

2025 Ottawa Bluesfest and CityFolk Festival Full Volunteer Harassment Policy

As stated in the VTBB Volunteer Code of Conduct, as part of our Zero Tolerance policy, harassment in any form will not be tolerated and can lead to dismissal from the festival.

We (Ottawa Bluesfest / CityFolk Festival) are committed to preventing harassment by providing all volunteers with a common understanding of appropriate and expected behaviour. We are all responsible for supporting initiatives to maintain a respectful festival environment.

Any person who feels that he or she has experienced harassment, including violence and/or sexual harassment, while volunteering at the Ottawa Bluesfest/CityFolk Festival, may take the recommended steps or file a formal complaint under this policy as soon as possible.

DEFINITION

Harassment is a form of misconduct/improper behaviour that is directed at, is offensive to, and is not welcomed by the victim, and which the harasser ought reasonably to have known would be unwelcome and cause offence or harm.

This includes discriminatory harassment within the meaning of the Canadian Human Rights Act (CHRA) which is to harass an individual based on the prohibited grounds of discrimination, which are race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, Gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, disability, or conviction of an offence for which a pardon has been granted.

IDENTIFYING & RESOLVING SITUATIONS PROMPTLY, FAIRLY, AND COOPERATIVELY

Any person who feels that they have experienced harassment while volunteering with the Team Behind Bluesfest (Ottawa Bluesfest / CityFolk Festival) can access some or all of the following measures:

- immediately inform the harasser that their behaviour is unwelcome and unwanted. Do so before witnesses, if possible;
- seek support from your Area Leaders, Supervisor, or other advisor such as onsite staff or security supervisor, to help address the situation;
- use informal conflict resolution techniques when possible can help resolve the situation to the satisfaction of all parties;
- document details of the incident in writing, including as much detail as possible (date and time, contact information of involved parties, actions leading up to the

event, witness information, location, etc.), you can choose to submit to your Area Leader, Volunteer Services staff (volunteers@ottawabluesfest.ca) or the onsite Admin Office.

- If all of the above are not successful, file a formal written complaint with Volunteer Services as soon as possible. You may obtain the Harassment Complaint Form on the Volunteer website and submit it to Volunteer Services Management (volunteers@ottawabluesfest.ca). Complaints must be made in good faith.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS

If you have experienced harassment you may choose to file a formal written complaint against your harasser to Volunteer Services management (volunteers@ottawabluesfest.ca). We request that formal complaints be submitted within two weeks of the incident. All complaints are kept confidential. You can access the Harassment Complaint Form on the Volunteer website and submit it to Volunteer Services Management (volunteers@ottawabluesfest.ca).

COURSE OF ACTION ONCE A FORMAL WRITTEN COMPLAINT IS FILED: All formal written complaints will be reviewed by an internal committee to determine if an investigation is warranted. In the case of the complaint involving a minor, the parent or guardian of the minor will be informed. If an investigation occurs it will be carried out in a timely and fair manner, respecting the privacy of all concerned parties to the extent possible.

INVESTIGATIVE ACTION:

The committee and/or an investigator will: determine the accuracy of as many details as possible; determine (from both parties) if there were any witnesses, as well as how the complainant responded at the time of the alleged incident; determine who was made aware of the alleged incident and whether anyone else is known to have reported similar behaviour by the same person; and find out what resolution the complainant would prefer.

OUTCOME ACTION

Substantiated Complaints: If following investigation the complaint of harassment is substantiated, Volunteer Services will act promptly and fairly in taking appropriate measures, which may range from reprimand to dismissal from volunteering at Ottawa Bluesfest/CityFolk Festival. Written records of the complaint, investigation and any

disciplinary action will be maintained in the personnel files of the parties involved in the complaint. Unsubstantiated Complaints: When an investigation of an allegation of harassment is unsubstantiated, all record of the complaint will be destroyed.

Frivolous/Malicious Complaints: A volunteer who makes a frivolous complaint, malicious complaint, or a complaint in bad faith, may be subject to disciplinary measures up to, and including, reprimand or dismissal from volunteering at Ottawa Bluesfest/CityFolk Festival. Retaliation for Complaints: A volunteer who retaliates against another volunteer for filing a complaint, may be subject to disciplinary measures by Ottawa Bluesfest/CityFolk Festival up to, and including, reprimand or dismissal from volunteering at Ottawa Bluesfest/CityFolk Festival. Additionally, any volunteer who is subjected to retaliation from another volunteer has the option of involving the authorities.

A volunteer may also file a complaint with the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) if the alleged harassment is related to one of the prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Canadian Human Rights Act.

If you are in imminent physical danger, and are not able to find onsite support, please call 911.