



## Sexual Violence Policy

### I. Policy

**It is the policy of this Cherish to support a workplace free from Sexual Violence. This policy applies to ALL of our program participants, and employees.**

### II. Procedures

A. All employees must not participate in any sexual violence toward program participants, co-workers or others while representing Cherish.

B. Sexual Violence includes using sexual words or actions that are unwanted or harmful to another person.

C. Strategies to minimize the risk of sexual violence:

Speak up if you are uncomfortable.

communicate No means No, CLEAR verbal or non-verbal consent means Yes.

Know that drinking and drug use can impair your judgement. If you drink, drink responsibly.

Don't go anywhere with someone you don't know.

D. Concepts of healthy relationships

A healthy relationship includes all of these eight key characteristics:

Mutual Respect. You acknowledge and respect each other, even if your views differ. ...

Reciprocity. This is the give-and-take in a relationship. ...

Commitment. ...

Communication. ...

Mutual trust. ...

Boundaries. ...

Shared Values. ...

Flexibility.

E. Bodily autonomy of people with disabilities

Body autonomy is the right for a person to govern what happens to their body without external influence or coercion. An essential part of human rights is the concept of personal autonomy. Every person needs autonomy so that he/she can feel free to make decisions. A person who feels free to make decisions will feel secure and happy. Violation of the bodily integrity of another is regarded as an unethical infringement, intrusive, and possibly criminal.

F. Reduce the Risk of Committing Sexual Violence

Listen carefully. Ask for clarification

No means no.

Don't make assumptions because of the way someone behaves or dresses.



## Cherish

If someone tells you that they are uncomfortable with the way you are behaving or speaking STOP IMMEDIATELY.

Obtain clear consent

if you have sex with someone who incapable of making that decision you may be guilty of rape.

Sexual violence of any type may be punishable by criminal and civil proceedings.

Get involved if you believe someone is at risk. Don't be afraid to intervene or get help.

### Reduce the Risk of Being Sexually Assaulted

- Know your sexual intentions and limits. You have the right to say “NO” to any unwanted sexual contact. If you are uncertain of what you want, ask your partner to respect your feelings.
- Communicate with your partner. Do not assume that someone will automatically know how you feel or will eventually “get the message” without you having to say anything. Just as it’s okay to say “NO” to unwanted activities, it’s okay - and important - to give clear consent to activities in which you would like to engage. Avoid giving “mixed messages”; back up your words with a firm voice and clear body language (e.g., if you consent, give a big smile and say “YES!”).
- Be aware that some people mistakenly believe drinking, dressing provocatively, or going to your or someone else’s room means you are willing to have sex. Be clear up front about your limits in such situations.
- Listen to your gut feelings. If you feel uncomfortable or think you might be at risk, leave the situation immediately and go to a safe place.
- If you feel you are being pressured or coerced into sexual activity, you have a right to state your feelings &/or leave the situation. If you are concerned about the other person becoming angry, it is okay to make up an excuse to leave or create time to get help.
- Attend large parties with friends you trust. Agree to “look out” for one another. Leave with the group, not alone. Avoid leaving with people that you don’t know very well.
- Attend a workshop on sexual assault risk reduction or take a self-defense course to learn additional general safety and risk reduction strategies.

The program’s designated staff person will notify the appropriate law enforcement agency when we have reasonable suspicion to believe that an employee may have participated in sexual violence while on duty during work hours. Where appropriate, we will also notify licensing boards.

Policy reviewed and authorized by the Cherish owners at a formal Board of Directors meeting

Last policy review: 8/22/2023