

## **Purpose and Scope**

MZD is committed to creating and fostering a community of practice and expression through dance in which everyone – artists, staff, volunteers, and guests, whether in-person or online – has the right to respect, dignity, and inclusion. Our mission of supporting the creation of, and engagement with, contemporary dance through education and the presentation of original, dynamic, and interdisciplinary dance is only served when our community feels safe to take creative risks. This can only occur when members of our community know that they will be treated in a respectful way while engaging with MZD.

This policy applies to all members of the MZD community when engaging with MZD or with other members of the community, either on MZD's behalf or at MZD sponsored or hosted events.

## **Definitions**

**Abuse:** Abuse is an attempt to control the behaviour of another person. It is a misuse of power, which uses the bonds of intimacy, trust, and dependency to make the victim vulnerable.

**Accessible:** identifying, removing, and preventing barriers for people with disabilities and with the goal of embracing full inclusion. We identify as barriers, which stop people from:

- sharing their expertise
- participating
- being independent
- being involved

**Consent:** To give permission for something to happen and should follow the 5-points of Consent they are listed below:

Consent is:

- Clear communication
- Freely-given,
- mutual and enthusiastic,
- ongoing and age specific,
- given in a sober mindset.

Also remembered as **F.R.I.E.S** : Freely-given, Reversible, Informed, Enthusiastic, Specific

**Colourism:** Prejudice or discrimination against individuals with a dark skin tone. This can occur among people belonging to the same ethnic or racial group, but more often it occurs and is experienced as being treated differently based upon having darker skin tone. This is also known as Shadeism.

**Culture of Consent:** Where communication and consent are the norm. Individuals are respected and not objectified, and have autonomy of their bodies. This includes non-sexual touch, respecting boundaries, and ensuring everyone feels safe. MZD recognizes that there is a consent-dominant framework being used to justify existing behaviors and actively works to address the root of those behaviors through reforming culture and extending this definition to include 2SLGBTQIA+ bodies.

**Discrimination:** the unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age, or sexual orientation.

**Good Faith:** to engage in honesty and respect for the other person's dignity, and genuinely want to hear what the other person thinks and has to say. In many cases, they are working together towards a resolution that will be mutually satisfying.

**Harassment:** a form of discrimination based upon a person's race, religion, sex, age, disability or any other of the grounds of discrimination; any unwanted physical or verbal behaviour that offends or humiliates, this includes making unwelcome remarks or jokes, threatens or intimidates you, and makes unwelcome physical contact with you, such as touching, patting, or pinching.

**Homophobia:** A culturally conditioned fear-based response to homosexuality, and attitudes toward individuals belonging to 2SLGBTQIA+ community. This prejudice can take form as intrusive or hostile questioning, threatening to 'out' someone, insulting speech, as well as unwanted physical contact and violence

and can take form verbally or in writing including the use of social media platforms.

**MZD Community:** includes any student, instructor, administrative or staff member, artist, member of the board of directors, guest, or visitor who engages with MZD's mission and purpose and/or is present at MZD sponsored or hosted events, whether in person or online.

**Prohibited Grounds:** are those grounds protected by human rights legislation, namely:

- race,
- religious beliefs,
- colour,
- gender (including pregnancy),
- gender identity,
- gender expression,
- physical disability,
- mental disability,
- age,
- ancestry,
- place of origin,
- marital status,
- source of income,
- family status,
- sexual orientation,
- ethnic origin (culture, language, dialect, accent or custom),
- citizenship, and
- creed.

**Racism:** Racism is the process by which systems and policies, actions and attitudes create inequitable opportunities and outcomes for people based on race. It occurs when this prejudice – whether individual or institutional – is accompanied by the power to discriminate against, oppress or limit the rights of others.

**Safe:** a place or environment in which a person or category of people can feel confident that they will not be exposed to discrimination, criticism, harassment, or any other emotional or physical harm.

**Sexism:** a belief that one sex is superior to or more valuable than another sex and includes the devaluing of the person based on their gender.

**Transphobia:** a rejection of trans identity and a refusal to acknowledge that it could possibly be real or valid including erasure of trans people as a viable class of people.

**Unwanted Sexual Advances:** unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature in the workplace or learning environment. This includes sexual assault, referring to sexual contact or behavior, often physical, that occurs without the consent of the victim.

**Violence:** an act of physical force that causes or is intended to cause harm. The damage inflicted by violence may be physical, psychological, or both.

### **Safe(r) Spaces Statement**

MZD acknowledges the intersectionality of our identities and the complicated ways in which we interact with our shared and separate histories. In light of this, we know that no space can be truly or entirely safe at all times. However, MZD is committed to taking steps to ensure that our spaces and events are places where members of the MZD community experience inclusive, respectful, and fair treatment. Where or when this commitment is not met, MZD is committed to investigating, within the best of our abilities and subject to the consent of the reporting individual, why and how the unsafe behaviour or treatment occurred to ensure that incidents of racism, colourism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, harassment, discrimination, violence, unwanted sexual advances, or abuse of any kind are not tolerated or repeated – our goal is not punitive, but preventative.

### **Code of Conduct**

All members of the MZD community have the right:

- to learn, work, visit or be involved with MZD in an environment that is free from racism, colourism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, harassment, discrimination, violence, unwanted sexual advances, or abuse of any kind, and that supports freedom of expression and respect for individuals;
- to communicate and to be communicated with in a respectful manner;
- to an accessible experience that removes unnecessary barriers to participation;
- to the protection of their privacy according to MZD policy and applicable legislation; and
- to participate in a culture of consent in which voluntary, active, and ongoing agreement to participate in any activity is centered and given due importance. This is especially true in regard to any and all sexual activity.

All members of the MZD community have the responsibility:

- to assist in making the MZD community respectful, safe, and inclusive by personally refraining from (and discouraging in others) conduct that threatens or endangers the safety, well-being, or dignity of any person, or that demonstrates racism, colourism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, harassment, discrimination, violence, unwanted sexual advances, or abuse of any kind; and
- to exercise their rights and freedoms with integrity, respect for the rights of others, and acceptance of accountability for their words and actions, whether acting individually or as a member of a group.

To be specific, as we are a multicultural organization operating within the framework defined by the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, MZD will not tolerate racism, colourism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, harassment, discrimination, violence, unwanted sexual advances, or abuse of any kind, and commits to protecting members of the MZD community from such actions, especially in regard to prohibited grounds.

### **Violations of this Policy**

There may be times when a member of the MZD community, either intentionally or not, violates this Policy and makes our space or event unsafe. Whether this is an explicit violation of this Policy or an analogous situation that is new to MZD, we believe in taking accountability to mitigate what could be a hurtful situation as soon as possible.

When at an MZD sponsored or hosted event, if any member of the MZD community engages in behaviour that violates this Policy, a survivor or witness can approach a staff member or a member of the board of directors at any time. Depending on the situation and need, our response may vary from

1. providing support,
2. ensuring that all parties are aware of this Safe(r) Spaces Policy,
3. removing the offending party, or,
4. in extreme cases where there is an imminent threat of violence, requesting the assistance of medical professionals or police.

All staff members are empowered to remove any individual who violates this Policy from MZD space, but are required to use their discretion when determining if this is the best way forward. In all instances we will be guided by a commitment to supporting survivors, protecting the privacy of all involved parties, and ensuring the safety of the members of the MZD community.

Members and potential members of the MZD community with a history of racism, colourism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, harassment, discrimination, violence, unwanted sexual advances, or abuse of any kind who have not worked to take accountability for their previous actions and who are deemed detrimental to the safety of the MZD community are not welcome in MZD spaces. Any decision to remove an individual from the MZD space, either temporarily for a specified period of time or permanently, will be made on a case by case basis by the Board of Directors and will be undertaken only after due consideration of all the circumstances and the available evidence.

### **Safe Disclosure**

As part of our obligation to provide a safe(r) space, MZD encourages members of our community to report any activity that violates this policy. Disclosures can be made in writing to [saferspaces@milezerodance.com](mailto:saferspaces@milezerodance.com), an email which will only be monitored and reviewed by members of the Safe(r) Spaces

Committee. Alternatively, disclosures may be made in person to any member of the Board of Directors. To be directed to a list of the current members, please ask for assistance from a member of staff.

In order to support this reporting, MZD undertakes the following:

1. MZD will respect and protect the confidentiality of anyone making a good faith disclosure and will not disclose identifying information except as required by law or regulation;
2. MZD will respect and protect the confidentiality of any individual accused of behaviour that violates this Policy and will not disclose identifying information except as required by law or regulation;
3. MZD will not tolerate any retaliation, direct or indirect, against anyone who makes a good faith disclosure;
4. MZD will investigate, as far as possible, any disclosure made to us in a timely fashion; and
5. Except as required by law or regulation, the results of any investigation will not be disclosed to any persons aside from those with a legitimate and pressing need to know. MZD will only notify the survivor of such information as is necessary to support the survivor while still respecting the privacy rights of the individual accused of behaviour that violates this Policy.

### **Related Information and Accessing Support**

If you are in immediate danger, please call 911.

- Alberta Information: 2-1-1
- Alberta Health Services Mental Health Help Line: 1-877-303-2642
- Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services: 1-866-403-8000 (9am-9pm. Toll-free long distance and non-English support available)
- Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) 24-Hour Crisis Line: 780-482-HELP (4357)
- Central Alberta Sexual Assault Support Centre (CASASC): 24-hour Crisis Line (call or text): 1-866-956-1099

- City of Edmonton Children's Mental Health Crisis Services:  
780-427-4491
- Edmonton Police Services: 780-423-4567
- Family Violence Help Line: 780-310-1818
- Hope for Wellness First Nations and Inuit Help Line: 1-855-242-3310
- Kids Help Phone: Call 1-800-668-6868 or text 686868
- Little Warrior Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-387-KIDS (5437)
- Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton (SACE):
- Support & Information Line: 780-423-4121 (9am – 9pm)
- Sexual Assault Response Team (SART): can be accessed through any emergency room in the city by checking in with the Triage Nurse and asking to see a Sexual Assault Response Team (or SART) nurse.