



Francisco J. Núñez, Founder/Artistic Director

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## **RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The Young People's Chorus of New York City (YPC) is a multicultural youth chorus whose mission and values are deeply rooted in providing children of all cultural and economic backgrounds with a unique program of music education and choral performance. YPC is committed to empowering our youth and providing pathways to success through the arts so that each child, no matter what race, gender, socioeconomic background, or religion can reach their full potential.

YPC aims to create an inclusive culture that fosters acceptance and respect for diversity. In doing so, we seek to deepen understanding and knowledge among students of diverse backgrounds, cultivate empathy and collaboration, and promote chorister and staff wellbeing. Our youth and staff are enriched by and celebrate the diversity of our whole YPC community.

YPC therefore rejects all forms of racist behavior and is committed to the elimination of discrimination (including direct and indirect racism) in our organization, music curriculum, programs, activities, and in the learning and working environment.

YPC is committed to ensuring that individuals and groups are not disadvantaged because of their ethnicity, culture, gender identification or religious background. No chorister, employee, parent or community member should experience discrimination within the learning or working environment of our venues or its activities.

Eradicating expressions of racism and discrimination in learning and working environments, and challenging the attitudes that allow them to emerge, is the shared responsibility of all.

### **POLICY POSITION STATEMENT**

All YPC teachers, staff, alumni, board members, parents, and choristers must adhere to the YPC's policy. Non-compliance with this policy will be addressed in accordance with procedure described in this document.

### **TRAINING**

All YPC staff will be trained on this policy, and on cultural awareness and/or culturally responsive teaching practices.

### **CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS**

YPC encourages all members of the YPC community to attempt to resolve complaints and concerns through our program. The complaints procedures are as follows:

If a YPC community member believes they have been subjected to, or have witnessed, harassment or discrimination of any kind or any conduct that violates this policy, they must immediately report the facts of the conduct to the Chief Operating Officer. If, for any reason,



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they do not feel comfortable discussing the matter with the Chief Operating Officer, they should bring the matter to the attention of any member of the YPC Board Task Force or the Chairman of the Board. The important thing is that YPC community members bring the matter to YPC's attention promptly so that any concern of harassment or discrimination can be investigated and addressed appropriately.

If any member of YPC staff observes any such prohibited behavior, or is made aware of any complaints from other YPC community members, they must report these complaints to Chief Operating Officer, YPC Board Task Force, and/or the Chairman of the Board, as soon as possible so YPC can attempt to resolve the issue as soon as possible.

All complaints will be treated confidentially, fairly and consistently, and resolved as speedily as possible. Any member of the YPC community who raises an issue of racism or discrimination in good faith will not be victimized or otherwise unfairly treated. All complaints of victimization will be taken seriously, investigated and acted upon as quickly as possible. Every chorister and staff member at YPC should feel welcome, supported and emotionally and physically secure at all our venues, during shows, trips and all YPC activities. The well-being of all students and staff is a priority for YPC.

We ask all YPC community members to cooperate in the investigation of alleged harassment or discrimination. Failing to cooperate or deliberately providing false information during an investigation inhibits our ability to address issues brought to our attention.

If YPC determines that a violation of this policy has occurred, it will take effective remedial action commensurate with the severity of the offense. This action may include remedial action against the accused party, up to, and including, a complete severance of the relationship with the offender employment. Steps also will be taken, as reasonable and necessary, to prevent any further violations of policy.

Retaliation by any person for reporting any incidents of harassment or discrimination, or perceived harassment or discrimination, for making any complaints of harassment or discrimination, or participating in any investigation of incidents of harassment or discrimination, or perceived harassment or discrimination, is strictly prohibited. Any report of retaliation by one accused of harassment or discrimination will also be promptly and thoroughly investigated. If a complaint of retaliation is substantiated, appropriate remedial action will be taken.

## DEFINITIONS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### DEFINITIONS (adapted from the Government Alliance on Race and Equity)

- **Anti-racism:** the practice of identifying, challenging, and changing the values, structures, and behaviors that perpetuate systemic racism.
- **Individual racism:** pre-judgment, bias, or discrimination by an individual based on race. Individual racism includes both privately held beliefs, conscious and unconscious, and external behaviors and actions towards others.

- **Institutional racism:** occurs within institutions and organizations, such as venues, that adopt and maintain policies, practices, and procedures that often unintentionally produce inequitable outcomes for people of color and advantages for white people.
- **Structural (or systemic) racism:** encompasses the history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions and society. It refers to the history, culture, ideology, and interactions of institutions and policies that perpetuate a system of inequity that is detrimental to communities of color.

## CATEGORIES OF RACIST BEHAVIOR

The listed behaviors could be observed in those working for the organization (teaching and non-teaching staff) as well as those served by it, that is choristers and their parents. Any of these behaviors can result in a complaint under the Concerns and Complaints procedures.

- **Physical assault and harassment.** Physical assault and harassment may include acts of intimidation or harassment, such as pinching, punching, hair pulling, throwing things at others, spitting or physical gestures directed against others because of their color, cultural background or language.
- **Verbal abuse and threats.** Verbal abuse and threats may include verbal intimidation and harassment and threats that lead to high degrees of fear for personal safety. It may also include deliberate use of language so abusive and offensive that it provokes an aggressive response.
- **Use of derogatory language and ridicule.** Racist, derogatory language and ridicule may include name-calling, insults, racist jokes, ridiculing or mimicking accents and cultural differences. Derogatory language may be spoken or written. Ridicule may be spoken, written or acted out.
- **Racist propaganda.** Racist propaganda may include racist graffiti, leaflets, comics and magazines, wearing racist badges and insignia, t-shirts and jewelry. Racist graffiti could appear in/on educational buildings, textbooks, folders, bags, desks, chairs and benches.
- **Incitement of others to behave in a racist manner.** Incitement of others to behave in a racist manner may include encouraging others to hate, have serious contempt for, or ridicule a person or group of people because of race, color, nationality, ethnic, or religious background.
- **Racist comments in the course of discussions in lessons.** Racist comments in the course of discussions in lessons may include comments, myths and anecdotes that promote stereotyped beliefs about cultural groups and religious groups.
- **Refusal to cooperate with other people because of their color, ethnicity or language.** Refusal to cooperate with other people because of their color, ethnicity or



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language may include refusal to work in groups, to sit next to, to serve or to interact effectively with particularly individuals or groups. It may include treating some people in ways that discriminate against them and limit their participation or potential.

- **Indirect racism.** Indirect racism (or institutional systemic racism) arises from the policies, rules, procedure and culture of an institution. In our offices and other venues it may include deliberate attempts to ignore or cover up the existence of racist attitudes or behaviors, use of euphemisms to avoid admitting that prejudice and bias might be present and denial that current practices could be placing particular individuals or groups at a disadvantage. It may include insensitive application of policies and practices that no longer reflect community expectations, such as uniform policies that do not allow the wearing of headwear in areas enrolling Jewish boys or Muslim girls; or scheduling activities at times of abstinence for particular religious groups in our choral community.
- **Cyber racism.** Cyber racism is most commonly defined as racism that occurs in the cyber world. This includes racism that occurs on the internet, such as on websites, social media platforms, images, blogs, videos and online comments, as well as racist comments, images or language in text messages, emails or on social networking sites. Online activities or published material that result in offensive comments in relation to a person's race, religion, gender identity, color or national or ethnic origin, have the same effect as similar offline activities. Cyber racism may present as racial hatred or cyber bullying.