

# ProjectTHISNG

# Harassment Policy

**Delete after reading this bit -  
Please search and replace these bits with those appropriate to your club.**

ProjectTHISNG

## The Policy Statement

ProjectTHISNG is committed to providing a safe environment for all its Employees, Staff, Guests, Volunteers, as well as Tabletop games Expos and conference attendees free from discrimination on any ground and from harassment at work including sexual harassment. ProjectTHISNG will operate a zero tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment in the running, operations and enjoyment of the gaming Convention, Expo, and events, treat all incidents seriously and promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment.

Harassment is generally any behavior that alarms, threatens, or excessively annoys another person or group. Harassment includes offensive verbal comments [related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion], sexual images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, unwelcome sexual attention, and false accusations of harassment. Attendees asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately.

*Your right not to be harassed is not a right not to be offended. All of us have different things that we find offensive. If you are offended, the best solution may be for you to walk away from the person who offends you. Should that person pursue you and continue to offend you, that could be harassment*

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### **Abridged Policy**

- Feeling Harassed??
- Absolutely No one has the right to touch you, photograph (within context) you or hug you without your consent, or permission.

- You always have the right to refuse unwanted attention!
- You have the right to be spoken to with respect.
- You have the right to be treated respectfully.
- You have the right to express a view or opinion, and to be challenged on that view or opinion.
- You have the right not to talk to or engage with someone.
- If you are ever made to feel uncomfortable, tell them to stop or find a safe and secure place (Like the Main Desk (If a member of staff is harassing you, talk to a site Manager Immediately) and tell a member of staff.)

*This policy is not a policy to allow you to create a situation where you feel your opinion is not being considered or hurt feelings. It is also not a policy to create a situation where such situations may occur due to deliberate contrivance. This goes both ways....*

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Remember Cons and events are a safe space for everyone.

- Any staff member found to have sexually harassed another will face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment, and any termination of volunteering and or other event organisation and possibly have the file passed to local law enforcement. All complaints of harassment including sexual will be taken seriously and treated with respect and in confidence. No one will be victimised for making such a complaint.
- Any Tabletop games Expos and conference attendee found to have sexually harassed another will face a disciplinary response, up to and including expulsion from the show and the facility (Without a refund at the discretion of the ProjectTHISNG Events Staff), and any termination of volunteering and or other event organisation, and possibly have the file passed to local law enforcement. All complaints of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and treated with respect and in confidence. No one will be victimised for making such a complaint

We encourage all allegations to be both taken seriously and all information to be provided to the local police and authorities.

Please understand that we are facilitating this con and this policy aims promote awareness for issues such as sexual assault, domestic violence, bullying, body shaming, sexual orientation shaming/abuse/harraseent, ect.

## Definition of harassment including sexual

Harassment including Sexual is unwelcome conduct of or/including of a sexual nature which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. It includes situations where a person is asked to engage in sexual activity as a condition of that person's employment or continued acceptance and attendance to the event, as well as situations which create an environment which is hostile, intimidating or humiliating for the recipient.

Harassment can involve one or more incidents and actions constituting harassment may be physical, verbal and non-verbal.

Examples of conduct or behaviour which constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:

### Physical conduct

- Unwelcome physical contact including patting, pinching, stroking, kissing, hugging, fondling, or inappropriate touching (Complaints about security or searches will be dealt with promptly and professionally)
- Physical violence, including sexual assault
- Physical contact, e.g. touching, pinching
- The use of job-related threats or rewards to solicit sexual favours
- Deliberate intimidation, stalking, or following
- Harassing photography or recording
- Sustained disruption of talks or other events
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Unwelcome sexual attention

### Verbal conduct

- Verbal or interview comments on a person's appearance (Including repeated questions about breast size, cup size, showing or moving costumes for a better more skin photo), age, private life, etc.
- Verbal comments that reinforce social structures of domination [related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, age,
- Sexual comments, stories and jokes
- Sexual advances
- Repeated and unwanted social invitations for dates or physical intimacy
- Insults based on the sex of the worker
- Condescending or paternalistic remarks
- Sending sexually explicit messages (by phone or by email)

## Non-verbal conduct

- Display of sexually explicit or suggestive material (This Includes Cosplay costumes that are considered to be explicit)
- Sexual images in public spaces
- Sexually-suggestive gestures
- Whistling
- Leering

## Advocating for, or encouraging, any of the above behaviour

*Note: Due to the nature of the many themes and subject matters covered by the board games in both our library and those being sold, demoed, will at times be or fall into some of the topics listed above, it is incumbent upon the players themselves to decide if a game's theme is appropriate to them and avoid those offensive to them.*

Anyone can be a victim of Harassment, regardless of their sex and of the sex of the harasser. ProjectTHISNG recognises that sexual harassment may also occur between people of the same sex. What matters is that the conduct is unwanted and unwelcome by the person against whom the conduct is directed.

ProjectTHISNG recognises that harassment including sexual is a manifestation of power relationships and often occurs within unequal relationships in the running, operations and enjoyment of the gaming Convention, Expo, and events, for example between a manager or supervisor and employee and a games demoing staff and attendees, Sellers and event staff and attendees, Exhibitors, Guest Speakers.

Anyone, including Employees, Staff, Guests, Volunteers, as well as Tabletop games Expos and conference attendees of ProjectTHISNG, clients, customers, casual workers, contractors or visitors who sexually harasses another will be reprimanded in accordance with this policy.

Exhibitors in the expo hall, sponsor or vendor booths, or similar activities are also subject to the anti-harassment policy. In particular, exhibitors should not use sexualized images, activities, or other material. Booth staff (including volunteers) should not use sexualized clothing/uniforms/costumes, or otherwise create a sexualized environment.

All harassment is prohibited whether it takes place within ProjectTHISNG premises or outside, including at social events, Tabletop Expos, Conventions or Gaming conferences sponsored by or operated by ProjectTHISNG and its staff.

## Service & Support Animals

Trained service animals are welcome at our events and should be considered suitable for all locations within the event site. Cosplayers who use service and support animals must retain control of their animals at all times and must keep them on a leash or harness while visiting. These animals are welcome to use any open outdoor area for relief as long as the owner picks up/Cleans up after the animal and leaves the area clean. Pets and non-service animals are not permitted inside the event.

*Other attendees should refrain from harassing or petting service animals at any time for any reason.* The rules on harassment also apply to such animals.

## Complaints procedures

Anyone who is subject to harassment including sexual should, if possible, inform the alleged harasser that the conduct is unwanted and unwelcome. ProjectTHISNG recognises that sexual harassment may occur in unequal relationships (i.e. between ProjectTHISNG staff like a supervisor and his/her employee, Or a Guest Speaker and attendee) and that it may not be possible for the victim to inform the alleged harasser.

If a victim cannot directly approach an alleged harasser, he/she can approach one of the ProjectTHISNG designated staff members and/or Security.

When a designated person receives a complaint of sexual harassment, he/she will:

- Immediately record the dates, times and facts of the incident(s)
- Ascertain the views of the victim as to what outcome he/she wants
- Ensure that the victim understands the company's procedures for dealing with the complaint
- Discuss and agree the next steps: either informal or formal complaint, on the understanding that choosing to resolve the matter informally does not preclude the victim from pursuing a formal complaint if he/she is not satisfied with the outcome
- Keep a confidential record of all discussions
- Respect the choice of the victim
- Ensure that the victim knows that they can lodge the complaint outside of the company through the relevant legal framework

*Note: ProjectTHISNG recognises that because harassment including sexual often occurs in unequal relationships within the running, selling, gaming and enjoyment of the gaming Convention, Expo, and events, victims often feel that they cannot come forward.*

*ProjectTHISNG understands the need to support victims in making complaints.*

## **Informal complaints mechanism**

- If the victim wishes to deal with the matter informally, the designated person will:
  - Give an opportunity to the alleged harasser to respond to the complaint
  - Ensure that the alleged harasser understands the complaints mechanism
  - Facilitate discussion between both parties to achieve an informal resolution which is acceptable to the complainant, or refer the matter to a designated mediator within the company to resolve the matter
  - Ensure that a confidential record is kept of what happens
  - Follow up after the outcome of the complaints mechanism to ensure that the behaviour has stopped
  - Ensure that the above is done speedily and within 14 days of the complaint being made

## **Formal complaints mechanism**

If the victim wants to make a formal complaint or if the informal complaint mechanism has not led to a satisfactory outcome for the victim, the formal complaint mechanism should be used to resolve the matter.

The designated person who initially received the complaint will refer the matter to a senior member of staff to investigate a formal investigation. A senior manager may deal with the matter him/herself, refer the matter to an internal or external investigator or refer it to a committee of three others in accordance with this policy,

### **The person carrying out the investigation will (if possible<sup>1</sup>):**

- Interview the victim and the alleged harasser separately
- Interview other relevant third parties separately
- Decide whether or not the incident(s) of harassment including sexual took place
- Produce a report detailing the investigations, findings and any recommendations
- If the harassment took place, decide what the appropriate remedy for the victim is, in consultation with the victim.
- Follow up to ensure that the recommendations are implemented, that the behaviour has stopped and that the victim is satisfied with the outcome
- If it cannot determine that the harassment took place, he/she may still make recommendations to ensure proper functioning of the running, operations and enjoyment of the gaming Convention, Expo, and events.
- Keep a record of all actions taken

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<sup>1</sup> It maybe that a situation occurs where we cannot interview or contact the aggressor if they have left or been ejected and we are not able to fully pertain their details. This does not mean that a victim is not believed or that it will not be reported to local authorities.

- Ensure that the all records concerning the matter are kept confidential
- Ensure that the process is done as quickly as possible and in any event within 14 days of the complaint being made

## Outside complaints mechanisms

A person who has been subject to sexual harassment can also make a complaint outside of the company. They can do so through their legal representative and local, area police force .

## Sanctions and disciplinary measures

Anyone who has been found to have sexually harassed another person under the terms of this policy is liable to any of the following sanctions:

### Staff

- Verbal or written warning
- Adverse performance evaluation
- Reduction in wages
- Transfer
- Demotion
- Suspension
- Dismissal

### Attendees

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Ask to leave the Venue
- Escorted off the premises by Security Staff
- Reported to Local authorities.

### Traders/Sponsors

- Verbal or written warning
- Adverse follow-up evaluation and reviews with other Conference Companies
- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Ask to leave the Venue
- Escorted off the premises by Security Staff
- Suspension
- Dismissal
- Reported to Local authorities.

The nature of the sanctions will depend on the gravity and extent of the harassment. Suitable deterrent sanctions will be applied to ensure that incidents of harassment including sexual are not treated as trivial. Certain serious cases, including physical violence, will result in the immediate dismissal of the harasser.

## Exhibitors

Exhibitors in the tabletop Conference and expo hall, Sponsor, Traders & Vendor booths, or similar activities are also still subject to the anti-harassment policy. In particular, exhibitors should not use sexualized images, activities, or other material. Booth staff (including volunteers) should not use sexualized clothing/uniforms/costumes, or otherwise create a sexualized environment. These events unless otherwise stated are family friendly ones.

## False Allegations

It is a violation of this policy for a member to knowingly, recklessly, and/or negligently disregard the truth when making a claim of harassment, intimidation, or discrimination. Failure to prove a claim of unlawful harassment is not, by itself, equivalent to a false claim. Neither should a thorough investigation to be sure a claim is not being made for other reasons (e.g. political disagreement, competitors, racial bias, gender bias) be taken as assumption of the claim being false.

## Exceptions

### **Tabletop Expos and Conferences in which sex, pornography, racism, etc. are on-topic**

On the whole we aim to make all our Tabletop games Expos and conferences are both welcoming to (all) regardless of genders, Race, Religion, Physical Ability and 'may' include discussion on topics which are blanket prohibited in the Companies anti-harassment policy.

*For example, Tabletop games Expos and conferences about supporting geek women, sexual Harassment of game demo staff, Trolling and aggressive stalking in the Gaming Community, How games companies approaches female lines or about social justice will necessarily have discussion about topics banned in the Harassment policy,*

Discussion or images related to sex, pornography, discriminatory language, or similar is welcome only if it meets all of the following criteria:

1. The organizers have *specifically granted permission in writing*,
2. It is necessary to the topic of discussion and no alternative exists,



3. It is presented in a respectful manner, especially towards the target group, i.e women and/or LGBTQIA people,
4. Attendees are warned in advance in the program and respectfully given ample warning and opportunity to leave beforehand. This exception specifically does not allow use of gratuitous sexual images as attention-getting devices or unnecessary examples.

## **Implementation of this policy**

ProjectTHISNG will ensure that this policy is widely disseminated to all relevant persons. It will be included in the staff handbook. All new Employees, Staff, Guests, Volunteers, trained on the content of this policy as part of their induction into the company. Tabletop games Expos and conference attendees will also be made aware with notices and relevant links in emails and *Terms and Conditions*.

Every year, ProjectTHISNG will require all Convention/Expo/Volunteers and Employees, Staff, Guests, Volunteers, as well as Tabletop games Expos and conference attendees to attend a refresher training course on the content of this policy.

It is the responsibility of every manager to ensure that all his/her Employees, Staff, Guests, Volunteers, as well as Tabletop games Expos and conference attendees are aware of the policy.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

ProjectTHISNG recognises the importance of monitoring this harassment including sexual policy and will ensure that it anonymously collects statistics and data as to how it is used and whether or not it is effective.

Supervisors, managers and those responsible for dealing with harassment including sexual cases will report on compliance with this policy, including the number of incidents, how they were dealt with, and any recommendations made. This will be done on a yearly basis. As a result of this report, the company will evaluate the effectiveness of this policy and make any changes needed.