

THEATRE COMPANY OF SAUGUS

Youth Protection & Mandatory Reporting Policy

Adopted: 19 March 2026



I. Purpose

The Theatre Company of Saugus (“TCS”) is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment for all minors participating in its programs, including but not limited to the Youth Theatre Workshop (YTW).

This policy establishes standards for:

- Youth safety and supervision
- Professional boundaries
- Reporting obligations
- Compliance with Massachusetts mandatory reporting laws (M.G.L. c. 119 §51A)

II. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Board Members
- Youth Theatre Workshop Committee Members
- Directors, Producers, Stage Managers
- Teaching Artists, Interns, Volunteers
- Contractors working with minors
- Any adult in a supervisory or instructional capacity over minors

All covered individuals must review and acknowledge this policy prior to working with youth.

III. Definitions

- **Minor:** Any individual under the age of 18.
- **Mandated Reporter:** Individuals required by Massachusetts law to report suspected abuse or neglect.
- **Abuse:** Physical, emotional, or sexual harm, or risk thereof.
- **Neglect:** Failure to provide adequate care, supervision, or protection.

IV. Code of Conduct & Professional Boundaries

To protect both youth and adults, the following standards apply:

A. Two-Adult Rule

Whenever feasible:

- Two adults shall be present during rehearsals, workshops, or backstage supervision.
- No adult shall be alone in a closed space with a minor.

B. Physical Contact

- Must be appropriate, non-sexual, and instructional in nature.
- Consent-based and limited to what is necessary for theatrical instruction.
- Intimacy, choreography, and physical direction must follow best practices.

(Your background in intimacy direction is an asset here — you may later want to add a specific Youth Intimacy Guidelines appendix.)

C. Communication

- No private direct messaging with minors.
- Communication must include parent/guardian and/or occur through official channels.
- Social media “friending” or private engagement with minors is prohibited.

D. Transportation

- TCS personnel may not transport minors alone.
- Transportation requires parental authorization and two-adult presence when possible.

E. Overnight Activities

- If overnight programming occurs, separate accommodations by gender identity (with inclusion and safety considerations) must be arranged.
- Clear supervision plans must be documented in advance.

V. Supervision Standards

- Attendance must be tracked daily.
- Sign-in and sign-out procedures must be documented.
- Parents/guardians must provide emergency contact information.
- Health and allergy information must be collected prior to participation.

VI. Mandatory Reporting Requirements

Under Massachusetts law (M.G.L. c. 119 §51A): Certain individuals are mandated reporters and must immediately report suspected child abuse or neglect.

A. Immediate Reporting Procedure

If abuse or neglect is suspected:

1. **Ensure immediate safety of the child.**
2. **Call the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) Child-At-Risk Hotline:**
 - 1-800-792-5200 (24/7)
3. Submit a written 51A report within 48 hours as required by law.
4. Notify the TCS President (unless the concern involves that individual).
5. Document the incident factually (no opinions or speculation).

Failure to report may result in:

- Legal consequences
- Removal from position
- Organizational discipline

VII. Internal Reporting

Even if uncertainty exists, individuals must report concerns internally to:

- The President
- A designated Youth Safety Officer
- Or the Board Executive Committee

TCS strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports a concern in good faith.

VIII. Investigation & Response

Upon receiving a report:

- TCS will cooperate fully with DCF and law enforcement.
- The accused individual may be suspended pending investigation.
- Confidentiality will be maintained to the fullest extent possible.
- Board Executive Committee will oversee response.

IX. Training Requirements

All individuals working with minors must:

- Complete CORI clearance
- Review this Youth Protection Policy annually
- Participate in periodic safety training as determined by the Board

X. Policy Oversight

This policy shall be:

- Reviewed annually
- Updated in accordance with Massachusetts law
- Included in Board onboarding materials
- Distributed to all YTW personnel

Affirmation

Theatre Company of Saugus affirms that protecting children is a shared responsibility. Youth safety is foundational to our artistic mission and community trust.