

CHICAGO BARN DANCE COMPANY DANCE ETIQUETTE POLICY

The Chicago Barn Company is committed to creating an inclusive dance community. All are welcome at our events, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or (dis)ability. Anyone can dance with anyone, and anyone can choose to dance either role. We strive to present a welcoming, comfortable, family-friendly environment where all can gather to enjoy contra dancing and music. We want you to look forward to dancing with us again.

The following are guidelines for etiquette and conduct in our community. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with them.

PHYSICAL SAFETY

Individual dancers vary in their ability to swing and move on the dance floor. In contra dancing, you are usually close to many other dancers, not just your partner, so it is important to be aware of the space around you. *You are encouraged to communicate respectfully with your fellow dancers about your comfort and safety;* both positive and constructive feedback is helpful.

Be conscious of the safety of your fellow dancers:

- *Remember that your partner's comfort zone may be different from yours.* Be sensitive to non-verbal cues and always err on the side of being considerate and respectful.
- *If you think your partner may be uncomfortable* with the way you are doing a move, stop immediately and ask them.
- *If you are uncomfortable* with the way your partner dances with you, ask them to stop and explain to them what you need.
- *Never force a partner to twirl.* Avoid jerking a partner's hand, arm or shoulder, such as at the end of a courtesy turn or swing.
- Eye contact can help with dizziness, but if it makes you uncomfortable, you can look at your partner's nose or ear. *Communicate with other dancers if you need to dance differently.*
- Be aware of how tightly you are holding peoples' hands; a tight grip can be uncomfortable, especially if dancers are wearing rings.
- Energetic dancing is lots of fun, but please be mindful of your arms and legs and keep them out of your neighbors' dance space.
- Dipping or lifting your partner on a crowded contra dance floor can be unsafe for you, your partner, and the other dancers around you. Therefore, please make sure your partner is willing, and that the moves can be executed safely.
- If you make a mistake, or miss a figure, don't worry about it; instead of rushing through the missed figure, skip it and go on to the next.

Additionally, for safety and policy reasons, insobriety will not be tolerated at our events, and you will be expelled from the venue. Bringing and consuming alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, etc.), other intoxicants, or illegal substances in the dance hall is not allowed. Please use good judgment if choosing to drink alcohol prior to attending the dances.

- **POLICY NOTE:** *The Irish American Heritage Center does not allow us to bring any alcoholic beverages to our events. Non-adherence to this policy by just one person (dancers, visitors, hired talent, etc.) could impact the entire community with the loss of our dance venue.*

RIGHT TO DECLINE WITHOUT EXPLANATION

Anyone may ask anyone to dance. Every dancer has the right to decline to interact with another dancer, on or off the dance floor, without explanation or repercussion. Persistently ignoring or challenging another dancer's expressed wish to not interact during the course of an evening is harassment and is not acceptable.

CLEANLINESS

Contra dancing is a physically vigorous activity and keeping clean and dry can be a challenge. Please be sure that your own body and clothing are clean. As a courtesy, consider bringing a hand towel or fresh shirts.

Some dancers are hypersensitive or allergic to highly scented products such as perfume or aftershave. Please refrain from wearing fragrances and be sensitive to other odors that might cling to you.

HARASSMENT

Any form of verbal abuse, harassment (such as inappropriate comments, unwanted physical contact, etc.), or discriminatory behavior on and beyond the dance floor is not acceptable. Smiling and eye contact are part of the fun, but predatory or intimidating behavior, or unwanted sexual attention (e.g. excessive or inappropriate touching, suggestive remarks) are not allowed. If you feel you are experiencing this kind of attention, please speak to a Chicago Barn Dance Company board member.

IF YOU HAVE FEEDBACK OR ENCOUNTER A CONCERN

If you have feedback, either positive or constructive, or if you encounter a concern at one of the dances that you would like to discuss, or would like help resolving, please inform a Chicago Barn Dance Company board member. Suggestions and comments about your dance experience can be communicated in person at our events, or you can email our current president, Cheryl Joyal at president@chicagobarndance.org or board members at the addresses below:

Chicago Barn Dance Company Board Members for April 2017 – April 2019

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| • All Board Members | | CBDCBoard@chicagobarndance.org |
| • President: | Cheryl Joyal | president@chicagobarndance.org |
| • Secretary: | Jack Levie | secretary@chicagobarndance.org |
| • Treasurer: | Ruth Runeborg | treasurer@chicagobarndance.com |
| • General Members: | Cara Sawyer | cara@chicagobarndance.org |
| | Georges Augustin | georges@chicagobarndance.org |
| | Jan Heyn-Cubacub | jan@chicagobarndance.org |
| | Michele Bou-Sliman | michele@chicagobarndance.org |

The board will address, and take action as appropriate, on comments and concerns that are received. Any warning about unacceptable behavior given by the Chicago Barn Dance Company Board needs to be taken seriously, and the behavior corrected to remain welcome at our dances.

The Chicago Barn Dance Company board reserves the right to expel from the dances and our community events anyone who does not choose to act within the limits of good behavior and adhere to this etiquette policy.