



Portland Intown Contra Dance

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Portland Intown Contra Dance Behavior Policy

Call 911 in the case of physical or sexual violence, or if you believe someone poses an immediate danger to themselves or others. In such cases, an offender may be told to leave immediately and never return to a PICD event.

POLICY STATEMENT: Portland Intown Contra Dance (PICD) is a community where we strive to ensure dancers of any level of experience are safe and feel accepted. PICD believes that our events should be a fun and comfortable experience for all. With this in mind, we have created a behavior policy that expresses these values.

In keeping with PICD's goals, it is important that all participants in PICD events maintain a physically and emotionally safe and nurturing community in a manner that is consistent with learning, mutual respect and the fun-loving nature of the PICD dance culture. In order to achieve this, it is imperative that all members of our community treat one another with respect and kindness, whether they are adults, representatives of PICD, or children under the age of eighteen (18) years.

All PICD board representatives, Dance Managers, volunteers, and event attendees are responsible for complying with this policy.

SPECIFIC POLICIES:

Emotional or Physical Harassment and Abuse: Violence, harassment and bullying of any kind will not be tolerated at PICD events. Harassment is defined as any unwelcome conduct that unreasonably interferes with an individual's ability to attend or enjoy a PICD event by creating an intimidating, threatening, unsafe, hostile, or abusive environment. Policy violations include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion or age;
- deliberate intimidation;
- stalking;
- sustained disruption of events;
- unwanted physical contact;
- unwanted sexual attention;
- Intentionally disrespecting pronouns or misgendering someone; or
- being a registered sex offender.

This includes unwanted physical, verbal, or written contact (letters, phonecalls, texts, e-mails, social media contact, or other electronic content or contact) that is directed from any community member to another community member. This could also include behavior that is performed by a PICD community member and directed at an individual or individuals outside of the PICD dance community.

Inappropriate behavior outside PICD events: PICD reserves the right to ban a person from PICD events in the case that their behavior outside of PICD events is determined to be in violation of this behavior policy or determined to create an unsafe physical or psychological environment within PICD events. If we have reasonable cause to believe that a PICD community member is harassing someone outside of PICD events, we reserve the right to ban the harasser from PICD events.

Stealing or malicious destruction of property: This will not be tolerated at any PICD event and may result in dismissal from the event and banning from future events without refund of admission fees.

Firearms and other dangerous weapons: PICD strictly prohibits the possession or use of firearms or other dangerous weapons. They may not be brought to any PICD event. Possession of any such weapon shall be grounds for dismissal from the current event and banning from future events without refund of admission fees.

Alcohol, tobacco, illegal substances and unprescribed prescription drugs: PICD does not allow the use of alcohol or tobacco at events. Additionally, we do not allow the possession or use of illegal substances and unprescribed prescription drugs at PICD events.

Behavior of minors under age 18: Each child attending a PICD event is the responsibility of their guardian. Any child attending a PICD event is expected to adhere to the PICD behavior policy. If a child's behavior cannot be controlled or is repeatedly disruptive to other community members or to the dance environment, they may be asked to leave in order to preserve the experience of the larger dance community.

Respecting the neighborhood: We're members of the larger Portland community. As you leave PICD events, please respect the property and peace of others, and ensure you act in the interest of your own safety. Should you experience something that causes you to feel uncomfortable or at risk, please report it.

Attire: PICD asks that all members of our community dress for safety — their own and the safety of other community members. The following attire can be dangerous if worn on the dance floor: very loose clothing; heavy jewelry; long sleeves, scarves and shawls that drape and can catch arms and hands; heavy rings or bracelets that can scratch a partner or even tear the flesh; outfits with bands that can catch hands, clothing that does not fully cover the back or other skin that is often touched on the dance floor, etc. Please do not wear these items or other unsafe items while dancing at PICD events.

Scent-free environment: Some of our community members are sensitive or allergic to highly scented products such as perfume and aftershave. Please do not wear scented products to PICD events.

Filming and photographing: PICD events are public events and participants and organizers routinely take photos and videos, often posting the media online. If it is important to you to be left out of photographs and videos, please let a PICD leader know.

PROCEDURES:

Designated PICD board members, when made aware of allegations of inappropriate dancer behavior, will determine if the circumstances warrant further action. Repeated instances of confirmed inappropriate behavior may incur a ban from PICD events and membership. Violations of PICD policies that are brought to the attention of PICD board members shall be addressed according to the following procedures.

When instances of alleged inappropriate behavior come to the attention of PICD, either by a complaint from a community member or comments/observations by others attending a PICD event, PICD shall follow the following procedures:

1. **Investigation.** All complaints shall be investigated in the following manner:
 - a. **Interviewing complainant.** All complaints of harassment will be taken seriously and reviewed by the Dance Managers or Board Members at the event immediately following the event at which the complaint was made. Two representatives of PICD who were present at the event where the alleged incident occurred will speak to the complainant(s). They will
 - record the circumstances and nature of the presumed inappropriate behavior (see #5);
 - collect contact information from the complainant(s), including full names, phone numbers, email and postal addresses;
 - explain the "Policy on Dealing with Complaints of Inappropriate Behavior" and give the complainant(s) a copy of the policy, along with a copy of "Helpful Hints and Etiquette for Contra Dancers", if appropriate;
 - provide someone (not necessarily a PICD representative) to remain with the complainant(s) if requested;
 - to the best of their ability, keep the name of the complainant and details of their circumstances, if appropriate, confidential.
 - b. **Interviewing accused.** Representatives of PICD who were present at the event where the alleged incident occurred will speak to the accused individual. Anyone present at the interview at the request of the accused individual is a witness, not an advocate, and will be expected to maintain confidentiality. The board will:
 - have available a card containing suggested wording for use in approaching the accused person and an outline of the procedures detailed here;
 - record the circumstances and nature of the presumed inappropriate behavior (see #5);
 - Collect as much as possible of the individual's contact information, including full name, phone numbers email and postal addresses; and
 - explain the "Policy on Dealing with Complaints of Inappropriate Behavior" and give the individual a copy of the policy, along with a copy of "Helpful Hints and Etiquette for Contra Dancers", if appropriate.If the accused person simply leaves when approached, PICD representatives will:
 - document the circumstances, including a description of the individual;

- remain alert in the future should the accused person return.
- c. **Recording interviews.** The representatives of PICD who reviewed the incident will make a detailed written record of the conversations with the complainant(s) and with the accused individual(s). The official board records of conversations will be preserved in a record. Any informal notes from the actual conversation should be destroyed when they are no longer needed. The incident record will also contain any other written statements that may have been provided by the complainant(s), any witnesses, or the accused individual(s), and a copy of any written warnings issued. These written records are confidential. Providing the written records to others than PICD board representatives will be a violation of board responsibilities.
 - d. **Further investigation.** If it is necessary for PICD to conduct an investigation of an incident, the investigating board representative(s) may prohibit the accused individual from attending events, for a period of time to be determined by the board while the investigation is conducted. Such a prohibition may be initiated on the first accusation or on any subsequent accusation. The investigating board representative(s) of PICD will notify the accused of the investigation and of the prohibition on attendance during the investigation.
2. **Decisionmaking.** Once the investigation is complete, PICD shall issue a determination in the following manner:
 - a. **If no inappropriate behavior.** If it is clear to the representatives of PICD that there **has not been** an instance of inappropriate behavior, then the matter is ended (though a record of the incident will be preserved, as described in #5 below). The person(s) raising the complaint will be notified of the decision and told the reason(s) for the decision.
 - b. **In case of inappropriate behavior.** If it is clear to the representatives of PICD that there **has been** an instance of inappropriate behavior, then, depending on the severity of the incident, the individual will either: A) *receive a verbal or written warning that future instances of inappropriate behavior may result in being banned* from events hosted by PICD, either for a specific period of time or permanently; or B) be *immediately banned* from events hosted by PICD, either for a specific period of time or permanently. These warnings shall be issued by the PICD Board. A record of such decisions will be preserved, as described in #5 below.
 - c. **Appeals.** If an individual is banned from events sponsored by PICD, either for a specific period of time or permanently, the individual has the right to appeal the decision to the PICD board within a 30 day period. There is no right of appeal during an active investigation.
 3. **Follow up.** Following a determination, PICD shall take care to enforce warnings and ensure ongoing safety in the following manner:
 - a. **Communication of incident.** The board members involved in the incident will inform the entire PICD board within 24 hours in person or by email that a complaint of inappropriate behavior has been raised. The only information in the email will be a request for all PICD board representatives to respond by phone. Information to be shared in the follow-up phone call includes whether those hearing the complaint found the behavior inappropriate and, if so, whether a warning was issued. Under no circumstances will the details of the case be shared electronically via email, nor will there be circulation of electronic copies of written records from the interview process. Similar restrictions on electronic communication apply to records of repeat offenses and decisions regarding banning from dances. The PICD board shall then notify dance managers and any other PICD leaders who will be involved in enforcing warnings or monitoring behavior.
 - b. **Behavior monitoring.** PICD will routinely monitor the behavior of dancers who have violated this behavior policy or are suspected of violating this behavior policy.
 - c. **Repeat offenders.** If a second instance of inappropriate behavior by the same individual occurs, the procedures described in 1-6 above should again be followed. In addition, the accused individual will be sent a written warning that another instance of inappropriate behavior may result in being banned from events sponsored by PICD, either for a specific period of time or permanently.
 - d. **Contingencies for return.** If an individual is banned from PICD events for a *specific period of time*, PICD may make the individual's return to events contingent upon: A) the understanding that the individual may be permanently banned from PICD events if they engage in further inappropriate behavior; B) additional dance training to help the accused individual better understand and apply appropriate behavior on or off the dance floor; C) the cessation of specific activities that are in violation of this behavior policy.
 4. **Archives and information sharing.** PICD will share information in the following ways:
 - a. **Archives.** PICD shall keep written records, which are made accessible to PICD board representatives and, under certain circumstances, PICD Dance Managers or other PICD community members. Information is shared with the express intent to ensure safety at events hosted by PICD and enforce warnings. All PICD leaders with whom information is shared shall always be warned to keep information confidential.

- b. **Confidentiality.** PICD will take reasonable care to ensure the confidentiality of all conversations and records; however, due to the involvement of many people and the need to have some conversations at open dances, PICD cannot guarantee complete confidentiality.
 - c. **Information sharing.** PICD will routinely share information about warnings issued and actions taken with PICD leaders and, under certain circumstances, with other organizations and community leaders. Information is shared with the express intent to ensure safety within PICD and the broader folk dance community. Individuals with whom information is shared shall always be warned to keep information confidential.
 - d. **Archives and changes in board membership.** All written records will be retained and accessible to future PICD board representatives. In the event that PICD no longer exists and there is no successor organization, all records will be destroyed by the PICD board President.
5. **Severability.** If for any reason any portion of this document is no longer applicable, the rest of the policy is not affected.



Portland Intown Contra Dance: Dance Behavior Initial Warning

Date _____

Name _____

As a result of a credible report of inappropriate behavior, we are issuing this warning. We have met with you and explained the circumstances of the complaint. We have provided you with copies of our policies and hints regarding dance etiquette.

Future instances of such behavior may result in your being banned from future dances, either for a specified period (with or without further contingencies) or permanently.

Signed by:

For PICD

Copy sent by certified mail on: _____



Portland Intown Contra Dance: Dance Behavior Second Warning

Date _____

Name _____

As a result of a credible report of a second instance of inappropriate behavior, we are issuing this formal warning. We have met with you and explained the circumstances of both complaints. We have provided you with copies of our policies and hints regarding dance etiquette.

Future instances of such behavior will likely result in your being banned from future dances, either for a specified period (with or without further contingencies) or permanently.

Signed by:

For PICD

Copy sent by certified mail on: _____



**Portland Intown Contra Dance:
Dance Behavior Notification of Banning from PICD Events**

Date _____

Name _____

As a result of credible reports of inappropriate behavior for which you have received warnings on
_____ and _____,

we are writing to inform you that you may not attend any PICD events for a period of:

The following contingencies apply to your being allowed to return to the PICD community:

Signed by:

For PICD

Copy sent by certified mail on: _____



Portland Intown Contra Dance: Behavior Policy Interview Outline

INITIAL INTERVIEW WITH COMPLAINANT(S)

- Record names of PICD board members or representatives present
- Record date and time of interview
- Record name(s) of complainant(s)
- Collect contact information for complainant(s)
- Record time and date of incident
- Record description of the event
- Explain Policy and procedures
- Give complainant(s) copies of Policy and Hints
- Offer to locate another person to stay with complainant

INTERVIEW WITH ACCUSED

- Record names of PICD board members or representatives present
- Record date and time of interview
- Record name of accused
- Collect contact information for accused
- If requested, record name and contact information for witness; explain confidentiality
- Describe nature of complaint
- Record reaction of accused
- Explain Policy and procedures
- Give accused copies of Policy and Hints
- Discuss relevant portions of Hints
- Determine further steps based on circumstances:
 - issue initial verbal or written warning if behavior determined inappropriate
 - give written second warning in person and via certified mail
 - inform the accused that further investigation is needed

FOLLOW UP

- Convey result of accused interview to complainant
- Email all PICD board members to notify them that incident occurred
- Provide further information to PICD board members via phone
- Conduct any needed additional investigation
- Make sure official record is complete; destroy any informal notes as outlined in policy



Helpful Hints and Etiquette for New Contra Dancers

Portland Intown Contra Dance (PICD) is a community where dancers of any level of experience may feel safe and accepted. It is important to us that everyone who participates in PICD events maintain a physically and emotionally safe and nurturing community in a manner that is consistent with learning, mutual respect and the fun-loving nature of the PICD dance culture.

With this in mind, we offer you these helpful hints on how to have a fun and quality experience while being kind and taking care of others.

TOP FIVE TIPS:

- **Listening:** All dances in contra are taught by the Caller, and you'll learn best by being alert to the other dancers on the floor. Listening with your ears and watching what is happening around you will help you know what to do and when to do it.
 - **Helpful hint! *Timing*** Most contra dance tunes are written in very audible 8-beat phrases. Listen for the beat and dance each figure within its musical phrase.
 - **Helpful hint! *Mistakes*** We all make them. If you make a mistake or miss a figure, don't worry about it—it's all in fun! Instead of rushing to get it right, simply skip it and go on to the next. You'll get many more chances, because all the moves in the dance repeat. It is more important to the people you are dancing with that you be ready for the next figure than for you to complete each figure.
- **Shared Weight:** Picture the tension you might give when helping someone who is seated rise to standing. In contra, we call this "shared weight", and it's a tool for both keeping our own center of balance and helping guide others on the floor. To "give weight", ensure your body is supported by your feet and legs (think like a tree in the breeze: you should be able to move gracefully while being rooted) and then "meet" your partner or neighbor's needs by providing counterbalancing tension.
 - **Helpful hint! *Squeezing*** A gentle touch is safer than a grip (especially if you need to move from point A to point B quickly!). When holding hands, giving weight, or guiding others, use a cupped "mitten" hand with closed fingers.
 - **Helpful hint! *Smooth and gentle*** Move with an easy walking step. Bouncing, skipping, and jumping can be unsafe and tiring for you and your partner.
 - **Helpful hint! *Eye contact*** Eye contact reduces dizziness during swinging and is a way contra dancers connect with one another. We recommend it. Should you feel uncomfortable giving eye

contact, simply look at a static spot on your partner or neighbor's face or their ear so you stay safe!

- **Voicing Your Needs:** Dancing should be fun and enjoyable. Before the dance begins, you might tell your partner if you have needs, such as “Can we go slowly? I’m dizzy.” or “My left shoulder is bothering me. Can we not twirl?” This will help them help you. You might also ask them if there is something you need to know about their needs. If your partner or anyone else is doing something that hurts or makes you uncomfortable or embarrassed, do not hesitate to let them know. In the moment:
 - Say “no”, “stop” or “I don’t like that.”
 - Use physical cues, such as stepping back, holding your arm down to indicate no twirls, or shaking your head “no”.
 - Remove yourself from the situation. Leave the line.
- **Helpful hint! *Saying no*** Remember that contra is community-focused; you’re encouraged to dance with a lot of different people and remain cordial. And, everyone has the right to dance when they’d like and decline to dance when they’d like for any reason. If someone asks you to dance and you’d like to decline, a simple “No, thank you” is best. No need to make excuses! It’s also okay to ask someone else after you say no or to say yes to another person.
- **Helpful hint! *Asking for help*** We want you to have a great time. If you have an uncomfortable experience for any reason, don’t hesitate to ask the caller or dance manager for assistance. We have a policy on appropriate dance behavior and we expect all dancers to abide by it.
- **Learn the Basics First:** If possible, attend the beginner’s lesson, as it’s the best way to learn style tips that will serve you as you grow your skill. As you get started, focus on doing the basics well and the dance will be more satisfying for both you and those you dance with. Flourishes may be added gradually over time.
 - **Helpful hint! *Ask the experienced*** It’s a custom in contra dance to switch partners every dance, and everybody asks anybody to dance. You’re encouraged to ask those whom you perceive to be more experienced than you to dance; it’s the best way to learn! Even if you have come to the dance with a partner, if you are both new to contra dancing, you will learn faster if you dance with more experienced dancers.
- **Dress for Fun:** Certain clothing works best for dancing contra. We sweat, so wearing wicking clothing is best. Please do not wear loose clothing, heavy jewelry such as rings or bracelets, purses, sleeves, scarves, or shawls. These items can catch arms and hands or even tear the flesh.
 - **Helpful hint! *Wear soft-soled shoes*** Wearing shoes with soft soles protects your body and the dance floor. A pair of gym shoes, leather-soled light dress shoes, or fancy dancing shoes all work!
 - **Helpful hint! *Avoid scents*** Many people have allergic reactions to perfumes and other scents. It’s best to avoid wearing this to dances.

Have fun! And if you have a question, ask! We hope you come join us time and time again.



Helpful Hints and Etiquette for Experienced Contra Dancers

Portland Intown Contra Dance (PICD) is a community where dancers of any level of experience may feel safe and accepted. It is important to us that everyone who participates in PICD events maintain a physically and emotionally safe and nurturing community in a manner that is consistent with learning, mutual respect and the fun-loving nature of the PICD dance culture.

Thanks for dancing with us! Regular contra dancers like you are the reason contra is thriving - and will continue to into the future. **You** are the reason new dancers decide to come back. The helpful tips below are reminders of how best to dance generously and safely with everybody.

TOP REMINDERS:

- **Take Care of the Whole:** In contra, we dance with the whole room, which means we balance our personal needs with the needs of everyone. To that end:
 - **Finding partners.** When looking for another partner after a dance ends, thoughtful dancers will look to the sidelines to see if there is someone who sat out the last dance and would like to dance the next. Wait until a dance is over before asking someone for the next dance, rather than booking ahead. New dancers will come back if they feel welcome and well taken care of, so consider dancing with inexperienced dancers for a portion of the evening. If someone declines a dance, don't take it personally - and know you have the right to decline dances, too.
 - **Ask and tell:** Every dancer's need is different based on their body and preferences. If you have a need, tell your partner before the dance begins. In service of your partner's safety and comfort, ask them what needs they have prior to the dance, too. If something changes during the dance, be vocal.
 - **Adjust to each dancer's needs and abilities continuously:** If you dance with 30 people in line, big or little, older or younger, you'll need to dance 30 different ways. Please hold yourself and your partner and neighbors so each of you is comfortable. Remember that your partner's comfort zone may be different than yours.
 - **Mind the sets:** Nobody's happy when a line is too crowded to dance comfortably and freely. When joining a line, join the shortest set, so the sets stay approximately the same length. Join the line at the bottom, rather than inserting yourself in the middle or at the top. Take hands four promptly. When the caller is teaching, pay attention, follow the instructions, and be patient while others learn.
- **Be Thoughtful about Your Impact:** You likely have ways you prefer to dance - and reasons contra is compelling to you. Every dancer's needs and preferences are different, so to ensure mutually satisfying experiences:

- **Give shared weight.** Let your partner's hand rest lightly in yours. Give just enough weight with your arms (or your hands) to keep your connection while you move through the contra figures. This requires mutual sensitivity and adjustment. Avoid squeezing too tightly or bending your partner's wrists.
- **Respect others' personal dance space.** If you're energetic in your dancing, remember that arms, feet, and swinging need to be controlled so as not to encounter someone else's body or someone else's feet. This is especially important in a crowded dance hall.
- **Be careful with flourishes like twirls and dips.** Before twirling or dipping anyone, ask and gain consent. It is the recipient of the flourish who decides whether to follow the lead or override it, or, if followed, to limit the number of twirls. Respect their decisions, as they know their body best. If you do decide to twirl or dip with your partner, ensure there is enough physical space and time to ensure both safety and courtesy as you head into the next figure. Do not execute a flourish if it will make you and the person you are dancing with late for the next figure.
- **Dance with New Folks - and Do So Kindly:** If you are an experienced dancer, please ask a newcomer to dance. You were new once, and learned from others. Pay that forward. When you do dance with new dancers:
 - **Help newer dancers face the right direction and smile!** Keep verbal instructions to an absolute minimum. Point, tap on the shoulder, use other signals, or call their name. It is hard for newer dancers to listen to you, other dancers, the caller, and the music all at the same time.
 - **When dancing with a newcomer, refrain from twirls, spins, and other flourishes.** Flourishes can be disorienting, slowing the learning process for your partner, as well as for other less experienced dancers around you who are watching for clues as to what they should do next.
 - **Mistakes will happen.** When helping other dancers, keep the atmosphere light. New dancers will relax when they sense your enjoyment and that you are more interested in being part of the flow than in perfection.

Thank you for being stewards of this delightful tradition. Have fun! If you have thoughts, suggestions, or questions, let us know.



Portland Intown Contra Dance (PICD) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to enrich lives and cultivate a vibrant community through dance.

We are delighted to welcome you to this event!

We trust you'll enjoy your time with us,
and that you'll feel comfortable returning to PICD events again and again.

If you have an unpleasant experience for any reason,
please tell an organizer or PICD Board Member before you leave.

After a dance, you may write to: theboard@portlandintowncontradance.com

Current PICD Board Members

Dela Murphy, President	dela@portlandintowncontradance.com
Dugan Murphy, Secretary	dugan@@portlandintowncontradance.com
David Chase, Treasurer	david@portlandintowncontradance.com

Current Dance Managers

Our Dance Managers are the people who help produce each evening of dance, making sure everything goes smoothly.
For a list of current dance managers and their photos, see the big board at the flyer table in the dance hall.

Speak to any of us during the event!