

Guidelines for Event Coordinators

Addressing Incidents

These guidelines apply when handling incidents not in keeping with the PCDC [Code of Conduct](#) or our [Community Standards](#).

Things to keep in mind when speaking with the involved parties

- There are always multiple sides and perspectives to an incident – make sure you listen to these.
- Assume good intent. The Person the Complaint is About might say something like “I didn’t mean it that way”, which is likely true. But impact matters regardless of intent, so we’d like the behavior to change.
- Problematic behaviors are unlikely to go away unless addressed.
- Followup is invaluable. It shows we care, and without it people often assume we ignored the issue. It’s helpful to share timeframes and to set expectations regarding feedback.
 - If a Complainant decides to handle an issue themselves, check in with them to see how it went.
 - If a Complainant decides not to address the issue, offer help and support. Behavior that endangers the community may require action even without Complainant involvement; always inform the Complainant and prioritize their privacy and safety as much as feasible.

Some considerations to help determine Severity of Complaint & Next Steps

- If the issue is about the running of an event or about the band, caller, or facility, thank Complainant, resolve as appropriate, and confirm Complainant does not require followup.
- If the issue involves the behavior of a participant, assessing the level of incident can help determine the next steps:
 - Low Level
 - Bad Dance Etiquette (for some examples, see [contra etiquette](#))
 - Encourage Complainant to speak directly with the Person the Complaint is About
 - Event coordinator can join in conversation if wanted, as support or lead
 - Event coordinator will follow up to ensure no further action is needed
 - Medium Level - can also treat as high or low, depending on circumstances
 - Has anyone been physically injured?
 - Is there a potential for injury?
 - How severe is the injury or potential for injury?

- Has there been inappropriate touching/contact?
 - Is the area of the body touched necessary for dancing?
 - Is the touch itself inappropriately intimate?
- Has there been inappropriate language?
 - Abusive, racist, sexist, queerphobic, or other offensive language?
 - Verbally loud (shouting/yelling)?
 - Is the language offensive to the recipient?
- High Level
 - If there is risk of immediate harm or destruction of property, call 911 and remove the Person the Complaint is About from the room for further conversation.
 - If no harm is imminent but grave concern exists, additional information and an investigation is needed.
 - Do not put yourself in danger. Get help from others in attendance if needed.
- Repeated problematic behavior that continues despite intervention may raise the incident level.

If the issue isn't resolved at the event itself, bring the following information to the relevant committee

- Who was involved - Complainant, Person the Complaint is About, witnesses, and who dealt with the issue at the event
- When the incident occurred
- What is the complaint (be as specific as possible)
- What actions were taken at the event

Report all medium and high level incidents to the relevant committee even if the issue is resolved at the event. For instance, if someone is accidentally injured at a dance, even if the injury is handled appropriately, the committee should know it happened.

Committee guidelines for handling issues

If interviews are needed, determine who should be interviewed (in order shown)

1. Complainant
2. The Person(s) the Complaint is about
3. Any witnesses to the incident

Interviews

- Interviews should be conducted in person or by video conferencing (but not recorded) if at all possible. A phone call can be a back-up if neither of the above is possible. Interviews should not be done via email.
- Determine the questions prior to meeting. Additional questions may become relevant during the interview - just remember to stay on topic.

- Use two interviewers whenever possible. Lead interviewer will ask the majority of questions. The role of the other interviewer is to take notes, listen, ensure the interview stays on topic, and help determine if further follow-up questions are needed.

Conclude interview

- It is important for the Complainant and the Person the Complaint is About to know next steps, including time frames for resolution. Witnesses should be asked to use discretion when talking about the incident with other people. Witnesses may not receive any follow-up but should be assured that the process is being followed and the complaint addressed.

Follow up

- Follow up as needed with the Complainant, the Person the Complaint is About, the relevant committee, and the board.

PCDC Board Record Keeping

Resolution of incidents and reports to the board.

Reporting an incident to the board is a subjective decision. If the Person the Complaint is About owns the problem, and if it is a first-time issue and a low-level incident, the situation can be resolved at the committee level.

The following types of situations should be reported to the board president and secretary, or their designees if there is a conflict of interest:

- An ejection from a dance
- Physical violence or danger, including someone bringing a gun into a hall
- Potential or threat of harm
- Physical injuries or incidents such as a serious fall or heart attack at a dance
- Doubt about how to handle a situation—the board president should be consulted
- Lack of resolution of an incident

Record keeping

If the incident was resolved at the dance or in later conversations and if there is small likelihood of recurrence, no record will be retained by the board president. Committee chairs may maintain their own records to help identify repeated problematic behavior by an individual.

If problematic behavior rises to the board level, then the board president and secretary will maintain a secure view-only electronic record with the name of the person(s) involved, a description of the incident, and the persons involved in the fact-gathering and resolution. Any time a record is made with the name of the Person the Complaint is About, that person and Complainant must be notified.

If a person is banned or suspended for a time from a dance or other PCDC activities, then the board president will provide to the relevant committee chair(s), the name of the person(s) involved, a description of the incident, the persons involved in the fact-gathering and resolution, and the decision to ban or suspend. The banned or suspended person's name and photo will be placed in a discreet location in the cash box of the relevant committee(s) so that they can be identified should they attempt to attend.

Sharing information about a high-level incident:

- Relevant information will be shared with the chairs or organizers of other PCDC events the Person the Complaint is About is likely to attend.
- The dance community will be informed that an incident occurred, that we have a board-approved process for dealing with it viewable at [location of document outlining process], and that we are following that process. After resolution of the incident, the outcome may be shared with the community (don't share names without individual consent).
- After consultation between the board president and the relevant committee chair, the relevant information may be shared with local non-PCDC contra or English dance organizers of other events the Person the Complaint is About is likely to attend. The board president shall inform the board of this decision.
- In extreme cases of intentional harm or harassment, after consultation between the board president and the relevant committee chair, the relevant information may be shared with organizers of other local and regional dances and/or events that the Person the Complaint is About is likely to attend. The board president shall inform the board of this decision.
- All persons involved in the incident being shared must be told who the information is shared with.

Adopted by the PCDC Board July 16, 2024. This document should be reviewed and revised as necessary every two years.