



NEAMA Safeguarding Policy

NEAMA (Nonprofit Education and Advocacy for the Movement Arts) is a division of Edify Movement, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, whose mission is to support transformative change toward safer practices in the movement arts. Our evidence-based education and advocacy works to identify, address, and prevent abuse in the industry. NEAMA is centered on safeguarding and supporting the physical, psychological, and sexual wellness of youth and adults, emphasizing the importance of the whole community, while never forgetting the inherent value of the individual.

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect members of the public, particularly vulnerable people, from any harm that may arise from contact with NEAMA members and affiliates.

Policy Statement

NEAMA believes that everyone, regardless of age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity, has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. NEAMA will not tolerate abuse or exploitation by NEAMA members or affiliates.

This policy will address the following areas of safeguarding:

1. protecting vulnerable peoples, particularly children and at-risk adults;
AND
2. protecting the general members of our communities.

NEAMA commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of

1. prevention
2. reporting
AND
3. response.

Scope

This policy covers harm arising from

- the conduct of NEAMA members and affiliates when interacting with members of the public.
- the design and implementation of NEAMA's programs and activities as they pertain to members of the public.

This policy does not cover harm arising from

- misconduct that is exclusively internal to NEAMA, such as misconduct between two or more NEAMA members or affiliates.
 - See NEAMA's Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy for information on that.
- misconduct that is exclusively external to NEAMA, such as misconduct occurring in communities where no NEAMA member or affiliate was involved.

Definitions

Safeguarding

Taking all reasonable steps to protect health, wellbeing, and human rights in the communities we serve. Specifically, we endeavor to prevent sexual violence and respond appropriately when violence does occur.

In this policy, we particularly want to protect members of the public, specifically vulnerable peoples like children, at-risk adults, and beneficiaries of assistance, from harm that might arise from contact with NEAMA members or affiliates.

We are keenly invested in preventing and responding to harm from any potential, actual or attempted abuse of power, trust, or vulnerability, especially for sexual purposes. Safeguarding applies to every NEAMA member and affiliate in everything we do: it requires proactively identifying, preventing, and guarding against all risks of harm, exploitation, and abuse. It requires mature, accountable, and transparent systems for response, reporting, and learning when risks materialize. These systems must balance survivor-centric practice with tenets of natural justice, such as respondents being innocent until proven guilty.

Vulnerable People

Vulnerable people include children, at-risk adults, or other people that require special care and consideration in the delivery of intersectional services.

At-risk adult or Vulnerable Adult

A person who requires or may require additional care due to mental or physical disability, age, or illness. They may be unable to protect themselves against harm.

Child or Children

Anyone under the age of 18.

Beneficiary of Assistance or Beneficiary

Anyone who directly receives goods or services from NEAMA's programs, especially vulnerable people. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider community that the NEAMA serves, and also can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

Harm

An infringement upon an individual's psychological wellness, physical wellness, or human rights.

Psychological harm may include, but is not limited to, humiliating and degrading treatment; yelling; name calling; constant criticism; threatening; mocking; belittling; persistent shaming; and solitary confinement or isolation. It can include phenomena like grooming.

Physical and sexual harm may include, but is not limited to, striking; hitting; kicking; biting; wanton gesturing; lewd remarks; indecent exposure; unwanted physical contact; any form of sexual contact; or inappropriate touching. Physical abuse does not include physical contact that is reasonably designed to coach, teach or demonstrate a dance related skill.

Grooming

Grooming is the process in which an adult builds a relationship with a child or the child's caretaker to gain the child's or the caretaker's trust for the purposes of sexually abusing and/or exploiting the child. Grooming typically occurs in phases, and it can happen online or face to face, by a stranger or by someone the child or caretaker knows. Since it is a gradual process, it can sometimes be difficult to detect. Here are a few indicators that an adult may be grooming a child or their caretaker:

- Favoring the child over others
- Providing the child with rewards or privileges
- Isolating the child from others
- Expressing interest in a child who is particularly vulnerable or in need of support (e.g., previous abuse of the child by another)
- Befriending the parents or caretakers who are responsible to protect the child
- Providing the child with alcohol or drugs
- Building intimacy (i.e., having inside jokes or telling the child that nobody understands him/her like the groomer does)
- Threatening, blackmailing, intimidating, or scaring a child by saying the groomer will do something to the child's family or friends

NEAMA members

All people subject to NEAMA's organizational policies, including but not limited to

- paid and unpaid staff;
- volunteers;
- AND
- the Board of Directors.

People affiliated with NEAMA (or "NEAMA affiliates")

All people who are engaged with NEAMA's mission, but who are not directly covered by some or all of NEAMA's organizational policies. Examples include, but are not limited to

- consultants;
- contractors;
- journalists;
- AND
- celebrities.

Survivor

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term "survivor" is often preferred to "victim," as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive. Individuals may choose to self-identify as "survivors," "victims," or other terms as desired.

Prevention

NEAMA's organizational responsibilities

NEAMA will

- ensure all NEAMA members and affiliates have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy.
- design and undertake all its programs and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with NEAMA.
 - This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programs is gathered and communicated.
- implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying NEAMA members and affiliates.
- ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organization.
- follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process.

NEAMA member and affiliate responsibilities

Safeguarding for vulnerable people

NEAMA members and affiliates must not:

- engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18.
- sexually abuse or exploit vulnerable people.
- subject vulnerable people to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect.
- engage in any commercially exploitative activities with vulnerable people including child labour or trafficking.
- engage in systems of behavior that contribute to the sexualization of vulnerable people.

We strongly advise that NEAMA members and affiliates should not

- drive alone with vulnerable people in a car.
- be alone when taking vulnerable people to locker rooms, bathrooms, or other private rooms.
- provide one-on-one training to vulnerable people without the assistance of another person.
- have private, rather than public conversations with vulnerable people.
- socialize individually with vulnerable people outside of sponsored activities.

Other best practices for working with vulnerable people:

- Parents and caretakers are encouraged to become as active as possible in NEAMA activities, since parental involvement makes abusive situations less likely.
- When traveling overnight with children, children should be paired with other children of the same gender and approximately the same age with chaperones available in separate, but nearby rooms.
 - Ensure that children are involved in the conversation and that they are given opportunities to express their gender identity to accommodate their preferred gender grouping.

Adult safeguarding

NEAMA staff and associated personnel must not

- sexually abuse or exploit at-risk adults.
- subject an at-risk adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect.
- engage in systems of behavior that contribute to the sexualization of at-risk adults.

General protection against sexual violence

NEAMA members and affiliates must not

- exchange money, employment, goods, or services for sexual activity when acting in capacities related to NEAMA.
- This includes any exchange of assistance owed to beneficiaries of assistance.
- engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics

Additionally, NEAMA members and affiliates must

- commit to upholding the Safeguarding Policy.
- report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by NEAMA members or affiliates to the relevant body.

Reporting

NEAMA will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with.

Any staff reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels (or if they request it) will be protected by [TBA - NEAMA's Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace (Whistleblowing) Policy].

NEAMA will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners, and official bodies.

How to report a safeguarding concern

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to their Safeguarding Focal Point [as appropriate] or line manager. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their Safeguarding Focal Point or line manager (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate staff member. For example, this could be a senior manager or a member of the HR Team. [Provide contact details]

NEAMA Safeguarding procedure

We would like to make a NEAMA Safeguarding Procedure that accurately reflects NEAMA's Safeguarding Policy. It is important we establish a course of action that aligns with the values outlined in this Policy, but this resource is still under development. We do want to share, however, some guiding principles in how we respond to safeguarding claims about NEAMA members and affiliates:

- **Minimum response time** - we commit to responding to any inquiries or complaints within 48 hours.
- **Natural justice** - we commit to practicing the tenets of natural justice as much as possible, such as respecting the innocence of accused parties until proven guilty.
- **Transformative justice** - we commit to practices that center healing and survivor agency, acknowledging that punitive justice approaches do not always respect survivor preferences: we seek to find radical and generative ways to transform conflict.
- **Conflicts of interest** - we commit to remaining aware and transparent about potential conflicts of interest that may arise with members involved in the safeguarding and decision-making process.

- **Respecting confidentiality** - we commit to at all times respecting the private information of those who are involved in disclosing or reporting harm.
- **Avoid retelling of experiences** - we commit to a process that does not subject a complainant to unnecessary repetition of their experiences in respect to their psychological and emotional wellbeing.
- **Rape shield** - we commit to prohibiting the introduction evidence or questioning that call into question the complainant's past sexual behaviour unrelated to the allegation.
- **Intersectionality** - we commit to respecting the intersectionality of violence, which occurs across multiple systems of oppression including racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, fatphobia, ableism, and classism.
- **Opt-out** - we commit to creating systems where adult survivors can choose to opt-out of an ongoing reporting process as desired.
- **Trauma-informed** - we commit to practices that are trauma-informed, such as avoiding retraumatization through graphic retellings of sexual violence, limiting “information dumping” on survivors, and creating positive systems that center survivor choice.

Response

NEAMA will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations (see Procedures for reporting and response to safeguarding concerns in Associated Policies).

NEAMA will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to NEAMA members or affiliates found in breach of policy.

NEAMA will offer support to survivors of harm caused by NEAMA members or affiliates, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.