

## **Policy on Safer Spaces Ground Rules**

### **PURPOSE**

Calgary Outlink is a community-based, not-for-profit charity dedicated to providing support, education, outreach, and referrals for the LGBTQ2IA+ and allied community in Calgary, Alberta. In providing its programming Calgary Outlink is committed to providing a space that is safe for all clients, volunteers, and staff.

### **PERSONS AFFECTED**

The Calgary Outlink Board of Directors, Staff, Volunteers, and clients.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

1. Calgary Outlink Committed to providing a safer space to its clients, volunteers, staff, and other participants.
2. Based on these core policies the following statements apply to the running of its peer support groups and meetings.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of the Calgary Outlink Board of Directors, Staff, Volunteers, and clients to:

- a. Respect everyone and the space;
- b. Respect people's identities, beliefs and personal autonomy;
- c. Respect confidentiality: What's said at Calgary Outlink, stays at Calgary Outlink;
- d. Respect people's right to out themselves at the pace they choose and about the issues they choose;
- e. Respect each other's pace of learning;
- f. Respect others' voices by listening to others: Speak one person at a time without interrupting one another;
- g. Respect everyone's right to pass and right to participate at their own pace;
- h. Respect everyone's right to have fun;
- i. Respect everyone's right to be heard;
- j. Respect everyone's right to respectfully correct others for mistakes;
- k. Respect everyone's right to make mistakes from time to time;
- l. Respect people's personal boundaries, i.e. always ask for permission before touching someone;
- m. Respect people's emotional, physical, and sexual boundaries and right to say no;
- n. Respect everyone's right to be free from mental, emotional, physical, spiritual, or psychological harm; and
- o. Respect everyone's right to be free from experiencing homophobia, transphobia, racism, sexism, classism, ableism, ageism, xenophobia, fatphobia etc.

### **PROCEDURES**

Participants in meetings agree to the following ground rules:

1. Participants agree to stick to the scope of the meeting.

2. People expressing ideas beyond the scope of discussion may be asked to table their ideas for later discussions.
3. Respectful and safe expression of all communication and ideas is expected.
4. There are no wrong expressions of ideas, but we ask to be clear, to the point, and to be focused of discussion of events and common issues to allow all those in attendance time to speak.
5. It is OK not to be perfect.
6. It is OK to not have an answer to some questions (pass).
7. Discussion, debate, or disagreement is always tolerated, it is the basis of good decision-making and/or creativity, but it is always done respectfully.
8. Participants understand that the meeting is not to come to consensus,
  - Respectful disagreement with one another regarding any point of view on any subject matter is OK.
  - People that wish to go forward on ideas which may not interest all members of the group are welcome to pursue these ideas.
9. Vulgar language, name calling, condemning, shaming, etc. will not be tolerated.
10. All forms bullying, harassment, abuse, or discrimination will not be tolerated.
11. All opinions and ideas of specific members in the group are confidential and should not be shared without consent of the members, but common knowledge and common issues arising from meetings may be shared with the public.

#### Violation of Ground Rules

1. If a Space Moderator (i.e. a Board of Director, Staff, Volunteers) determines that a violation is occurring, the Space Moderator may remove the participant from the session and report the incident to their supervisor.

#### REVISION HISTORY

- March 15, 2021: Update to Format.