

MASTER PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a clear and concise list of rules, regulations, and policies for all participants of programs with Vanguard Music and Performing Arts. Specific information regarding status within one of our programs can be found using the following links to additional resources.

DEFINITIONS

“Participant” refers to any person participating in one or more of the VMAPA programs.

“Program Staff ” refers to any person employed by VMAPA to instruct, administer, or support one or more of the VMAPA programs.

“Program Member” refers to any person receiving the instruction and experience for which one or more of the VMAPA programs has been designed.

“Program Volunteer” or **“Volunteer”** refers to any person providing their time or services without compensation for one or more of the VMAPA programs.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

[VMAPA Employee-Specific Handbook](#)

[VMAPA Volunteer-Specific Handbook](#)

[SCV Member-Specific Handbook](#)

[SCV Staff-Specific Handbook](#)

(must be logged into your SCV email to access)

[Safesport](#)

[ServSafe](#)

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SECTION I: VMAPA OVERVIEW

About VMAPA

Vanguard Music and Performing Arts (VMAPA) – VMAPA is a non-profit performing arts organization that sponsors a number of programs including the Santa Clara Vanguard and Vanguard Cadets.

Santa Clara Vanguard Drum & Bugle Corps (SCV) – The Santa Clara Vanguard was formed in 1967 in Santa Clara, California and is the flagship program of Vanguard Music and Performing Arts. SCV won its first championship title in 1970 at the American Legion Championships and went on to win the coveted Veterans of Foreign War Championships in 1971. In 1972, SCV became one of the founding members of Drum Corps International and has since won 7 DCI World Class Championship titles (1973, 1974, 1978, 1981, 1989, 1999, 2018.) SCV holds the distinction of being the only drum corps to make Finals every year since DCI was formed.

Oakland Unified School District Partnership (VMAPA/OUSD) – Vanguard Music and Performing Arts has partnered with the Oakland Unified School District and their Department of Expanded Learning Programs to provide instruction and expertise to their students and music programs. January of 2024 is the inauguration of this program.

Vanguard Alumni Association – The Vanguard Alumni Association serves to create a fully inclusive network of alumni, acting with integrity and advocacy for the organization. As a group, these Alumni come together to support current members in a number of ways that include ordering member shirts, purchasing age-out gifts, and providing scholarships. Any and all former Vanguard program members are welcome to join the Vanguard Alumni Association after aging out!

Vanguard Cadets Drum & Bugle Corps (SCVC) – The Vanguard Cadets were formed in 1971 in Santa Clara, California and compete in DCI's Open Class Division, primarily traveling throughout the state of California. SCVC has enjoyed great success throughout the years, having claimed six Open Class Championship titles (2000, 2008, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2018) and performed at DCI World Championships 16 times. The group has made it as far as DCI World Class Semifinals every year since 2011. The Vanguard Cadets program is currently on hiatus.

VMAPA Championship Titles:

1970: American Legion Champions (SCV) – Portland, OR
1971: VFW Champions (SCV) – Dallas, TX
1973: DCI World Champions (SCV) – Whitewater, WI
1974: DCI World Champions (SCV) – Ithaca, NY
1978: DCI World Champions (SCV) – Denver, CO
1981: DCI World Champions (SCV) – Montreal, Quebec
1989: DCI World Champions (SCV) – Kansas City, KS
1999: DCI World Champions (SCV) – Madison, WI
2000: DCI Div. II Champions (SCVC) – College Park, MD
2008: DCI Open Champions (SCVC) – Bloomington, IN

2009: WGI World Guard Champions (SCVWG) – Dayton, OH
2011: WGI World Guard Champions (SCVWG) – Dayton, OH
2011: WGI Open Percussion Champions (VWP) – Dayton, OH
2013: DCI Open Champions (SCVC) – Michigan City, IN
2015: WGI World Guard Champions (SCVWG) – Dayton, OH
2015: DCI Open Champions (SCVC) – Michigan City, IN
2017: DCI Open Champions (SCVC) – Michigan City, IN
2018: DCI Open Champions (SCVC) – Michigan City, IN
2018: DCI World Champions (SCV) – Indianapolis IN
2022: DCI Open Champions (SCVC) – Marion, IN

VMAPA HISTORY & TRADITION

- Vanguard is defined by Webster’s Dictionary as “the foremost or leading position in a trend or movement” and “the foremost position in an army or fleet advancing into battle”
- The founder of the Santa Clara Vanguard was Mr. Gail M. Royer. He was the Corps Director from 1967 through 1992. He passed away on June 17th, 1993
- Vanguard’s corps song is Stephen Sondheim’s Send in the Clowns from the musical, “A Little Night Music”. The corps first performed the song as part of their musical program in 1974, the year SCV won its second DCI World Championship. In that year, Clowns was performed at a quicker tempo with both the hornline and drumline. The snare parts were written with a rimshot played at the height of the piece. In honor of this memory, all of the Alumni Corps have found a way to incorporate the rimshot when they perform Clowns
- The organization has historically been visually distinctive by the wearing of an Aussie hat as part of the uniform. The origin of the Aussie is from the Australian Army who pushed up the side of the brim so their rifles could be carried. Vanguard is known for the large red or white feather worn on the Aussie. The feather was moved down when worn with the uniform, until the corps was ready to take the field. Prior to stepping onto the field, the drum major would call “Feathers Up! Mark time in your best, step off.” and the corps would turn their feathers to stand straight up, which signified a readiness to perform. The Aussie hat became a symbol of pride, which was carried and worn by members with respect and pride
- The Vanguard Star is an eight-pointed star that has been the SCV symbol since 1972. The stars are given to members at the end of the season, kept as mementos, and placed on the corps jacket upon graduating from the corps. Similarly, the Vanguard Cadets’ Shield is given to SCVC brass, percussion, and color guard members during their season
- “Miss Amana” is the beloved traveling food truck that has served members of the Santa Clara Vanguard for many years. The current “Miss Amana” is actually the 3rd edition to travel with the drum corps, and was newly added to the fleet for the 2019 season. Our food truck first earned this nickname because of the Amana brand appliances it came equipped with
- The Vanguard Business Office is located at 1795 Space Park Drive in Santa Clara - the heart of Silicon Valley. This facility includes a complete Bingo Hall, Administrative Office, Equipment Storage, Merchandise and Uniform Storage, a Music Rehearsal Room, and a Dance Studio. The Vanguard Office is dedicated in memoriam to Mr. James Edwards, who helped establish the Vanguard Bingo operation
- Other Vanguard traditions include the Bottle Dance, The Vanguard Yell, The Vanguard Walk (formerly known as “God Walking”), Vanguard’s Cymbal “V”, and the Green Feather formerly worn in the Aussie, hair, or behind the star by age outs of the Vanguard for their final performance that is now ceremonially given to age outs though aussies are no longer worn

VMAPA CODE OF CONDUCT

- Be on time, prepared, and be informed. Read provided information carefully, utilize all resources available, and questions are welcome when you need more clarification
- Excessive swearing and abusive language is not acceptable. You have the right to expect the same professionalism from all Vanguard stakeholders, including Program Members, Program Staff, Volunteers, Executive Leadership, Board of Directors, and Alumni
- You are a role model. It is your responsibility to remember that at all times. This role model responsibility applies to how you conduct yourself at all times
- Treat others as you would like to be treated. Respect the personal needs and requests of others. This awareness should apply at all times
- Set high standards for yourself. Ensure that you know, understand, and execute the expectations set forward
- While affiliated with VMAPA, you are always considered to be in the public eye and are thus not permitted to espouse or promote political causes or movements that conflict with the core values and mission of the VMAPA organization while appearing as a participant of the VMAPA organization in rehearsal or performance. You are also expected to refrain from the public promotion of drug and alcohol use and sexual innuendo. You are not to promote any corporation that conflicts with a current VMAPA relationship, partnership, or sponsorship. Violations will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of your contract and or employment.
- Treat all participants of VMAPA Programs (members, staff, and volunteers) of VMAPA programs as well as parents, fans, office staff, board members, and alumni with respect at all times. If you have concerns with someone that have escalated beyond appropriate means of immediate intervention, reports can be made to report@scvanguard.org or through the whistleblower portal (see Section III for more information)
- You represent the Vanguard Music and Performing Arts organization at all times. It does not matter where you are – rehearsal, performance, social media, messaging apps, school, work, home, etc. What you say and write as a participant of VMAPA will be viewed as the opinion and philosophy of the organization. If someone knows you are affiliated with VMAPA then you are representing the entire organization. Make all of your actions happen with pride, class, and integrity
- Understand that the information you create and share via social media will serve as a representation of Vanguard Music and Performing Arts. We expect all members, staff, and volunteers to refrain from posting their personal opinions on sensitive topics and in any way that may be interpreted as being the opinion of the organization. Any and all uses of VMAPA trademarked materials (logos, program names, show artwork, etc.) must be approved by Corps Management. This includes use in graphics, section apparel, or other merchandise.

SECTION II: PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS

Prohibited Behaviors, as follows, should be reported and can result in investigation, the need for appropriate amends to be made, or dismissal depending on the evidence & severity of the offense.

Bullying & Physical Assault

Bullying can be categorized as verbal, social, or physical bullying. Verbal bullying includes gender/ethnic/cultural slurs and teasing, insulting, name-calling, and taunting. Social bullying includes purposeful exclusion, attempts to damage a person's reputation, spreading rumors or gossiping about someone, or intentionally embarrassing someone. Physical bullying is engaging, or threatening to engage in, behavior that poses an immediate danger to the life, health, welfare, safety, or property of any other individual. In many cases, physical bullying is also considered physical assault. Coercive bullying is a controlling behavior that makes a victim dependent on the harasser via isolation, emotional abuse, economic abuse, intimidation, and threats. The victim usually ends up in a state of emotional paralysis and fear of what may happen if they do something that will displease the abuser/harasser. Physical assault includes hitting, kicking, pinching, spitting, pushing, or tripping. Making rude hand gestures toward someone can also be considered physical bullying. Taking someone's personal possessions can be considered physical bullying or theft. Unwelcome pranks can be considered bullying.

Discrimination

Discrimination is treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor of or against a person based on a person's age, race, religion, national origin, sex or gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, color, pregnancy, parental status, genetic information, or weight. It involves restricting members of one group from opportunities or privileges that are available to another group, leading to the exclusion of the individual or entities. In all participation opportunities, VMAPA strives to refrain from discriminatory practices and to continue actively reversing the tide of discrimination. Discrimination, for this organization, does not include artistically motivated casting decisions based on musical or visual capabilities of performers, and is the sole discretion of VMAPA staff.

Drug, Alcohol, & Tobacco Use (Contraband)

Illegal substances, whether by federal or state law, or the possession of substances regulated by laws related to age restrictions are prohibited for participants of VMAPA. All participants are forbidden from possessing, consuming, or disposing of illegal substances including alcohol while on school grounds. Participants 21 years of age or older are allowed to consume alcoholic beverages while on a free day and off of school grounds but are required to follow these guidelines: Alcohol cannot be consumed by Program Staff or Volunteers while in the presence of program members regardless of age; Alcohol cannot be consumed by Program Members 21 years of age or older in the presence of program members under the age of 21; Participants cannot be inebriated or appear to be inebriated while on duty with the corps (while on school grounds, while at rehearsals, while at event venues, while traveling by bus, and while at awards ceremonies or any other corps-sponsored events); Program Members are restricted from bringing

open containers of any kind (cups, bottles, etc) with them while boarding the bus after free days, laundry blocks, or buy/rest stops; Program administration reserves the right to search participants and personal belongings, if there is suspicion of a participant being under the influence or possessing illegal substances, which can lead to expulsion from the program.

False Reporting

In any situation where a person is reporting in good faith, whistleblower protection and protection from retaliation are applicable. If it is discovered through the investigation process that a person provided a false report with intention to mislead the organization, this will be considered prohibited behavior and be subject to disciplinary action.

Fraternization

VMAPA strictly prohibits romantic or intimate relationships of any kind between adult participants and minor participants. Romantic or intimate relationships between all Program Volunteers/Staff with Program Members of any age are also strictly prohibited. VMAPA requires a disclosure of relationships among Program Staff to Human Resources, especially in the case of program staff and their direct supervisor that is consensual. Program Staff in a relationship should have no influence on the employment status, compensation, investigation, or promotion of their partner.

Grooming

Grooming is defined as establishing an emotional connection and trust with a person, and sometimes with their friends and/or family, to lower their inhibitions for the purpose of sexual abuse. Grooming also include communicating with the person outside of the scope or the nature of the professional relationship (student/staff or supervisor/direct report) or via channels not approved by VMAPA including but not limited to: 1:1 texting, 1:1 phone calls, 1:1 direct messaging on social media, or being physically alone with the person and having discussions that are not related to instruction or collaboration on a shared project, and instead blur the lines between personal and professional boundaries. VMAPA provides all Program Staff with Slack and official SCV email addresses for the purpose of communications. Any Program Staff found in this violation may result in disciplinary action, up to including termination of employment. More information on Grooming can be found [here](#), though grooming is not limited to minors.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as communication or behavior that mocks, demeans, puts down, disparages, defames, or ridicules an individual or group of individuals. Threats and intimidation are also forms of harassment and bullying. Harassment may also include offensive jokes, name-calling, offensive nicknames, and offensive pictures or objects.

Harassment based on the prescription of any of these characteristics is also prohibited:

Race; Religious creed; Color; National origin; Ancestry; Physical disability; Mental disability; Medical condition; Genetic information; Marital status; Sex; Gender; Gender identify; Gender expression; Age; Sexual orientation; Reproductive health decision making; or Veteran or military status.

Harassment may occur in many ways: The types of conduct that may constitute harassment include:

- Verbal harassment, such as epithets, derogatory comments or slurs;
- Physical harassment, such as assault or physical interference with movement or work;
- Visual harassment, such as derogatory cartoons, drawings or posters; and
- Sexual favors, e.g., employment benefits in exchange for unwanted sexual advances (often referred to as *quid pro quo* harassment).

Hazing

Hazing is defined as the imposition of strenuous, humiliating, and sometimes dangerous initiation rituals on those seeking membership or inclusion in an organization.

Media Misuse And Misrepresentation

All Participants are expected to represent VMAPA positively through media, and are expected to refrain from misrepresentation of themselves in official capacities. We expect that our sponsors, vendors, and partners will be treated respectfully. We will not engage in derogatory treatment of others within the VMAPA organization, other corps, or VMAPA. We will not use VMAPA's logos or images without authorization. We will not share information that has not yet been made public outside of our organization. We will refrain from sharing copyrighted material. We will utilize equipment provided by VMAPA for work purposes only. Inappropriate electronic messages are not tolerated. We commit to thinking before we post or message.

Racism, Sexism, & The LGBTQIA+ Community

Racism and sexism refer to personal interactions, institutional practices or policies, and systemic issues within the marching arts that cause harm to people of color, women, non-binary or transgendered individuals, or people with non-heterosexual identities. All Participants are protected by the organization from interpersonal harm in these areas. The Organization is committed to continued growth and change institutionally in these areas. The Organization will advocate within the marching arts as a whole for improvements in all organizations in these areas. VMAPA's stance is one of antiracism, antisexism, and in support of LGBTQIA+ communities. VMAPA will work with all participants to educate all parties in implicit bias and the avoidance of overt and micro aggressions toward members of protected classes. VMAPA works with nonbinary or transgendered individuals to make individualized accommodations, especially when it comes to correct pronoun use, preferred name use, uniforming, sleeping accommodations, bathroom use, and buses.

Sexual Assault

Sexual Assault includes physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent because of their temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity, because they are below the minimum age of consent, or because they are incapacitated due to the use of drugs and/or alcohol. Sexual assault includes non-consensual sexual penetration or sexual contact, or such contact with an individual that is under the age of consent.

Sexual penetration without consent: Any penetration of the sex organs or anus of another

person when consent is not present; any penetration of the mouth of another person with a sex organ when consent is not present; or performing oral sex on another person when consent is not present. This includes penetration or intrusion, however slight, of the sex organs or anus of another person by an object or any part of the body.

Sexual contact without consent: Knowingly touching or fondling a person's genitals, breasts, thighs, groin, or buttocks, or knowingly touching a person with one's own genitals, breasts, or buttocks, when consent is not present. This includes contact done directly or indirectly through clothing, bodily fluids, or with an object. It also includes causing or inducing a person, when consent is not present, to similarly touch or fondle oneself or someone else.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for dating after having been declined once, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical harassment of a sexual nature. Harassment can include offensive remarks about a person's body/attire, sex or gender, gender identity, relationships, sexual activity, or sexual orientation. Jokes, innuendo, sexually explicit profanity, gestures of a sexual nature, leering or staring at a person, sending lewd images, or asking/telling a person about topics of a sexual nature can be considered sexual harassment.

Sexual favors, e.g., employment benefits in exchange for unwanted sexual advances is also known as *quid pro quo* harassment. *Quid pro quo* is defined as "a favor or advantage granted or expected in return for something".

Sexual Exploitation

Sexual Exploitation includes taking sexual advantage of another person for the benefit of oneself or a third party without consent. This includes, but is not limited to, the following actions (including when they are done via electronic means, methods, or devices): Sexual voyeurism, or permitting others to witness or observe the sexual or intimate activity of another person without that person's consent, indecent or lewd exposure, or inducing others to expose themselves when consent is not present, recording any person engaged in sexual, private or intimate activity in a private space without that person's consent, distributing personal sexual information, images, or recordings about another person without that person's consent, even if the images or recordings were obtained with consent, recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining another person for the purpose of sexual exploitation, inducing incapacitation in another person with the intent to engage in sexual conduct, regardless of whether sexual misconduct actually occurs, and knowingly transmitting a sexually transmitted disease such as HIV to another person. It also includes causing or inducing a person, when consent is not present, to similarly touch or fondle oneself or someone else.

Stalking

Stalking is defined as engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to (A) fear for their safety or the safety of others; (B) suffer substantial emotional distress, or (C) a course of conduct that violates a specific person's request for personal distance or space. Stalking includes conduct that occurs via electronic communications,

including social media (i.e., cyberstalking.) If a person asks another individual to cease contact with them, that request should be respected.

Weapons

VMAPA bans the possession of weapons for participants and visitors while present at VMAPA related activities. A weapon is defined as anything that is designed to be used to inflict physical harm on another person or their property, such as guns, brass knuckles, throwing stars, tasers, mace, etc. or any facsimile of these types of items. Likewise, items designed for another purpose may not be used to harm, intimidate, or endanger others.

SECTION III: PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES & RECOURSE FOR PERSONAL HARM

Reporting Concerns with Prohibited Behaviors or Code of Conduct Violations

Reporting prohibited behaviors in real time can help us protect everyone within our organization. While we recognize the need for anonymity in some cases when reporting, we strongly encourage reports that contain contact information (even of a 3rd party) so that the investigative team can conduct a full and thorough investigation and ask important follow up questions and report back to you on our findings and actions taken. If you hear, see, or experience something, say something.

For reports regarding Participants no longer affiliated with VMAPA, you can expect that VMAPA's Investigation Committee will listen to your grievance, contact the proper authorities as needed in the event of illegal activity, document your grievance for official record within VMAPA, review with you the current policies and procedures in place to prevent future harm, and amend current policies and procedures if additional measures to prevent harm become evident in what we learn through your story.

For reports regarding current Participants of VMAPA, we will follow our outlined investigation procedure.

Reports can be shared in the following ways:

- Through the [FaceUp app](#) (*This is our most preferred method, as it allows you to remain anonymous if needed, and allows for 2 way conversations with you to ask follow up questions as needed or fill you in on the outcome of your report*)
 - Please choose “My Organization” instead of “My Primary/Secondary School”
 - The unique organization code is VMAPA (case-sensitive)
- Through the Whistleblower Policy page on the VMAPA website at <https://www.scvanguard.org/whistleblower-policy/> or via email to report@scvanguard.org
- To the Director of Human Resources (hr@scvanguard.org)
- To the Vanguard Corps Director (gbastante@scvanguard.org)
- To the Chief Executive Officer (rgavin@scvanguard.org)

If you have information or reason to believe VMAPA is violating a state or federal statute, or violating or not complying with a state or federal rule or regulation, we encourage you to report it immediately by contacting a manager, administrator, or through our whistleblower submission at: <https://www.scvanguard.org/whistleblower-policy/>.

A whistleblower is an employee who discloses information to a government or law enforcement agency where the employee has reasonable cause to believe that the information discloses: a violation of a state or federal statute; a violation or noncompliance with a state or federal rule or regulation; or with reference to the employee's safety or health, the information discloses unsafe working conditions or work practices in the employee's employment or place of employment.

2:1 Ratios

All Program Staff & Volunteers serving VMAPA are expected to keep a 2:1 ratio at all times for the protection of all Participants. This means that there can be two Program Members and one Program Staff or Volunteer, or two Program Staff or Volunteers and one Program Member, but never one Program Member and one Program Staff or Volunteer alone together. This applies to electronic communications unless the official email accounts, Slack workspace, or other official VMAPA program application are utilized.

Background Checks

All Program Staff and Volunteers involved with VMAPA must have a clear background check in order to participate in the organization. This check includes a review of any pending criminal and traffic charges or convictions, including checking Sex Offender Registry. Participation eligibility will be denied if there is a conviction record and/or pending charges are related to the ability to safely and effectively work with Program Staff and students and be a good role model to Program Members. Any Program Staff or Volunteer who is found to be on a Sex Offender Registry will generally result in termination of employment/participation. The results of these background checks are shared with the Corps Director and VMAPA Board of Directors if needed. These parties have the authority to deny anyone participation with VMAPA based on the outcome of the background investigation. These background checks will be completed per Organization's policy and respect to DCI's guidelines.

Confidentiality

It is essential that all VMAPA Participants respect the privacy and confidentiality of one another. Refrain from sharing protected personal information (medical, psychological, familial, disciplinary, or otherwise) privately or publicly. Any personal information regarding other Participants that you are in possession of or become aware of should be carefully protected.

Defining Consent

Understanding consent is a critical factor in maintaining safety. Consent must be informed, freely given, and mutually understood. Consent requires an affirmative act or statement by each participant. Consent is not passive.

- If coercion, intimidation, threats, or physical force are used, there is no consent
- If a person is mentally or physically incapacitated or impaired by alcohol or drugs such that the person cannot understand the fact, nature, or extent of the sexual situation, there is no consent. Warning signs of when a person may be incapacitated due to drug and/or alcohol use include: slurred speech, falling down, passing out, and vomiting
- If a person is asleep or unconscious, there is no consent
- If a person is below the minimum age of consent in the applicable jurisdiction, there cannot be consent.
- Consent to one form of sexual activity does not imply consent to other forms of sexual activity
- Consent can be withdrawn at any time and for any or no reason. A person who initially consents to sexual activity is deemed not to have consented to any sexual activity that occurs after they withdraw consent
- Simply being in a romantic relationship with someone does not grant or imply consent to

- any form of sexual activity
- Effective consent cannot exist when there is a disparity in power between the parties (e.g. program staff/member or supervisor/direct report)

Intervention & De-escalation

All individuals within VMAPA will undergo training on bystander intervention and de-escalation in order to interrupt and prevent harm that is witnessed. It is the responsibility of all participants to make efforts to reduce tension in interpersonal episodes of conflict or challenge. Under extreme or dangerous circumstances, all participants are responsible for communicating to their supervisor(s), including calling 11 - Police law enforcement, when further intervention is necessary.

Investigation Procedure

The Investigation Committee (IC) consists of the VMAPA Board President, select members of the Board of Directors, Director of Human Resources, the Chief Executive Officer, and the Corps Director(s).

Important Note regarding the Investigation Committee (IC): If a conflict of interest arises (when the investigation involves one of these parties as a claimant, respondent, or witness or when the investigation involves someone that they have a relationship with beyond VMAPA) for any of the parties on the Investigation Committee, they shall not participate in the investigation and should instead receive the final report with any sensitive information redacted after its conclusion.

VMAPA is committed in conducting an investigative process that provides all parties appropriate "due process". Due process generally means:

- Giving parties notice of what is being alleged against them;
- Providing a meaningful opportunity to fully respond to the allegations being made;
- Being thorough and complete;
- Performing a fair and unbiased investigation; and
- Acting in a timely manner.

This process is applied to all investigations, including for Program Staff and Program Member, volunteers, etc. Our practice of interviewing involves an interviewer and a witness/note taker.

Our investigation process may include the following steps, but is not limited to:

- **STEP 1:** A complaint is received
- **STEP 2:** It is determined whether or not parents of a minor, law enforcement, child protective services, DCI, or any other authorities need to be notified immediately. The IC will simultaneously continue the internal investigation unless advised otherwise by any other authority.
- **STEP 3:** The Investigation Committee (IC) determines if any of their committee members need to step aside for this investigation and reviews [this training document](#) as a guide for the investigation process
- **STEP 4:** The level of urgency for the investigation is determined (Tier 1: As immediately as possible, Tier 2: Within 1 week, Tier 3: Within 1 month, Tier 4: An investigation is not necessary)
- **STEP 5:** The IC gathers any documentation regarding policies in the area of the complaint, contact information as needed, documents available, etc. and begins a report document.

- **STEP 6:** It is determined if a suspension is necessary during the investigation process
- **STEP 7:** Question sets are developed by the IC for the claimant and respondent
- **STEP 8:** The IC interviews the claimant (if the report is not anonymous) and adds findings to the report document
- **STEP 9:** The IC interviews the respondent and adds findings to the report document
- **STEP 10:** The IC develops question sets for witnesses and interviews witnesses suggested by the claimant or respondent and adds findings to the report document
- **STEP 11:** Any final evidence is gathered and added to the report document
- **STEP 12:** The report document is reviewed by the IC and findings and recommendations are added
- **STEP 13:** Wherever possible, complainants (if the report is not anonymous) and respondents will be made aware that the investigation has concluded and will be made aware of the findings and recommendations of the report, redacting information that cannot be shared
- **STEP 14:** Should new evidence become available, the claimant or respondent is encouraged to reach out to the IC

Important reminder to Staff: Employees have a duty to cooperate with and be truthful during a workplace investigation. Lying during an investigation or refusing to respond to specific questions can be grounds for discipline in some situations.

Mandated Reporting

Outside the scope of the law, VMAPA considers it essential to everyone's safety that all Participants report known or suspected engagement in prohibited behaviors. If a Participant is experiencing prohibited behavior from anyone within VMAPA, requests for confidentiality cannot be honored and a report should be given to the Corps Director, Chief Executive Officer, HR, and Board President barring that the report being made is about one of those parties, in which case that party can be excluded. During meetings with student leadership, regular reminders to report prohibited behavior will be given and documented.

All adults are mandated reporters, including those on the health & wellness team as well as those holding licensure to teach at the K-12 level. A mandated reporter is required to call the police in the city where the incident occurred immediately or as soon as is practicable if they have reason to believe that abuse or neglect of a minor has occurred, and to turn in a written report to the police in the city where the incident occurred within 48 hours.

[This list](#) provides access to many toll-free hotlines to call in the event that a minor is endangered.

SafeSport Certification

All VMAPA Participants are required to complete SafeSport training annually. Participants who completed the full training will need to complete subsequent refresher courses each year.

Sexual Harassment Training (for Program Staff)

All VMAPA Program Staff are required to complete Sexual Harassment training. New Program Staff are required to complete this training requirement within 6 months of hire. After which, Program Staff must re-take and complete the training every two years. Managers are required to complete additional training every two years through Paychex on this topic as well.

Whistleblower Protection

VMAPA protects those who voluntarily disclose information about illegal activity, and including individuals violating the code of conduct or prohibited behaviors set forth in the personnel manual. This means protecting their participation status, as well as protecting them from retaliation and/or harassment as a result of their disclosure.

SECTION IV: PARTICIPANT HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELLNESS

Health, Safety, and Wellness

VMAPA is composed of a team of Health & Wellness experts to ensure participant health, safety, and wellness during all program events. This team consists of individuals with varied expertise and is bolstered by connections to consultants with individualized areas of specialty.

The Health & Wellness team is responsible for creating & executing policies the following areas:

- Creating, collecting, maintaining, & protecting medical records
- Maintaining medical supplies & inventory
- Illness (prevention, examination, evaluation, intervention, and a plan of care for Program Members, Program Staff, and Volunteers, which include informing the parents/legal guardians of minors)
- Injury (prevention, examination, evaluation, intervention, and a plan of care for perform, which include informing the parents/legal guardians of minors)
- Mental health (preventative care strategies, acute care in crisis, and communicating with all participants and parents of minors)
- Rehearsal Safety (Weather conditions and hydration)
- Determinations of eligibility and parameters for participation in rehearsal or performances for Program Members

[Concussion Protocol](#) and [Weather Protocol](#) can be found using these links provided.

VMAPA has a Communicable Disease Mitigation measures in place for [audition, callback, & rehearsal camps](#) as well as [tour](#). (including COVID-19). These are living documents, updated whenever new best practices or better information becomes available.

Prescription medications should be immediately available to you when needed. Therefore, you will be responsible for storing and taking prescription medication(s) as directed by your PCP or other medication prescriber. If you are under 18 years of age, the Health & Wellness team will consult with you and your parent/legal guardian on an agreed upon plan for medication management. Please follow guidelines for storage as recommended by the drug manufacturer and inform the Health & Wellness staff of special circumstances (i.e. cold storage). Over-the-counter medications will be managed by the Health & Wellness staff.

Please do not:

1. share any medications with others
2. inappropriately take medications, or
3. fail to communicate your medication plans with the Health and Wellness team.

Our Health & Wellness team will document any issues of pain, headache, or other ailment that you are experiencing and will help to ensure that all participants are using all medications properly.

Neither Program Staff nor Volunteers should administer medications to Program Members unless they are part of the health & wellness team.

Mental Health First Aid information can be located [here](#).

Equipment Safety and Prop Plan

VMAPA practices the **S.E.F.R.** system in regards to handling of heavy equipment and participant safety.

Safe

The safety of our Participants is of the utmost importance. Our paramount concern is and always shall be the participants' well-being. Purposely and mindfully planning a system and environment in which the participants will come into the minimal amount of risk possible. Above all else, this is the predominant principal and fundamental priority. Participant well-being and physical safety at all times.

Efficient

This is practiced with the knowledge that time is precious. With that in mind, we carry out a system that contains the fewest steps possible and eliminates any task redundancy or unnecessary repetition.

Fair

In relation to efficiency, we take in mind the fairness of what we ask our participants to do. We strive to make this task as equitable as possible regarding their time and energy. It is our goal to alleviate as much burden in these tasks as we can to our participants and have them come out of this with a positive view of the task.

Repeatable

This should be a repeatable and reliable process. The same order, the same placement, the same procedures, every time. This leads back to efficiency, and can give our participants the self-assurance that they have a controllable grasp of the task which they will perform hundreds of times.

VMAPA implements a safety and training system and supervision during loading for the benefit and well-being of its participants. This includes:

- Complying with all OSHA, USITT, and Drum Corps International rules and regulations regarding props. Including height, stability, maintenance, and instruction to the members of the handling, transportation, and storage of each specific prop
- The proper use and implementation of appropriate PPE (Personal Protection Equipment) as the situation necessitates. These are including but not limited to; gloves, hardhats, safety goggles, close toed and non-loose fitting shoes, and/or hearing protection

- Participants of the prop crew will undergo training to familiarize them with the props they will be handling, and the loading and unloading procedures from the truck. This will be implemented during spring training so that they may gain knowledge and practical hands-on experience before the initial beginning of the competition season
- Prop equipment will also undergo a daily and weekly inspection. Additionally, all props will have a pre-show inspection by the prop maintenance personnel proceeding each performance
- All Program Members and Staff will have access to a line of communication, email, Slack, etc. to communicate anything concerning or suspicious to the prop maintenance personnel. Communication can be made at any time and will be followed through with an in-person inspection and will be attended to accordingly in a prompt manner
- Lights will be provided in the area in which props are being loaded and unloaded anytime prop crew participants are working in a dark environment. There will be internal lighting inside the truck for the actual loading and unloading of props. In addition, there will also be external lights to provide a safe visual area for participants of the prop crew to work
- A traffic cone and/or stanchion system will be implemented outside of the loading area to reserve the proper amount of space needed for the crew participants to work. This will be specifically for any time the prop equipment truck shares a parking space with the general public
- All combustion engine generators shall be maintained, fueled, and monitored by maintenance staff. They will be inspected on a weekly basis, or as needed depending on usage
- Accompanying combustion engine items will be at a minimum, one functioning certified and fully charged fire extinguisher for emergency uses. It will be placed in a recognizable and easily accessible area approximate to combustion engine generators. All related personnel will be trained in the use and proper handling

Vanguard Music and Performing Arts (VMAPA), takes all effort and scrutiny to make the participant experience a safe and secure environment. This is an ongoing process, and we shall adapt to new information and incorporate policies as we acquire knowledge and develop this program for participant safety together.

The VMAPA Master Participant Handbook is not a contract. This VMAPA Master Participant Handbook is a living document, thus VMAPA reserves the rights to revise, add, or delete from this handbook as we determine to be in our best interest. When changes are made to this document and guidelines contained herein, we will endeavor to communicate them in a timely fashion.