

Section Five: Terms of Reference for West Coast Cooperative of Sex Industry Professionals

These Terms of Reference were created to ensure future cooperative projects have the agreed upon goals and processes.

Terms of Reference (Draft 2007) West Coast Cooperative of Sex Industry Professionals

Vision/ Goals:

- To create labour standards to improve the occupational health, safety and capacities of sex industry professionals as employees and contractors within a legitimized profession.
- To empower and unify sex working communities inclusive of diversities to increase the economic security of adult sex industry workers.
- To provide worker-specific training/ education/empowerment/ capacity building, ownership of skills and leadership in developing policies within the sex industry.
- Nurture community relationships, forge partnerships, identify and engage allies and external expertise in pursuit of Cooperative goals.
- Create a community where all are respected and honoured for their experiences.
- Create enterprises that reflect the dreams and aspirations of diverse groups of sex industry workers.

Guiding principles

- Work for the safety and respect of all sex industry workers regardless of their location within the industry;
- Ensure the inclusion of diverse communities, perspectives, capacities and expertise from the sex industry;
- Promote progressive thought, forward thinking and continual positive change for the empowerment and education of sex industry workers and the community at large;
- Keep harm reduction frameworks at the forefront and work toward social justice and social change to increase quality of life in addition to human and labour rights for sex industry workers.

- Pool resources and work together as a community.

Membership/composition:

- Members must be active or former sex industry workers, inclusive of: street level, bath houses, massage parlours, ads/ internet, dancers, adult film, off street, phone sex, web cam etc.;
- Must be 19 years and over;
- Must provide proof of work experience in the sex industry through on of the following sources:
 - Criminal charges, 213, 211 or 210; tickets-no go zones, etc.
 - Photos, websites, ad payments, vouched by another worker;
 - Employment history and verify work history;
 - Contracts for adult film, website, phone, escort/ massage licenses etc;
- Members must demonstrate commitment to sex worker community development through community work, (paid or unpaid), for at least 6 months. This work could include but is not limited to;
 - Outreach
 - Support work
 - Taking part in programs
 - Peers participant
 - Moderating on-line forums

Code of Conduct

- Never speak in anger;
- Build positive relationships;
- Think of others and limit disputes;
- Attend meetings ready to work and ready to contribute: alert and present in mind and body. Those on medication or using harm reduction strategies must employ drug management strategies;
- No cross talking and ensure that all have an equal opportunity to speak and contribute;
- Honour everyone's opinion and be inclusive of a range of opinions;
- No hijacking of agenda;
- Be mindful and accepting of diversity and varying capacities: honouring individual members opinions, choices, experiences and knowledge;
- Respect meeting space- from set up to clean up;

- Zero Tolerance to Violence: verbal abuse, physical abuse and threats will lead to revocation of membership in Cooperative and all other BCCEC projects;
- No personal politics, leave outside issues outside and leave the street on the street

Confidentiality

- Events that happen at meetings stay at meetings;
- Project membership and personal identities of members and their contact information must remain confidential;
- Intellectual property and details about projects are not to be shared with outside entities or individuals except when in the form of a communication strategy that has been designed and approved by the members;
- Confidentiality extends even after leaving project and must respect the sex workers rights of movement and the anonymity of those involved;
- Breach of confidentiality will lead to the immediate revocation of membership and exclusion from participation in future Coop and BCCEC initiatives;
- All existing and new members must sign a confidentiality agreement and sign on to the most current Terms of Reference.

Decision-Making

Decisions will be made through a consensus model. All members in good standing are voting members and will enter any of the following 4 responses to issues that are being considered:

1. Agree,
2. Disagree,
3. Disagree but can live with the decision,
4. Disagree and can't live with the decision and will resign my membership (Last resort);

Note: if members choose option four, the issue at hand will be revisited and opened for discussion. Another vote will be posed to the membership.

There are 13 members of the Coop Development Team and a minimum of 7 must vote in group decisions; if this number does not vote the decision is invalid.

Conflict Management

- The complainant should attempt to reconcile differences informally unless it is considered unsafe for the individuals to undertake this first step.
- The complainant shall submit a written complaint to the West Coast Cooperative of Sex Industry Professionals Board of Directors regarding the allegation. Upon receipt of the complaint, a committee of three people including a member and representative from the Board of Directors will

- engage in a process of investigation. This investigation will include interviewing all individuals affected by the incident and will result in a report to the Board of Directors. The committee will submit a report to the Board of Directors including recommendations for how to proceed on the matter. The Board will make the final decision on the status of the Board/ staff/ volunteer or member.
- If the matter remains unresolved, the Board of Directors will solicit the support of an external mediator and engage in further negotiations or appeal.

Meeting Structure-Minutes

- Agenda and previous meeting minutes circulated via email prior to meetings.
- Action column and recommendations will be read at the following meeting.
- A rotating chair will facilitate meetings or an external facilitator may be hired.
- The BC Cooperative of Sex Industry Professionals recognizes that the meeting procedures and minutes may be available to the public but will refrain from identifying members.

Communications/ media

- All may speak about their own lived experiences but must also respect that our collective position may differ;
- Communications will be very important within the coop, between programs and with the outside world. Position statement will be collectively constructed and delivered by an authorized representative.
- A communications sub committee must be struck to work on messaging and communications.

Partnerships

- Partnerships with the West Coast Cooperative of Sex Industry Professionals will be determined and approved by the membership;
- Partners must sign and uphold a Memorandum of Agreement which details the partnership and expected outcomes, risks and benefits.