



HVC TRAINING CENTER STUDENT BILL OF RESPONSIBILITIES & RIGHTS

Happier Valley Comedy is committed to maintaining a welcoming, inclusive community where people of all identities and backgrounds are seen, valued, and respected. While we support students in taking beneficial risks and learning from mistakes, we strongly uphold a community of mutual respect for every race, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, physical and/or mental ability, religion, place of origin, citizenship, and age. You have a responsibility and the right to review this agreement before your first class.

At your first class, you will be asked to signify your agreement to everything in this document by signing your initials. In doing so, you agree that you're aware of our commitment to inclusivity and respect and you're willing to take responsibility for your role in the learning process. Now let's get into some specifics...

- ★ Let's be clear: **Bigotry has no place at Happier Valley Comedy.**
- ★ Humanity has all the space in the world, and - news flash! - humans are messy and gloriously fallible. Given the unpredictable nature of learning comedy, our classroom cannot be considered a "safe space." However, *HVC maintains a deep commitment to maintaining a brave, intentionally caring space of trust-building and profound respect for people of all backgrounds and identities.*
- ★ Assume Good Will is our golden rule. We trust that anyone who crosses a boundary or otherwise challenges us means well, though their actions may not sit well. We assume good will of all intentions while navigating the impact of specific actions. We also agree to assume good in turning missteps into learning opportunities.
- ★ You have the right to define what feels fun and comfortable for you without judgment. You have the responsibility for communicating your boundaries with clarity and compassion. You have the right to change and expand your boundaries if it feels productive to your learning process to do so.
- ★ Though you may learn important life lessons at HVC, comedy class is not therapy. Your teachers are only here to teach improv and storytelling standup. Your learning journey in class may be uncomfortably vulnerable at times even when it's productive. If you've recently experienced trauma or are in the middle of a very tender healing process, you have the right to withdraw from class. To empower your self-care, you have the right to the Compassionate Care Refund, which you can request up to 5 days before the second class, to receive a total refund from Happier Valley Comedy if you decide that this is not the right time for you to study comedy. (We'll be here with open arms when you're ready.)
- ★ While your teacher is responsible for stopping or redirecting an exercise if something disrespectful or unsafe happens, you also have the right to stop any moment in class whether or not you're directly involved. You have the right to turn down a suggestion that feels demeaning or unfun. You also may leave any exercise or classroom that feels unsafe or unhelpfully-uncomfortable with or without explanation.
- ★ You are responsible for using your most reserved judgment in class. When in doubt, don't do it (then discuss.) If you have the thought, "I wonder if this is appropriate?" DON'T do or say it. But DO bring it up later with the group or teacher to clarify the class's culture of trust, beneficial risk-taking, and respect.



- ★ For physical contact, if it's appropriate in a reserved business, it's appropriate in our classroom. For example, a tap on the shoulder, handshake, or high five is okay unless otherwise requested. Don't ever use aggressive contact, inappropriately touch, pick up, or even hug your classmates. You have the right to require the class to respect your specific physical boundaries even if that means no touching at all.
- ★ If your classmates set specific limits for content or touch, you are responsible for respecting them whether or not they line up with your personal boundaries. In short, if anyone says, "I'm not comfortable with that," don't ever do it.
- ★ You have the choice to share your pronouns in class. This is optional. If you choose not to share your pronouns, just share the name you'd like us to call you. If you are cis-gendered - meaning your personal identity and gender corresponds with your birth sex - please do not make any commentary, flippant remarks, or jokes about pronouns. We recognize that sharing pronouns can be a significant act of trust that demands respect. We all have the responsibility to use any pronouns shared by an individual.
- ★ You have the responsibility and right to report any behavior that infringes on your or any other community member's rights. You have the right to have this discussion held in confidence or to be shared in the agreed upon manner. Exercising any of these rights will not adversely affect your ability to progress in classes, to be cast in or to be invited to shows. **If there is an issue with something that comes up in class, please bring it up as soon as possible.** We can't fix what we don't know about. You have your teacher's contact information, and you can find the contact information for HVC Leadership, the Impartial Mediator, and the Anonymous Reporting System on the ["Contact Us" page of the website](#). Remember: Better out than in.
- ★ In addition to this agreement, you also are responsible for being familiar with the [Anti-Harassment & Issues of Respect Policy](#) and [The On the Nose Pause for Learning](#) process before your first class. We know it may feel like a lot to sort through. Thanks for your patient attention. The fun starts soon!
- ★ You are responsible for extending ample compassion and patience to learn according to your and your classmates' unique personal timeline.
- ★ You have the right to learn from your mistakes and to redefine those mistakes as gifts.
- ★ You have the right to love your work.
- ★ You have the right to have more fun than anyone!

Thank you for agreeing to the Student Bill of Responsibilities & Rights.

We are grateful to have you join our community! If you have any questions, please reach out to:

Pam Victor, Head of Happiness: pam@happiervalley.com, 413-658-4615
Scott Braidman, General Manager/Artistic Director: scott@happiervalley.com, 781-264-8260

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students: The Happier Valley Comedy School admits students of any race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religious affiliation, age, ability, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religious affiliation, age, ability, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.