

February 16, 2016

Dear iO employees, students, instructors and performers:

When Del Close and I created iO in 1982, it was our dream to create a "theater of the heart" – a theater where people cherished each other to succeed on stage. After many years building what we all enjoy today – thanks to you – iO is the premier venue for cultivating the next generation of Americas best and brightest comedic performers and writers.

As our operations grow, we are no longer that tiny little theater anymore. Our venues, stable of performers, student body and staff have grown substantially. What a wonderful thing! Yet, as we grow, it is also necessary to establish basic expectations as to the manner in which we interact with and treat each other in our work and learning environment.

To thrive as an improv theater, our work together must be built on trust and respect. iO is committed to providing a safe and respectful place for comedy to be made and appreciated. In the upcoming weeks, we will be distributing an employee manual, which will establish our expectations of iO's employees, students, instructors and performers. In the meantime, we provide below the first portion of these policies – specifically, our equal employment opportunity policy, anti-harassment policy, open door policy, and general standards of conduct.

We expect that all of our staff, students and performers will abide by these policies. If you have any questions about our policies and expectations, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Charna Halpern

MISSION AND VALUES

The mission of iO Theater is to advance the art of improvisation and cultivate the next generation of funny, talented and creative artistic professionals. In doing so, we believe we have a responsibility to institute a safe creative establishment which promotes a high level of artistic achievement.

EQUAL TREATMENT

At iO, we firmly believe in equal treatment and respect for all. That's why we are committed to equal opportunity for all employees, applicants, performers, instructors and students. We never let our employment, training and performance selection decisions be influenced by such things such as race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran's status, or any other basis prohibited by law.

We're confident you'll help keep iO a positive, professional place to work and learn by:

- Always acting fairly and considerately towards others
- Contributing to the self-confidence and self-esteem of others
- Maintaining positive relationships with employees, students and performers

Behavior that contributes to or constitutes unlawful discrimination or harassment will be dealt with firmly—up to and including employment termination and/or termination of your affiliation with iO.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Improvisation is a creative pursuit that encourages and requires performers to explore the fullness of life experience, including topics which might have the tendency to make some uncomfortable or might not be appropriate during polite conversation. Occasionally, performers may give voice to viewpoints that society finds undesirable, impolite or offensive. And while some of the topics and viewpoints explored during improvisation might be unacceptable to some, others might find them harmless. iO seeks to provide performers and students the artistic freedom to explore any such topics and viewpoints without reservation even if such a performance may cause discomfort for other performers, students or audience members. Any person who enrolls in an improvisation class at iO or performs on one of its stages should approach that experience with an open mind, knowing that good improvisation benefits from a broad spectrum of perspectives and experiences.

However, iO insists that performers and students approach improvisation with respect for their fellow performers and students, both on-stage and off, avoiding harassing or abusive conduct targeted toward an individual performer or student. While iO will generally not interfere with

artistic choices made on-stage or during a classroom exercise, any performer or student who feels that such behavior has become harassing or abusive may excuse themselves from the performance or exercise and should report the conduct to any of the following: (at iO Chicago) Stacey Malow, Becca Barish, Rob White or Charna Halpern; and (at iO West) Gina Ippolito, Colleen Doyle, Holly Laurent, Brandon Sornberger and Charna Halpern. In the case of such a report, iO will investigate the matter and address the issue as appropriate and consistent with our Anti-Harassment policy below. iO will permit no retaliation against a performer or student who makes such a report in good faith and/or participates in an investigation under this policy.

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

Harassment of any kind is most damaging to the person being harassed. But harassment also damages positive working relationships. It offends our sense of dignity. It destroys trust. And it will ultimately harm our core mission and values.

Our goal is to provide a workplace and learning environment where each member of our improv community feels respected, valued and comfortable. To preserve this atmosphere, iO will not tolerate harassment or other abusive behavior by anyone – including employees, students, performers, instructors, visitors, vendors and audience members.

The term “harassment” means unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical or visual, that is so severe or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with an individual’s participation in iO programs, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational or working environment. This conduct is inappropriate and unacceptable, whether based upon or derisive of a person’s race, color, ancestry, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, military status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or other legally protected characteristics or conduct. Examples of prohibited harassment include, but are not limited to epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; or denigrating jokes directed at an individual based on his or her personal characteristics. All employees, instructors, performers and students have a responsibility to keep iO free of any such harassment.

iO’s policy also specifically prohibits sexual harassment. “Sexual harassment” means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually-motivated physical contact or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature where:

- Submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition of employment or status as a performer at iO, either explicitly or implicitly; or
- Submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual’s employment or status as a performer at iO; or
- Such conduct or communication unreasonably interferes with an individual’s job or theatrical performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment also includes sexual assault. No one involved with iO – whether a member of management, another employee, an instructor, performer or member of the Harold Commission – may request or require an employee, applicant, instructor, performer or student to submit to sexual harassment as a condition of receiving any benefit (such as a raise, promotion or selection for an iO performance) or avoiding any detriment (such as a pay cut, demotion or non-selection for an iO performance).

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.

Reporting Inappropriate Conduct

If you become aware of discrimination or harassment in violation of the policies stated above, you must immediately report the matter to your manager, your supervisor, your teacher, your coach, the Artistic Director, the Training Center Director, House Manager, the Events Coordinator, or to any of the following:

(at iO Chicago)

Leah Farmer with Noelle Brennan & Associates, 312-422-0001

Stacey Malow – smalow@ioimprov.com,

Becca Barish – becca@ioimprov.com,

Rob White – classes@ioimprov.com,

Charna Halpern – charna@ioimprov.com

(at iO West)

Leah Farmer with Noelle Brennan & Associates, 312-422-0001

Gina Ippolito – gina@ioimprov.com,

Colleen Doyle – colleen@ioimprov.com,

Holly Laurent – holly-laurent@ioimprov.com,

Brandon Sornberger – brandon@ioimprov.com or

Charna Halpern – charna@ioimprov.com

The above named individuals will communicate your report to Leah Farmer with Noelle Brennan & Associates who will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of all complaints of harassment or discrimination.

The scope of the investigation will depend upon the specific circumstances, but may include interviews with the person making the complaint, the person against whom the complaint is made, any potential witnesses identified by either person, and any others whom the iO believes may have relevant information. The person making the complaint normally will be requested to put his or her complaint in writing.

You are expected to cooperate in this process if asked to do so, and to provide truthful information. Any person who knowingly provides false information in connection with an investigation under this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment or affiliation with iO.

iO will make every effort to respect the privacy of those involved in an investigation under this procedure. However, please understand that we may need to disclose certain information to complete our investigation or otherwise address the matters raised in the complaint. A request not to investigate a reported violation of this policy cannot be honored.

The results of the investigation will be discussed with those individuals involved and then iO will determine whether any action is warranted in response. Individuals who are found to have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or affiliation with iO.

No Retaliation

iO will not retaliate against any person for making a good faith complaint under this policy, regardless of the outcome of the investigation. Similarly, iO will not retaliate against any person for providing truthful information in connection with an investigation under this policy. Any employee, instructor or performer of the iO who retaliates against another for utilizing in good faith the procedures in this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, or termination of their affiliation with iO, as the circumstances warrant.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INSTRUCTORS AND STUDENTS

Those who teach for the iO Training Center or who are members of the Harold Commission are entrusted with guiding students, evaluating their talents and recommending students to the Theater for performances and work engagements occurring within our community. Students depend on the integrity of their relationships with those instructors and understandably expect instructors to exercise their authority fairly. The instructor-student relationship must not be jeopardized by possible doubt of intent or fairness of professional judgment, conflicts of interest, harassment, or the appearance to others of favoritism or advantage.

In light of the potential for misunderstanding, morale problems, or abuse arising from consensual romantic or sexual relationships, iO strictly prohibits its instructors and Harold Commission Members from entering and/or engaging in romantic and/or sexual relationships with a student while the student is enrolled at iO. Moreover, relationships between an instructor and student existing prior to the student's enrollment at the iO Training Center should be reported to the Director of the Training Center; the student will not be permitted to enroll in a class taught by the instructor with whom he or she is romantically involved.

In addition to the above, iO strictly prohibits Coaches from entering and/or engaging in romantic and/or sexual relationships with a performer of a team they currently coach. Moreover, members of the Harold Commission must recuse themselves when voting on teams that involve individuals with whom they maintained or currently maintain a romantic and/or sexual relationship.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

iO is committed to providing a safe, productive and fun educational environment for all employees, performers, instructors and students. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, concern or question can be addressed and discussed.

At iO, we value the suggestions of employees, performers, instructors and students and want you to share your ideas with us. Through mutual cooperation and constant communication, we can identify and develop best practices in performing our jobs and addressing the needs of our students. We also want to have the opportunity to correct any misunderstandings or complaints that you may have. Your first step in resolving workplace issues should normally be to discuss the matter with your direct supervisor, coach or instructor, as the case may be. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, or you are not comfortable discussing the issue with this individual, you may bring the issue directly to the attention of to any of the following: (at iO Chicago) Stacey Malow, Becca Barish, Rob White or Charna Halpern; and (at iO West) Gina Ippolito, Colleen Doyle, Holly Laurent, Brandon Sornberger and Charna Halpern.

There will be no retaliation for raising a concern under this policy. Any issues raised or discussions held pursuant to the this policy will be treated with the utmost confidentiality without compromising any investigation iO may need to conduct.

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

iO is committed to high standards of ethical, moral and legal business conduct. In line with this commitment, and iO's commitment to open communication, this policy aims to provide an avenue for employees, performers, instructors and students to raise concerns and reassurance that they will be protected from reprisals or victimization for whistleblowing.

This whistleblowing policy is intended to cover protections for you if you raise concerns regarding iO, such as concerns regarding:

- incorrect financial reporting;
- unlawful activity;
- unethical or illegal conduct;

- activities that are not in line with iO policy; and
- any other activities otherwise amounting to seriously improper conduct.

General Principles

This policy encourages employees, performers and students to put their names to allegations because appropriate follow-up questions and investigation may not be possible unless the source of the information is identified. Concerns expressed anonymously will be explored appropriately, but consideration will be given to:

- the seriousness of the issue raised;
- the credibility of the concern; and
- the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

Harassment or retaliation for reporting concerns under this policy will not be tolerated. Please note that employees, performers, instructors and students who wish to report an incident of harassment or sexual assault must follow the complaint procedures set forth in iO's Anti-Harassment policy.

Process for Raising a Concern

The whistleblowing procedure is intended to be used for serious and sensitive issues. Such concerns, including those relating to financial reporting, unethical or illegal conduct, may be reported directly to any of the following: (at iO Chicago) Leah Farmer with Noelle Brennan & Associates, 312-422-0001, Stacey Malow, Becca Barish, Rob White or Charna Halpern; and (at iO West) Leah Farmer with Noelle Brennan & Associates, 312-422-0001, Gina Ippolito, Colleen Doyle, Holly Laurent, Brandon Sornberger and Charna Halpern.

Although the individual is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, he or she should be able to demonstrate to the person contacted that the report is being made in good faith. iO will not retaliate against any person for making a good faith complaint under this policy, regardless of the outcome of the investigation.

How the Report of Concern Will be Handled

Upon receipt of a report of inappropriate conduct under this policy, iO will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation and appropriate corrective action will be taken, if/as warranted. The action taken by iO in response to a report of concern under this policy will depend on the nature of the concern.

Initial inquiries will be made to determine whether an investigation is appropriate, and the form that it should take. Some concerns may be resolved without the need for investigation. The

amount of contact between the complainant and the person or persons investigating the concern will depend on the nature of the issue and the clarity of information provided. Further information may be sought from or provided to the person reporting the concern.

Right to be Free from Retaliation

iO will not retaliate against any employee, instructor, performer or student 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.