

Mabel Diversity and Inclusion Policy

INTRODUCTION

The Mabel League upholds the fundamental principle of equity and inclusion of all peoples and recognizes the inherent dignity and worth of every person, as well as our responsibility and commitment to provide equitable rights and opportunities without discrimination.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to highlight various ways that the Mabel League is committed to making the league a safer, more inclusive, and supportive space for members to play and learn more about softball.

Scope

This policy applies to all Mabel League members, including players, managers, coaches, subs, and the Executive Committee.

Roles and Accountabilities

It is the overall responsibility of each Mabel League member to apply all sections of this policy. The following is each league member's responsibility:

- Review and comply with the guidelines in this policy;
- Participate in educational training about diversity and inclusion;
- Assess and modify how they interact with other members and the impacts of bias, and how that affects other players' experiences within the league;
- Challenge each other and the league as a whole to do better by bringing any concerns to the attention of the Executive Committee and/or the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and/or the Grievance Committee; and
- Hold spectators and fans of league members accountable, and share the league's values.

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee while working with the Executive Committee is responsible for overseeing and maintaining this policy.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

The Mabel League is committed to providing a safe(r) and affirming space for members to learn and play softball. One key component to this is creating psychological safe spaces.

Physical safety is the protection of someone from experiencing harm from a physical object. Psychological safety is the protection of someone from experiencing harm from unseen circumstances.

Creating a psychologically safe space includes the absence of harm and/or threat of harm to the mental well being of members when interacting with official Mabel activities. This could include, but is not limited to, league events, games, and online. As well as discretion, respect, and care with the use of personal contact information shared for team communication purposes.

Psychological safety is:

- A belief that someone will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes.
- A feeling that one can “be oneself” and will be accepted this way.
- A feeling of belonging to the group or team.

Human needs when unmet or thwarted can become risk factors for psychological distress; when satisfied can lead to psychological and organizational health. These human needs include security and physiological safety, belonging, social justice, self-worth, self-esteem, self-efficacy, accomplishment, or autonomy.

There are many factors that can play a role in someone’s psychological make-up, as a member of Mabel many people come to this space expecting safety and community.

All members of the Mabel League should be actively engaged in this policy to be aware of factors that may create an unsafe space.

Resources:

[Psychological Health & safety - An action guide for employers - Mental Health Commission of Canada](#)

ANTI-RACISM

The Mabel League is committed to identifying, preventing, and eliminating systemic racism in all aspects of the league. Every Mabel League member has the right to participate in a safe(r) environment free of racial discrimination and harassment.

The League prohibits discrimination and harassment, including conduct on the basis of race, creed, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, and citizenship that:

- Is abusive, demeaning, or threatening;
- Biases administrative and executive decisions; or
- Misuses power, authority, or influence.

The Mabel League has zero tolerance for violence, hatred, and discrimination on the basis of racial identity.

Examples of racial discrimination and harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Valuing members and/or their opinions less based on the perception of a member's nationality or race;
- Using racial slurs;
- Linguistic discrimination - treating members with less respect and taking their opinions less seriously because of an accent or because English is not their first language;
- Judgment and assumptions based on the perception of a member's nationality or race;
- Seemingly well-intended compliments toward someone's ability to speak English;
- Negative attitudes towards people who speak a different type of English;
- Attaching less credibility to statements spoken in a foreign accent; or
- Excluding members from specific opportunities because of their nationality or race.

It is the role and responsibility of all League members to build a diverse, inclusive, accessible, and respectful league where every member has a voice and the opportunity to fully contribute and participate.

Proactivity

The League recognizes that anti-racism work is not only reactive, but also proactive.

The Diversity & Inclusion and Executive Committees commit to meaningfully involving people of colour in decision making to ensure decisions are informed by insights into how racism operates, and this can help address the challenges different people face.

The League acknowledges that it is not the responsibility of people of colour to teach others how to be anti-racist; it is every members' responsibility to learn.

FAT POSITIVE SPACES

The Mabel League is committed to providing a safe(r) and affirming space for fat people to learn and play softball. Mabel welcomes members of all sizes. Fatphobia and fat shaming towards any members will not be tolerated.

Fat shaming is deeply entrenched within the culture of sports. In fact, it is so embedded that most people are unaware when they are perpetuating fatphobia. Fat people are the targets of many forms of hate and discrimination. For most fat people, sports feels like an unsafe space to be.

Examples of fat shaming and fat phobia includes, but is not limited to:

- Assuming a fat person will not be able to contribute to a team;
- Making statements about someone's abilities due to their body size;
- Discussing or celebrating someone's loss of weight;
- Commenting on personal weight or size;or
- Making comments about what food is healthy or unhealthy to consume.

Some ways Mabel members can help create a safe(r) and affirming space for fat members include:

- Ensuring that the team is educated and aware of fatphobic comments;
- Not questioning whether someone is healthy or not to play;
- Creating space for fat people only team or teams;
- Call in people if you hear rude comments about people's body size;
- Ensure team clothing is available in all sizes; and
- Continue to educate yourself that all bodies are good bodies.

Note: Fat is a word that people may choose or not choose to describe themselves. Do not assume someone uses fat to describe themselves unless they have explicitly shared this with you.

References:

[Here's What Fat Acceptance Is—and Isn't - YES! Magazine \(yesmagazine.org\)](https://www.yesmagazine.org/here-s-what-fat-acceptance-is-and-isn-t/)

NEURODIVERSITY

The Mabel League is committed to providing a safe(r) and affirming space for neurodivergent members to learn and play softball.

Neurodiversity refers to the various ways the brain may work and interpret information. It highlights that people think about things in a variety of ways. All individuals have different interests, motivations, and natural strengths. Neurodiversity includes, and is not limited to, Attention Deficit Disorders, Autism, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia.

Many day to day tasks are designed in a 'neurotypical' way and therefore these may have an impact on someone who is 'neurodivergent'.

Principles

- Everyone deserves opportunities, encouragement and support to realize their full potential.
- A diversity of cognitive approaches is a source of great strength and value within a genuinely inclusive league.
- Members must not be subject to unfavourable treatment if they choose to disclose a neurodiversity.
- Each person is unique and there can be a high degree of overlap between neurodiversity.
- Any support needs may be shared with team leads, but this is up to each individual.
- Team leads should work on creating a space that is welcoming for people to come forward and share any needs or accommodations.
- The league will support a person-led approach, together with an open dialogue which is inclusive and non-judgmental.
- The league will create a culture where members feel safe to discuss their needs and to advocate for themselves.

Resources:

[Neurodiversity and Inclusion Policy - 360Giving \(threesixtygiving.org\)](https://www.threesixtygiving.org/Neurodiversity-and-Inclusion-Policy)

TRANSGENDER INCLUSION

The Mabel League is committed to providing a safe(r) and affirming space for people of all marginalized genders to learn and play softball. Mabel has members from across the gender spectrum, including many transgender and non-binary members.

Transgender individuals face an increased amount of scrutiny and policing around their presence in sports leagues that can make leagues feel like unsafe spaces. Transphobia and identity-based harm against transgender and non-binary members will not be tolerated.

Examples of transphobia and other identity-based harm includes, but are not limited to:

- Misgendering and/or deadnaming. Using they/them pronouns for someone if you know they do not use those pronouns is misgendering;
- Assumptions about athleticism/physical ability due to gender identity;
- Gatekeeping or other exclusionary behavior based on transnormative expectations of transition (i.e. hormone therapy, gender affirming surgery); or
- Unwanted and/or invasive comments and questions about gender identity.

Some ways Mabel members can help create a safe(r) and affirming space for trans and non-binary members include:

- Introducing yourself with your name and pronouns to new players;
- Avoiding language that is gendered or makes generalized assumptions about experience of gender;
- Correcting players who misgender and/or deadname a teammate;
- Do not assume other player's gender; use they/them pronouns if you do not know, or ask a player for consent to ask them their pronouns.

PROCEDURES

As a part of the Mabel League, members are expected to be aware of the principles of anti-oppression and strive towards creating an environment that is affirming and safe. Conflicts and misunderstandings between members will happen, but we believe that many such conflicts can be resolved through discussion and calling in, and that this approach can lead to personal growth and greater team cohesion. Mabel League also recognizes that there are conflicts that cannot be addressed with this approach. In these situations, the Executive or the Grievance Committee provides an additional avenue to resolve conflicts.

When making a complaint against another league member, members should consider whether they wish for the complaint to be addressed by their team representatives, or by the Executive or Grievance Committee. If a complaint involves members from multiple Mabel teams, it may be addressed by team representatives from all involved teams, or by the Executive or Grievance Committee.

If a member believes the issue stems from a misunderstanding and can be solved with discussion, it may be appropriate to bring it to team representatives. If a member believes the issue is coming with the intention of deliberate harm, it may be appropriate to resolve the issue through the Executive or Grievance Committee. Team representatives may also opt to escalate complaints to the Executive or Grievance Committee for any reason, such as if they do not feel properly equipped to have the conversation with the members or if the incident is indicative of a larger pattern of behavior.

The process for determining whether a conflict should be resolved by team representative, Executive, or Grievance Committee is ultimately up to the discretion of the involved parties. There are no hard criteria to determine what approach should be taken, and we trust Mabel members to decide which approach will be more likely to ensure their own safety and wellbeing, and lead to a resolution in the dispute.

Members who are experiencing or have experienced harassment or discrimination, whether individual or systemic, are encouraged to report their experiences to team representatives, Executive, or the Grievance Committee via email. The League will support all members reporting this behavior as safely as possible and without repercussions.

It is the responsibility of team representatives, Executive, and the Grievance Committee to respond to reports within two weeks of receiving them. The Executive or Grievance Committee will reach out to involved parties to gather information before meeting with any individuals who have been found to breach League policy. Appropriate relief and remedies, including a possible ban from the League, will be implemented. The type of remedies, reconciliation and/or resolution implemented will be informed by the situation and may vary depending on all the circumstances.

CONCLUSION

Creating a supportive and anti-oppressive space is work that requires consistent effort and care. This policy aims to provide a framework to support League members in that work.

This policy will be reviewed annually to continue to identify and develop resources and support. This review will ensure the policy is up-to-date and equipped to serve League members. If you have feedback on the policy, please email executive@mabelleague.com.

DEFINITIONS

Allyship: Being an ally is an ongoing journey and only those in a community can call you an ally. You yourself are not able to say you are one, but you can always strive to be. True allyship is a verb, not a noun. It is about the commitment you make to doing better. Being an ally is not meant to be something you are hoping to gain recognition on, but something you want to do to make others feel like they belong.

Anti-racism: the practice of identifying, challenging, preventing, eliminating and changing the values, structures, policies, programs, practices and behaviours that perpetuate racism. Would love to see a definition on calling in, which I think will be a really useful term in the game which is so outwardly social.

Bullying and Harassment: refers to any action taken by a person to intentionally disrespect, humiliate, intimidate, or otherwise victimize another person. It may refer to a single instance or a series of instances.

Calling In: Invitation to a one-on-one or small group discussion to bring attention to an individual or group's harmful behaviour, including bias, prejudice, microaggressions, and discrimination.

Good Faith: is defined as a general presumption that any two or more parties involved will deal with each other honestly and fairly so as to not destroy the right of the other party or parties.

Neurodiversity: is a popular term that's used to describe differences in the way people's brains work. The idea is that there's no "correct" way for the brain to work. Instead, there is a wide range of ways that people perceive and respond to the world, and these differences are to be embraced and encouraged.

Sexual Harassment: is defined as any conduct, comment, gesture or physical or non-physical contact of a sexual nature that one would find to be unwanted or unwelcome.

Safe & Inclusive Space: is defined as Mabel's commitment to provide a welcoming, anti-oppressive space, that is accessible and inclusive where everyone can feel safe, welcome, and respected especially regarding: race/ethnicity, cultural background, sexual orientation, gender presentation, gender identity, age, ability, mental health status, economic/social class, physical appearance, body size, condition or cost of their gear, religion, citizenship or citizenship status.

Safe(r) Space: Mabel is committed to creating a space that is safe and inclusive as defined above, however, due to external circumstances, we can never guarantee that a space is 100% safe, but we will always strive to make it safer.

Transformative Justice / Approach: is defined as a framework for responding to violence, harm and abuse that seeks to respond to violence without creating more violence and/or engaging in harm reduction to lessen the violence. It is the presence of the values, practices, and relationships that proactively puts in place things we want, such as healthy relationships, good communication skills, skills to de-escalate active or "live" harm and violence in the moment, learning how to express our anger in ways that are not destructive, incorporating healing into our everyday lives.