



Respectful Behaviour and Interactions Policy

Policy Statement:

London Downtown Business Association is committed to promoting a safe, healthy, respectful, and positive environment for all LDBA staff, board directors and volunteers. To this end, the goal of this policy is to define behaviour and interactions that may negatively impact the experience of staff, board members and others at the workplace, public meetings, and events and through electronic communications. This policy provides direction to the board and staff that helps to identify these behaviors and interactions, how to avoid it from happening; and how it will be addressed if/when it occurs.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to guide the LDBA Board and Staff in identifying situations that meet the criteria of inappropriate behaviour and interactions and the associated board directions that may be taken in such circumstances. The goal of this policy is to promote decorum at public meetings and encourage respectful dialogue at the workplace and through all forms of communications to create a positive, safe, and supportive environment for interactions among LDBA members, staff and board members encouraging respect, commitment, and considerate relationships. This policy also aims to provide measures that may be taken when behaviour, statements, or actions become inappropriate.

This policy applies to all members of LDBA, the public, and other community stakeholders interacting with LDBA staff and board at:

- LDBA's AGM and public meetings
- LDBA's Head Office
- LDBA sponsored events and programs

The decision to classify a person's behaviour and interactions as inappropriate at a public or private meeting or through verbal, written or electronic communications may have consequences for the Subject Person. Although each case must be determined in light of its own circumstances, below are examples meant to help LDBA Board and Staff identify inappropriate conduct. It is understood that these examples are not determinative; the list is not exhaustive, nor does any action set out in the list necessitate application of this policy.

Inappropriate communications, behaviours and actions in private or public for the purpose of this policy include, but are not limited to the following:

- Bullying, aggressive or offensive language, content, or tone, meant to intimidate, harass, embarrass, incite insult, or disparage others;
- Implied or expressed verbal threats against LDBA staff or board members;

- Harassment via electronic communications (text, email, etc.)
- Making unjustified or erroneous statements against LDBA staff or board members in an effort to embarrass or humiliate in public and/or see them disciplined.
- Aggressive or intimidating physical actions intended to harm;
- Attempts to goad or incite anger in others;
- Physical striking at others;
- Throwing of objects;
- Covertly recording meetings and conversations;
- Unlawful behaviour such as theft of property; vandalism, possession of weapons;
- Under the influence of alcohol or drugs (legal or otherwise);

Addressing Inappropriate Conduct and Behaviour - Private Meetings/Workplace/Communications

Staff, Volunteers or Board members who experience or observe any form of disrespectful behaviour, interactions or communications from another, they will:

- Advise the Subject Person that their behavior/communications is unacceptable and request that they stop or alter their behavior/communications immediately;
- If the Subject Person is communicating electronically and the unacceptable interactions continue, the individual/staff member should no longer engage electronically with the Subject Person and must bring this to the immediate attention of the Executive Director;
- If the Subject Person is at the workplace, they should be asked to leave the premises. Should they refuse to leave the premises, advise them that they are now trespassing, and the police will be called;
- If the Subject Person threatens to harm in any way, call police immediately;
- All complaints surrounding inappropriate conduct or communications should be brought to the immediate attention of the Executive Director (for staff or volunteers) or Board Chair and Vice Chair (for board members) for review to determine the appropriate resolution.

Request of Delegation Status at Public Meetings and Handling Inquiries

- Members are not permitted to speak at any LDBA public meeting unless they have requested and received Board permission to make a presentation
- The member must make a written request for delegation status with the LDBA Executive Director and Board Chair, explaining the nature and purpose of the request
- Upon receipt of a written request for the member presentation, the Board Chair will work with staff and the board to determine if the matter to be presented can be addressed internally through staff. If not the Board Chair will advise the member of the next steps
- If approved, a delegate will have 5 minutes available for the presentation and the delegate will be requested to respect the time limitations.
- For general inquiries at the LDBA AGM, members or any person attending are required to submit their questions in writing at least 48 hours before the start of the AGM meeting to the Board Chair and Executive Director. These questions will be reviewed and addressed accordingly during the AGM or if it is something that staff can address directly they will follow up with the member.

Addressing Inappropriate Conduct or Behaviour at Public Meetings

In the event of an incident involving inappropriate conduct or behaviour or actions at a public meeting, the Board Chair and/or Vice Chair will utilize where possible suggested de-escalation techniques below and will:

- Immediately identify the behavior, actions or statements of the Subject Person as inappropriate and not elicit further dialogue and engagement with them on the matter
- If the Subject Person's behaviour or actions continue to be inappropriate, advise as a final warning to the Subject Person their behaviour, statements or actions are inappropriate and they need to stop immediately or they will be asked to leave the premises
- If circumstances continue, request the Subject Person leave the premises.
- If the Subject Person refuses to leave the premises, advise them that they are now trespassing, and the police will be called.
- Ensure Board members understand their respective roles in removing the Subject Person and attendees feel safe (eg. Vice Chair calls police, Treasurer and Secretary lead attendees for a coffee break, other Board Members help Board Chair to de-escalate until authorities arrive, etc.)
- As a last resort the Subject Person may be restricted from attending future LDBA AGMs. In this instance and if the Subject Person is a LDBA member, the LDBA Board of Directors may request they send a designate on their behalf to future meetings.

Member/Guest Conduct at Public Meetings - Duties and Functions of the Chair

The responsibilities of the Chair at AGM meetings include:

- Ensure that board members understand the role they should play ahead of the meeting if a member(s) cause disruption and help to de-escalate
- Ensure clear and concise rules of conduct of members and guests at public and AGM meetings are prepared and distributed to members ahead of the Public/AGM meeting (i.e provision of Respectful Behaviour and Interactions Policy)
- Remind at the start of the public/AGM meeting the rules of conduct
- Preserve orderly conduct of those present
- Determine who has the right to speak through delegation status
- Ascertain the views of the meeting on the formal resolutions under consideration, and confine discussion to matters within the scope of the meeting
- Close the discussion and move to the vote

De-escalation Techniques

- Speak calmly and with the right tone and use of words
- Ensure your body language is neutral, relaxed and in control
- Set boundaries
- Request that they move to a private area to discuss their issues
- Avoid overreacting
- Ignore challenging questions that are meant to incite anger or create embarrassment.
- Provide them with choices that will empower them to comply