



Casting Guild of Australia  
Guidelines and Protocols in Relation to Sexual Harassment  
& Protection of Artists in the Workplace – March 2022.

**CGA MISSION**

Casting Directors are in a unique industry position, in many cases, working with actors and crew members over long periods of their careers. This can result in trusted working relationships and conversations in confidence. In the event that a Casting Director is told directly (or from a third party) about alleged sexual harassment in the workplace, or is a witness to sexual harassment in the workplace, or outside of the working environment, the Casting Guild of Australia (“CGA”) aims to:

1. Provide Casting Directors with the tools to respond, report and provide support for any given event.
2. Provide Casting Directors with access to information in relation to helping and supporting victims of sexual harassment.
3. Provide clear guidelines to the wider entertainment industry in relation to what a Casting Director will do, and procedures they will be obliged to follow in the event they are a witness to sexual harassment in the workplace, or industry related events.

All Casting Directors who are members of the CGA are expected to observe the following “Guidelines and Protocols in Relation to Sexual Harassment & Protection of Artists in the Workplace”.

**What is sexual harassment?**

Sexual harassment is unwelcome or uninvited conduct of a sexual nature, which makes a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated.

Conduct of a sexual nature in relation to another person includes:

1. a sexual advance or a request for sexual favours to that person;
2. conveying a message with content of a sexual nature to that person, or in the presence of that person (whether by SMS, e-mail, in person or otherwise);
3. staring, leering or unwelcome touching of that person, such as kissing, touching in a sexual manner, patting, pinching or unnecessary familiarity such as deliberately brushing against the person;
4. issuing gender-based insults or obscene gestures to that person, wolf-whistling or taunting that person;

5. directing suggestive comments, innuendo or intrusive questions about that person's private life or body;
6. displaying obscene or pornographic material to, or near, that person; or
7. directing sexual banter, offensive jokes or crude conversation to or near that person.

Conduct between parties which is the subject of mutual acceptance or consent is not unwelcome and is therefore not sexual harassment.

### **Existing Sexual Harassment policies that cover casting**

In addition to these guidelines, there are several other agreements, codes and policies in place which deal with sexual harassment and which are relevant to casting, including:

#### **MEAA – Actor's Television Programs Agreement ("ATPA")**

Full version (see, in particular, clause 43) - <https://www.meaa.org/download/equ-agmt-atpa-2013/>

Summary version - <https://www.meaa.org/download/atpa-summary-2018/>

#### **SPA – Screen Industry Code of Practice**

<https://www.screenproducers.org.au/news/screen-industry-code-of-conduct-takes-effect>

#### **LPA – Code of Practice to Prevent Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying**

[http://liveperformance.com.au/industry\\_code\\_practice\\_preventing\\_workplace\\_discrimination\\_harassment\\_sexual\\_harassment\\_and\\_bullying](http://liveperformance.com.au/industry_code_practice_preventing_workplace_discrimination_harassment_sexual_harassment_and_bullying)<https://www.meaa.org/download/atpa-summary-2018/>

Additionally, individual productions and workplaces may have their own agreements and codes in place which deal with sexual harassment. CGA recommends that Casting Directors request and familiarise themselves with copies of such documents, having particular regard to the provisions which deal with sexual harassment.

The CGA also fully endorses compliance with the **MEAA Intimacy Guidelines for Stage & Screen** and recommends that Casting Directors adopt these best practices guidelines whenever casting involves intimacy, nudity or simulated sex activities.

The MEAA Intimacy Guidelines for Stage & Screen" can be found here:

<https://www.meaa.org/campaigns/intimacy-guidelines/>

### **1. INITIAL AUDITIONS – Nudity & Simulated Sex Scenes**

It is the position of the CGA that there is no reason or justification for nudity, partial nudity or any actual physical, or sexually simulated contact in any initial round of casting or auditions.

Where scenes have been chosen for the casting process, that on the page, involve nudity, love or simulated sexual activity, it is the responsibility of the casting team and production to find an approach that delivers the intention of the scenes – without nudity or any actual physical, simulated sexual activity.

In the event that the only scenes required for a role involve nudity or simulated sexual activity, it will be the responsibility of the casting team and production to provide advice to the artists on how the initial audition will be approached, which must not include nudity or simulated sexual activity with another performer.

An artist should never be asked or required to send a self tape involving nudity or simulated sexual activity.

## 2. CHEMISTRY READS/FINAL AUDITIONS – Nudity & Simulated Sex Scenes

A “**Chemistry Read**” is the final audition where the artist is matched with another artist for the purpose of assessing their on screen or on stage chemistry.

It is the position of the CGA that nudity should not be a requirement in any round of casting or auditions.

However, the artist has an obligation when asked to truthfully answer and disclose any tattoos or body abnormalities that may affect filming.

If a body check is required or requested, this is to be coordinated by production, in consultation with the artist and full terms of ATPA or relevant agreement will apply. Checks must be done in private and no video footage or pictures are to be taken during a body check. If the casting team or production feels that simulated sexual activity is a requirement for a Chemistry Read, all MEAA guidelines and regulations in relation to nudity and simulated sex scenes must be followed.

Before a Casting Director can coordinate and confirm such an audition session, production must obtain the artist’s written consent in accordance with clause 43 of the ATPA as follows:

*The producer or his/her representative may not direct the artist to appear nude, semi-nude or in sex simulated scenes except where such a request has been previously discussed with the artist and the written consent of the artist has been obtained.*

*A performer’s consent to appear nude, semi-nude or in a sex simulated scene may only be sought by the producer where the producer has specified the following in writing:*

1. *The program, episode and scene where the nudity will be required - and why that is required in an audition context [or the play and scene where the nudity will be required - and why that is required in an audition context];*
2. *The extent of the nudity involved;*
3. *The type of physical contact (if any) required in the scene/audition;*
4. *The nature of the wardrobe involved (if any)*

*and any other relevant information requested by the artist pertaining to the scene which may reasonably be expected to give full, true and complete disclosure and informed consent.*

The artist may nominate a third party individual to be present during filming of an audition or rehearsal of nude or simulated sex scenes.

Artists should be provided with prior notification regarding who will be present during filming of an audition or rehearsal of nude or simulated sex scenes.

Once the role has been cast, Casting Directors must delete all footage involving simulated sex. Any footage involving nudity must not be uploaded to any online server or casting site.

### **3. OBLIGATIONS – If a matter is reported to a Casting Director**

If a person reports an incident of sexual harassment to a Casting Director, doing nothing is NOT an option. Questions that a Casting Director should ask that person include:

1. Is the matter a first-hand account (i.e. is the person reporting the matter the victim of the sexual harassment or are they speaking on someone else's behalf)?
2. What would the person like the Casting Director to do with the information? If the person requests that communications be treated as confidential, the Casting Director should respect that confidence so long as it is consistent with the CGA's commitment (and the Casting Director's legal obligation) to taking reasonable and practical steps to prevent sexual harassment or victimisation occurring.
3. Has the matter been reported to any authority? Does the person need any help or advice in reporting the matter to a relevant authority? The Casting Director should inform the person that they can raise the matter with a State or Commonwealth agency that has the power to resolve sexual harassment or victimisation matters (such as the Australian Human Rights Commission or the Fair Work Ombudsman). If the matter is a criminal matter, the Casting Director should raise it with the police. The final page of these guidelines can be printed and given to the person reporting the matter to assist them with the various reporting and support options.
4. Is the matter currently part of any police or criminal investigation?
5. Is the person a member of the MEAA? If not, the Casting Director should encourage them to join.
6. If relevant, has the person spoken to their agent about the matter?

If the matter is in relation to a project which a CGA member is currently involved in or has worked on – depending on who the complaint is about if appropriate and with the consent of the complainant – CGA members should report the matter to the line producer or executive producers as a matter of urgency.

Casting Directors in this situation should report the matter to the executive committee of the CGA for advice and support (with the understanding they may not be able to provide all details and names depending on the situation). A Casting Director should not feel alone to deal with such an important responsibility.

### **4. OBLIGATIONS – If a Casting Director is a witness to sexual harassment**

The broader entertainment industry should be made aware that the CGA has a zero tolerance policy for sexual harassment in our working environments.

Casting Directors are obliged to "STOP. SUPPORT. REPORT."

A Casting Director who is a witness to sexual harassment should report the matter to the executive committee of the CGA for advice and support. A Casting Director should not feel alone to deal with such an important responsibility.

### **5. IF THE MATTER IS IN RELATION TO A CGA MEMBER**

Any matter in relation to a CGA member will be treated in the same manner as any other report and the same obligations will apply. A matter involving sexual harassment can be reported directly to the president of the CGA.

The CGA is committed to giving all of its members, including those accused of sexual harassment, fair treatment and due process.

## **6. SHORT FILMS/LOW BUDGET PROJECTS/INDIE FILMS/FRINGE THEATRE**

The CGA recognises that the casting process for short films, low budget projects, indie films and fringe theatre is often an area of concern for CGA members in relation to sexual harassment.

Frequently, a Casting Director will not be attached to these types of projects and film makers and producers will cast their projects by themselves as a cost saving measure.

Many of these types of projects are advertised through online casting sites which are not sanctioned by the CGA.

If an artist is putting themselves forward for these types of projects, the CGA strongly encourages the artist themselves to adhere to these guidelines for their personal protection, and to send these guidelines to relevant film maker / producer. If these guidelines are not followed by the relevant film maker / producer, we strongly suggest that the artist withdraw from consideration for the project.

In no circumstances should an artist be asked or required to send a self tape involving nudity or simulated sexual activity.

## **REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS**

### **NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT**

PH: 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)

<https://www.1800respect.org.au>

### **REACH OUT – AUSTRALIA NATIONAL SUPPORT LISTINGS**

<https://au.reachout.com/articles/sexual-assault-support>

### **LIFELINE**

PH: 13 11 14

[www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

### **BEYOND BLUE – MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT**

PH: 1300 224 636

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au>

### **INDUSTRY SUPPORT**

**MEAA** – Phone: 1300 656 513

<https://www.meaa.org/news/sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace/>

### **Entertainment Assist**

<https://www.entertainmentassist.org.au>

### **Theatre Network Australia**

<http://www.tna.org.au/>

### **Safe Theatres Australia**

<https://www.safetheatresaustralia.com/>

**The Arts Wellbeing Collective**

<https://www.artswellbeingcollective.com.au/>

**AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Complaints Information Officer, call 1300 656 419 or

email [complaintsinfo@humanrights.gov.au](mailto:complaintsinfo@humanrights.gov.au)

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/sexual-harassment-code-practice-what-sexual-harassment>

**AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION – INFORMATION RE MAKING A COMPLAINT**

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints/complaint-guides/information-people-making-complaints>

**AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION – KNOW YOUR RIGHTS**

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/publications/know-your-rights-sex-discrimination-and-sexual-harassment>

**AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION – GUIDE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES**

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/publications/supporting-workplaces-end-workplace-sexual-harassment-guide>

**Reporting to Police:**

NSW

[https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/crime/sex\\_crimes/adult\\_sexual\\_assault/sexual\\_assault\\_categories/sexual\\_assault\\_reporting\\_option\\_saro](https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/crime/sex_crimes/adult_sexual_assault/sexual_assault_categories/sexual_assault_reporting_option_saro)

VIC

[https://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document\\_ID=43353](https://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=43353)

QLD

<https://www.police.qld.gov.au/programs/adultassault/report/default.htm>

**SA Police Sexual Crime Investigations**

Ph: 08 8172 5555 (business hours only)

<https://www.police.sa.gov.au/contact-us/key-contacts>

WA

[https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/U\\_Z/What-to-do-if-you-want-to-report-sexual-assault-to-the-police](https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/U_Z/What-to-do-if-you-want-to-report-sexual-assault-to-the-police)

NT

<https://nt.gov.au/law/crime/report-sexual-assault>

TAS

<https://www.police.tas.gov.au/useful-links/sexual-assault-support-services/>

**OTHER RESOURCES:**

**NSW GOVERNMENT - JUSTICE**

Victims Access Line on 1800 633 063

**Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission**

<https://humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/index.php/sexual-harassment>

**Legal Aid Victoria**

<https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/sex-and-law/get-help>

**Sexual Assault Crisis Line**

<https://www.sacl.com.au/>

**SA Health - Yarrow Place**

24 hour crisis response service, professional counselling, support groups, collection of forensic evidence

[dvrcv.org.au/yarrow-place](http://dvrcv.org.au/yarrow-place)

Phone: (08) 8226 8787 or 1800 817 421

**South Australia's Victim Support Service**

[victimsa.org](http://victimsa.org)

Phone: (08) 8231 5626 or 1800 182 368

**SASS – SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT SERVICE – HOBART**

PH: 1800 MYSUPPORT (1800 697 877)

[www.sass.org.au](http://www.sass.org.au)