

# Safer Spaces Policy

## Introduction

ŌPCo actively strives for the liberation of all. We practise joy as an act of resistance and to maintain a vibe we must first build a foundation of trust and safety.

To achieve this there are certain behaviours that are unacceptable in ŌPCo spaces:

Harmful behaviour: intimidation, dishonesty, harassment, bullying, aggression and violence - anything that threatens the safety of individuals or the safety and continuity of the project.

Oppressive behaviour: includes - but is not limited to - any demonstration of: racism, colonialism, classism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, fatphobia, ageism.

Our spaces are located on colonised land. We acknowledge Mana Whenua as indigenous peoples of Aotearoa, and recognise that Tino Rakatirataka was never ceded.

## Covered by this policy:

- Interactions between people occupying ŌPCo spaces, including Yours and 43a Moray Pl.
- The behaviour of ŌPCo members.
- Communications between members via phone, email and social media channels.

## Guidelines for All

- We want our spaces and associated events to be friendly, fun, safe and vibey and this starts with respecting the physical, emotional, and mental boundaries of others.
- As a guest or member of ŌPCo, we ask that you take responsibility for your behaviour and make efforts to understand the ways in which it can affect others. We value freedom of expression, but not at the cost of alienating others.
- People who are unwilling or unable to discuss and correct their harmful behaviour will have to leave.
- No weapon or item that appears to be a weapon may be brought to or used in our spaces.

## Dealing with Conflict and Disagreement

Here we come together from many experiences for a common purpose, but from different backgrounds with different concerns. This can lead to tension and conflict. Sometimes this is healthy; at other times it can be destructive.

If you find yourself in a conflict which is escalating, the first priority should be to try to resolve the conflict directly with the other person. If you do not feel safe to do this, you may wish to seek the help of an ŌPCo member.

## Doing it Together

Whether or not it directly affects you, we encourage you to call people out for their unsafe, inappropriate and/or harassing behaviour if this can be done safely.

Try using the following tactics if you are unsure of what to do. Sometimes it could be as simple as saying: 'I think women are just as able to fix a bike as men are' or 'that sounded a bit racist, can you explain what you meant?' If a person is invading another's personal space and failing to read body language, you could say "I don't think they're cool with that, would you mind giving them some space?"

## The Policy in Practice

- If someone approaches a Member with an issue, they have a responsibility to try to resolve it. If the complainant's consent is obtained, they may bring the issue to the other Members who are present.
- ŌPCo makes decisions by consensus, therefore this will be the method of deciding whether people should leave the space in question.
- We will normally give people a chance to change or address their behaviour or language if they have made others feel uncomfortable, threatened, or unsafe. If the person refuses to do so they will be asked to leave the space. Ensuring the space is safe and accessible for all may require people unwilling to change their behaviour to no longer be a part of the group and/or event.
- Depending on the nature of the complaint (such as sexual assault), a warning may not be deemed an acceptable solution and the person may be asked to leave immediately.
- When a rapid decision needs to be made, a consensus process will involve as many group members as possible in the circumstances.
- The person being asked to leave may be included in this conversation unless the group decides it is not appropriate.
- For the purposes of these two decisions (asking someone to leave, and whether they can take part in the conversation), the group does not require the agreement of the person(s) who has caused the issue in question.
- While we cannot guarantee an environment free from all discrimination, the intention of our policy is to make people feel comfortable to approach us with any concerns and make wellbeing a priority. We hope this policy will help people understand their role in creating and maintaining a safer space.

## Acknowledgements:

This safer spaces policy was informed by the respective policies of Rise Up For Climate Justice, Auckland Peace Action and Peace Action Wellington. Thank you for your mahi.

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