

The Visual & Performing Arts Center (VAPA)

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Updated on Sep 07, 2021



VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS CENTER





Mission Statement

“The VAPA Center will cultivate accessible exhibition and creative work spaces to inspire and nurture the relationship between artists and the community.”

Social Contract & Conflict Resolution Plan

As an arts collective, VAPA is committed to creating a thriving, inspired, and safe environment for artists to plan, create, exhibit, and perform various disciplines of art.

With that being our mission, we intend to do our best to ensure that every artist and every guest feels safe to create, explore and inspire one another without any negative or oppressive energy in our space.

This is a collective, and as such, people or organizations who are committed to conflict, bigotry, negativity, exclusion, or exclusive self-interest are not in alignment with our vision, and are welcomed to go elsewhere.

For us to keep our space drama free, we have created a social contract that outlines how we intend to conduct ourselves in our dealings with one another, internal/external clients, artists, sponsors, and the community. This contract is enforceable by the VAPA Board of Directors in as such, people who violate the tenants, can be asked to leave the property, no longer be affiliated with the organization, or be removed from the Board of Directors. Every Board Member and Tenant are required to read and sign this contract before occupying space at VAPA Center. We are committed to being humanitarian in our dealings with each other and our community.

What we are committed to:

1. We commit to treating each other with respect, courtesy and kindness in all of our dealings.
2. We are committed to emotional and professional intelligence in all of our dealings between VAPA members and our guests and will resolve any conflicts with kindness. We will ask for a mediator from the Board of Directors if needed.
3. We commit to behaving in a professional manner while at VAPA center, understanding that member's guests, board of directors, audience members, city/county members, sponsors and donors may be on premises at any time.
4. We understand that how we represent ourselves as VAPA members reflects on the entire organization and will conduct ourselves within accordance of this document while at VAPA Center.
5. We commit to taking a "time out" if we feel ourselves becoming triggered or aggravated with any other individual, and asking another member of VAPA to step in for them to resolve the

situation if we are unable to in a professional and kind manner.

6. We are committed to treating all guests as “our Guests” at VAPA Center, even if they are there to visit a different artist, we know that if any guest feels welcomed and has a good time, they will come back and see other artists in the space.

7. We commit to doing our individual part to turn VAPA Center into a mecca for artistic endeavor and do our best to continually inspire one another and be open to community service, serving on VAPA action committees, open to co-creation projects with other artists.

8. We are committed to all COVID 19 safety standards as recommended by the CDC and The State of NC. All artists in VAPA Center are required to follow the same COVID protocol including wearing masks, separating seating areas, keeping groups of people in lines 6 feet apart, sanitizing private and common areas, and making sure our staff and guests follow protocols as well.

What we do not tolerate at VAPA:

1. The use of illegal and illicit drugs on the property, including all of the parking areas, is strictly forbidden.

2. Smoking, including vaping, inside the building and within 50 feet of any public entrance.

3. Alcohol can only be purchased and consumed in accordance with licensing of the VAPA Center at any given time. People cannot bring in or sell alcohol for events unless permitted to do so.

4. Private parties that are not a publicized artistic “event” listed on our calendar are prohibited. After parties from a show or event are allowed up to our specified “quiet time”.

5. The use of dangerous chemicals, explosives, heat producing elements or machinery that could cause harm to people or the building are prohibited except those required for the specific purposes of creating art. (like dark room chemicals) All chemicals and machinery must be approved by the Building Manager and added to the artists lease as an addendum, including OSHA docs for the elements used. That tenant must supply their own emergency solutions or eye wash center as required by OSHA.

6. The use of loud music, light or sound that in any way obstructs any other businesses or bleeds over into another space without expressed permission from that space.(ie: playing your music so loud others hear it, use headphones.)

7. Approaching guests who have come to see one artist to convince them to see another. All promotional items can be put on line and in the lobby, but we do not want our guests to be harassed, but to be encouraged to come back and see other artists at the end of our shows and exhibitions.

8. VAPA is does not tolerate discrimination or bigotry of any kind.

9. VAPA will not condone or tolerate abusive actions, language or imagery unless it is an artistic endeavor created for the purposes to raise awareness or communicate an artist perspective.

10. Members and tenants of VAPA Center are to conduct themselves professionally while on the property and when interacting with other board members, artists, tenants, clients, audience members, city/county representatives and sponsors. We realize that the behavior of any one of us, reflects on the entire organization.

11. Hostile, overly aggressive, harassing, threatening, or unwanted sexual attention towards any persons is strictly prohibited. People behaving in any way that threatens the health, safety, wellbeing or emotional health of other persons will result in immediate removal from the property, banning from further access, and applicable legal action.

12. Racial, religious, xenophobic, sexual or any other type of dehumanizing slurs or behavior will not be tolerated and will be dealt with as aggressive behavior once being reported to security or the building manager, and they will enact the disciplinary response listed below.

13. No one will receive favoritism based on race, sex, country of origin, sexual orientation, physical ability or artistic endeavors, except when making decisions to be sure that our communities underserved populations are being assisted in accordance with our community service goals. I.e: we won't favor one art group over another, nonprofit over profit, or organizations that other members are on the Board of. All groups are considered by merit and need.

14. People who find themselves emotionally upset or "triggered" are asked to remove themselves from the property or meetings until they can regain composure, and address peers in a professional manner.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

Disciplinary measures are put in place to have a definitive action plan for people who violate our core social contract. This is to protect members of the organization and our clients from any undue injury, be it physical or emotional, and so every member and tenant knows what is expected of them, what will not be tolerated, and what are the corrective steps if incidences occur.

1. Any member of VAPA Center, including tenants, are asked to immediately contact security if they witness anyone behaving in a manner that is threatening to the safety and wellbeing of any person or property. Any person behaving in such a manner will be removed by a security officer or the Police, & will be banned from the property indefinitely, and legal action perused if necessitated.
2. Any VAPA member, including tenants and guests that are behaving in a manner that is aggressive or unprofessional will be addressed in incremental levels.
 1. They will be asked if they are okay and if they need assistance and space to collect themselves. (could it be a physical issue like low blood sugar or mental health issues.)
 2. If they continue to “spin out”, they will be told that their behavior is not consistent with our social contract and asked to leave the situation to “cool off”.
 3. If they refuse to remove themselves from the situation, the building manager/ security or closest Board member should be contacted to take over the situation and ask the person to regroup.
 4. If the prior actions fail to de-escalate the situation, they will be escorted off the premises by our security officer.
 5. If that fails, CMPD or Emergency Mental Health Services will be called to handle the situation.
3. Any step prior to being escorted out of the building, is considered a “negative behavior event.”
4. If any one VAPA member or tenant has 3 or more negative behavior events, the building manager or any VAPA Center member can ask the Board of Directors to vote for further action, including expulsion of that person, and their organization.

5. Any person that feels threatened or harassed by another member of VAPA Center or our guests is asked to contact security, the Building Manager or if they are not available, the nearest Board Member immediately. However; if there is a serious threat to the life of anyone, call 911 immediately, then call security/Building Manager.

6. Any person that has had an incident that they feel was sexual harassment, threatening, bigoted, bullying or otherwise out of accordance with this agreement, they are asked to report it immediately to the Building Manager who will initiate the steps of investigation and remedy.

Steps

1. VAPA members, tenants or guest files a report with the building manager.

2. The Manager or HR person will have a one-on-one conversation with the person who filed the official complaint.

3. The Manager or HR person will have a one-on-one meeting with the person the complaint was filed against.

4. The Manager or HR person will be granted the authority by the Board of Directors to make a decision for immediate action, as stated above, if after interviewing both parties, determines that the complaint is founded and the offending person is complacent about changing their behavior for the better or correcting the situation.

5. If the Manger investigates and does not feel that he/she can resolve it, he will bring his investigation to the Board of Directors who will then vote on the course of action to be taken. The courses of action can be as follows:

a. A warning in writing which states the negative behavior and a copy of the Social Contract required to be a member or tenant of VAPA.

And what actions will be taken by VAPA if the behavior is not corrected.

b. A special meeting with at least one Board member and the parties in conflict to see if the parties can resolve their conflict.

c. Requesting the affronting party(s) to vacate in 30 days if no resolution can be achieved.

d. Requesting that party (s) leave immediately if prolonged exposure to one another would create an unhealthy environment for any members of VAPA or our guests.

This document could be used as an addendum to our lease for tenants and should be read and agreed to by all who occupy the building and each organization would commit to distributing this to their personnel that would be in the building as well.

Signed by: _____ of _____
organization

Date: _____

Created by: Keli Semelsberger and Arthur Rogers

Reviewed by;

Edited by:

Approved by Board: _____ Date: _____





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