

Polyphony Lit Protection of Minors Policy

Section One: Purpose

Polyphony Lit hereby establishes guidelines for adults acting on the behalf of the organization who may interact with our core constituency of high school students in grades 9-12 (or equivalent), with the goal of promoting the safety and wellbeing of minors.

Section Two: Scope

This policy provides guidelines that apply broadly to interactions between minors and any adult staff, employees, volunteers, Board members, or any person engaged to provide services on behalf of Polyphony Lit which involve interaction with minors. All such individuals are responsible for understanding and complying with this Policy.

Section Three: Definitions

Staff for the purposes of this policy means any adult acting in an official capacity for Polyphony Lit, regardless of whether they are a volunteer or paid employee.

Abuse or Neglect of Minors for purposes of this Policy means infliction of physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, or negligent treatment or maltreatment of a person under age 18. Sexual abuse includes engaging in or attempting to engage in a sexual act or sexual contact with a minor, causing or attempting to cause a minor to engage in sexually explicit conduct, or exposing the minor to sexually explicit conduct. Neglect includes the failure to make reasonable efforts to prevent the infliction of abuse upon a person under age 18.

Harassment of Minors for purposes of this Policy means repeated online attention targeted at a particular person that causes the targeted individual substantial emotional distress and/or the fear of bodily harm of a person under age 18.

Programs for purposes of this policy means any formal program offered by Polyphony such as workshops, as well as informal interactions via our electronic means such as Zoom, Submittable, and Discord. Since electronic means of communication often develop and change, this Policy covers any interactions between the aforementioned adults and any minor student for which the core topic or reason for the interaction is business connected to Polyphony Lit.

Minor for purposes of this policy means any person under the age of 18.

Section Four: Guidelines and Responsibilities

When participating in Polyphony programs, staff should:

- Always be vigilant in protecting the well-being and safety of minors with whom they interact in programs or elsewhere.

- Watch for signs of minor abuse or neglect or harassment and promptly report suspected instances of abuse or neglect, or violations of this policy or law.
- Avoid situations which may invite improper conduct, e.g.:
 - Staff should not regularly meet with students on an individual basis.
 - Staff should not socialize with students outside of Polyphony programs
 - Staff should primarily use Polyphony-monitored means to communicate with students instead of private emails/chats
- Be prepared to retain records related to suspected incidents, including but not limited to email, texts, chats, screenshots, or notes of reported information.
- Know to whom to report violations or suspected violations of this Policy.

Section Five: Training for Those Participating in Programs and Activities

Staff who participate in Polyphony Programs involving minors must complete appropriate training. At a minimum, training must include:

- Basic warning signs of abuse or neglect or harassment of minors.
- Guidelines for protecting minors from emotional and physical abuse and neglect and harassment.
- Requirements and procedures for reporting incidents of suspected abuse or neglect, harassment, or improper conduct.

Training may be expanded depending upon the program or activity and the person's role in the program or activity.

Section Six: Reporting Potential Harm to Minors

Because all of Polyphony's Programs are operated remotely, circumstances can complicate what would be routine reporting in a face-to-face environment. Complications can include: time zone differentials, inability to reach endangered minors, local/national laws for minors outside the US, cultural differences regarding acceptable behavior, and so on.

General guidelines for reporting incidents: any case in which a minor may be endangered should be simultaneously reported to the Executive Director and a designated Board member. If either such person is named in the incident, then report should be made to a different Board member and the Managing Director. The designees will evaluate the situation, make inquiries as necessary, and determine how to proceed.

Section Seven: Enforcement

Sanctions for violations of this policy will depend on the circumstances and the nature of the violation, but may include the full range applicable to the individual including suspension, dismissal, termination, and, where appropriate, exclusion from Polyphony programs. Polyphony Lit may also take necessary interim actions before determining whether a violation has

occurred. Polyphony Lit may also terminate relationships or take other appropriate actions against any entities which whom we work that violate this Policy.

Section Eleven: Policy Implementation and Modification

The Board of Directors, in collaboration with the Executive Director, will review this policy on an annual basis in order to update or modify it as necessary. The Policy may be modified with the approval of the majority of the Board to reflect changes in the law, standards relating to the protection of minors, or internal processes, or as otherwise necessary.
