Community Guidelines

Updated 5/29/25

As a condition of participation in Haus of Comedy programming, all participants are expected to comply with our community guidelines. Anyone found in violation of these guidelines may be removed from the group/community.

Overview:

1. Creating a culture of trust, empathy, and respect
2. Know your boundaries and respect others' boundaries (AKA, "Cross your own lines")
3. No punching down
4. Respect others' time
5. Safety first!
6. You can always opt out!
7. Get consent!
8. Say "ouch" or "oops"
9. Be kind and support your teammates!
10. Mistakes happen!
11. Don't give someone notes without their consent
12. Take ownership, be proactive, and practice self-reliance

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Create a culture of trust, empathy, and respect

No one knows what direction an improv scene can take, which makes things exciting but also risky. Everyone has different levels of comfort around the nature of the content they participate in, and different physical and emotional boundaries or limitations. We will work together to communicate clearly about our needs and respect each other's perspectives, with the understanding that this not only creates a safe space for all, but helps us all to be better performers. Let's strive together to create a culture and an

environment where we can be open, kind, vulnerable, empathetic, and respectful towards and with one another.

To address any disrespect or conflict, you can reach out to Jessilee after the workshop, or call, text, email, or Slack Jessilee at any time.

Jessilee Windhaus
Owner, Haus of Comedy
916-600-0046
jessilee@windhausimprov.com
Slack: @jessilee windhaus

If you are not comfortable reaching out to WI leadership, you can contact Red Flag reporting, an impartial third party. Report concerns safely, securely and anonymously 24/7. Red Flag Reporting is your hotline for fraudulent activity / theft, misconduct, safety violations, and/or unethical behavior. Protect your organization and your co-workers - Because Everyone Deserves to Feel Protected and Safe.

To file a report, remember our Client Code is "WINDHAUS" and pick one of the following options:

Web:	www.RedFlagReporting.com
Text:	RFR to 234-231-9005
Call:	1-877-647-3335
Email:	redflag@redflagreporting.com

Know your boundaries and respect others' boundaries (AKA, "Cross your own lines")

Personal boundaries are the limits and rules we set for ourselves in terms of our level of comfort around others.

Reflect on your own boundaries around sensitive experiences and consider if and when you are read to cross them yourself. To create a culture of respect, don't cross someone's boundaries intentionally: cross your own lines. No one else can speak to your lived experiences, and the freedom to explore and push our own boundaries often contributes to the diversity in art forms that have historically lacked diversity through implicit and explicit exclusion of diverse voices. You are encouraged to speak on your experiences in your participation, while holding space for the fact that each individual comes with their own story and comfort levels and sometimes these will contradict one another.

When a teammate expresses discomfort with a crossed boundary, we will prioritize listening and understanding to identify the best way to move forward and repair the trust. At minimum, a crossed boundary should be acknowledged and steps to avoid crossing the boundary should be identified and agreed upon.

If a teammate expresses a boundary has been crossed, we will apologize and work to respect that boundary going forward so we can continue working towards creating and holding a safe space to play!

No punching down

To "punch down" is to attack, criticize, or stereotype someone in a less powerful position. This can include people from marginalized communities, such as BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, people with disabilities, women, people with mental health conditions, etc. Not only is this not funny, it perpetuates systems of oppression within our society and makes our space less safe. Comedy is speaking truth to power. Punching down is bullying.

Respect others' time

People on our team may have to figure out childcare, arrange transportation, or make other arrangements or sacrifices to be at practice/class. Following attendance policies, being on time, holding space for breaks, and being present when you're at practice, class, or a show is a way to show that you respect your fellow teammates' time and commitment to our group.

Safety first!

Our teammates' emotional and physical safety should be top priority at all times. If you're not sure if something is safe to do, it's best to avoid it. If someone does get hurt, pause and check to see if they're OK! If you need to take a rest or a break or leave for any reason, your safety comes first.

You can always opt out!

If you're not comfortable with something that's happening in a scene or during practice/class in general, you can always pause and opt out. You can also express a clear "no" or opt out of something in character during a scene.

Get consent!

Building physical trust on a team is a process that takes time. If you're not sure of someone's physical boundaries onstage or off, just ask in or out of character and get a clear "yes" before moving forward, then listen for any indication of your teammate withdrawing that consent.

Say “ouch” or “oops”

Say, “ouch” when someone steps on your toes, and provide yourself the space to own your feelings.

Say “oops” when you step on someone else’s toes and genuinely apologize for the ways your intention did not match your impact. It takes vulnerability for many folks to express a boundary, so please take responsibility by researching how you may approach a situation or phrase something more inclusively next time! The person you hurt might not feel like explaining why in the moment, but that doesn’t mean you shouldn’t find a better way to phrase things.

Be kind and support your teammates!

This one probably seems obvious, but try to lead with kindness and support at all times <3

Mistakes happen!

Even with all of these community agreements in mind, building a safe space includes providing an environment where we can safely discuss or take a break when an “ouch”/“oops” happens. Sometimes we cross boundaries without meaning to or the impact of our words or actions is more hurtful than intended. Rather than taking a punitive approach, we will strive for a restorative approach. When we communicate our experience and listen to others with an open mind and heart, we turn moments of conflict into opportunities to learn from different perspectives on the team. While addressing mistakes may be uncomfortable for both sides in the moment, these conversations often end up deepening trust and vulnerability and strengthening relationships and supporting stronger choices in our improv.

Don’t give someone notes without their consent

To ensure that everyone feels their ideas are respected and their personal boundaries are protected: ***Please do not give notes to other performers during practice/class and/or post-show notes***. Exceptions to this include:

1) You have been put in charge of a workshop, event, or practice
2) The person has specifically asked you for your feedback

Take ownership, be proactive, and practice self-reliance

We trust you to be a professional including being responsible for your own schedule, well-being, and readiness. Please review the resources we share—Slack updates, pinned documents, emails, calendars—before seeking clarification. If your schedule or circumstances change, let us know as soon as possible. By staying proactive and self-sufficient, we can spend more time on creativity and collaboration instead of repeated logistics.