

# **Bad Girls**

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Statement of Purpose**

Bad Girls of Portland, Oregon, is a social and educational group for women interested in BDSM with other women. We welcome self-identified women 18 and over of all sexual orientations as club members. BDSM includes, but is not limited to, the practices of bondage, discipline, sadomasochism, dominance and submission, role-play, and fetishism. Bad Girls uses a broad definition for self-identified women to be inclusive of cisgender, transgender, and intersex women, along with gender expansive individuals who find home within women's spaces. This can include gender non-conforming, agender, two-spirit, butch, femme, and many other identities.

Bad Girls is not a political organization, although it may support organizations that work for causes such as the defense of sexual freedom and the empowerment of women and sexual minorities.

### **Principles**

Bad Girls' principles as a club are RESPECT, INTEGRITY, SAFETY, COMMUNITY, INCLUSION, EDUCATION, EMPOWERMENT and HONOR.

**Respect:** We honor each person's unique experience and perspective and treat others with respect, even when we differ or disagree. We value the participation and experience of novices as much as that of more seasoned players.

**Integrity:** We practice honesty and accountability in our dealings with each other. We take full responsibility for our own feelings, needs, and choices. When we make a mistake, we admit it, learn from it, and make amends as needed.

**Safety:** While acknowledging that BDSM, like life, is inherently risky, we practice a high standard of care for our own and our partners' physical and emotional safety. This includes educating ourselves about safer BDSM practices and techniques, taking precautions against the spread of disease, respecting others' boundaries, and being honest about our own limitations.

**Community:** We seek to form a welcoming and cohesive community that engages with and gives back to the larger community around us. We cooperate and build bridges with other SM-related, women's, and sexual minority organizations. Placing fairness and community welfare before interpersonal conflicts, we avoid malicious gossip, scapegoating, and factionalism.

**Inclusion:** We try to provide accessible events and programs, and safer spaces for marginalized people within the kink community. This includes, but is not limited to, people of color, disabled individuals, people of various socio-economic groups, transgender women, intersex women, and gender expansive participants. If you feel that you belong here, you belong here. We recognize that there is an unfortunate history of exclusion and factionalism that has driven people apart and we actively work to welcome diverse members from various backgrounds and identities, and encourage all to become involved in leadership roles.

**Education:** We are committed to continually improving our skills, understanding, and self-knowledge around BDSM. We acknowledge that everyone, no matter what their level of experience, has things to teach and learn. Through our workshops and discussion groups, we create opportunities for experiential learning that go beyond technique to touch on the spirit of what we do.

**Empowerment:** We affirm the validity of BDSM as a path to self-discovery, pleasure, intimacy, healing, and spiritual awakening. We support each member's right to explore and express their unique sexuality in any way that is consensual and causes no harm to others.

**Honor:** We endeavor to fulfill and stay true to the history, traditions and tenets of Bad Girls while we forge new ways to innovate, grow and maintain a vibrant club for all members.

## Membership

Membership in Bad Girls is open to self-identified women, 18 or over, with a positive personal interest in woman-to-woman BDSM. Women of all sexual orientations, levels of experience, and BDSM-related interests are eligible for membership. Individuals seeking to join solely for the purpose of research, journalism, fiction writing, law enforcement, or similar purposes are not eligible.

To become a member, applicants must attend a mandatory Safety & Etiquette Workshop and a New Member Orientation, both of which are free of charge and held together quarterly.

**Safety & Etiquette:** These workshops are offered to educate about the basics of safe and courteous BDSM.

**New Member Orientation:** Club orientation is vital to the understanding each participant has for the expectations of, duties to, and benefits from the club. At the orientation meeting, applicants must do the following things:

- Complete an application form
- Provide their legal name and verification of age
- Review a copy of this Policies and Procedures document and sign a waiver of liability
- Pay dues or make payment arrangements

The Board reserves the right to reject an application in the best interest of the club.

**Pledge and Probationary Periods:** Upon paying dues and joining Bad Girls, members are considered “pledges” for a period of three months. During this three-month period, a pledge’s membership may be revoked (with a 75% refund of paid dues) or a pledge may withdraw their membership without explanation.

After the completion of the pledge period, a pledge enters the six-month probationary period, during which they are not eligible to vote, earn colors, or run for Board office. At the end of the pledge and probation periods together (nine months total), a full membership of Bad Girls is awarded.

If a member has a lapse in membership of two years or more, they will re-enter the club at probationary status and must re-attend the Safety & Etiquette and New Member Orientation.

### **Categories of Membership:**

**Premium Members:** Premium members are eligible to vote in Board elections, can hold Board office, and may become eligible to earn colors. Premium membership grants discounted entry to workshops and events.

**Basic Members:** Basic members are eligible to vote in Board elections, can hold Board office, and may become eligible to earn colors. Basic membership allows discounted entry to workshops events.

**Associate Members:** Associate members are those who live more than 50 miles outside Portland city limits. Associate members are eligible to vote and earn colors but cannot hold office.

**Patrons:** Patrons are those who wish to show their support for the club. Patrons are not eligible to vote, hold office, or wear colors. Patrons need not be self-identified women.

There is no limit on the number of members in the club.

All members who have successfully completed their probationary period are eligible to purchase and wear a shoulder patch and are also eligible to purchase official Bad Girls T-shirts. Official Bad Girls T-shirts are only to be worn by club members. Non-members may purchase Bad Girls pins, or specialty event T-shirts when available, to show support of the club.

**Dues:** Dues are set and adjusted, as needed, by the Board. Members joining during the orientations in March and June will pay full membership fees. Members joining during the orientations in September and December will pay 50% of the full membership fees. The membership year is from March 1 through the last day of February.

Members may prepay for future years at the dues rate in effect at the time of prepayment.

### **Scholarships:**

Bad Girls offers need-based payment arrangements of dues as well as scholarships at the Basic Member rate. Payment arrangements and scholarships are administered at the discretion of the Treasurer, who is accountable to the Board for staying within the scholarship budget.

A member may not receive more than two consecutive annual scholarships.

**Tommie Spilmon Memorial Scholarship:** Each year, one full member who petitions for scholarship will be chosen by the Board to receive the Tommie Spilmon Memorial Scholarship at the Premium Member rate. The scholarship was created in 2012 to honor the passing of Tommie, a pivotal member of Bad Girls.

**Honoring Allies of the Club:** When a member of the community, who is not a member of the club, has performed a significant service for the club, such as hosting an event or presenting a workshop, the Board may decide to honor that person with a club pin. Where possible, the pin is presented publicly at a club event in the traditional manner (i.e. pinned to the fly of the recipient's jeans or attire by a kneeling Board member).

**Confidentiality:** All membership information is completely confidential. Membership information is used for organizational purposes only and will not be sold, traded, or given to anyone outside of the club.

Members retain the right to be as anonymous or as public as they like, both within and outside of the club. Members choosing to be known only by a first name or assumed name are responsible for not disclosing their complete identity to other members. Discreet language, as practiced by all Bad Girls members, is using titles, roles played, and/or chosen labels instead of the proper names of any person not present.

**Reciprocity:** Women who belong to other women's BDSM organizations that are located at least 50 miles outside of Portland and with whom we have established reciprocity are welcome to attend Bad Girls functions at Basic Member rates. Proof of membership must be provided.

**Disciplinary Process:** Members who repeatedly disregard club principles or who are disruptive, threatening, violent, or obviously impaired by alcohol or drugs will be removed from meetings and events, as will those who refuse to comply with event rules. Members whose behavior is causing problems for the club may be reprimanded by a decision of the Board.

A member can be expelled by the Board in the best interest of the club. A member being considered for expulsion must be notified of a closed meeting where that decision will be made and has the right to defend herself. Members who are expelled must give up their colors, if applicable.

### **Club Colors**

Colors are awarded to members who actively participate and continuously contribute to both the club and the community at large. Potential colors holders demonstrate that they understand and represent the club's principles and leather-based traditions. Colors holders must maintain active membership and are expected to honor a commitment that should be thought of as permanent.

**Colors Committee:** Members who have earned club colors comprise the Colors Committee. The Colors Committee is responsible for determining the earning and granting of colors and the maintenance of said Committee. The Committee has a liaison to the Board to attend Board meetings, as needed. The Colors Committee also has an annual rotation of two members who organize the meetings, requirements and details of the Committee. Colors are awarded annually and presented by the Colors Committee at the General Membership Meeting. Those who have earned their colors during that year shall receive an announcement thirty days prior to the General Meeting. This allows them time to pay the colors rental fee in order to have the colors formally presented to them.

Colors are the property of the club. They are rented, not purchased. If for any reason a member does not keep their club membership current, they are expected to return the colors or petition for Honorary Member status and the right

to continue to wear Bad Girls colors.

Colors holders show respect for their colors and do not abuse them by sitting on them, placing them on the ground, lending them to others, or behaving in such a way as to dishonor the club. Those members abusing the honor of colors will be stripped of them by a vote of the Colors Committee.

Honorary Bad Girls: Honorary Bad Girl status must be sought by a petition to the Board while a full member in good standing. Honorary Bad Girl status includes the right to wear previously earned colors and to receive admission to events at the Basic rate. Honorary Bad Girls are held to the same standard as Bad Girls members, and as such are subject to the same disciplinary procedures.

## **Activities and Programs**

Bad Girls offers workshops, discussions, and social events that provide safe space for women to explore the BDSM lifestyle. Members must present their membership card to receive member rates for events.

Activities and programs include but are not limited to the following:

### **Education:**

Bad Girls offers a two-pronged approach to education that promotes active learning through both hands-on, experiential workshops and thought-provoking discussions.

Workshops: Bad Girls offers at least four educational workshops per year that are interactive and experiential, with the emphasis on doing rather than just listening. Workshop topics address a range of interests and levels of experience.

Presenters are selected at the Workshop Coordinator's discretion, and with Board approval, from the membership and community. Male-identified persons with knowledge and skills that are of benefit to the club may be invited to present.

At least two of the workshops and play parties are open only to all self-identified women over 18; additional workshops may be open to queer-identified persons regardless of gender. Materials required for the workshop are included in the fee.

Full Moon Friday Discussion Groups: Bad Girls hosts at least nine opportunities per year for women to discuss issues related to BDSM. These events are facilitated by a Bad Girl member in coordination with the Workshop Coordinator to ensure that the discussion is kept on-topic, respectful, and inclusive of all participants.

Discussion groups are open to all self-identified women over 18 (or over 21 if required by the venue). A hat is passed for a voluntary donation. Afterwards, attendees are invited to join the group for social time where all are welcome (not just self-identified women).

Bad Girls Munch: On the second Tuesday of each month, Bad Girls hosts a Women's Munch. The intention of this event is to provide community, resources, and an opportunity for socializing. This event is open to all self-identified women 18 or over (or 21 and over when designated by the venue). There is no charge for the Bad Girls Munch.

Charity Night: Bad Girls sponsors two annual Charity Nights, currently in Spring and Fall of each year, where club members, supporters, and other members of the community gather to socialize. All proceeds from Charity Nights go towards the club's annual, membership-chosen charity. Everyone is welcome at Charity Night. Entrance fees may be assessed by the particular venue.

Play Parties: Bad Girls will sponsor a minimum of two play parties annually. Participants must be 18 or over, sign a waiver of liability and agree to comply with rules as decided on by the Board. Play party fees are set and adjusted, as needed, by the Board.

Special Interest Groups: SIGs are small groups, for members only, formed to provide additional social and support opportunities for those with similar interests. There is no charge for any SIG activity. These groups are facilitated by

members, have their own email lists, and may have their own social activities.

Currently Established SIGs: Leather Reading Group;

Of the following three groups, Bad Girls members can choose any group that pertains to them but can only be in one group at a time: DOM Group (Dominants, Owners and Masters); Switch Group; Submersion (subs and bottoms).

New SIGs can be formed by any full member of Bad Girls with approval from the Board.

Fundraising: Proceeds from dues and events are used to support the activities of the club and also to raise funds for local and national charities that support the defense of sexual freedom, women's issues, and sexual minorities.

Each year, at the General Meeting, the membership is responsible for voting for the charity it wishes to support. The Board will determine a target budget for charitable donations and 100% of the net proceeds of the Spring and Fall fundraisers are dedicated to the chosen charity. The Board may choose to extend the Charity's fundraising period from one to two years, to increase the amount of donation.

The Board may also choose to internally fund needs-based scholarships for Bad Girl activities, assistance during extreme or tragic personal circumstances of a club member or other special projects. Special projects may focus on supporting the collection and maintenance of Women's Leather History, one-time or ongoing expenses related to the improvement of the club, its infrastructure and/or its financial stability. Bad Girls also maintains and funds a prudent reserve fund for emergency, non-normal, expenses.

## **Organization**

The Board: Bad Girls is run by a Board whose purpose is to direct and carry out the activities of the club according to the policies and procedures in this document. The Board collects input and feedback from the membership, at Board discretion, as needed to make decisions that serve and represent the interests of the group.

Board members must uphold the traditions, policies, and principles that the club represents. The Board consists of up to seven officers, whose responsibilities include but are not limited to:

Chair: Establishes and maintains good relations and reciprocal agreements with other groups. Organizes and facilitates Board meetings. Guides the Board in making and meeting its goals. Publishes revisions to the P&P and handles all official correspondence to the members. Oversees incoming and outgoing written correspondence. Facilitates communications within the organization. Alternates with the Co-Chair in managing Board elections. Creates special committees as needed. Will delegate responsibility as needed to the other positions.

Co-Chair: Works in collaboration with the Chair. Implements official policy as set forth in the policies and procedures. Chairs and supervises special committees. Along with other Board members, takes on responsibilities of unfilled Board positions. Handles disruptive members and unexpected situations at Bad Girls events. Stands in for the Chair and assumes other responsibilities as necessary. Regularly maintains the Bad Girls website and implements improvements to website in response to priorities set by the Board.

Secretary: Handles membership applications and oversees the membership and orientation processes. Produces printed copies of all club documents. Records and distributes meeting minutes within one week of meetings. Works in collaboration with the Treasurer on scholarships and payment arrangements. Maintains a list of those honored with club pins and club colors.

Treasurer: Checks PO Box regularly and distributes mail in a timely fashion. Collects and tracks dues. Receives and disburses organizational funds. Deposits checks and manages the checking account. Maintains an accurate record of monetary transactions. Drafts and maintains a yearly budget with targeted expenditures and income. Provides monthly financial reports of all expenditures and funds received for Board meetings. Maintains membership database and arranges members' payment plans and scholarships in collaboration with the Secretary. Must present all scholarship disbursement, after the fact, to the Board.

Workshop Coordinator: Creates annual master club calendar of events. Organizes at least four workshops a year and

monthly discussion groups. Finds presenters and gathers supplies for workshops. Devises topics and questions and makes sure there is a facilitator for discussion groups. Works with Promotion Coordinator to promote workshops and discussion groups. Maintains list of possible presenters and keeps up-to-date records of all correspondence with presenters.

Promotion Coordinator: Acts as liaison between Bad Girls and the community. Responsible for publicity and outreach. Promotes Bad Girls events. Networks with S/M organizations around the country. Shares information on other groups' functions and events with Bad Girls members. Keeps up-to-date records of all written correspondence with the media and other organizations. Responsible for creating and posting promotions to various BDSM websites and other online advertising locations, the coordination of creating, reviewing and distributing handbills intended to advertise the club and its events.

Social Coordinator: Works with the Board to plan and organize Bad Girls events, such as Charity Night, the Bad Girls Munch, play parties and others. Works with the Promotion Coordinator to publicize events. Acts as liaison with the venues where events are held. Solicits and organizes volunteer help. Initiates contact with members who become inactive.

The order above indicates the official chain of communication.

In addition, all Board members are responsible for the following:

- Attending Board meetings, or contacting the Chair in the event of absence
- Responding to Board-related e-mail, text messages, and phone calls in a timely manner
- Assisting with Bad Girls events
- Maintaining positive community relations
- Consulting the Board on all actions representing the Board
- Completing assigned tasks or contacting the Chair if unable to do so.

Volunteer Assistance: The Board may seek the assistance of any member with specialized skills to complete certain duties.

Board Meetings: The Board meets once a month (at least eleven times annually). The Promotions Coordinator is responsible for e-mailing the time and place of the meeting to members beforehand, and the Secretary is responsible for distributing the meeting minutes afterwards. Board meeting quorum (the number of Board members present at a meeting in order to conduct business) will equal one half the current Board membership, plus one ( $1/2 + 1$ ).

All members are invited to attend Board meetings. Participation of members is highly valued by the Board. If a member has an idea or a concern, wants to change policy, or present a special program, they may bring an agenda item to the Board meeting by notifying the Chair prior to the meeting.

Special Meetings: Special meetings of the Board shall be held at a time and place determined by the Board. Notice of such meetings, describing the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting, shall be delivered to each Board member personally, by telephone, text or e-mail. Any Board member may request a special meeting; however, such meetings must be called by the Chair or Co-chair. Special meetings are closed to membership and no minutes will be recorded.

Committees: The Board may establish committees as it deems necessary, confirmed by majority vote. Such committees may exercise functions of the Board of Directors or may be Advisory committees. Any committee that exercises any function of the Board shall be composed of at least one Board member. No committee may authorize payment or make financial commitments on behalf of the Board.

Decision-making process: Where logistics and time pressure permit, the Board makes decisions in person and by majority vote with Chair as tiebreaker.

When the Chair calls for a vote on a proposal, each member has three options:

- Voting in favor of the proposal
- Voting against the proposal
- Abstaining

Terms and elections: To seek election for Board office and to vote in elections, members must have passed the pledge period (3 months), must have successfully completed the probationary period (6 months), and must be full members.

The Chair and Co-Chair positions are two-year terms elected in alternating years. They have term limits - each position may only be held by one person for two consecutive terms. The remaining positions are one-year terms. The Chair or Co-Chair (whichever one is remaining in office during the upcoming year) administers the election, calls for candidates, distributes ballots, and tabulates election results.

A call for candidates goes out to the members in December and elections are held in January. Members can vote by e-mail, by postal mail, or by secret ballot at the General Meeting. Ballots are distributed via e-mail at least a week before the General Meeting. Members who don't have e-mail must be notified of elections and sent a ballot by postal mail.

Ballots include the position descriptions, a statement by each candidate and a "None of the above" option for each position. Candidates must receive a majority of votes cast in order to be elected. "None of the above" votes are counted as votes against the candidate. In case of a tie, the rest of the newly elected Board decides the election.

If one or more positions are unfilled, the newly elected Board members may voluntarily take on different roles so that crucial positions such as Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer are covered. The Board can then decide how to redistribute remaining duties among its members. If necessary, the Board may fill an unfilled position by appointing a qualified member to the open position.

Removing a Board member: Any Board member failing to fulfill their responsibilities as assigned by the Board or whose conduct seriously damages the club/goes against club principles, shall be subject to removal or reprimand by a majority vote of the remaining Board members.

A complaint about a Board Member, can be made to the other Board members, by any member in good standing, at any time. Upon receiving a complaint, the remaining Board members, with the accused Board member absent, will meet in Executive Session to review the complaint and decide next steps. At the following month's Board meeting, the complainant and the Board member who is under review will have the opportunity to present their arguments before the Board takes any action.

If a Board member is removed from their Board position, they may remain a Bad Girls member unless the Board decides that the problems were egregious enough to merit expulsion from the club. After removal from the Board, the member cannot run for any Board position for at least the next three years, and possibly even removed from Bad Girls membership altogether.

In the case of death, removal, or resignation of a Board member, a replacement shall be appointed to complete the current term by a majority vote of the Board members.

## **Policy and Procedures Revisions**

Revisions: This document may be revised in any way agreed by the Board with the exception that Bad Girls was founded as and will always remain a woman-to-woman BDSM club.

### **Revision History:**

<b>Date Revised By</b>	<b>Date Revised By</b>
1994 Founding Members	2005 Board
1998 Board	2009 Board
2001 Reorganizing Committee	2010 Board
2002 Board	2012 Board
2003 Board	2013 Board
	2014 Board
	2017 Board