MEMBER HANDBOOK AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Ups and Downs - Calgary Down Syndrome Association

2026/2027

MISSION

Building community by enriching the lives of individuals with Down Syndrome and their families.

VISION

Removing barriers to foster lifelong connections for a future without limitations.

ups and downs
Calgary Down Syndrome Association

UPS AND DOWNS - CALGARY DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION

Member Handbook and Code of Conduct
2026 – 2027

Purpose

Ups & Downs is committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive, respectful, and safe environment for all members, participants, families, caregivers, volunteers, staff, board members, and guests.

This handbook outlines membership expectations, participant rights and responsibilities, community standards, and the processes used to address concerns when they arise.

All members are expected to follow this handbook while participating in Ups & Downs programs, services, events, meetings, volunteer activities, online communities, and other organizational activities.

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1. Commitment to Inclusion

Ups & Downs welcomes individuals of all backgrounds, identities, abilities, cultures, faiths, family structures, and lived experiences.

We are committed to fostering a community where everyone is treated with dignity, respect, fairness, and belonging.

Discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation, or exclusionary behaviour based on race, ethnicity, disability, age, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, family status, or other protected characteristics will not be tolerated.

2. Membership

2.1 Membership Eligibility

Membership is open to individuals and families who support the mission and objectives of Ups & Downs and meet the membership requirements established by the organization.

2.2 Members in Good Standing

A member is considered to be in good standing when they:

- Maintain an active membership.
- Follow the organization's bylaws, policies, and procedures.
- Follow this Member Handbook and Code of Conduct.
- Are not under suspension or membership restrictions.

2.3 Member Rights

Members in good standing may:

- Participate in eligible programs and activities.
- Attend membership meetings.
- Vote as outlined in the bylaws.
- Receive organizational communications and updates.
- Share feedback and suggestions regarding programs and services.

3. Member Responsibilities

Members are expected to:

- Treat others with courtesy, dignity, and respect.
- Contribute to a safe and welcoming environment.
- Follow instructions provided by staff, volunteers, and event leaders.
- Respect the rights, privacy, and personal boundaries of others.
- Use organizational resources responsibly.
- Communicate concerns respectfully and constructively.
- Follow all applicable Ups & Downs policies and procedures.

4. Personal Boundaries and Consent

Ups & Downs is committed to ensuring that all participants feel safe, respected, and comfortable while participating in programs and events.

Participants are expected to:

- Respect the personal space and boundaries of others.
- Ask permission before engaging in physical contact whenever appropriate.
- Respect when another person does not wish to be touched, hugged, photographed, recorded, or otherwise engaged.
- Recognize that every individual has the right to determine their own boundaries.

The following behaviours may be addressed by the organization:

- Unwanted physical contact.
- Repeated attempts at physical contact after a person has indicated discomfort.
- Behaviour that makes others feel unsafe, uncomfortable, intimidated, or harassed.
- Physical interactions involving individuals who are unable to provide consent.

Ups & Downs recognizes that some participants may require reminders, education, guidance, or additional supports related to personal boundaries and social interactions. The organization will work collaboratively with participants, caregivers, and support persons whenever possible to promote safe and respectful participation.

5. Participant and Caregiver Expectations

Ups & Downs values the participation of individuals with Down syndrome across all stages of life and strives to make programs accessible and inclusive.

Participants, caregivers, support workers, and family members are expected to:

- Follow event and program guidelines.
- Respect staff, volunteers, presenters, and fellow participants.
- Follow venue rules and safety requirements.
- Treat facilities, equipment, and property responsibly.
- Share relevant information that may affect safe participation when appropriate.
- Cooperate with reasonable requests related to safety and program participation.

Parents, guardians, caregivers, and support workers remain responsible for participant care, supervision, medication management, transportation, personal care, and behavioural support unless otherwise communicated by Ups & Downs.

Participation in organizational activities does not create a caregiving, supervision, or respite relationship between the participant and Ups & Downs.

6. Participation Supports

6.1 Right to Assess Participation Supports

Ups & Downs strives to provide programs and events that allow all participants to engage safely and successfully.

The organization reserves the right to assess whether a participant can be reasonably accommodated within available staffing, volunteer capacity, venue limitations, and program supports.

The safety, dignity, privacy, and well-being of all participants will be considered when determining appropriate participation arrangements.

6.2 Support Person Requirement

Where additional support is required for safe and successful participation, Ups & Downs may require a participant to attend with a parent, guardian, caregiver, support worker, or other designated support person.

Situations where additional support may be required include, but are not limited to:
- Difficulty following safety instructions.
- Repeatedly leaving designated program areas without notifying event leaders.
- Behaviour that creates safety concerns for the participant or others.
- Difficulty respecting personal boundaries.
- Physical contact with others without consent.

- Behaviour that interferes with the comfort, safety, dignity, or participation of others.
- Medical, communication, or support needs requiring ongoing individualized assistance.
- Circumstances where volunteers or staff cannot reasonably provide the level of support required.

Whenever possible, Ups & Downs will work collaboratively with participants, families, caregivers, and support persons to identify solutions that promote inclusion while maintaining a safe environment for everyone involved.

7. Privacy, Photography, and Media

Ups & Downs respects the privacy and dignity of all participants.

Members are expected to:
- Respect the privacy choices of participants and families.
- Follow organizational media consent procedures.
- Avoid sharing photographs, recordings, or personal information about others without permission.
- Respect event-specific photography restrictions.

The organization may establish photo-free areas, participant identifiers, or other measures to support privacy requests.

8. Social Media and Online Conduct

Members are expected to engage respectfully in all online environments associated with Ups & Downs.

The following behaviours are prohibited:
- Harassment or bullying.
- Personal attacks.
- Discriminatory language.
- Sharing confidential or private information.
- Posting knowingly false or misleading information about individuals or the organization.
- Behaviour that damages the safety, reputation, or integrity of the community.

Respectful disagreement is permitted; disrespectful conduct is not.

9. Health and Safety

Ups & Downs is committed to maintaining a safe environment for participants, volunteers, staff, and guests.

Members must:

- Follow safety instructions provided by event leaders.
- Report hazards, incidents, injuries, or concerns promptly.
- Follow venue safety rules.
- Refrain from behaviour that places themselves or others at risk.

The organization may take immediate action where a safety concern exists.

Following Facility Rules

Many of our events take place in community spaces such as recreation centres, libraries, restaurants, conference facilities, schools, and other venues.

When attending an Ups & Downs event, we ask everyone to follow the rules and expectations of the facility we are using. This may include safety rules, photography restrictions, food and drink policies, pool rules, supervision requirements, or other venue-specific guidelines.

We are grateful to the organizations that welcome us into their spaces and ask all participants to treat facilities, staff, and property with respect.

10. Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, and Weapons

Members must follow all organizational policies and venue rules related to:

- Alcohol.
- Cannabis.
- Tobacco products.
- Vaping products.
- Illegal substances.
- Weapons.

Participants whose behaviour is affected by substances or whose actions create safety concerns may be asked to leave an event.

11. Concerns and Conflict Resolution

Ups & Downs encourages respectful and collaborative resolution of concerns whenever possible.

Individuals are encouraged to:

- Pause and reflect before responding to a concern.

- Discuss concerns respectfully with the appropriate individual when appropriate.
- Seek support from an event leader, volunteer coordinator, staff member, or Executive Director if the matter cannot be resolved informally.
- Submit a formal complaint if necessary.

Retaliation against anyone who raises a concern in good faith will not be tolerated.

12. Membership Fees and Refunds

Membership fees are established by the Board of Directors.

Membership and event refunds are governed by the organization's Refund Policy.

Members should review the current refund policy prior to registering for memberships, programs, events, conferences, and other activities.

Refund requests will be assessed in accordance with the organization's approved policies and procedures.

13. Non-Compliance and Corrective Action

When concerns arise, Ups & Downs will seek to address them in a fair, respectful, and proportionate manner.

Depending on the circumstances, corrective actions may include:

- Verbal guidance or reminders.
- Additional education or support.
- Written warnings.
- Behaviour agreements.
- Requirement for a caregiver or support person to attend.
- Temporary restrictions on participation.
- Suspension from programs or events.
- Suspension or revocation of membership.

The organization will consider the circumstances, severity of the issue, safety considerations, previous incidents, and the needs of those affected when determining an appropriate response.

Member Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Ups & Downs Member Handbook and Code of Conduct.

I agree to follow the expectations outlined in this handbook while participating in Ups & Downs programs, services, events, meetings, and activities.

I understand that failure to follow these expectations may result in corrective action as outlined in this handbook.

Member Name: _____

Parent/Guardian/Support Person (if applicable): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____