

Charlottesville Underground Fetish Fellowship Bylaws

Charlottesville Underground Fetish Fellowship (CUFF) is a pansexual social organization created for the enjoyment and education of its members who share common interests and ideas. We are non-sexist, anti-racist, pro-sexuality, gender-neutral and non-sectarian.

Article I. Purpose and Intent

1.01 Name

The official name is designated as the "Charlottesville Underground Fetish Fellowship". It is hereafter referred to as CUFF.

1.02 Purpose

CUFF is a not-for-profit BDSM organization dedicated to providing education, support and a social network for its Contributors in a safe, responsible and discretion-conscious environment.

1.03 Creed

CUFF adopts and pledges to support the leather community's creed: "Safe, Sane and Consensual".

1.04 Legality

CUFF does not condone, suggest, or endorse any activity that is illegal or non-consensual.

Article II. Organization and Activities

2.01 Organization

CUFF consists entirely of paying Contributors whose membership must be renewed each fiscal year. The fiscal year runs from February 1 to the last day in January. Five Contributors are elected each fiscal year to serve as the Board of Directors.

2.02 Events

Official CUFF-sponsored events may include Contributorship meetings, meetings of the Board of Directors, munches, play parties, and other activities. Certain events, such as board meetings and play parties, are reserved for CUFF Contributors, their guests, and members of reciprocal groups, while others are open to members of the general public of age 18 or over.

2.03 Properties

CUFF owns various properties, including books, play furniture, and related equipment such as first aid kits.

2.04 Services

CUFF may maintain various services as hosted by Contributors. Examples include a United States post office box, an e-mail address, a web site, a voice mail newspaper advertisement, an open e-mail list, and an e-mail list reserved for CUFF Contributors.

2.05 Treasury

CUFF maintains a treasury funded by Contributor membership fees and donations collected at play parties and other events.

Article III. Contributorship Status

3.01 Requirements

In order to become a CUFF Contributor in any given fiscal year, an individual:

- (a) Must be at least 18 years of age.
- (b) Must attend two meetings of the general Contributorship. This requirement may be waived at the Board's discretion.
- (c) Must attend an Orientation as described in Article IV.
- (d) Must pay the annual fee as published in the Fee Schedule.

3.02 Length

Contributorships are valid during the fiscal year. (i.e.. ALL Contributorships expire on February 1st.)

3.03 Benefits

- (a) Contributors will receive a membership card.
- (b) Contributors may attend all functions sponsored by CUFF, including play parties and meetings of the Board of Directors. If fees are required for a specific event, the Contributor shall be allowed to pay the CUFF Contributor rate.
- (c) Contributors may borrow CUFF properties.
- (d) Contributors may make use of all CUFF services, including the Contributor e-mail list, if there is one.
- (e) Contributors may review account ledgers of the CUFF treasury.
- (f) Contributors who meet eligibility requirements may run for a position on the Board of Directors, as described in Article VI.
- (g) Contributors may vote, as described in Article VII.

3.04 Expulsion of a Contributor

(a) Contributors may resign at any time. A Contributor who disregards or disobeys the rules laid out in these Bylaws, the confidentiality of the organization, or any rules established by a play party or other event host may be removed as a Contributor immediately upon a majority vote of the Board of Directors and/or a majority vote of Contributors in attendance when the vote is taken. (b) If removal by the Board of Directors and Contributors is not deemed appropriate for the offender's specific misconduct, any Director or Contributor

may recommend a sanction (s). (c) The Board of Directors and Contributors will use the same procedure as described for removal to determine whether the recommended sanction(s) will be enforced against the offender.

Article IV. Orientations

4.01 Presenter

Orientations shall be conducted by at least one (1) appointed CUFF Contributor.

4.02 Content

Orientations shall include, at a minimum: (a) Overview of the Bylaws, (b) Discussion of scene etiquette, (c) Discussion of privacy, discretion, and respect issues, (d) What to expect, and what not to expect.

4.03 Dissemination of Materials

New Contributors shall receive a copy of the Bylaws.

4.04 Age Verification

The presenter may request proof of age at the orientation if in doubt that the attendee is over 18.

Article V. Contributorship Meetings

5.01 Frequency

Meetings are held once a month on a regularly scheduled day and time.

5.02 Content

Meetings shall consist of a business segment, a workshop or demo/discussion segment, and then a social segment.

5.03 Fees

Meetings are free to CUFF Contributors. The first meeting attended by a non-Contributor is also free. At the second meeting attended by a non-Contributor, that individual must either become a Contributor or pay a fee as posted in the Fee Schedule. The fee is waived for demonstration presenters.

5.04 Special Activities

Special activities occur on the following months as specified:

- JAN: Election of Board of Directors
- FEB: Orientation and Contributorship renewal
- DEC: Nominations for Board of Directors

Article VI. Board of Directors

6.01 Responsibility of the Board of Directors

(a) The Board is empowered to make all decisions necessary for the operation of CUFF, except those specifically reserved by the Contributorship as a whole (Article VII). This includes control of all CUFF events, properties, services, and the CUFF treasury. (b) The Board may create committees, either standing or temporary, and appoint Contributors to those committees, as it deems appropriate and necessary to the operation of CUFF. (c) The Board may bring any item to the Contributorship as a whole for a vote or discussion that it deems necessary or appropriate.

6.02 Organization of the Board

(a) The Board of Directors shall be made up of five (5) Contributors. (b) Each Board member shall be equal and all shall share in the responsibility given to the Board by the Contributorship as a whole. (c) Once elected, the Board shall divide up specific responsibilities among Board members as they see fit based on individual interests and abilities.

6.03 Requirements for Board Members

(a) Must be a Contributor in good standing. (b) Nominees may not be involved in a committed relationship with other nominees. (i.e. A couple either married or living together or 2 people involved in a relationship, even if living apart, may not both be elected to the Board.)

6.04 Elections to the Board of Directors

(a) Nominations for the Board for the following fiscal year must be made by the December meeting of the general Contributorship. (b) The outgoing Board shall appoint an election committee to prepare and count ballots. (c) The Board shall be elected to a one (1) year term, by a vote to be held at the January Contributorship meeting each year. The five nominees receiving the most votes shall be deemed the winners. (d) All Contributors in attendance at this meeting are eligible to vote. Any Contributor who is not able to attend the January meeting may submit an absentee ballot prior to the meeting. The absentee ballot must be submitted in a sealed envelope showing the Contributor's member number, printed name, and signature. The envelope shall not be unsealed until the ballots are ready to be counted, and any absentee ballot submitted improperly will be discarded. The election committee will take steps to ensure that no Contributor casts more than one ballot. (e) In the case of an outcome-affecting tie vote, a runoff vote by the general Contributorship in attendance at the January meeting should be held immediately to choose between the affected nominees. If that vote also results in a tie, then the winner will be determined by a coin toss or other random method. (f) Board membership is valid for the fiscal year (i.e. Board members elected in January start their term on February 1.)

6.05 Vacancies

In the case of a vacancy on the Board, during the term year, the Board shall conduct a special election to fill the remainder of the term.

6.06 Benefits

CUFF Board members are not bestowed any special considerations. (i.e., Board members shall have the same yearly Contributor rate and social entry fees as other Contributors).

6.07 Board Meetings

Board meetings will be held at the request of the Board.

6.08 Impeachment of a Board Member

(a) A Board member may be impeached for a willful violation or inappropriate use of his/her power as a Board member. (b) Upon a receipt of a complaint of misconduct, the Board shall form a judicial committee of three. This committee shall be comprised of one Contributor selected by the accused, one selected by the accuser, and chaired by a third selected by the first two. (c) The committee shall investigate the allegation, and upon finding cause, shall present the findings to the Contributorship as a whole for a vote. A majority vote is required for impeachment.

Article VII. Powers Reserved for the Contributorship as a Whole

7.01 Voting Requirements

(a) Items up for Contributor vote shall be announced at least one month in advance both at the meeting prior and in the Contributor e-mail list. (b) Voting will occur at a meeting of the general Contributorship. (c) All Contributors present may vote. (d) A 50% majority of those Contributors voting must be in favor of the specified item for it to pass.

7.02 Voting Powers

- (a) Adoption and amendment of Bylaws (majority vote).
- (b) Election of Board members (top five).
- (c) Changes to the Fee Schedule (majority vote).
- (d) Approval of expenditures over \$250 (majority vote).
- (e) Acknowledgement of reciprocity with another group (majority vote).
- (f) Other items as presented by the Board of Directors (majority vote).

Article VIII. Discretion Policy/Privacy Statement

8.01 Specific Prohibitions

CUFF understands and embraces its obligation to safeguard each Contributor's privacy to the very best of its ability. With this in mind the following procedures are established:

- (a) Willful disclosure of a Contributor's identity without express permission from that Contributor may be grounds for expulsion.
- (b) Cameras, tape recorders, or any other types of audiovisual recording devices are NEVER allowed in a recording capacity at any CUFF sponsored event.

8.02 General Conduct

Discretion is absolutely necessary. Some members' family, friends and/or jobs may be threatened if their lifestyle were known. We expect people's privacy and identities to be protected. Use your common sense. Don't approach other scene people in public and make a reference to any lifestyle topic. They may very well be with someone who does not know of their interests.

When in doubt, err on the side of caution.

Article IX. Rules For Play Parties

9.01 Admittance

An attendee must be a Contributor, a guest of a Contributor, or a member of a reciprocal group and have RSVP'ed for the party in order to gain admittance. Attendees agree to abide by the CUFF rules for play parties and may be asked for proof of age. Although donations are suggested as indicated in the Fee Schedule, admittance to play parties is free.

9.02 Guests of Contributors

Contributors may bring guests to CUFF play parties. However, the following rules shall apply: (a) Each Contributor may bring up to 2 guests to a particular event. (b) The Contributor is directly responsible for the behavior of the guest and the guest's adherence to CUFF rules. Violations committed by the guest can lead to warnings or expulsion of the sponsoring Contributor. (c) Guests must be at least 18 years of age. (d) Guests are encouraged, but not required, to make a donation as indicated in the Fee Schedule.

9.03 Scene Etiquette

CUFF recognizes that "Scene Etiquette" is dynamic and personal. It differs depending on the individual and the situation. CUFF hereby adopts and promotes the practice of "Scene Etiquette" which fosters courtesy and respect among individuals within the leather community. Being mindful of "Scene Etiquette" is strongly encouraged. Some specific guidelines:

- (a) Do not interfere with a scene.
- (b) Do not invade scene space.
- (c) Keep conversation, laughter, and comments to a minimum in the play area.
- (d) Do not monopolize the equipment.
- (e) Do NOT join a scene unless specifically asked to do so!

9.04 Consensuality and Legality

All play shall be consensual and legal. Specifically, no illegal substances of any kind or firearms are allowed on the premises. Prostitution, solicitation, and negotiation of compensation for sexual services are illegal and are not tolerated. Violations shall result in immediate removal and banning from future events. Scene professionals may not accept payment for any services rendered at a CUFF event.

9.05 Dungeon Monitor

CUFF sponsored play socials may have one or more Dungeon Masters/Mistresses (DM), appointed by the Board, on duty, if feasible. (a) The DM shall not be encumbered with any other duties that may distract him/her from the role of DM. (b) The DM will have access to all areas during an event. (c) All concerns should be brought to the attention of the DM. Only DMs may interrupt a scene. (d) The decisions made by the DM are final. (e) In the event that no DM is available or on duty, all persons in attendance will be notified and the party host assumes final authority.

9.06 Discretion

For emphasis, it is noted here that the issues of discretion enumerated in Article VIII apply in particular to play parties as they do to all CUFF events. In short, an attendee should not willfully disclose another attendee's identity without that person's express permission, and no cameras, tape recorders, or any other types of audiovisual recording devices are allowed in a recording capacity at a play party.

9.07 Clean-Up

Please clean up after your scene. Leave all equipment free of sweat, blood, other bodily fluids, wax, toys, etc. Bring bodily fluid concerns to the attention of the DM. Wax, fire, and scenes involving bodily fluids need prior permission of the DM, unless a designated area has been set aside for these purposes.

9.08 House Rules

Additional "House Rules" may also apply, depending on location, host, and/or other circumstances.

Article X. Disclaimer

Neither the Charlottesville Underground Fetish Fellowship (CUFF), its Board of Directors, nor the management, owners, or operators of event space, nor any agents, successors or assigns of any of the foregoing shall be held liable to any attendee for injury to person or property incurred as a result of attendance at any CUFF event.

Article XI. Reciprocity Policy

11.01 Openness

Any group that CUFF enters into a reciprocal agreement with should follow CUFF's general guidelines of safe, sane and consensual play and have an open organizational structure similar to ours. This does not mean that groups for gay men or lesbians or het couples or any other subset of our community will be ineligible for reciprocity. Not all groups are pansexual and we shouldn't penalize them for that. What it does mean is that any group seeking reciprocity with us should have open meetings and educational events available to the interested public rather than only hosting closed events attended by members or by invitation of a member. CUFF meetings are open to all and membership requirements do not include sponsorship by an existing member or approval of prospective members by the existing group.

11.02 Communication

It is important to have a contact person in each group that we enter into reciprocity with who can verify membership in good standing of folks who want to come to our parties and who can keep us informed about the other group's activities. It would be a good idea to have that contact person subscribe to the CUFF open mailing list so the burden of keeping track of our activities would be on them. Finally, CUFF members and one or more members of each reciprocal group must meet face to face at a club event twice a year. It makes no difference if they attend two of our events or we attend two of theirs or we split the difference, just as long as twice a year we get together.

11.03 Process

Requests for reciprocity with other groups will be made to the Board by a governing member in good standing of the requesting group. The request will be considered by the Board, which will then make a recommendation one way or another to the membership. The membership will decide the issue by vote. It will be the responsibility of the Board to keep track of reciprocal groups and the contact person for that group, and this information will be published on the web site. Requests to end reciprocity can come from the reciprocal group or from a CUFF member in good standing; and then the above process will be followed.

11.04 Other Considerations

(a) Registration for CUFF events will be opened first to CUFF members and their guests, then members of reciprocal groups, then the larger leather community. (b) Membership by a CUFF member in good standing in a group will exempt that group from all reciprocity requirements other than the first one.