Persephone Theatre created the following *Statement of Care* in 2023 as part of their Balancing Act Level UP! Pilot Project.

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If you have any questions or would like to discuss these materials, please contact Balancing Act at balancingact@theatredirect.ca.

Persephone theatre

BALANCING ACT

Persephone theatre

STATEMENT OF CARE

Pre-Amble

As an Employer, Persephone Theatre has a legal duty to reasonably accommodate the needs of employees and contract workers, as outlined in provincial legislation, the collective agreements to which Persephone is a signatory, and Persephone's human resource policies, such as Employment, Standard Reporting, and Anti-Discrimination. Individuals seeking accommodations or addressing behaviours, which contravene the Code of Conduct, are asked to refer to these documents for appropriate steps. This document does not address those issues.

This Statement of Care exists, in companionship with our existing human resource policies, as a method of articulating Persephone Theatre's organizational mindset around care. The Statement of Care exists in addition to the organizations' legal requirements.

Persephone Theatre commits to making its approach to care transparent and available to those currently engaged in a relationship with Persephone, as well as those who may be considering accepting opportunities and/or engagements.

This statement applies to everyone regularly engaged in the Persephone workplace, including full- time, part-time, temporary, and casual staff, contract artists, interns, mentees, and students.

What is Care?

For the purposes of this statement, care is defined as a modification or adjustment to the usual practice of the organization and/or the theatre industry to address bias, situational, societal, or systemic obstacles which, while not a legally required accommodation, the absence of prevents an individual from engaging in their work as their whole person, and are within the organization's means to address promptly, without undue hardship to the organization or other individuals.

Extensions of care can be requested by an individual or offered by the organization. Extensions of care are provided as a kindness, knowing the work Persephone and its workers do is relational, and with a desire by Persephone to engage in genuine relationships built on reciprocity.

Statement of Care

Persephone Theatre has a desire to provide a welcoming and supportive workplace, which prioritizes the health and wellness of people first. Persephone Theatre believes in an

intersectional approach to people and care. Persephone Theatre acknowledges care looks different to each individual, and a “one-size-fits-all” approach to care is not inclusive. We are committed to supporting the needs of workers, with an intersectional approach, which recognizes care needs, while different from legal accommodations, still can and do intersect with an individual’s race, creed, age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, marital status, nationality, ancestry, ethnic origins, family relationships, dependents, disability, sexual orientation, political affiliation, socio-economic status, and mental wellness.

Persephone Theatre’s five core values are People First, Shared Resources, Transparency, Accessibility, and Meaningful Art. Experience tells us the final value is not possible without an unfailing commitment to the first four.

We are an organization that ceases to exist without its people. Persephone Theatre is committed to fostering organizational thinking that prioritizes meeting the needs of its staff, artists, students, and volunteers, as best it can within its means.

We encourage you to discuss your needs with us so we can strategize how extensions of care may be provided within our available resources.

To help get the conversation started, we would like to share with you this Statement of Care, and some of the extensions of care we already have in place.

Existing Extensions of Care & Considerations

We believe there are many ways to provide care and consideration without financial strain on the organization. We have collected the following list of extensions of care and considerations we already offer, to be transparent about how we may already be meeting your needs.

Staff:

- Flexible working hours
- Hybrid and work-from-home options, which support health, wellness, and life commitments, where compatible with organizational needs
- Protection for the unexpected loss of wages due to COVID-19, for up to one week
- Employee benefit plan for full-time salaried staff
- Child and pet-friendly premises
- Workspace modifications to suit the individual
- Sick/Personal/Mental Wellness days
- Annual stipend for personal or professional skill development
- Hygiene products in staff washrooms
- Staff social functions
- Persephone Perks Card, which gives the user access to discounts with local businesses
- Discounted fees for Theatre School for dependents

Theatre School Students:

- Flexible payment options for enrollment fees
- Financial Assistance and Accessibility Fund
    - Full and partial bursaries for students experiencing financial hardship
    - Financial support for any support persons, which would make it possible for students with disabilities (physical, developmental, intellectual, sensory) to participate in our programs
- More information about this program and how to access it can be found here: https://school.persephonetheatre.org/accessibility/

Local and Visiting Artists:

- Scheduling:
    - We recognize being a freelance artist can make it difficult to plan for various life events. We are open to discussing scheduling needs which allow artists to create a work-life balance.
    - Rehearsal weeks are scheduled with five working days, Tuesdays to Saturdays, with two consecutive days off. Performance weeks are eight performances over six working days, Tuesdays to Sundays. There are never two-show days scheduled back-to-back.
- We maintain a membership to The Library of Things, a local borrowing library of everyday and specialized items, which can be accessed by any visiting artist.
- We maintain an Artist Borrowing Library of common items requested by visiting artists, such as kitchen equipment, staple food supplies, humidifiers, winter gear, etc.
- Discounts with the YMCA/YWCA for visiting artists
- Collection of childcare items for artists and staff caregivers to use while at Persephone
- Assistance finding reputable childcare for visiting artists
- A list of licensed medical care options, such as registered massage therapists, chiropractors, dentists, and walk-in clinics
- Can provide access to workspace, including photocopier, Wi-Fi, and basic office supplies
- Green room has a full kitchen, available for artist use
- Dog-friendly—we love dogs at Persephone! Bringing dogs to the facility and to billet homes is open for discussion with artists, so we can ensure consideration of the sensitivities/allergies of other collaborators.
- Family friendly—we strive to support the needs of families and caregivers. Let us know what you need.
- We can dedicate space for childcare or breastfeeding needs
- Taxi vouchers are provided to artists to use for late-night travel during tech week
- Access to complimentary and discount ticket allotments
- Ceremonial supplies for smudging
- We can dedicate space for prayer
- A Persephone Perks Card, which gives the user access to discounts with local businesses
- A Remai Modern membership pass is available for visiting artists to use
- Coffee and sugar are available to artists in the green room. Artists provide their own milk options.

What if care needs are not addressed in the existing extensions of care?

You are welcome to bring any care needs you have which may not be addressed here to the attention of management at any time. Requests should be brought forward to the person who manages your department, or your primary point of contact.

- For Theatre School staff and students and their caregivers → Director of Education
- Box Office staff → Box Office Manager
- Front of House staff and volunteers → Front of House Manager
- Administrative staff and contractors → Executive Director and/or Artistic Director
- Production staff, technicians, IATSE workers, stage management, designers → Production Manager
- Actors → Director or Stage Management
- Directors, Music Directors, Choreographers, Fight Directors, Dialect/Vocal Coaches → Artistic Director

Alternatively, requests can always be brought directly to the Executive Director or Artistic Director at any time. All requests and discussions around care needs will be handled privately by management and with the understanding that time is of the essence.

Adopted by the Board of Directors on September 11, 2023.
Last revised August 28, 2023