

# KhushDC Listserv Charter

## Article 1

### Introduction:

#### Section 1: Preamble and Mission:

KhushDC is a mailing list for, by and about the organization KhushDC. The organization is a social, support, and political group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning (LGBTQ) and other gender or sexual minority South Asians in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

We advocate our mission by:

1. Providing a safe and supportive environment,
2. Promoting awareness and acceptance, and
3. Fostering positive cultural and sexual identity.

The purpose of the list is to create a safe space and to establish a network for individuals to exchange information and share thoughts, feelings, and ideas. The topic of discussion is open to any issue that affects the lives of the *members*, so long as it does not violate any of the rules established by policies of this mailing list.

The purpose of this Charter is to help create and maintain a fun and supportive environment in which LGBTQ and other gender or sexual minority South Asians *and allies* can come together without fear of humiliation, retaliation or recrimination. The rules listed below were decided by the *Policies and Procedures Subcommittee of KhushDC*. The rules and regulations outlined in this document are necessary to ensure the security and privacy of the group as a whole, as well as its individual members. *The listserv members are expected and required to adhere to the rules of this document with respect to communication over the listserv.*

#### Section 2: Relation to the organization, KhushDC:

It should be understood that the listserv, KhushDC and the organization, KhushDC are governed by the elected board of KhushDC organization (henceforth referred to as the Board or KhushDC Board) and have a considerable overlap in membership. But they are not the one and the same entity. Though primarily intended for members in the DC area, the list-serv has members from across the US, Canada, and the world, and serves as a general tool of communication amongst LGBTQ South Asians.

#### Section 3: South Asian: How we understand it?

For purposes of the listserv, "South Asian" refers to anyone who self-identifies as "South Asian." Just as an example, this may include people from (or with ancestors from) such countries including but NOT limited to: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the

Maldives, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Tibet; or from the global South Asian Diaspora.

## **Article 2 Membership**

### **Section 1: Joining the listserv:**

To subscribe, send e-mail to [khushdc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:khushdc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

To unsubscribe, send e-mail to [khushdc-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:khushdc-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com).

Joining the KhushDC listserv requires a moderator's approval. In order to prevent spammers from joining, it is mandatory that every new member to the listserv, state their purpose in joining the listserv in the "comments to the moderator" field on the page for joining the listserv.

It should be noted that the membership to the listserv does not automatically guarantee membership to KhushDC organization. Henceforth, for the purpose of this document, the term. "member", "membership", or 'listserv member' should be taken to mean a member of the KhushDC listserv, not the organization.

### **Section 2: Eligibility:**

While the KhushDC mission is primarily to serve the South Asian community of Washington D.C., membership on this listserv (and attendance at most KhushDC events ) is not restricted to South Asians or to persons living in the Washington D.C. area. We welcome and desire our group to be as diverse as possible.

For purposes of the listserv, "South Asian" refers to anyone who self-identifies as "South Asian." This, for example, may include people from (or with ancestors from) such countries including but NOT limited to: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, he Maldives, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Tibet; or from the global South Asian Diaspora. We understand that the regional listing might not satisfy all definitions of being South Asian, hence we include the clause 'self-identifying'.

### **Section 3: Membership Status/Termination:**

A member may resign their membership at any time by making a request for the same to the Moderator of the listserv. Alternatively, the member could send an email to [khushdc-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:khushdc-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com) .

In certain instances, membership may be revoked as a result of disciplinary action.

Case A. This applies to spamming email-identities that send Commercial/other spam. The Moderator shall issue warnings, for the first two violations. After that the moderator can

ban the email of that user. This is not to be used for real individuals, who are not just email-identities.

Case B. In case of violation of the Listserv Charter Policies by a member, the moderator shall issue a warning to the said member via email. In case of repeated violation of listserv policies, the following steps should be taken in order.

Step 1. The moderator should issue at least two warnings to the member (who is violating listserv policies) and reaffirm guidelines and listserv policies.

Step 2. In case the member violates listserv policies after two warnings, the moderator can refer the case to the Board. The Board shall appoint a "Ad-hoc Listserv Committee", formed of three general listserv members, not on the Board. The moderator can not serve on the committee. The Board should try its best to appoint an unbiased and neutral committee. The committee shall be dissolved after the case is resolved and a decision is reached.

Step 3. The case shall be presented to the committee. All involved should be given fair chance to present their side of the story. If the committee decides that the member is at serious fault, they could call for disciplinary action, including but not limited to membership on probation, suspended membership or in an extreme case revoking the membership. The committee decision shall be by consensus. If the committee feels, it could, with consent of the involved parties, take the case to the whole list-serv before making its decision. The decision of the committee shall be final. In case the decision is to revoke or suspend the membership, the committee should recommend a time interval after which the member could reapply for membership to the listserv.

Termination of membership does not absolve members of their agreement to uphold this Charter, including but not limited to the provisions of privacy and respect for other list members. Termination of membership to the listserv also does not automatically mean that the member is banned from the organization, KhushDC or vice versa. The membership decisions for the listserv, KhushDC and the organization, KhushDC are independent though both are subject to the decisions of the Board.

It is also understood that revoking of membership is an extreme decision and should be used with caution. It should be used as a last step only in a very serious case. Having said that, we also understand that such a situation could arise.

A member whose membership is suspended or revoked, can reapply for joining the listserv after a period of time. The decision to reinstate the membership shall be by Board decision.

It is also to be noted that this section is necessary to protect a safe environment on the listserv in extreme cases.

### **Article 3**

#### **KhushDC Mailing list Policies:**

## Section 1 : Respect for privacy - See Article 5..

### Section 2 :

We cannot guarantee confidentiality. If you wish to make a private post, you should consider posting anonymously or not making very private and personal posts. Contact the list owner or the current moderator to make an anonymous post.

### Section 3 :

KhushDC values individual opinions and treasures the ideal of free speech. Keeping this in mind, discussions on this listserv are unmoderated and uncensored. However, our primary aim is to maintain a safe and supportive environment, and so the following types of activity are not welcome and repeated violation of them may result in membership being revoked or suspended.

- Hateful language
- Sexually offensive content
- Commercial Solicitations/ads
- Solicitations for sex
- Chain letters/e-mails
- Spam
- Personal attacks against listserv members
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### Section 4 :

There is no official policy regarding forwarding of articles, newsclips, etc. However, we request members to use their judgment in sending unusually long forwarded posts to the list. Please take into consideration that some members are restricted in mailbox space, computer space, etc. If you are forwarding information to several listservs you belong to, make sure that you either BCC or send them individually. No ccing on listservs. Please try to remove the lengthy header information when forwarding emails.

### Section 5 :

We ask that you do not post **blatant, commercial posts** that relate in no way to South Asian or queer issues (SPAMMING). The line between commercial and non-commercial posts is not always black and white. When announcing your book, video, exhibition or journal paper, use your judgment as to what would be appropriate to this list. You may want to consider posting a short description, website address or e-mail address where interested individuals may get more information. Spamming by a member may result in the sender's membership on the listserv being terminated.

## Section 6 :

Changes in policy can be voted on periodically. To put a policy change request to vote, at least three members must call a vote. This can be done at anytime. The voting period should be restricted to a designated period of time. The acceptance of the proposed amendment is contingent to a plurality of vote in its favor. The voting majority will decide whether or not the proposed policy is implemented. (See the section on Changes to the Charter to determine what makes a voting majority.) For the purposes of listserv policy, the voting shall be conducted via YahooGroups Polls.

## Section 7. Conflict Resolution.

In case a member feels inconvenienced/harassed on the listserv by another member due to his/her actions on the listserv or feels that someone is seriously violating listserv policies then that member can bring this to the notice of the Moderator or KhushDC board. The Moderator or the Board should try to resolve the conflict by mediating between the two members. In case the problem is not solved by this preliminary step, or in case of repetition of the offense, the Board shall form an Ad-hoc committee for resolution of this conflict, following the same guidelines as outlined in Article 2, Section 3 of this Charter (membership termination)

Section 8: Public Relations: Generally, no member is permitted to act or communicate on behalf of KhushDC listserv; only speak as a member of the group. If you are requested to represent the group in public, you need to get permission from the KhushDC Board and/or the list owner. If the latter is the case, then the list owner should advise the KhushDC Board as soon as possible. As the posts on this group are private and confidential, you are not permitted to disclose information about the discussion topics and/or individual members. You may, however, mention the existence of the mailing list, and any of its Charter or policy information.

## Article 4

**General Netiquette:** Please note that these are just suggestions to the listserv members based on values that the Committee feels that KhushDC as a community should uphold:

(1) At times, E-mail can seem to be an impersonal medium of communication. We ask that you take that into consideration when you write your posts or read others' posts. E-mail can be very easily misunderstood and the author of the e-mail often misinterpreted. As a general rule of thumb, give people the benefit of the doubt.

(2) FLAMING: Realize that everyone does not have the same opinion as you. We ask that you restrict your discussions, arguments, etc. to the issues rather than personally attacking the author of an e-mail, implicitly or explicitly. Each of us brings unique experiences and thus, a very unique perspective to the list. While discussion and debates of issues are encouraged, it is NOT ok to flame individuals.

(3) As a courtesy to all on the list, use your SUBJECT Header to clearly define the topic of your e-mail. We'd like to ask that all members make an effort to change the subject header of your message when the focus of the discussion changes significantly from the original. This will not only serve as a way to manage sub-threads, but it will hopefully provide a means for members to skip over discussions they are not interested in.

(4) Given the unique make-up of this list, you may be requested by individuals/friends who are not members to post or forward a request to the mailing list. As this list is for, by and about LGBTQ South Asians, we ask that you use your judgment when forwarding a direct request to the list made by a non-member. Although there are no policies against it, consider posting in your own words and asking people to contact you if they would like to be in contact with the non-member.

(5) We are not merely words on a computer screen, but individuals who think, feel, and \*are\*. Please think before you follow up to a post that pushes your buttons and/or upsets you. Please attempt to address the intent behind the words, before you address the words themselves. If you are uncertain about the intent, ASK! In many cases, when we are feeling better/calmer, we wish we had responded in a softer, less accusatory tone.

In many cases, the original author may not be aware of the effect of his/her words. It doesn't help to come back to a group of hostile attacks that put her on the defensive. A NEUTRAL Do you really mean that?, Do you understand how far-reaching that statement is?, This upsets me, and I am going to attempt to explain to you why, so that you understand where I am coming from. IS EASIER TO ADDRESS THAN how could you say such a thing? That is so totally offensive and insensitive, and You don't know what you are saying!

In many cases a lot of misunderstandings and hurt feelings can be avoided if you address the original post privately. There is no need to tar-and-feather one of our own until there is a cause.

(6) Some subject matters are generally very quick to turn into name calling and flame wars. We ask that you stop before you answer a post that you strongly disagree with, and consider all the negative ways what you are about to say could be taken. When we feel passionately about something, we are quick to strike out for or against it. Again, remember to separate the topic from the individual.

## **Article 5**

### **PRIVACY, CONFIDENTIALITY, RESPECT**

1. E-mail addresses and names the address of the distribution list, as well as the names and addresses of the individual members of this group are CONFIDENTIAL AT ALL TIMES. Any member found to be propagating this information to a non-list member will be subject to disciplinary action.

This does not include such situations where one list member gives permission to another list member to pass their name/address on to a non-list member, nor does it include don't knows, where members of multiple lists may accidentally send a response to the wrong list. In order to avoid sending out the email address of another listserv member inadvertently, please remember to also remove the header information when forwarding a KhushDC listserv email to someone else.

2. List Confidentiality and Outside Discussions: In general, any information about a KhushDC listserv member, his/her personal life, or anything that can reasonably be assumed to be private to this list should not be sent posted or discussed elsewhere. Information of interest to the general public can be sent, posted, and discussed elsewhere. If you have any doubt about what can be sent on and what can't make sure that you check in with the individual member of the email. . To make this distinction clear, if you post something to the list that might be of interest to other groups, add a line such as, "Forward to anyone interested", at the top of your note.

This section does not apply to such situations where one list member gives permission to another list member to discuss something outside this forum.

3. TRUST: As a group, we have grown to trust one another in this forum and we wish to maintain that trust which makes KhushDC listserv a place where members can talk about anything without fear of recrimination or retaliation.

Members should take care not to breach the general etiquettes of trust and privacy for personal gain.

4. Outside the Forum: Many of us may know each other outside of this group, and have relationships that are outside of this group For those of us in this category, the rules of privacy and respect apply that much more. Many of us are familiar with the disastrous effects of gossip and shared private information can have. It is absolutely essential for all of us to respect the privacy of others and the coming-out-process for many who are on the list. Because of this, breaches of privacy between members who know each in real life are considered absolutely unacceptable.

## **Article 7: Owner/Moderator**

Section 1. The Owners of the listserv shall be the President and Vice President of KhushDC.

Section 2. The moderator should be a General or Youth Member of the KhushDC Organization and would be elected by an online vote on the listserv (Yahogroups Polls). This election would take place along with the KhushDC Board elections every year. The online vote for the listserv moderator must be completed within 7 days of the date of the annual KhushDC elections. The winner is decided by plurality of votes.

Section 3. Role/Responsibility:

The primary role of the moderator will be:

- \* To approve/reject requests of new aspirants to join the listserv
- \* To process membership-related requests,
- \* To manage KhushDC membership questions,
- \* To manage inquiries from non-members, and
- \* To monitor the rules and guidelines established by the KhushDC Listserv

Charter.

Section 4. In case the moderator is on vacation for some days, the owner(s) of the listserv can take up the duties of the moderator temporarily.

Section 5. In case the moderator resigns midterm, the KhushDC board will seek nominations from among the listserv members via a 'special notice' email to the listserv members. The period for seeking nominations can be no longer than 14 days from the date of resignation of the previous moderator. The final choice will be based on an online listserv voting. The winner is decided by a plurality of votes. In the interim period of the moderator resigning and a new moderator being elected, the owner(s) of the listserv shall fill in as the moderator.

## **Article 8**

### **CHANGES TO THE CHARTER (VOTING MAJORITY)**

Section 1. This Charter is a living, breathing document that shall be amended and updated as the needs of the listserv members grow and change. Any situations not covered by this Charter will be dealt with as the situation deems necessary, and the appropriate additions to this Charter will be made upon resolution of the situation. Additions, subtractions, and revisions will be made upon the majority of voting members.

Section 2. A majority vote shall consist of a majority of all members who vote. For example, if 10 members vote yes and 9 members vote no, and 20 members do not vote at all, the vote shall pass and the resolution adopted. However, if 10 members vote yes, 9 members vote no, 2 members vote 'I abstain', and 18 members do not vote at all, the resolution will not pass. Thus it is acceptable for a member to vote I abstain, as it will alter the number of active members for the vote.

Section 3. For the purposes of the listserv Charter/policies the vote shall be conducted online.

I have read and understood the Charter and the policies of the KhushDC mailing list, and I agree to abide by the terms of this membership. I understand that if I violate any of the policies, my membership may be terminated.