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Harassment Policies

Mission Statement

Sun Dragon Martial Arts and Self Defense supports the physical and spiritual empowerment of all through training in conflict resolution, self defense, and non-violent martial arts. We offer a safe and affirming learning environment for all. We believe that we can end violence in our community, and that self defense is every person's right.

Harassment Policy

(First paragraph taken, with some revision, from Cayuga Lake Seidos's policies)

The topics of sexual harassment, child abuse, and other types of violence are not easy to discuss. Unfortunately, many times the victims of these practices are silent due to fear of retaliation, feelings of isolation, or simply not knowing where to turn. It is our hope that by clearly stating our policies and procedures that all who are a part of our dojo community will feel safe and respected and will know exactly what to do should a difficult situation arise.

As part of being a safe and affirming learning environment, we take a strong stance against harassment in our dojo and community. We have outlined our definitions of harassment (which are not exhaustive and may be updated - if a person or situation makes you feel unsafe, please report it); our reporting process, our investigative process; and external contact information.

In addition to condemning harassment and abuse, we will not tolerate denigration or harassment of any member, staff, volunteer, or program participant on the basis of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, citizenship status, religion or atheism, age, mental or physical ability, or any other grounds.

Reporting and Investigation Policies

Reporting

Our reporting process includes the intake of both formal and informal (possibly anonymous) "complaints," defined as a report of a situation where harassment/abuse occurred or is witnessed. The person who has made the verbal or written complaint is referred to as the "complainant." Both forms of complaints will be investigated and addressed in some fashion, but anonymous complaints cannot guarantee a resolution to the complete satisfaction of the complainant if they cannot be contacted for additional input.

The complainant will be empowered to decide how their complaint will be addressed within the dojo. A complaint that involves criminal behavior may be treated as a formal complaint and in a small minority of cases, as required by law, we will report it to the proper authorities.

Guiding, yet unrestrictive, definitions outlining harassment and abuse can be found in the following section. If you have been made to feel physically, mentally, or emotionally unsafe but are not sure if it is harassment, you may speak with a staff member or board member who can help you decide what will help resolve the situation.

Informal Complaint:

Intended for the use of reporting situations the complainant believes may be quickly resolved, an informal complaint allows for feedback to be brought to appropriate leadership at Sun Dragon. An informal complaint may be made by speaking with a staff member, a board member, or by submitting our [online form](#). If made verbally, the staff member or board member will fill out the form documenting the incident for use in the investigation.

If determined that the incident would be more appropriate as a formal complaint, it can be elevated at any time to a formal complaint and officially filed. As informal complaints can be anonymous, there is not a way to guarantee a direct response to the complainant within a set timeframe.

Formal Complaint:

Intended for use of alerting Sun Dragon leadership of situations of extreme misconduct. A formal complaint can be made by submitting the form online or printing it out and handing it directly to any staff or board member. After a formal complaint has been submitted, the complainant should expect to have both their submission acknowledged and the investigation process initiated within a week of its receipt.

Investigation

We (members of the board and the Executive Director, barring conflicts of interest) will investigate all complaints made whether informal or formal and will come to resolution acceptable to the complainant, if known. The contents of a complaint will be kept as confidential as possible; alleged perpetrators will not be told of the complaint until contact is made with the complainant; if the complaint is anonymous, the investigation and resolution will be conducted at the board's discretion.

Within thirty days of the acknowledgement of the submission, we will report a determination to the involved parties and implement any corrective actions decided upon. All persons involved, including complainants, witnesses, and alleged perpetrators will be accorded due process to protect their rights to a fair and impartial investigation.

Investigation Process

(Process description taken, with some revision, from Thousand Waves' policies)

Investigations will involve the following:

Confidentiality. While we will do our best to maintain confidentiality, it is likely that the details of a complaint will need to be revealed to the accused, to witnesses, and to those undertaking the investigation.

Interim Protection. The safety of all parties is paramount, and in some cases separation of the accused and the accuser might be necessary to guard against harassment and/or retaliation. Actions such as shifting schedules, leaves of absence, or temporary suspensions of membership may be required.

Investigator Selection. The primary investigator/s will be selected by organizational leadership listed above based on credibility to fairly evaluate the circumstances of the complaint, likelihood that the investigator will be deemed impartial by all parties, and ability to document the findings. Depending on the nature of the complaint and the parties involved, outside counsel in the form of specialized consultants may be engaged.

Dissemination of Findings. A final report will be made available to senior organizational leadership as identified above, to the accused, and to the accuser. When possible, the report will include 1) a detailed description of the specific incident or issues investigated 2) factual findings of the investigator, including sources, 3) an articulation of the organizational policies pertinent to the investigation, 4) a statement of conclusion making reference to the complaint 5) a description of unresolved issues, 6) recommendations for action, including public disclosure when appropriate.

Appendix

Definitions

Bullying

(Definition taken, with some revision, from USA Tae Kwon Do's SafeSport policies)

Bullying involves a pattern of intentional behaviors, either/both physical and non-physical in nature, that seeks to isolate or intimidate a participant. Bullying extends to physical intimidation (including, but exclusive of, punching, kicking, choking, or pushing), verbal behaviors, and to the use of electronic media, inclusive of social media and cell phones.

Also included are behaviors, such as tickling or pranks, that are non-consensual and meant to intimidate.

Child Abuse

(Definition taken, with some revision, from Cayuga Lake Seidos's policies)

Child abuse can take many forms: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional neglect, or educational neglect. Indicators of physical or sexual abuse may be behavioral or physical or both. Perpetrators of child sexual abuse may gain the trust of potential child victims and their caregivers by methodically "grooming" them. This process begins with identifying potential victims, gaining their trust, and breaking down their defenses.

Any one sign doesn't necessarily mean that a child was abused, but the presence of several suggests that you should begin asking questions and consider seeking help.

Disclosures of physical or sexual abuse by children of any age will be reported as required by law.

Consent

(Definition taken, with some revision, from UT Austin's policies)

A voluntary, mutually understandable agreement that clearly indicates a willingness to engage in each instance of sexual activity. Consent to one act does not imply consent to another. Past consent does not imply future consent. Consent to engage in sexual activity with one person does not imply consent to engage in sexual activity with another. Consent can be withdrawn at any time. Any expression of an unwillingness to engage in any instance of sexual activity establishes a presumptive lack of consent.

Consent is not effective if it results from: (a) the use of physical force, (b) a threat of physical force, (c) intimidation, (d) coercion, (e) incapacitation, or (f) any other factor that would eliminate an individual's ability to exercise his or her own free will to choose whether or not to engage in sexual activity.

An individual's manner of dress or the existence of a current or previous dating or sexual relationship between two or more individuals does not, in and of itself, constitute consent to engage in a particular sexual activity. Even in the context of a relationship, there must be a voluntary, mutually understandable agreement that clearly indicates a willingness to engage in each instance of sexual activity.

While the legal age of consent in Texas is 17, the capacity to give informed consent is determined by more than age. Depending on power dynamics or relationship of trust between parties (such as student-teacher relationships), what might appear to be consent is not freely given. For example, if you are a teacher, you are not allowed to date students regardless of age. Relationships must be disclosed to the head instructor.

Discrimination

Mistreatment or alienation on the basis of race, color, religion, citizenship, political activity or affiliation, marital status, age, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, veteran status, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or any other characteristics.

Harassment

Sun Dragon defines harassment as any non-accidental action that causes injury or harm to a member of the Sun Dragon community, including but not limited to discrimination, sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, abuse of authority, hazing, bullying, threats, and stalking.

Hazing

(Definition taken, with some revision, from USA Tae Kwon Do's SafeSport policies)

Hazing includes conduct that is intimidating, humiliating, offensive, or physically harmful. Hazing is typically an activity that serves as a condition for joining a group or being socially accepted by a group's members. Team building activities designed to establish team bonds that do not have potential to cause harm to a participant are not hazing. However, if such activities feel harmful to a participant, regardless of intent, they should be reported.

Sexual Harassment

(Definition taken, with some revision, from UT Austin's policies)

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. It may include:

- Sexual violence, which includes rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion
- Physical conduct, that includes but is not limited to unwelcome intentional touching or deliberate physical interference with or restriction of movement
- Verbal conduct, including oral, written, or symbolic expression
- explicit or implicit propositions to engage in sexual activity
- comments, jokes, questions, anecdotes, or remarks of a sexual nature about clothing, bodies, or sexual activities
- persistent, unwanted sexual or romantic attention
- subtle or overt pressure for sexual favors
- exposure to sexually suggestive visual displays such as photographs, graffiti, posters, calendars, or other materials

Social Media/Cyber Misconduct

Social media and electronic communications can also be used to commit misconduct (e.g., emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment, and hazing). Such communications by instructors, staff, volunteers, administrators, parents, or students will not be tolerated and are considered violations of our policy.

Sun Dragon Instructors and Staff are not to request connection or accept connection of students under 18 years of age. In the cases of more public-facing services such as Instagram and Twitter, Instructors and Staff may have to proactively block or remove students in the event they request or establish a Connection. Sun Dragon Instructors and Staff are not to interact with students under 18 years of age in any capacity, including but not limited to, "Liking" posts, commenting on posts, and/or sending or replying to direct or private messages, except when conducted in the Sun Dragon Discussion Facebook Group. Connections between Sun Dragon Instructor/Staff and students 18 years of age or older are permitted with mutual consent.

Other expectations include that any pictures posted of minors on Sun Dragon social media pages will not include names and communication between adult instructors and minors in

an official capacity will copy a parent/guardian. Please refer to Sun Dragon's full [Social Media Policy](#) for more details.

External Policy Links

<http://thousandwaves.org/about-us/harassment-statement/>

<https://cayugaseido.perfectmind.com/SocialSite/safety>

<https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-d/>

<https://safesport.org/policies-procedures>

<https://www.teamusa.org/usa-taekwondo/v2-resources/safe-sport>