substances in their systems while attending class and/or engaged in Training Center activities. **Outside alcohol consumption or illegal drug activity that impacts a participant's performance or participation in Finest City Improv activities and/or threatens the reputation of the Training Center /Finest City Improv will not be tolerated.**

The only exception to this policy applies with respect to alcoholic beverages served and consumed at Finest City Improv sponsored or approved social or business related functions or meetings, provided that the participant consumes alcohol responsibly and in moderation and does not become intoxicated or otherwise impaired. **Alcohol consumption by Finest City Improv employees, volunteers, students or guests who are under the age of 21 is strictly prohibited.**

Participants who violate the Training Center's Drug and Alcohol policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including permanent expulsion from Finest City Improv and/or referral for prosecution of criminal violations.

Whistleblower Policy

Participants must immediately report to FCI Artistic Director(s) any activity or conduct that they suspect is:

- Illegal, or a violation of any state or federal law and/or regulation; or

- A serious violation of Finest City Improv's policies and/or procedures, including the above - stated policies regarding violence, use of drugs and/or alcohol and weapons; or
- Otherwise inappropriate and/or unethical.

Finest City Improv will not retaliate against any participant as a result of his or her report of inappropriate conduct under this policy, or because he or she has refused to follow an illegal, inappropriate and/or unethical request.

Confidentiality

Reports of inappropriate conduct under the policy may be submitted on a confidential basis by the participant directly or may be submitted anonymously. Finest City Improv will endeavor to investigate the reported conduct as discreetly as possible under the applicable circumstances. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an appropriate investigation.

Handling of Reported Violations

Upon receipt of a report of inappropriate conduct under this policy, Finest City Improv shall conduct a prompt and thorough investigation and appropriate corrective action will be taken, if/ as warranted.

Open Door Policy

Finest City Improv is committed to providing a productive and fun educational environment for all participants. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, concern or question can be addressed and discussed.

Performers who have a question, problem, suggestion and/or complaint should feel free to discuss the issue with FCI Artistic Director(s). There will be no retaliation for raising a concern under this policy. Any issues raised or discussions held pursuant to Finest City Improv's Open Door Policy will be treated with confidentiality unless the participant agrees to include others in the discussion or an investigation into the matter is warranted, in which case, confidentiality will be maintained to the extent practicable without compromising the investigation.

Please note that Finest City Improv's Whistleblower and Open Door policies do not apply to complaints of harassment or sexual assault. Participants who wish to report an incident of harassment or sexual assault must follow the complaint procedures set forth in the Anti-Harassment and Sexual Assault policies.

Discipline Policy

Immediate Dismissal or Expulsion

If at any point during FCI activities, a coach feels that a performer is engaging in behavior which is threatening, dangerous and/or highly disruptive to the ensemble, the coach may require that the performer leave for the remainder of that day. Performers dismissed in this manner may not return to Finest City Improv until they have spoken with FCI Artistic Director(s). Behavior which would result in immediate dismissal includes, but is not limited to threats or acts of violence, inebriation and/or severe impairment due to use of drugs and/or other controlled substances, violation of the Anti-Harassment and/or Civility policies or other actions which are disruptive to the work of the class, in the discretion of Finest City Improv. If behavior is deemed excessively disruptive or dangerous to the FCI environment, the FCI reserves the right to permanently expel a participant from Finest City Improv property.

Warnings

Participants who display behavior which a coach, team captain, or staff member deems to be detrimental to the progress of their ensemble may be issued a warning. The coach, team captain, or staff member gives the warning verbally and then notifies the FCI office. If a participant receives more than one warning for similar issues, the FCI office will be notified and appropriate action will be taken. **Examples of conduct considered detrimental to the progress of the ensemble include, but are not limited to, excessive lateness, excessive absences, and harassment of another participant including muckraking/slander/malicious gossip.**

DISCUSSING THEATER AND TEAM ISSUES

YOU are the first representatives of FCI and students, ensemble, guests and patrons look to us to set an example and live up to our vision of an inclusive and supportive community. We agree to refrain from all participant, team, and theater issue discussion with anyone outside of the circle of our team and coaches and only when in private rehearsals.

FCI has a zero-tolerance policy regarding negative, slanderous, malicious or disparaging comments made about other performers, coaches, staff, or other FCI community members. Please direct all grievances directly to FCI Artistic Director(s).

If you are witness to this behavior please report this to FCI Artistic Director(s) and they will discuss this directly with the parties involved. Repeated violations will result in dismissal from any positions that represent FCI.

RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE FINEST CITY IMPROV ENSEMBLE MEMBER HANDBOOK AND POLICIES

I have received and read a copy of the Finest City Improv Ensemble Member Handbook, and agree to abide by the Handbook's rules, policies, and standards of conduct, including, without limitation, the Civility, Violence, and Anti-Harassment policies, as well as any revisions made thereto. I understand that the policies described in the Handbook are subject to change at any time.

I understand that by their very nature, improv theater and comedy are artistic pursuits in which the boundaries of what is deemed socially "appropriate" and/or politically correct are often blurred and subject to interpretation. As such, I may, at times, be exposed to ideas and/or behavior that I find unwelcome, disagreeable or even offensive. Under such circumstances, I agree to approach my work with an open mind and take into account the diversity of viewpoints, beliefs and backgrounds inherent to the improv theater experience. By the same token, I will exercise good judgment and avoid engaging in conduct that rises to the level of abuse, such as targeted attacks directed at a particular individual. Finally, I understand that if I am exposed to and/or experience any conduct that makes me uncomfortable and/or that I believe oversteps the bounds of what is acceptable in an improv theater / comedy setting, I am not required to participate, and should discuss the matter with FCI Artistic Director(s).

Ensemble Member Name:

Signature:

Email:

Phone:

Date Signed:

FCI Artistic Director(s) 2017:

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