



## **Policy for Preventing and Addressing Violence - Midburn Association**

### Background

The Midburn Association is the legal entity leading the official Burning Man project in Israel ("the Association"). The Association's vision is "to encourage and create participatory experiential spaces that inspire and drive social, environmental, and cultural development." Therefore, the Midburn event is unique, allowing us the freedom and right to be ourselves without judgment or criticism from those around us. To ensure this freedom for event participants, we have taken on the responsibility to establish, publicly publish, and implement this policy.

Violence of any kind — physical violence, verbal abuse, a violent atmosphere, incitement to violence, bullying (including online bullying), and vandalism — violates human dignity, freedom, privacy, and/or property. Such acts may even constitute criminal offenses, civil wrongs, and serious disciplinary violations. Additionally, any form of violence disrupts the cultural fabric and relationships between participants and is in conflict with the values of the Association.

**The purpose of this policy is to outline all instructions, guidelines, and actions to prevent any type of violent incidents, ensuring that all Association spaces, including Midburn events and digital spaces, are safe environments.**

This policy establishes clear guidelines for handling violent incidents and related occurrences. It is subject to the law. In any case of conflict between this policy and the law, the law will prevail. All references to gender in this document apply to individuals of all genders.

### **1. Policy Objectives**

1. To outline guidelines, instructions, and actions to prevent all forms of violence in Association-sponsored spaces, including among participants, event vendors, Association employees, unpaid volunteers, and suppliers. This policy creates mechanisms to ensure safe, violence-free spaces, addressing all forms of violence, such as physical violence, verbal abuse, incitement to violence, bullying (including online bullying), and vandalism. It applies to event participants, Association employees, volunteers, and unpaid workers, and sets procedures for handling incidents of violence.
2. Definition and characterization of the roles and authority of Association bodies:
  1. The designated person appointed by the Association's Board to address incidents of physical violence, verbal abuse, a violent atmosphere, incitement to violence, bullying, and vandalism.
  2. A committee appointed by the Board to review and address complaints of violent incidents.
3. To establish procedures for investigating and addressing complaints regarding violent incidents during Association events and other physical and digital spaces managed by the Association.
4. To create consistent guidelines for the operations of the Violence Prevention and Response Committee.
5. To establish guidelines for implementing the committee's decisions.



## 2. **Policy Scope**

This policy applies to Association members, employees, suppliers at Association events and spaces, volunteers, and all participants in Association-organized events.

The policy applies in the following areas:

1. Events organized by the Association;
2. Volunteer meetings ahead of Association-organized events;
3. All work environments related to the Association;
4. Digital spaces managed by the Association, including Facebook pages, groups, Instagram accounts, WhatsApp groups, and any other digital space affiliated with the Association;

## 3. **Definitions**

- "The Association" - Midburn Association (Registered Association No. 580567600).
- "The Board" - The governing board of the Association.
- "The CEO" - The CEO of the Association.
- "Any Form of Violence" - Physical violence, verbal abuse, a violent atmosphere, incitement to violence, bullying (including online bullying), and/or vandalism.
- "Incitement to Violence" - Publishing a call to commit a violent act, or words of praise, sympathy, or encouragement for a violent act, support for it, or identification with it (referred to as "incitement publication"), based on the content and context of the publication.
- "Online Bullying" - As defined by law, this includes, but is not limited to, the use of the internet or technology, such as mobile phones, to intentionally harm, insult, threaten, harass, mock, or humiliate another person, whether in a single instance or repeatedly.
- "Verbal Abuse" - Threats involving harm to a person's body, freedom, property, reputation, or livelihood, whether of the individual or someone else, made with the intent to intimidate or provoke. This includes insults, name-calling, defamatory remarks, derogatory language, or other expressions that cause offense or humiliation, as well as publications that carry a genuine risk of prompting the publisher to commit physical violence.
- "Violent Atmosphere" - An environment saturated with physical or verbal violence, even if not specifically directed at the complainant.
- "Vandalism" - Intentional damage to private or public [property](#) not owned by the individual.
- "Physical Violence" - An offense that harms a person's body or endangers a person with serious injury or death.
- "The Committee" - A committee appointed by the Board, authorized to receive summaries and recommendations from the appointed officer regarding complaints of violent offenses within the scope of this policy, as detailed in Section 6.



- "The Appointed Officer" - The person responsible for receiving, investigating, and handling complaints, as well as providing the Association with recommendations for addressing cases of violence and offering guidance, information, and support to employees who approach them, as detailed in Section 5.
- "Association Member" - As defined in the Association's bylaws.
- "Victim or Complainant" - An individual claiming or alleged to have been harmed.
- "Volunteer" - A person who performs activities for or on behalf of the Association without receiving financial or other compensation. Minimal compensation (defined here as less than 50% of the minimum wage) and/or reimbursement of expenses will not be considered compensation for the purposes of this definition.
- "Respondent" - A person who is the subject of a complaint of violence within the scope of this policy.

#### **4. Appointed Officer**

1. As defined in the definitions, the officer is appointed by the Association's Board to handle incidents involving violent events for a term set by the Board and in accordance with the law. The officer's duties are as follows:
  1. To raise awareness regarding violent incidents, their implications, and their harm; to provide information, guidance, and advice to those who approach them.
  2. To receive complaints and reports about violent incidents.
  3. To investigate complaints and handle them by communicating with all parties involved in the case: complainants, respondents, and any relevant witnesses; to consolidate findings, testimonies, and any other relevant materials.
  4. To provide recommendations to the committee on how to address the case, summarize the findings, and forward them to the committee.
  5. To take interim measures, as outlined below, until the complaint investigation is completed.
  6. To update the CEO and the Board at least quarterly regarding the officer's activities, ongoing required actions, and the implementation of the policy's guidelines.
  7. To monitor the execution of decisions, collect statistical data, and submit it exclusively for review by the Board and the CEO, adhering to the required confidentiality.
  8. To establish procedures and regulations for themed camps, areas, and departments to ensure participant safety, subject to the Board's approval.
2. The officer may be either male or female and will undergo required training, as well as sign a confidentiality agreement.
3. The officer is an independent and separate entity; to avoid any potential conflicts, they will not be part of any other department or organizational unit nor volunteer within them.



## **The Committee**

1. As defined, the committee will be appointed by the Association's Board and will consist of three members, including current board members and, where applicable, former board members willing to serve in this role. Members will be required to sign a declaration affirming they have no criminal convictions and commit to confidentiality.
2. The committee will receive the summary of the incident from the appointed officer, along with the officer's recommendations and assessment based on first-hand impressions of the evidence. If deemed necessary, the committee may request further investigation from the appointed officer, with or without additional instructions, and make any other decisions it considers necessary or beneficial for completing the complaint's handling.
3. As a rule, the appointed officer will be present during the presentation of the case details and provide their assessment based on their direct impressions of the testimonies presented to the committee members. After the testimonies and assessment are given, the committee may request that the appointed officer not participate in the committee's discussions regarding the approach to handling the complaint. In such a case, this decision must be recorded in the minutes.
4. Upon receiving the appointed officer's summary and recommendations, the committee will decide without delay, and within no more than 10 working days, on the implementation of its powers as specified in Section 11 below.
5. The committee will notify the appointed officer of its decision, providing a written, reasoned decision. The appointed officer will then convey this decision to both the complainant and the respondent, allowing them to review the officer's summary and recommendations. The Association will promptly act to implement the committee's decision.
6. The committee may, due to a change in circumstances, alter its decision or delay its implementation, and will provide a written, reasoned notification to the appointed officer, the complainant, and the respondent.
7. The committee may postpone, delay, or change its decision due to disciplinary or legal proceedings related to the incident in question. In such a case:
8. The committee will issue a written, reasoned notification to the appointed officer, the complainant, and the respondent.
9. Until these proceedings conclude, the Association will protect the complainant during the complaint investigation from harm within Association events, spaces, and/or work-related contexts as a result of filing the complaint. The Association may take steps, such as distancing the respondent from the complainant where necessary, in line with the circumstances.
10. At the conclusion of these proceedings, the committee will issue a decision per Section 5.5 above.
11. All committee decisions must be justified with an explanation of the rationale behind them.



12. Committee decisions will be made through discussion; in cases where agreement is not reached, the committee will decide by vote, with each committee member having one vote. Decisions will be made by majority vote.
13. If any committee member has a personal relationship with one of the parties involved in the complaint and finds themselves in a conflict of interest, they will be replaced by an individual with similar qualifications, appointed by the Association's Board.

## **6. Legal Advice**

Legal advice for the committee will be provided by the Association's legal advisor. It is clarified that the committee is permitted to seek legal advice from an external advisor who is not the Association's legal advisor and is not a member of the community, provided that this decision is recorded and justified in the minutes and that the external advisor has expertise in the relevant field.

## **7. Complaint Submission and Handling**

1. All complaints will be handled solely by the appointed officer. The complaint should include a description of the incident, including:
  1. Identification of the individuals involved in the incident, if possible, as well as any witnesses.
  2. The location and time(s) of the incident(s).
  3. The main facts according to the complainant regarding the alleged violent behavior.
2. Complaints about violent behavior may be submitted in the following ways:
  1. In writing;
  2. Orally;
  3. By phone;
  4. By email;
  5. By message;
  6. Or by any other means the complainant chooses;
3. If the complaint is submitted orally, the appointed officer will document its content, and the complainant will sign to confirm the accuracy. The officer will provide the complainant with a copy of the complaint.
4. For clarity, within the context of employment or volunteer relations within the Association, any manager or department head who learns in any way (even without witnessing the incident) of suspected violence among their subordinates, members, or volunteers in their department is responsible for reporting the incident to the appointed officer and providing any necessary assistance. The officer will contact the victim, witnesses, and respondent to investigate the incident. If the victim requests confidentiality, a report will be made without disclosing the victim's identity.
5. If a complaint is submitted per Section 7.3 to a manager or department head, they must forward the complaint to the appointed officer for further handling.



6. Reports of violent acts by a supplier or subcontractor during an event covered by this policy (as described in Section 3 above) will be forwarded to the appointed officer for investigation. The Association will handle these matters in line with its agreements with the supplier or subcontractor.
7. Records maintained by the appointed officer are confidential and may not be shared or accessed except for the purposes of investigating the complaint per this policy.
8. The victim may submit an anonymous complaint detailing the incident without including identifying information.
9. The appointed officer is responsible for informing the complainant of the legal options available to them. The complainant will also be informed that all forms of violence constitute criminal offenses and civil wrongs, and that they have the option to file a police report or a civil lawsuit, in parallel with the committee's investigation process.
10. If the complaint was submitted by a witness to the incident (not the victim), or if the appointed officer receives notification of suspicion per Sections 7.3 and 7.4, the officer will verify the circumstances with the victim and inquire whether they wish to submit a formal complaint. Meanwhile, the officer will conduct a general inquiry with the respondent.
11. If the parties involved were or are in a personal or romantic relationship, or if there is another underlying conflict, the officer and committee may refer the parties to an external professional for assistance. The officer will exercise discretion on whether to handle the case according to this policy or in another manner and will explain their decision to the committee.
12. Following Section 8.9, in cases where the victim has not submitted a complaint, or if the victim is uncooperative or unwilling to continue the investigation, and if the officer believes that sufficient inquiry has been conducted with the respondent and based on a witness or supervisor's account, the officer will present a summary of the facts to the committee, noting that the victim does not wish to file a complaint.
13. It is clarified that even if a police complaint has been filed against the respondent concurrently with a complaint to the appointed officer, this will not halt the investigation of the complaint by the officer as outlined in Section 9 below, unless instructed to do so based on legal advice or a directive from an authorized authority.
14. Following the submission of a complaint per Section 7.2, and at the appointed officer's discretion to proceed with the investigation, the officer will inform the respondent that a complaint has been filed against them and is under investigation. This notification will occur before further inquiries with witnesses or involved parties, except for the complainant.

## **8. Complaint Investigation**

Upon receiving a complaint, the appointed officer will inform the complainant about the procedures for handling incidents of violence according to the law;

1. The appointed officer will conduct an investigation of the complaint, which will include, among other things, interviewing the complainant, the respondent, and any witnesses, as well as reviewing all relevant information.



2. The appointed officer will not handle an investigation if they have a personal interest in the subject of the complaint or in any individuals involved. In such cases, the complaint will be transferred to another appointed officer without a personal interest or to a deputy appointed by the Association's Board.
3. Complaints will be investigated efficiently and without delay. The appointed officer will aim to complete the investigation within no more than 75 days, considering that the number of complaints may increase around large Association events.
4. Complaints will be investigated with maximum respect for the dignity and privacy of the complainant, the respondent, and other witnesses. The appointed officer will not disclose any information obtained during the investigation unless required to do so for the investigation itself or by law.
5. The Association will protect the complainant during the complaint investigation from potential harm in Association events or work-related matters resulting from filing the complaint or other harm within Association events or work relations that could disrupt the complaint investigation. Among other actions, the Association may distance the respondent from the complainant as necessary based on the circumstances. To this end, the appointed officer will issue a written notice to the respondent, stating that according to policy, they are barred from all Association activities and/or event participation until the complaint investigation concludes.
6. At the conclusion of the complaint investigation, the appointed officer will promptly submit a written summary of the investigation to the committee, along with well-reasoned recommendations for further action.
7. If senior officials within the Association become aware of an incident of violence or harassment within Association events or work relations, and no complaint has been filed or the complainant has withdrawn their complaint, the Association will transfer the case to the appointed officer for investigation. Should such a case be referred for investigation or the appointed officer becomes aware of it, they will conduct an investigation into the incident according to this section, with any necessary modifications, and if the complainant has withdrawn their complaint, the appointed officer will also investigate the reason for the withdrawal.
8. Regarding a respondent who does not cooperate with the appointed officer's investigation, their suspension as outlined in Section 8.6 will remain in effect, and the timelines specified in Section 8.4 will not apply until the respondent resumes cooperation with the investigation. If non-cooperation persists for more than 12 months, the respondent will be permanently barred. However, in exceptional circumstances and for reasonable grounds, this decision may be amended at the committee's discretion.

## **9. Archiving a Complaint**

The appointed officer may order the archiving of a complaint under the following conditions:

1. If after examining the claims with the complainant, the affected individual (if the complaint was submitted by someone else), the respondent, and any other relevant parties, the appointed officer finds the complaint to be without merit.





2. If the affected individual requests in writing to cancel the complaint, provided the appointed officer is convinced that the request was made voluntarily, without coercion or undue influence, and that there is no basis for the complaint.
3. If the appointed officer decides to archive the complaint, they will issue a written, reasoned notice to both the affected individual and the respondent. The decision to archive a complaint may be appealed within 30 days by submitting a request to the committee.
4. In cases where a complaint is archived, the appointed officer will arrange for all documents related to the matter to be stored in a digital folder accessible only to the appointed officer, the committee, and the committee's legal advisor. If physical documents exist, they will be held by the appointed officer in secure custody.

## **10. Committee Actions**

1. The committee may take the following actions based on the circumstances, individuals involved, and severity of the incident:
  1. Issuing a warning to the respondent, including setting sanctions that will be imposed if the behavior recurs.
  2. Suspending participation or activity in association events for a specified period, for multiple events, or permanently.
  3. Banning from a specific event.
  4. Terminating volunteer activities, either for a set period or permanently.
  5. Termination of employment if the respondent is an association employee.
2. The committee may impose actions in cases where a complainant, witness, or other party has submitted a complaint in bad faith, provided false information in support of a false complaint, or otherwise assisted in a false complaint.
3. The committee may also impose actions against any participant in the investigation process, including committee members themselves or any employee/volunteer, in cases of breach of confidentiality as stipulated in this procedure.
4. If the respondent violates the decision of the committee or the appointed officer, the matter will be brought before the committee again, which may decide to remove the respondent permanently or for a different specified period, based on the circumstances.
5. If a complaint is filed with the police regarding an incident that has been or will be reviewed by the committee and an indictment is filed against the respondent, the respondent will be excluded from all association activities until the legal proceedings are completed and/or the sentence is served, irrespective of the committee's decision under section 10.1 above.
6. Upon the end of the sanction period, the respondent may apply to resume activities within the association, subject to restrictions set by the committee, provided there are no new complaints pending against them for another incident with the police or the appointed officer. Reinstatement will be made through a formal request by the respondent (not automatically). This request process does not allow for additional consideration or review; it is purely procedural.





7. For any complaint investigated by the committee that is found to involve an assault resulting in bodily harm or verbal violence involving threats that instill fear and intimidation in the complainant, the committee will apply the strictest measures according to sections 10.1.1–10.1.5, including permanent exclusion from all association activities.

## **11. Confidentiality Obligation**

1. During the investigation process, all parties involved (complainants, respondents, witnesses, and their representatives) are required to refrain from publicly sharing any information related to the complaint or the investigation process, including within the community or in public media. Such disclosures may disrupt the investigation and hinder the ability to conduct a professional and fair process.
2. Public statements by the respondent will be reviewed by the committee, alongside the original case, and the committee is authorized to take action against the respondent and the publisher (whether directly from the respondent or otherwise).
3. Posts or comments regarding the case, made on official channels of the organization, including its social media, will be immediately removed, and the publisher will be informed that such publication compromises the investigation process.
4. Contacting the appointed officer, committee members, advisory bodies, or the board regarding matters under committee review is prohibited, as it may impair the investigation.
5. The organization and all parties acting on its behalf in accordance with this procedure will respect the privacy of complainants, respondents, and witnesses as much as possible. This includes using code names or other identifiers, taking into account applicable legal requirements. Investigation materials and records will be kept confidential and secured.
6. Any publication or disclosure regarding complainants, respondents, witnesses, case details, or committee decisions by anyone with access to these details is strictly prohibited, except as provided within this procedure.

## **12. Appeals**

1. The respondent and complainant have the right to appeal the decision within 30 days after receiving it.
2. Appeals must be submitted in writing and directed to the board for review. Generally, appeals should only address issues of unreasonable decision-making, clear factual errors, or cases of significant injustice.
3. The board will review the appeal, and any board member who participated in the initial committee decision will not participate in the vote. If necessary, they will be replaced by an independent former board member to ensure an odd number of voters. Decisions will be made by majority vote.
4. The appeals body will deliver its decision on the appeal within 14 days at most from the date the appeal was heard.



### **13. Information Disclosure**

1. The organization will publicly disclose the identity, role, and contact information of the appointed officer.
2. The organization will inform its members, managers, employees, volunteers, and participants of the prohibition against violence, the organization's obligations under relevant laws and regulations, and the provisions of this procedure.
3. The appointed officer will collect and compile statistical data on complaints received in the course of their duties (without any case details) and submit quarterly and annual reports to the board, no later than one month after the end of each quarter/year, detailing the extent of violence-related incidents in organizational activities.

### **14. Rights of Individuals Affected by Acts of Violence**

1. A person affected by an act of violence who has submitted a complaint to the appointed officer is entitled to receive information regarding the committee's decision related solely to their complaint.
2. If multiple complaints have been filed against a single respondent by different complainants in relation to different incidents, each complainant may receive the committee's decision specific to the incident about which they complained.
3. A person affected by an act of violence is entitled to receive information regarding any appeal submitted by the respondent regarding the committee's decision on their complaint, as well as the appeal decision by the management board.
4. A person affected by an act of violence has the right to keep their identity anonymous, with it being visible only to the appointed officer. If the affected person requests anonymity, this information will be presented to the committee and/or the management board during the appeal process and will be considered as part of their decision-making.

### **Statute of Limitations**

The committee will consider complaints submitted within a period of up to ten years from the date of the incident.