

**ARONOFF CENTER**  
**Front of House Manual**  
**For Volunteer Ushers**



ARONOFF CENTER  
MUSIC HALL

**Revised: July 2015**

This manual, and subsequent policies, supersedes any previous manual and policy to date.

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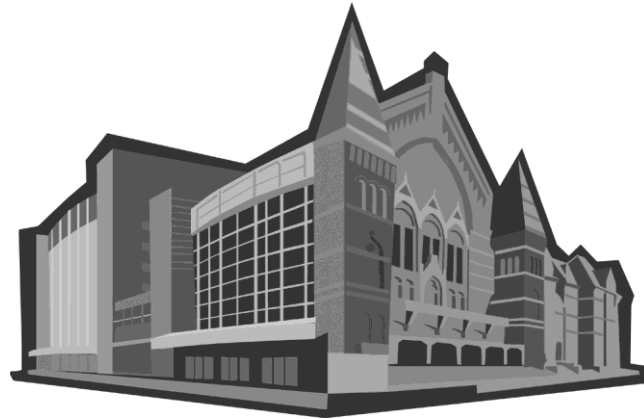
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# ARONOFF CENTER MUSIC HALL



[www.CincinnatiArts.ORG](http://www.CincinnatiArts.ORG)

## **ARONOFF CENTER**

650 Walnut St. Cincinnati, OH 45202 Phone: (513) 721-3344 Fax: (513) 977-4150

## **MUSIC HALL**

1241 Elm St. Cincinnati, OH 45202 Phone: (513) 744-3344 Fax: (513) 744-3345

### Volunteer Contacts

Volunteer Manager, Aronoff Center	513-977-4113
Aronoff Center Volunteer Message Line	513-977-4117
Volunteer & House Services Manager, Music Hall	513-744-3417



Welcome!

On behalf of the Cincinnati Arts Association, it is my pleasure to welcome you as a new volunteer at the Aronoff Center. As a volunteer, you are joining the ranks of nearly 1,000 other dedicated and talented individuals who contribute to the vital operations and administration of our organization.

The Cincinnati Arts Association strives to provide high-quality programs, customer service and first-class venues to the Greater Cincinnati community. As a volunteer, you become an active participant in, and ambassador for, these valuable services.

We are proud of our many accomplishments. On an annual basis, we engage nearly 90,000 school children through CAA's arts education programs in our venues and in the schools. The Weston Art Gallery is among the finest visual art spaces in the Tri-state, and is consistently recognized for its excellence and focus on local and regional artists. Our presenting seasons bring some of the world's most exciting, diverse and intriguing artists to the Tri-state. And, our nationally-recognized, state-of-the-art facilities – Music Hall and the Aronoff Center – are the finest performing arts facilities in the region, each serving 400,000 - 500,000 patrons annually.

Thank you for your commitment and for investing your valuable time with us. We are delighted that you are joining the Cincinnati Arts Association family, as we continue to bring the best of the arts to Cincinnati audiences. I look forward to seeing you at the theater!

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen A. Loftin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Stephen A. Loftin  
President and Executive Director

## “How May I Help You?”

As a volunteer member of the Front of House Staff at the Aronoff Center for the Arts, you are the front line -- the first people that the audience sees on the night of the show. Thank you for participating in our program and assisting us in fulfilling our mission.

The impression an audience member receives upon his or her arrival is key. A thoughtful and respectful staff is one of the more lasting impressions taken away from the Aronoff Center. Attending a performance at the Aronoff Center should carry with it a sense of occasion, a feeling of “going out on the town.” It is you who make it possible for the patron to have a truly enjoyable event by a nice word or an extra service. It is you who bring a “Cincinnati Welcome” into the theater, providing an atmosphere conducive to the fullest experience of live performance.

At the Aronoff Center, our Front of House Staff has a twofold job: **to assist the patrons and to help promote the facility and its programs.** You are responsible for the safety and well-being of a large audience, as well as personally contributing to the professional manner in which the Aronoff Center is managed. The entire Aronoff Center staff strives to be constantly polite and considerate. The volunteer corps comprises the largest department within the Aronoff Center and, because of the visible positions; we hold the key to the perfect performance.

The Front of House Staff is comprised almost completely of volunteers. The time and service you offer helps to keep the arts and entertainment alive in the theaters and within the community for you, your neighbors and visitors to the Greater Cincinnati area. Without hours of service from dedicated individuals, or the excitement you share when discussing the performances with your family, it would be difficult for many to enjoy the entertainment that the Aronoff Center regularly provides.

As a volunteer usher for the Aronoff Center, you have all the responsibilities of an employee and are **compensated** for your services with receiving the satisfaction of performing a service for the arts and engaging others to enjoy the performing arts. There are also the tangible rewards: the opportunity of seeing some performances, recognition parties, newsletters, discounts, and raffle prizes. Your **bonus** is the knowing that you have made someone’s theater experience more enjoyable.

Thank you for being part of our volunteer team, and sharing your enthusiasm for the arts with your neighbors and guests in Cincinnati. Please let me know how I can help you!



**Meghan Kaskoun, CVA, M.A.**  
**Volunteer Manager**

Please note that this manual is a work in progress and updates are given in your Newsletters.

## THE CINCINNATI ARTS ASSOCIATION

You have joined the Cincinnati Arts Association (CAA), a not for profit organization which manages the rental use and maintenance of the Aronoff Center and Music Hall. Corporate offices of CAA are housed within the Aronoff Center.

The Aronoff Center is a state-owned building and CAA manages its use as well as manages the use of Music Hall (city owned). While CAA focuses on maintenance and rentals of facilities, it also strives to provide quality entertainment as a presenter, and offers an excellent Education Program to the region.

The purpose of the manual is to enhance the awareness of policies, procedures and requirements for volunteers and employees at the Aronoff Center for the Arts.

The current mission statement of our organization is printed below.

### Mission Statement

The mission of the Cincinnati Arts Association, as the region's premier promoter of the arts and entertainment, is to use its expertise as a manager, presenter, and educator to:

- Offer a broad range of high-quality performing and visual arts programs
- Develop diverse audiences
- Foster an appreciation of the arts and understanding of their forms
- Encourage the use of facilities by local and regional arts organizations

We meet our goals through our many departments. Whether we are presenting a show or marketing our clients' events to different neighborhoods, developing diverse audiences with different cultures and communities within the city, working with local schools or regional artists through our Education department, or offering volunteer guided tours of the theaters or Gallery, we are always striving to present CAA, and specifically the Aronoff Center, in its most positive light.

### Education

Since the inception of the Cincinnati Arts Association's Educational Program in 1995, it has become the choice for hundreds of teachers and thousands of students who have quickly learned a simple equation: **Cincinnati Arts Association = Quality Arts Education**. Children are no different than the general public in terms of programming decisions; with this in mind, CAA carefully chooses its events based on their artistic, educational and entertainment values.

Learning does not stop with school and the Cincinnati Arts Association Community Relations Program strives to engage the community as a whole in the arts by offering

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various projects throughout the community and in its venues that are easily accessible and affordable.

**SchoolTime** At Music Hall and the Aronoff Center, SchoolTime offers a number of main-stage performances during regular school hours. Performances and presentations are designed to enhance school curriculum needs through a variety of topics, educational support materials and services. This program serves various ages and multiple disciplines.

The goal of this program is to offer the region's children the opportunity to experience high-quality arts' programming in some of the finest venues this region has to offer!

**Artists On Tour** From classrooms to recreation rooms, senior centers to birthday parties, you can generate excitement by adding the arts!

Artists on Tour offers interactive opportunities that:  
Support and enhance school curricula, including activities developed to meet state and national standards.

- ▶ Expand multi-cultural awareness in audiences
- ▶ Add to the fun of learning with professional performers
- ▶ Showcase talent that makes any occasion a special event

**Overture Awards** The Overture Awards is a scholarship program and academy developed to recognize, encourage and reward excellence in the arts among Tri-state school students in grades 9-12. Its mission is to encourage arts education as an integral part of students' studies, and to create an environment that encourages training in, and appreciation of, the arts.

The program annually awards \$4,000 scholarships to six area students for use toward post-secondary education. Additionally, 18 finalists are each awarded \$1000 scholarships. Students are nominated by their schools to compete in one of six areas: **Creative Writing, Dance, Instrumental Music, Theater, Visual Art, Vocal Music**

### **Alice F. and Harris K. Weston Art Gallery**

Located in the Aronoff Center for the Arts is Cincinnati's premier art space for the latest artist projects, collaborations, site-specific installations and new commissions. Situated on two levels, the Weston Art Gallery is a staging ground for the most intriguing visual art of the region. Exhibitions feature painting, sculpture, prints, photography, textiles, independent film, performance and electronic media. Up to ten diverse exhibitions are programmed annually in the gallery's 3,500 square foot museum-quality space.

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## **About the Aronoff Center for the Arts**

Opened in October 1995, the Aronoff Center is a special part of the Cincinnati community. State Senator Stanley Aronoff, for whom the building is named, assisted in securing state funding (\$40 million of the needed \$82 million) for construction. The State of Ohio owns the building itself. Cincinnati Arts Association (CAA) is responsible for managing the Aronoff Center on behalf of the state, and also Music Hall which is owned by the City of Cincinnati. The mission of CAA is to bring first class entertainment onto its stages while promoting the arts. In addition to all of the organizations that rent these theaters, CAA is also a presenter. We work to bring the best of Broadway, ballet, children's programs, theater, concerts, and a host of locally and nationally produced events to Cincinnati.

### **The Aronoff Center consists of 3 independent performing arts spaces:**

The **Procter & Gamble Hall**, a 2719-seat venue, has a fully equipped stage, and state-of-the-art sound and lighting equipment to handle the largest of stage productions. This modern facility is the home for the Fifth Third Bank Broadway in Cincinnati and Cincinnati Ballet productions. The main entrance is on Walnut Street.

The **Jarson-Kaplan Theater**, a 437-seat venue, combines full production capabilities with superb acoustics, excellent sight lines and comfortable seating. The Jarson-Kaplan Theater hosts a wide variety of gatherings, including seminars, conferences, and stage presentations. Among the local organizations which call this theater home are Contemporary Dance Theater, Exhale Dance and Cincinnati Music Theater. The main entrance is on Walnut Street.

The **Fifth Third Bank Theater**, seats up to 150 in a flexible configuration to fit different needs. With full lighting and sound capabilities, this space is ideal for experimental theater, business conferences or receptions. Cincinnati Playwrights Initiative presents in this space along with numerous other local arts groups. The main entrance is on Main Street, at the corner of Seventh Street.

### **The Aronoff Center also has a visual arts component:**

The **Weston Art Gallery**, a 3,500 square foot area spanning two floors, is on the corner of Walnut and Seventh Streets. This versatile space provides a downtown exhibition venue while supporting the development of professional and emerging artists of the region.

Additional spaces within the Aronoff Center include a full service box office, rehearsal hall, meeting and reception rooms and expansive lobbies. All spaces within the Aronoff Center are available for rent for corporate business and private social functions.

Cincinnati BoyChoir and Broadway in Cincinnati have offices in our facility also.

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## **THE CINCINNATI ARTS ASSOCIATION STAFF**

**President & Executive Director of CAA:** Steve Loftin

**Director of Marketing & PR:** Van Ackerman

**Director of Development:** Deborah Morgan

**Director of Education & Community Relations:** Joyce Bonomini

**Director of Human Resources:** Brenda Carter

**Director of Operations – Aronoff Center:** Todd Duesing

**Event Managers:** Candace LoFrumento and Jennifer Sanders

**House Manager (aka Manager on Duty or MOD):** Stratin Seremetis

**Assistant House Managers (MOD):** John Faig, Dan Hamilton, Nancy Herrin, Kristin Seuss, Kathleen Thomas, Sylvia Williams

**Floor Supervisors (paid staff):** Louise Arnett, Monica Cox, John Faig, Dan Hamilton, Nancy Herrin, Susan McDonald, Thomas McMackin, Rudi Megowen, Jim Racster, Barb Rippetoe, Greg Rudolph, Lucinda Sander, Michelle Skaggs, Kristin Seuss, Kathleen Thomas, and Sylvia Williams

**Usher Captains (volunteer leadership):** Louise Arnett, Jill Conway, Karen Carter, Ron Carter, Roger Earnhart, Fouad Ezra, Mary Ezra, Connie Flodder, Rick Giglio, Heather Jordan, Mimi McCain, Dede Ralston, Sherry Rehbock, Bud Walters, Barb Wagner, Michelle Weber, and Bill Wong

**Volunteer Manager:** Meghan Kaskoun

**Volunteer/Operations Administrative Assistant:** Beth Troendly

### **OTHER PAID STAFF YOU MAY WANT TO KNOW:**

**Director – Weston Art Gallery:** Dennis Harrington

**Concessions Manager:** Claudia Cahill

**Facility Services Manager:** Janie Roempp

On the day of an event, it goes something like this:

- ◆ Ushers are checked-in and assisted by the *volunteer* Usher Captains
- ◆ Ushers then report to the Manager on Duty (MOD) who addresses the group
- ◆ Floor Supervisors (there are several per show, one per floor) report to the MOD, and directly supervise volunteer ushers on their floor
- ◆ The Director of Operations oversees all of those staff members, as well as others in the “family tree” with whom you will work regularly: technical, custodial, maintenance, ticketing, concessions and security departments

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## CUSTOMER SERVICE PHILOSOPHY

Amended 11/12, superseding any previous Philosophy in place

The focus of the Front of House must be directed to the needs of our customers, so that their experience is enjoyable and they return. Volunteers provide a key link to the patrons, representing everything that the Aronoff Center is and strives to become. Volunteers are expected to smile, present themselves professionally and courteously, speak positively about all events and guests, show respect to all cultures and people, and strive to make each patron's experience memorable and positive. Ushers must provide accurate and timely information while making the patrons feel special.

Staff and Volunteers of CAA who have contact with the public must always have *the guest's needs* and *CAA's reputation* uppermost in their mind. This is our customer service philosophy.

### USHER MISSION STATEMENT

Ushers are enthusiastic hosts and ambassadors for CAA; making a connection with Aronoff Center guests while identifying and anticipating their needs and exemplifying our desire to serve.

#### What is a Customer?

L.L. Bean says this about **customer**: *A customer is not dependent on us...we are dependent on them. A customer is not an interruption of our work...they are the purpose for it. We are not doing the customer a favor by serving them...they are doing us a favor by giving us the opportunity to do so.*

Disney found four (4) things **guests** most want, listing most important first, which is not the order in which we typically might think:

#### **To Feel Special - Be Treated as an Individual - Respect Their Children - Knowledgeable Staff**

CAA's customers are: the production companies, the artists, and the ticketed patrons. Our goal is for them to remain happy and return to our facilities often.

#### What is Customer Service?

*"Know what your customers want, even before they do."* – Disney Institute

Customer service is **customer focused**. It is an attitude of providing exceptional service that permeates every facet of an organization, radiating out to every person utilizing the facilities. This focus, which you embody when volunteering, is how the Aronoff Center and CAA want to be perceived. Thank you for helping us to achieve this goal.

Feeling special/Being treated as an individual is based in the patrons' perception. Staff and volunteers should always be asking "**How am I being perceived?** Might someone not return because of an action I'm doing or from something I'm saying?"

Remember that experiences start at the door.

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**As an usher at the Aronoff Center, I agree to follow this Theater Etiquette:**

- I will minimize my movement in and out of the theater, or up and down from my seat since it is distracting, especially at side corridor doors.
- Comments about the show or patrons will always be positive, no matter my personal opinion. I am representing CAA and the production on stage.
- Use of flashlights is for patron assistance in and out of the dark theater and emergencies; I will **never** aim the light at the stage or use it to read the program or look at a watch
- I will refrain from whispering, except when necessary, as it is distracting and often heard by patrons
- I will hold discussions longer than a sentence or two in the corridor or lobby.
- I will refrain from having my cell phone with me when volunteering in the theater, unless discussed with the paid staff due to emergency needs and then set to silent.
- I will be aware of my surroundings at all times and proactively respond to potential issues before they become issues.
- Anytime the house lights come up, I will stand, ready to assist patrons
- Anytime a patron is in the lobby, I will stand upright, not leaning, ready to assist patrons

## **VOLUNTEER MANAGER'S OFFICE**

The Volunteer Manager's Office acts very much like the Human Resources Department of a large company. There are nearly 900 volunteers at the Aronoff Center and a small staff to insure that information and benefits are communicated. One of the many roles this office serves is to make sure your volunteer experience is a positive one. With this in mind, we believe that our volunteers have the following rights:

- ◆ adequate orientation, training and supervision
- ◆ courteous treatment from all staff members & other volunteers
- ◆ recognition for your service
- ◆ feedback regarding your participation
- ◆ opportunity to make suggestions

### **Open Door Policy**

The Volunteer Manager's office hours are generally 9:00am to 5:30pm, Monday through Friday. However, the Volunteer Manager works some weekends and evenings. Enter the CAA Administrative Entrance on 7<sup>th</sup> street and take the elevator to 3 to find the Volunteer Office.

If you have any difficulty with a staff member, another volunteer, or you are unclear about your role at the Aronoff Center, please stop by the Volunteer Manager's office.

Messages may be left on 513- 977-4117, ext. 4, or email [volunteers@cincinnatiarts.org](mailto:volunteers@cincinnatiarts.org) and the Volunteer Office staff will respond to your concerns as quickly as possible.

### **Services provided by the Volunteer Manager's Office:**

- |                            |                           |                            |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| -Reorder a nametag/ID Card | -Volunteer vest orders    | -Benefits administration   |
| -Volunteer lost & found    | -Volunteer applications   | -Additional manuals        |
| -Volunteer Newsletter      | -Volunteer Suggestion Box | -Maintain activity records |

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**Personal information changes:** If you have a change in name, address or phone number, please change this information on [www.myvolunteerpage.com](http://www.myvolunteerpage.com), on the My Profile tab and save it. It is important to communicate these changes to us here, as this is our main database; otherwise invitations and important notices are missed. If help is needed in making changes, please contact the Volunteer Office.

**Usher Captains:** We have volunteer leadership in the Usher Captains. These volunteers have completed additional training to be your resource. During Procter & Gamble Hall shows only they serve as a liaison between the Front of House Ushers and the Volunteer Manager. Their other official responsibilities include:

- Supervise sign-in and dismissal of Front of House volunteers
- Organize and supervise access of volunteer area
- Manage lost & found box
- Monitor voicemail during Procter & Gamble Hall performances (only)
- Manage nametag distribution
- Monitor compliance of volunteers with dress code policy, attendance policy
- Assist Front of House staff and Volunteer Manager as requested.

## WHAT DO ALL THOSE THEATER TERMS MEAN?

There are many terms that are used in the theater that seem foreign to many new volunteers. Here's a list of some of the most commonly used terms to help you acclimate to the language of the theater:

<b>Backstage</b>	The area behind and to either side of the stage, not visible to the audience. Backstage includes all technical areas, dressing rooms, hallways and performance-related areas.
<b>Comps</b>	Complimentary tickets distributed at no charge.
<b>Curtain</b>	The time at which a performance is scheduled to begin.
<b>Floor Supervisor</b>	The paid staff representative of the Aronoff Center for the Arts who supervises the activities of the volunteers during performances; there is typically one per floor of the Procter & Gamble Hall.
<b>House</b>	The area inside the performance hall that includes all audience seating areas; between the doors and the front edge of the stage.
<b>Front of House (FOH)</b>	All public area outside the performance hall, including lobbies, ticket office, restrooms, concession areas, etc.
<b>Hold</b>	Delay in the curtain time, because the lobby is still full of patrons, or the company needs to hold back the original curtain time.
<b>Seating Hold</b>	AKA Late Seat hold, occurs at the beginning of the performance (usually), as dictated by the company producing the show. FOH

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staff is not allowed to admit anyone (staff, volunteers or patrons) into the house or allow them to leave during seating holds. This means FOH staff cannot open or close doors during seating holds, at any time.

<b>House Directions</b>	House directions are determined by standing in the house and facing the stage. Your left is House Left (HL) and your right is House Right (HR).
<b>Manager On Duty (MOD)</b>	The representative of the Aronoff Center on duty and responsible for all front-of-house activities, in any part of the building.
<b>House Staff</b>	MOD, Floor Supervisors, Usher Captains, and volunteers.
<b>Opening the House</b>	Opening the doors of the theater to allow the audience members to take their seats.
<b>Hold on the House</b>	Delay in opening the house for patron seating.
<b>Perimeter</b>	The invisible barrier the ticket takers create, preventing patrons from entering the lobbies; this does not include the house.
<b>Production Company</b>	The company which presents the performance within the theater (Cincinnati Ballet, Contemporary Dance Theater...). Cast, crew, props, wardrobe are already created, staged and rehearsed elsewhere and brought to our theaters.
<b>Stagehands</b>	The backstage crew who do all the technical work on a production (lighting, sound, sets, props and wardrobe). All stagehands are members of I.A.T.S.E. (the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees Union.).
<b>Stage Directions</b>	Directions from the performer's perspective, standing on stage and facing the house. <i>Stage Left</i> is the performer's left and <i>Stage Right</i> is the performer's right. <i>Downstage</i> is moving toward the audience and <i>Upstage</i> is moving away from the audience.
<b>Stage Manager</b>	The person responsible for communication and coordination of all backstage and onstage activities during rehearsal and performance times. Typically travels with the show.
<b>Will Call</b>	Tickets which are held at the ticket office for patrons who have already paid for them.

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## PATRON INFORMATION



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## FACILITY RULES FOR PATRONS

Amended 4/15, superseding any previous policy/procedure in place

Patrons attend events at the Aronoff Center under the fundamental assumption that they will enjoy the performance. This assumption extends to their expectation that they will also enjoy *the experience* of attending the event. The entire front of house staff is dedicated to ensuring the facility delivers a quality experience.

Implicit in the staff commitment to deliver an enjoyable experience is a requirement that patrons adhere to policies established by the building and/or the presenter. Many of these may be posted in the lobbies to alert the patrons or announced from stage prior to curtain. Because all of the facility rules can't be communicated to each patron as they enter, the front of house staff, including volunteer ushers may sometimes need to share & enforce them.

Ushers should ask patrons to comply with the following rules one time. One time only and then ushers should seek help from the paid staff. If the inappropriate behavior continues, contact your Floor Supervisor (FS) immediately; they are typically in their lobby unless working with a patron.

If not immediately available find the FS on the next floor, or find an Usher Captain to radio the paid staff or contact a bartender to call for help.

*CAA does not expect its volunteers to take abuse from patrons, so please seek help immediately if needed.*

- ◆ Cameras, video, or audio recording devices are not allowed to be used inside the performance halls. These may remain with the patrons, but inside a bag, coat or pocket. Occasionally, cameras may be allowed for use in the theaters and the MOD will indicate exceptions (i.e. graduations) if or when appropriate to you at the MOD meeting.
- ◆ Cellular phones, pagers and other electrical devices should be in the off or silent mode during performances.
- ◆ Weapons of any kind are not permitted into this public assembly.
- ◆ All snacks and beverages purchased at the Aronoff Center Lobby Concessions are allowed in the theater and the MOD will indicate exceptions to you at the MOD meeting.
- ◆ Box seat ticket holders may enjoy food and beverage purchased through the Aronoff Center at their box seats.
- ◆ No outside food (not purchased at the Aronoff Center Lobby Concessions) may be brought into the lobbies or theater
- ◆ No smoking of any kind is permitted in CAA facilities unless as a part of a theatrical production.
- ◆ Coats or objects hung over front rails or box edges in the theater are fire hazards. Please actively ask that they be removed when you see them.
- ◆ Loud talking, crying babies, or disruptive patrons may be asked by paid staff to leave the theater. Please inform the Floor Supervisor of continuing disruptive behavior after you've asked for it to stop. The Floor Supervisor decides on and supervises all movement of patrons.

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- ◆ Backstage areas are off limits to patrons and volunteers.
- ◆ Everyone, including children, must have a ticket to enter the theater.

The manner in which theater policies are communicated to patrons is critically important. Ushers must be polite, clear, and firm while doing their best to avoid patron confusion. When a patron becomes upset, no matter what the circumstances, it's best to apologize for the situation, and immediately seek assistance from the front of house staff.

Please note that an ushers' responsibility for enforcing the facility policies ends after they have asked the patron once to stop the behavior observed. If the inappropriate behavior continues or the patron becomes argumentative, find your Floor Supervisor immediately and request their assistance in addressing the situation.

Floor Supervisors are typically in the lobby unless working with a patron. If not immediately available find the FS on the next floor, or find an Usher Captain to radio the paid staff or contact a bartender to call for help.

*CAA does not expect its volunteers to take abuse from patrons, so please seek help immediately if needed.* Ushers always are considered to be on-duty and should represent CAA in a respectful, tactful, and polite way.

## **POTENTIAL SITUATIONS AND SOLUTIONS**

Amended 4/15, superseding any policy/procedure previously in place

If a patron becomes argumentative or you are unsure how to respond, find your Floor Supervisors (FS). They are typically in their lobby unless working with a patron. If not immediately available find the FS on the next floor, or find an Usher Captain to radio the paid staff or contact a bartender to call for help.

In a time sensitive serious situation (ill patron/security issue) *when no one with a radio or access to a phone is available*, call over the rail to the Event Guard on the marble of the P&G Hall to get help to you NOW (only time sensitive AND serious situations).

<b>Situation</b>	<b>Solution</b>
Patron comes on wrong date/time	Get FS to assist
Patron does not like seat or location	Get FS to assist in reseating if possible
At curtain, patron is waiting for friends in line at Ticketing Services	Politely offer for them to go inside & that you'll seat friends when they arrive
Patron's seat behind large wheelchair or view obstructed	Get FS immediately to assist in reseating if possible
Patron unable to access seat due to Medical Necessity	Get FS immediately to assist in reseating
Patron (or patrons child) is loud or disturbing other patrons – <i>do NOT wait for nearby patrons to complain. Be proactive!</i>	Politely ask patron to quiet down; if patron cannot quiet child, suggest that they move to lobby until child is quiet. If behavior persists, immediately get FS

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Patrons shown to seats and other patrons already occupying seats	Double check date/time; then check row & seat on both tickets. If correct, fold seated patrons tickets & find FS immediately; if incorrect, reseat accordingly.
Camera flashes or recording devices noted (some shows allow cameras; MOD will advise when allowed)	Stand close to aisle & get attention of patron to discourage use; if behavior persists, advise FS immediately
Patron comments that theater is too hot or too cold; sound is too loud or too low	Advise patron you will alert staff; relay their concern to FS immediately with location
Patron wants to go backstage to give flowers or note to actor	Offer to take item for them, explaining house policy. Give any items to FS
Patron spills drink, gum found on seat, or other maintenance issue noticed (broken seat, light out, etc...)	Notify FS immediately; they will contact housekeeping or engineering to rectify
Patron enters with baby in arms & only has ticket for one person	Seek FS immediately; patron will need to purchase inexpensive ticket (i.e. last row of balcony) for child & FS can assist
Patron drapes coat over railing	Politely ask patron to remove coat, or offer to take to coat check; explain that it violates fire code

Any other situations that you are unsure of how to handle, please seek your Floor Supervisor quickly for assistance.

## PATRONS WITH DISABILITIES

At the Aronoff Center, we are committed to providing all our patrons with a comfortable and enjoyable experience. We recognize that a disability may come to anyone, regardless of age, sex, race, religion, or socioeconomic status. We also recognize that the key to good patron service is to see the **person** with whom you are dealing and to communicate appropriately.

The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) mandates reasonable accommodations be made for all patrons in public facilities. The following guidelines are a resource for you to provide every patron with quality service and attention – disabled or able bodied.

- ◆ Treat everyone as you would like to be treated.
- ◆ **Offer** to assist first and only *assist when asked*.
- ◆ Speak clearly and audibly when talking to all patrons.
- ◆ See the person who has the disability as a person, not as a disability.
- ◆ Speak to the person at their appropriate age level; avoid “talking down.”
- ◆ Be patient.
- ◆ Speak directly to the individual, not to a companion or an interpreter.
- ◆ Introduce yourself, using a normal tone of voice.
- ◆ Treat adults as adults. A physical disability is *different* from a diminished mental capability.

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- ◆ Use first names only when that familiarity is extended to everyone present.
- ◆ Be considerate. It might take extra time for a person with a disability to respond.
- ◆ If you receive a request for assistance which you cannot fulfill, be polite in explaining why you cannot help.  
For instance, ushers are not required to assist persons with disabilities into the restrooms; though, if a member of your ushering team is comfortable doing so, summon that usher.
- ◆ Relax. Don't worry about using common expressions like "See you later" or "I've got to run along" when talking to persons with disabilities.

#### Persons who use a wheelchair or crutches

- Keep in mind hovering around the person and offering unsolicited help indicates the assumption of inability, and most likely will upset the patron. Patrons may appear to struggle in your eyes, but are doing fine in theirs.
- Don't take offense if the person declines help, politely or otherwise.
- Leaning or hanging on a person's wheelchair is an invasion of that person's body space.
- Whenever possible, allow a person who uses a wheelchair or crutches to keep them within reach.
- You may assist with a transfer if the patron in a wheelchair desires assistance and asks for it.
- Consider distance, weather conditions, and surfaces such as stairs, curbs, carpeting, or inclines when giving directions.

#### Persons with hearing loss

- Speak clearly and audibly.
- Be flexible in your language. If the person has difficulty understanding you, rephrase your statement using simpler words. If the difficulty persists, stop repeating and write it down.
- Keep sentences short and face the patrons as often as possible.
- Be a lively speaker. Use facial expressions that match your tone of voice and use moderate gestures and body movements to aid communication.
- Under the ADA, "hearing ear" dogs are allowed in with the patron. These are "working dogs"; therefore, please avoid petting the animals unless the patron invites you.

#### Persons with vision loss

- Introduce yourself, using a normal tone of voice.
- Use the person's last name (Dr. Jones, Ms. Smith) whenever possible to be clear to whom you are speaking. Let the person know when you are ending the conversation or moving away.
- Ask if help is required.
- When giving assistance, allow the person to take your arm - do not pull the patron along.
- Be alert to any steps or changes in level, and explain the upcoming changes.
- Be alert to any changes in lighting and explain the changes.
- Use specifics such as *left or right, forward or backward*.

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- Under the ADA, “seeing eye” dogs are allowed in the facility with the patron. These are "working dogs"; please avoid petting the animals unless the patron invites you.
- Always walk on the side of the patron, away from the assisting dog.
- Guide the patron to the appropriate seat and place their hand on the arm of the seat.

#### Persons with speech difficulties

- Give your complete attention to the patron.
- Avoid correcting, finishing sentences, and speaking for the person.
- Allow extra time. Give help when needed.
- Keep your manner encouraging. Maintain gentle voice and facial expressions.
- Ask questions that require short answers or, when possible, a nod or shake of the head.
- Admit if you have difficulty understanding. Repeat what you *do* understand, then allow the person to repeat the misunderstood portion of the exchange.

#### Persons with mental retardation

- Speak slowly and distinctly.
- Give your complete attention to the patron.
- ***Showing*** is more effective than *telling*.
- Tell/show the patron what is *expected* instead of what is not allowed.
- Keep your manner encouraging. Maintain gentle voice and facial expressions.
- Exceptions to the rules should be based on reason and necessity.
- Admit if you have difficulty understanding, and ask questions.
- Repeat what you *do* understand, then allow the person to repeat the misunderstood portion of the exchange.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

Amended 7/15, superseding any policy/procedure previously in place

A set of accessible doors is located off the Sixth Street plaza, which enter into the lobby near the Jarson-Kaplan Theater. Patrons attending events in the Procter & Gamble Hall may then cross the box office to the Otto M. Budig lobby.

The upper art gallery also has a set of accessible doors, which are located off the Seventh Street plaza.

Each theater has its own elevator for accessibility, and all of our restrooms are accessible for patrons in wheelchairs.

Assisted Listening Devices (ALD’s) are available for guests at the Guest Services Desk in the Procter & Gamble Hall and the Jarson-Kaplan Theater coat room. The ALD is a headset and infrared beam system. The headsets provide amplified sound or audio description, depending on the event.

Audio described or sign language interpreted performances are available at no charge. Patrons must request the services from Box Office at least one week prior to opening night for arrangements to be made and the service to be possible.

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The Aronoff Center owns wheelchairs that may be borrowed by guests in the building. The Procter & Gamble Hall has 24 spaces for patrons using wheelchairs which are available on all three seating levels. The Jarson-Kaplan Theater has spaces for patrons in wheelchairs on both sides of the theater and on all three levels.

Assistive animals are permitted anywhere in the building. They should not be distracted or disturbed in any way. Please speak directly to the patron and not the assisting animal.

Many signs in the Aronoff Center, including the signs and buttons in the elevators, are in Braille.

Attitude is the last barrier to overcome, and the language we use directly reflects our attitude. Please remember to refer to patrons using wheelchairs as a person in a wheelchair and a patron who has a visual impairment as just that – a patron who is blind or visually impaired. This focuses on the person and not the disability.

## **GENERAL CUSTOMER SERVICE GUIDELINES**

Customer service not only extends to our patrons, but also to other staff and volunteers. CAA prides itself on offering excellent customer service as well as developing diverse audiences. Often CAA produces events which highlight different cultures, and invites communities into the facility who may be unfamiliar with the theaters.

This also means that there will be many cultures and people within our facilities, who may be unfamiliar to volunteers. ALL patrons, regardless of nationality, race, perceived sexual orientation, gender, disability or socio-economic income level are to be offered first class service while inside our buildings, regardless of individual feelings.

There are three classifications of customer service which are described at training:

- **Expected Service** is when the customers' basic expectations are met; i.e. giving accurate and complete directions with a smile.
- **Tragic Moment** is when we have customer service failure; i.e. directing someone to the wrong side of the theater for their seats, or ignoring them when in the lobby. Our goal is to avoid these at all costs.
- **Magic Moment** is where we have not only met, but exceeded the patrons' expectations; i.e. helping someone who is ill until their family can be with them, or anticipating a need such as where the water fountains are if they need to take a pill.

Magic Moments do not have to be large gestures, and in fact are sometimes acts that you might forget, but that the patron will remember. Our goal is for a positive and memorable experience for all patrons. At the very least we want to provide them with expected service and always strive to offer magic moments in our theater so patrons enjoy their live theater experience and return again for more.

Remember, you may be the only staff person a patron encounters, and it is imperative that patrons take away a positive experience. As a valued representative of CAA your pride in

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your role as a volunteer enhances the quality of entertainment and service the Aronoff Center provides. These guidelines are to be followed while volunteering.

**Body Language:**

- Begin and end every patron interaction with direct eye contact
- Face patrons when they are interacting with you
- Smile and sincerely welcome patrons to the Aronoff Center
- Match facial expressions to words (i.e. concern shown when concerned, etc...)
- Exhibit good posture (no slouching, no leaning on railings or walls, no crossed arms)
- Read patrons body language as well; note if they are frustrated and respond suitably
- Approach those who look lost or confused and ask “May I help you?”

**Appropriate Tone of Voice:**

- Should be calm, sincere, and light
- Should offer a suggestion to help, rather than condemnation
- Should never infer disgust, unhappiness, sarcasm
- Should relay to patron that their concerns are being handled seriously, even if volunteer or staff person personally finds the concern superfluous
- Should express concern, respect and attention

**Employ Active Listening:**

- Face patron and acknowledge what is being said with a head nod, or verbal “ok”
- Restate concerns/comments so that you have understood them correctly
- Offer solutions; if you cannot offer solutions, relay that you will bring the issue to the attention of your supervisor
- Thank the patron for bringing the issue to your attention
- Afterwards, follow up to insure patron needs are met

If you seek first to understand, it is easier to be understood. A way to do this is to employ active listening. We realize that most of your interactions with patrons will not be long enough to employ all these skills; however, we’d like you to keep these in mind when interacting with anyone while at the Aronoff Center.

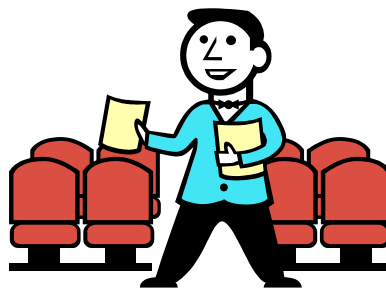
Another way to show respect and authenticity is to employ **T.A.C.T. (Talk After Careful Thinking)**. This allows you to think about what the patron is actually asking, without any other extraneous filters from you or the patron. Once you are sure there are no biases or filters changing how you view the patron or the question asked, then you can answer their question politely and positively.

At the end of each patron encounter, thank the patron for attending. Without the patrons, there is no Aronoff Center.

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## Usher Information



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## BECOMING AN USHER

Amended 8/13, superseding any previous policy/procedure in place

The impression an audience member receives upon his or her arrival is key. A thoughtful and respectful staff is one of the more lasting impressions taken away from the Aronoff Center. Attending a performance at the Aronoff Center should carry with it a sense of occasion, a feeling of “going out on the town.” It is the Ushers who make it possible for the patron to have a truly enjoyable event by providing a friendly greeting, accurate directions or an extra service.

We recognize that all ushers must be well trained before the necessary confidence can be exhibited to achieve good customer service. The usher-training program is incremental, which allows learning to occur over time. CAA Staff provide the information and are available to answer questions, **but it is up to the volunteer to make time to learn the information.**

Potential ushers, who have applied, are asked to an interview at the Aronoff Center. Upon successful completion of the interview, applicants receive a Front of House manual, quiz, and online scheduling directions for orientation. Applicants must schedule online and attend one (1) three-hour orientation.

**All ushers must complete the three-part training program to be ACTIVE ushers:**

1. **General Orientation**

Orientations are typically held bi-annually. These orientations offer an overview of the commitment required of an usher, and an in-depth look at the volunteer program. At the conclusion of the orientation, the prospective usher can then schedule for step 2, Volunteer in Training.

2. **Volunteer In Training (VIT)**

The prospective volunteer must complete two events as a Volunteer-In-Training. A VIT is paired with a training buddy (an experienced volunteer). Upon completion of these two VIT events, ushers receive an official volunteer name badge and may schedule future events along with the rest of our active volunteers, except for Lottery events until the Emergency Procedure Training is complete.

3. **Emergency Procedures Training**

After completion of the general orientation, we hold a specific training to review evacuation routes, severe weather procedures, seating issues, and dress. All new ushers must attend within a year of the general orientation date to remain active. Only those who have completed this training are able to work lottery events.

Active ushers may be asked (or choose) to participate in the following:

1. Refresher training at the beginning of each season (General Orientation).
2. Mid-season training (Emergency Procedures Training)
3. Other trainings as determined by CAA staff (i.e. Usher Recharge session)

The **Emeritus Status** is for volunteers who are no longer active in our system. Volunteers who meet specific criteria and are extended an invitation to participate may remain involved with the Aronoff Center as an Emeritus Volunteer. Only those volunteers who are invited may be designated as Emeritus.

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## USHER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Amended 4/15, superseding any previous Position Description to date

**Position goal:** To provide excellent customer service to the Aronoff Center's patrons and visitors while being an ambassador for CAA and promoting its resident companies.

### **Position responsibilities in performance/event capacity:**

- to thoroughly understand emergency procedures and to assist in case of an emergency
- to thoroughly understand the house layout, seating charts and to correctly direct patrons
- to carry out duties as assigned per performance or event; including but not limited to program stuffing and distribution, ticket taking, ushering, greeting, directing patrons, working in coat-check, candy sales, and assisting patrons with special needs
- to be available to patrons before, during and after performances and events
- to report any and all problems to the Floor Supervisor – immediately!

### **Position requirements:**

- Able to work any level (balcony, loge, orchestra) of any theater (Procter & Gamble, Jarson Kaplan, Fifth Third Bank) equally well
- Able to be flexible in nightly position assignments
- Able to stand for long amounts of time (up to 5 hours) to insure patron safety
- Available to volunteer **at least 10 hours** per month, each month, totaling 80 hours in a season; otherwise will communicate any needed changes to volunteer office
- Able to access computer regularly to schedule shifts
- Able to address patron issues in the theater quickly and effectively
- Able to show enthusiasm for patrons, resident companies and for CAA consistently
- Able to offer smiling, welcoming, and accurate service to patrons
- Able to work with a broad range of people and show respect for all cultures
- Able to speak and understand English; Able to read and follow directions
- Able to work independently or as a team member
- Able to read and comprehend seating charts and tickets
- Able to communicate clearly and instruct patrons through theaters correctly
- Able to remain calm under pressure and seek help as needed
- Must attend all initial orientation and training sessions
- Able to arrive at call time consistently
- Able to accept constructive criticism
- Must be at least 18 years old
- Interest in performing service to the arts community

### **Physical demands:**

Ability to negotiate stairs easily and be comfortable with heights

Ability to stand/be on feet for lengthy amounts of time (up to 5 hours or more)

Ability to quickly lead patrons down stairs and out of building during evacuations

Ability to see and read tickets to direct patrons accurately, often in dim lighting

### **Supervised nightly by:**

Manager on Duty, Floor Supervisors, Usher Captains and Volunteer Manager

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## CAA EXPECTATIONS OF USHERS

Amended 7/15, superseding any previous expectation to date

A season for our purposes is September 1 through August 31 of any given year. It is NOT a calendar year.

- A commitment to a minimum of **80 hours (spread throughout the season** – hours start when you enter the building and end when you leave). Aiming to work 2 per month, calendar permitting, will keep you on track to achieve this goal. You are encouraged to surpass this minimum commitment.
- It is mandatory that each season volunteers usher **2 Gold Sheet Events** (see section entitled “Gold Sheet Events”)
  - Please note that many organizations around the city utilize the same software, and if you volunteer for any other organization using it you will see shifts and hours all in one place. Only shifts worked at the Aronoff Center go toward the 80 hours expectation.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Amended 7/15, superseding any previous policy/procedure in place

If you are unable to volunteer for a calendar month or more, you can request a leave of absence. The Volunteer Manager will provide credit for the month(s) you were unable to work, so that you do not need to make up hours. A Leave of Absence may be taken for a period between 1-6 months, but no longer than 6-months and can be taken retroactively. Please contact the Volunteer Office to be placed on a Leave AND to be taken off a leave.

- ◆ If you are unable to volunteer for a period longer than six months, retraining as determined by the Volunteer Manager will be needed to return to active status

## CALENDAR

Amended 7/14, superseding any previous policy/procedure in place

All volunteers receive a bi-monthly volunteer newsletter that contains a three-month calendar of events, *which is subject to change regularly.*

- ◆ Weekly updates are recorded on the **Volunteer Calendar Hotline, 513-977-4121.** This message lets you know of any changes to the Events calendar. This exact message is also emailed to those with email access.
- ◆ Changes to the calendar are also posted as they become known. It is wise to check the schedule on [www.myvolunteerpage.com](http://www.myvolunteerpage.com) regularly as well as the newspaper or on [www.cincinnatiarts.org/event\\_search.jsp](http://www.cincinnatiarts.org/event_search.jsp)

## EVENT TYPES

Amended 7/14, superseding any previous policy/procedure in place

**Regular Events:** All events will be available on [www.MyVolunteerPage.com](http://www.MyVolunteerPage.com) one month prior to the opening date of a show at **Noon**. For example, *Evita* opens September 6 and runs through September 18. At Noon on August 6 we will make available **all** the available dates for the entire run of that show.

**Gold Sheet Events:** To assure proper staffing and customer service levels for every type of show presented at the Aronoff Center, it is mandatory for volunteers to usher two Gold Sheet Events per year. Examples of these events might include: events with unknown

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content, events with potentially offensive content, shows occurring on holidays or events with extremely early or late arrivals/endings.

When scheduling on [www.myvolunteerpage.com](http://www.myvolunteerpage.com) the words “Gold Sheet” will be printed on them after the show title to distinguish them from other events (i.e. “Nutcracker – Gold sheet”). On the newsletter calendar they will have “-GS” listed after the event title or specific event time.

The Volunteer Office will track the number of gold sheets worked, and that number will appear on the qualifications page of the My Profile tab online within 2 weeks of the event worked.

**Lottery Events:** Typically a few very popular 1-night events are held in the Procter & Gamble Hall. Because there are nearly 900 ushers who might enjoy filling one of the 56 spots available for these shows, a system was created for all active ushers to sign up. *Volunteers in Training are not included in this system, nor are those who have not completed the Emergency Procedures Inservice.* (In the volunteer newsletter, these events appear as a green space with light lettering on the calendar.)

- Once ushers have confirmed 2 lottery events in a season, they are no longer eligible to enter the lotteries. Working as a substitute does not count towards this total. Those who were confirmed and needed the sub (i.e. someone subbed for them) will have that confirmation count towards their total of 2 lottery confirmations.
- Ushers may click on the box which states "sign up" & save. Nothing will show up in your assignments until winners are chosen – if you win. The system limits us to allowing 250 ushers to enter the lottery.
- **BUDDIES:** Only 5 pairs of partners allowed per lottery. You both must be signed up for the event. **BEFORE** the event is chosen, someone must tell the volunteer office that you & your friend would like to work together if one person is chosen.
- Two weeks from the posting date (so if it's posted on the 5th, on the 19th), you check your "assignments" tab -the only place a lottery winner can tell if they were chosen **IS ON** the assignments tab.
- If you are chosen, you have 7 days to confirm the event on your "assignments." If you have not confirmed the event by then, we will remove you and schedule someone else.
- **IF YOU NO LONGER CAN WORK** the event, **decline it.** DO NOT find a sub, as the office will pick more winners. The only time you need to find a sub as a lottery winner is **IF YOU HAVE CONFIRMED** already - this is true of any event.
- We will **NOT** email winners - you need to check your assignments tab.
- If a lottery is not filled with lottery winners within 5 days of the event itself, the event will be opened up to anyone who would like to work. Those who won and confirmed prior to the event opening will have it count toward the 2 lotteries for the season. If the event is opened and ushers sign up during that specific time frame, this confirmation of lottery will **NOT** count toward their 2 for the season.
- Scheduling is first come first serve. It is also an honor system – please do not abuse it. **In the first week after a posting, sign up for 1 event date in the P&G first - 1 only!** If you wish to work more than 1 shift in the P&G, please wait at least one week from posting so that everyone has the chance to work.
- You may **not** work more than 1 shift in the JK or 5/3 Theaters on any run of a show– unless we specifically ask for more help; this does include Education shows.

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**Active Volunteer sign-up procedures:** Active volunteers sign-up for events on the [www.myvolunteerpage.com](http://www.myvolunteerpage.com) website.

- **For those without their own computer:** Computers are available in the Volunteer area or in the Volunteer Office, when the Volunteer Office is open. Enter the CAA Administrative Entrance on 7<sup>th</sup> street and take the elevator to Floor 3 to find the Volunteer Office.
- Ushers must be diligent in checking for openings and available to work alternate dates & times other than first choice preferences.
- Each volunteer is expected to work a minimum of 80 hours (about 16-19 shows) a season (beginning September 1 through August 31) – there are typically enough events for ushers to work more than 80 hours.
- *Hours are logged by the office within 7 days of the show.* Ushers do NOT need to log hours for events.
- A confirmed event is always the ushers' responsibility until it is handed off to another usher AND the office knows about it.

**Volunteers in Training:** After the Orientation session, prospective volunteers sign-up ONLY for two Volunteer-In-Training (VIT) events online. They may not sub for anyone or work any other shows but VIT events. After completion of the second training event, VIT's qualification will change to that of active volunteer and they can begin scheduling any other events.

## ONLINE SCHEDULING OF EVENTS

Amended 7/15, supersedes any previous policy/procedure in place

(It is your responsibility to schedule yourself for the minimum required hours.)

Please note that many organizations around the city utilize the same software, and if you volunteer for any other organization using it you will see shifts and hours all in one place. Only shifts worked at the Aronoff Center go toward the 80 hours expectation.

1. Go to [www.myvolunteerpage.com](http://www.myvolunteerpage.com) and input your Username and Password  
Once logged on, you will see 7 tabs across the top of the window.

**(Home) (Sign-up) (Assignments) (Hours Log) (Contact) (Reports) (My Profile)**

NEVER remove any hours from the Hours Log – that is our only record of your activity

2. Scheduling takes 2 steps a) signing up & b) confirming it

### **Signing up:**

1. **Choose Sign Up Tab:** The events available will be listed by theater.

- a. **If volunteering for another organization**, you will have to filter the page to only show shifts for the Aronoff Center. At the top of the page, choose the organization you'd like to see using the drop down box.

2. **Choose Event name:** on the underlined event title & a new page will open

3. **Date Chosen:** Scroll down to the list of dates available

- a. Click in the box next to the event date/time you want – NEVER choose “select all” – ever.

4. scroll to the bottom right of the page and hit

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**Please note:** scheduled does NOT mean confirmed; ushers may only work confirmed shows.

**Confirming:**

1. **Choose “Assignments”** tab
  - a. Once “Assignments” opens, scroll down to the show you just scheduled.
2. **Click on “Confirm”** (Click "OK" on the box that pops up)
3. **SAVE**

Those who have NOT CONFIRMED in time will be removed 10 days prior to the event date for which they are scheduled (i.e. on the 5<sup>th</sup> unconfirmed ushers will be removed for the 15<sup>th</sup>)

Ushers are responsible for checking the website, especially prior to coming downtown, for correct arrival times, scheduled events and available events. The office will not schedule any usher over the phone.

## **EARLY SCHEDULING (prior to an event posting)**

Amended 7/14, superseding any previous policy/procedure in place

Only 20 Early Sign-ups are accepted per event date in the P&G; 4 accepted in the JK per event date; 2 accepted in the 5/3 per event date.

*We limit the number of “early sign-ups” we accept (Blue Passes & Phone sign-ups) to keep the process fair for everyone.*

**Blue Sheet Event Passes (blue sheets):** Certain events are harder to fill, and we may offer ushers a perk for working these events. One perk is a Blue Sheet Event Pass. The event pass allows you to schedule and confirm for any event, provided the following are met:

1. The volunteer office receives the pass at least **1 weekday before** the event is *posted*.
2. The pass is received in the volunteer office **BEFORE** the deadline stated on the pass.
3. The pass is received no earlier than four (4) months prior to an event posting.

Some general guidelines to using the passes:

- ◆ Blue Sheets are good only for one volunteer and are **not** transferable to another volunteer (once the pass is turned in).
- ◆ If used for a Lottery event, the pass guarantees a confirmed spot on the Event Usher Roster. (ie: you do not have to participate in the lottery process itself, when the event is posted, it will show as confirmed in your schedule). Passes can be mailed or dropped off to the office; Blue Sheets received for events more than 4 months out will be returned.
- ◆ Once an usher receives a Blue Sheet, the usher is responsible for keeping track of the Blue Sheet. Requests for replacements of lost Blue Sheets will not be honored.
- ◆ If an usher cancels the event for any reason, the Blue Sheet will not be returned.
- ◆ It is up to the volunteer office to determine when a Blue Sheet is to be reused.
- ◆ If an event cancels within a week of the date for which a Blue Sheet was used, the Blue Sheet will not be returned. Ushers will receive hours for the cancelled event.

**Phone Sign-ups:** At the end of a season, we offer rewards for those who work above the required number of hours; one reward is a phone sign-up. These are like blue sheets BUT, you don’t have to worry about getting a piece of paper in to the office.

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The timing of use of a phone sign-up is up to the individual. Remain aware that some events fill quickly with any early sign-up; phone sign-ups do not supersede, but fall within, scheduling procedures.

**Scheduling 2 or more people:** Ushers may schedule as many people as they would like, but they will need usernames and passwords of all their friends they are scheduling. To sign two (2) people (or more) up:

- sign in as you and schedule yourself for the desired event (**do NOT confirm** yet, otherwise you're confirmed and there may be no more spots for your friend)
- sign out as you
- sign in as your friend
- schedule your friend for the same date/time as you & confirm them immediately
- sign out as your friend
- sign in as you and confirm yourself

**SAVE every change you make.** Write down usernames and passwords (yours and everyone else's) and keep in a safe place!

### **What if the event is full and I can only work a particular date?**

If there are no available spaces on an event, don't give up. You can:

1. Mark yourself as "add me to the back-up list" in the box on the top left of each event dates/times page. The office will email those marked ushers first for cancellations.
2. Check the schedule on [www.myvolunteerpage.com](http://www.myvolunteerpage.com) regularly. If someone declines the event, you may be able to pick up opened shifts.
3. Join the **AronoffUshers Yahoo Group** to get sub requests directly from other ushers. Check your email regularly.
4. Shifts may open up all the time, and most likely 10 days before the event shift.

When signing-up for events, remember that only active, fully qualified Aronoff Center Ushers may volunteer at performances. There may be times when your qualification levels are lowered, depending on your communication and activity level.

## **CHANGING YOUR USHER SCHEDULE**

Amended 4/15, superseding any previous policy/procedure in place

1) **Unconfirmed event:** decline the event in the "Assignments" tab. This releases you from your commitment.

2) **Confirmed event:** you are **expected and you cannot change your schedule**. Contact the office immediately and follow the outlined steps below:

- A) Find a sub on your own. You can contact friends, fellow ushers who went through orientation with you or utilize the YahooGroup.
- B) Contact the Office (more than two (2) days prior to the event), by calling 513-977-4117 ext. 4. Last minute (day of the event & 1 day prior) cancellations should be called in ONLY. (see C below)
  - An email will then be sent from the office to those volunteers who indicated "add me to the back-up list" about the opening.

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- C) **If last minute** (day of the event or 1 day prior) or **an emergency occurs** so that you cannot work, please call the Volunteer Message line, 513-977-4117 ext. 4. *Emails are NOT acceptable for last minute cancellations and will count as a no-show regardless.*

**Substitutions:** An email will be initiated by the office once you have cancelled the event. It remains in your best interest to also search for a sub via the AronoffUsher Yahoo! group (see below). Subs should be called in to 977-4117 ext. 4, so we know whom to expect.

**No-Shows:** If a volunteer fails to report when confirmed, and does not notify the Aronoff Center appropriately (as outlined above), they will be reported as a **no-show** for that event. Any volunteer who has **two** no-shows in a season (i.e.: 9/1/14-8/31/15) will no longer continue as an usher until they can complete a future volunteer orientation.

**Cancellations:** If you are confirmed and need to cancel *you MUST contact us at least 2 days prior to the show*. As long as the show appears on your Assignments page, we are expecting you to be here so please give us notice if something changes. Any volunteer with **Four** cancellations in a season (i.e.: 9/1/14-8/31/15) will no longer continue as an usher until they can complete a future volunteer orientation.

- When an usher is absent, others must pick up the slack. Volunteer records track all the events worked, as well as cancellations, no-shows and late arrivals.
- ☞ *Either 4 cancellations or 2 no-shows results in a change in status – not a combination of both.*

## CONTACTING THE ARONOFF CENTER

Amended 11/08, superseding any previous policy/procedure in place

All volunteers are encouraged to route their calls to the **Volunteer Message Center, 513-977-4117**. This number gives the following options:

Press 1-- If you would like to become a volunteer at the Aronoff Center  
Press 2—For current volunteers *specifically* directed to this box (i.e.: party RSVP)  
Press 3—For information regarding private Tours of the facility  
**Press 4--If you are a CURRENT VOLUNTEER and would like to leave a message.**

- You will use the “**Press 4**” option most often, and it is checked throughout day. These calls are monitored during weekday business hours and in evenings and on weekends, when Usher Captains work.
- Extension 4 is the only line that Usher Captains can access, and where they will look to see if there are cancellations for an event.

When leaving a message, **please speak slowly, clearly and spell last names**. If we cannot understand you, we will not receive the information you tried to share. **If you must speak with someone, please let us know to call you back. If not, we will take appropriate action on your message *without returning your call*.**

- Emailing the office ([volunteers@cincinnatiarts.org](mailto:volunteers@cincinnatiarts.org)) is for regular communication with staff, not last minute cancellations. *Usher Captains do NOT have access to this email.*

**\*\*Please note: Usher Captains only work when there is an event in the P&G; there are some evenings/weekends when the calls are not monitored\*\***

Please note that this manual is a work in progress and updates are given in your Newsletters.

## YAHOO GROUPS USHER SITE

Amended 7/15, superseding any policy/procedure previously in place

The Aronoff Center created a site on Yahoo Groups for communication among. This site makes it easy to contact hundreds of ushers at once via email. To request a sub or ride share, once you are a member, email [aronoffushers@yahoogroups.com](mailto:aronoffushers@yahoogroups.com). Membership is totally voluntary and is moderated.

To Join: Email [aronoffushers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:aronoffushers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

To unsubscribe: Email: [AronoffUshers-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:AronoffUshers-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com)

## DRESS CODE

Amended 7/15, superseding any previous Dress Code in place

It is very important to note that there is never an exception to this dress code. If you arrive for your shift without the proper attire, **you may not be able to usher.**

### Ushers must supply the following attire:

Women: **Deep Black skirt or tailored dress slacks** (jeans (anything with rivets), leggings, leather or Capri pants, shorts or skorts unacceptable)  
**White, collared dress blouse buttoned to the collar bone, ironed & worn tucked in** (please, bright white only). Sleeves must cover the armpits, and must be free of any colored detailing. For warmth, white turtlenecks or t-shirts may be worn underneath the white blouse only. Sweaters or Blazers are prohibited. The dress shirt collar must accommodate the men's style tie, which is given to you.

**Black dress shoes** - must be safe on steps (no sport shoes, Crocs, very high heels, open-toed or thong type shoes)

**Black hosiery** - must be worn at all times; beige hose, or black hose/socks.

Men: **Deep Black Dress Trousers** (jeans (anything with rivets), leather pants or shorts unacceptable)

**White, collared, & ironed dress shirt worn tucked in** (please, bright white only). Sleeves must cover the armpits, and be free of any colored detailing. For warmth white turtlenecks may be worn, but under white shirt only. Sweaters or Blazers are prohibited. The dress shirt collar must accommodate the men's style tie, which is given to you.

**Black dress shoes** (no sport shoes, open-toed shoes or Crocs)

**Black socks**

**Flashlight:** Part of the uniform, used to assist patrons in the dark theater and for emergencies. It should be pocket sized, have a single bulb and be bright enough to see in pitch black theaters.

When escorting a patron to their seat, ushers should point the beam at the patron's feet to minimize distraction and assist them. It should never point at the stage, be used for reading programs or looking at watches.

Barrel LED flashlights (with multiple bulbs) are unacceptable because they are too bright.

### CAA supplies the following 3 items:

1. **Vest:** All vests hanging are owned by CAA and **MUST** be returned to the Volunteer Room with all the pockets emptied of all items.

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- a. Volunteers may purchase their own vest by filling out an order form, accompanied by a check or money order. Vest price is \$25.
2. **Name Badge:** CAA issued name badges must be worn at all times and are part of the uniform. A badge with your first name will be provided to you, and if lost, a replacement badge can be purchased for \$5.00.
3. **Tie:** A green zipper tie is given to all ushers and is part of the uniform. This is the only tie that should be worn with the white collared dress shirt. The tie should go under the collar of the shirt, and must be worn close to the neck.

**Unacceptable Accessories:**

- Fanny packs
- excessive perfume
- pins or buttons unrelated to the Aronoff Center
- opera glasses
- binoculars
- **Cell phones** on your person while volunteering in the theaters.
- facial piercings
- barrel flashlights with 7-9 LED bulbs

**Pins:** Volunteers may choose to wear up to three Aronoff Center related pins or badges on their vests, in addition to their name badge. This includes any awarded stars for years of service.

**Grooming:** Hair should be neat and tasteful. Clothing should be professional looking (neat, tucked in and pressed.) Women’s makeup should be minimal and in good taste. Good general hygiene is encouraged. Excessive perfume can be problematic for patrons, staff and other volunteers; please wear minimal amounts or avoid wearing any at all.

## **ARRIVAL**

Amended 7/15, superseding any previous policy/procedure in place

The Aronoff Center could not possibly function without a Front of House volunteer staff.  
Thank you in advance for your promptness and courtesy.

All volunteers must arrive at the Aronoff Center *and check in* at the time stated on the “start time” on [www.myvolunteerpage.com](http://www.myvolunteerpage.com) for the given event. The arrival time varies for each event but is usually one and a half hours before curtain. Consistent tardiness (more than 4 instances) will not be tolerated, regardless of whether a call is made. The MOD meeting starts within 5-minutes of your stated call time, and imparts critical information you must retain to assist patrons accurately; it is fundamental that you be on time to participate in the meeting.

Arrival times are set based on pre-performance needs to allow Ushers ample time to:

- Receive specific instructions about the evenings’ events within the facility
- Participate in stuffing programs
- Become familiar with floors and assigned positions (reviewing seating layout as well as emergency exits)
- Perimeter typically opens one hour prior to curtain and ushers must be in position

If you are going to be late, it is important that you notify the volunteer information line 513-977-4117 ext 4, as soon as possible so that we know to expect you. Please leave your cell phone number so we may return your call.

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If you have not called and arrive late, you may be unable to work.

*Please keep in mind the Front of House Staff reserves the right not to accept a volunteer who arrives late.*

## PARKING

With more than 6000 parking spaces within a two block radius of the Aronoff Center, volunteers have many options for parking. Please avoid arriving late by allowing plenty of time for traffic, Reds or Bengals games, street festivals (i.e. Oktoberfest Zinzinnati) and to find parking before your call time. Please note that downtown events often increase the cost of parking in lots. Contact the volunteer office if you need another map with specific directions.

- Olympic Garage often offers a discount to volunteers when the Volunteer ID is shown.
- ABM - P&G Parking garage at 300 E 6<sup>th</sup> Street offers \$2 parking weekdays after 5p and all day on weekends specifically for volunteers, regardless of special events, when name tag is shown.
- Fountain Square is \$5 after 5p on weekdays, and weekends/holidays.
- Please note that parking meters are in effect 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday.

## EVALUATIONS

Amended 7/14, superseding any policy previously in place

The Floor Supervisors review all ushers' customer service performance yearly, and records of these evaluations are maintained by the volunteer office. The Volunteer Manager checks all volunteer activity records, and evaluations.

Volunteers who are below minimum requirements receive a letter, reminding them of policy, placing them on probation, and requesting a personal review of time commitments. If volunteers receive this letter twice, they are unable to volunteer in the program.

## BENEFITS

Amended 7/15, superseding any policy/procedure previously in place

Other than seeing performances for free when ushering an event, assisting with maintaining a lower cost associated with the arts, furthering the mission of CAA, sharing their passion for the arts by becoming ambassadors for the Aronoff Center and assisting all communities in enjoying and appreciating the arts, the following benefits are available for ushers:

- ◆ **Volunteer newsletter:** All volunteers receive a copy. The newsletter has informative articles, announces volunteer benefits and policy changes and has a 3-month calendar. It can also be found at [www.cincinnatiarts.org/manual](http://www.cincinnatiarts.org/manual)
- ◆ **Raffle:** Each month you volunteer, you are entered into the raffle. Winners are notified.
- ◆ **Party:** CAA staff and Board of Trustees host an annual volunteer recognition party to honor all the active Aronoff Center for the Arts and Music Hall volunteers.
- ◆ **Hours Reward System:** Hours over the required 80 are rewarded with special tiered perks within a season. A season goes from the first of September through the end of the

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following August (9/1/15-8/31/16 is an example of a season). Perks are awarded at the beginning of the following season (i.e. in the month of 9/1/16)

101-129 hours	2 blue passes 1 Prize grab bag
130-175 hours	2 blue passes 1 Gift certificate 5 Free parks at Olympic 1 Private theater tour for 5 (does not include backstage)
176-299 hours	2 sign ups over the phone \$25 gift certificate to Box Office Vest (or polo or hat if already own vest) 10 free parks at Olympic 1 Private theater tour for 10 (does not include backstage)
300 and more	4 sign-ups over the phone 1 year membership to CAA Vest (or polo or hat if already own vest) 24 Free parks at Olympic 1 entry into the end of season viewing suite raffle \$50 gift certificate to Box Office

- ◆ **Invitation** to dress rehearsals by local performing companies; you must show your nametag or ID card.
- ◆ Occasional ticket discount offers
- ◆ Special viewing of the exhibitions in the Weston Art Gallery with the Director
- ◆ Invitation to special tours of the facility
- ◆ Opportunity to meet interesting people

## **FACILITY RULES FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Amended 7/14, superseding any previous policy/procedure in place

**Smoking:** No smoking of any kind is permitted in CAA facilities unless as a part of a theatrical production.

**Drinking:** Volunteers have a water cooler and soft drink machine in the Volunteer area for their use. The volunteer workroom, and/or drinking fountains are the **only place** volunteers are allowed beverages.

- ◆ Alcohol, bars, and concessions in the lobbies are for **patrons only**.
- ◆ Alcohol consumption and being under the influence while volunteering is grounds for immediate dismissal.

**Eating:** Volunteers may bring food prior to the MOD meeting or use the vending machine in the area to eat in the volunteer workroom. This is the **only place** a volunteer is permitted to eat anything, unless the Floor Supervisor has relayed special circumstances about the event.

- ◆ Gum chewing is prohibited.

**Weapons:** Weapons of any kind are not permitted in this public assembly venue. This prohibits concealed carry when volunteering.

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**Breaks:** If you must take a break (less than 10 minutes) please inform your supervisor, and have another volunteer cover your position for you. The volunteer workroom phone is for volunteer use; ushers may ONLY use their cell phones in the workroom. Cell phones are not permitted on your person.

**Restrooms:** Restrooms are open and available to ushers prior to the MOD meeting on the orchestra level, house left only. Once up on the floor, ushers must be in place to allow the perimeter to open on time. If a break is needed, ushers must ensure their position is covered by another usher before leaving for the restroom. Ushers must wait until all patrons are finished using the facilities and may not stand in line with patrons during intermission.

**Theater Etiquette:** Volunteers are always on duty, and should represent the Aronoff Center to patrons in a knowledgeable, calm, respectful, quiet manner.

- Movement in and out of the theater, or up and down from your seat is distracting, and is to be kept at a *minimum*, especially at side corridor doors.
- Comments about the show or patrons should always be positive, no matter your personal opinion. Remember you are representing the Aronoff Center and the production on stage
- Use of flashlights is for patron assistance in and out of the dark theater and emergencies; they should **never** be aimed at the stage or used to read the program or look at watches
- Whispering is distracting and often heard by patrons; please keep it to a minimum
- Discussions longer than a sentence or two should always occur in the corridor.
- Cell phones should never be on an usher's person when volunteering in the theater, unless discussed with the paid staff due to emergency needs and then set to silent.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times and respond to potential issues before they are problems. Proactive ushers divert trouble, rather than just respond to it
- Anytime the house lights come up, ALL ushers stand, ready to assist patrons
- Anytime a patron is in the lobby, ALL ushers are standing ready to assist patrons

**Visitor Policy:** Friends or relatives will need a ticket to attend a performance. Volunteers may request an assignment in the vicinity of guest seats, and every effort will be made to honor the request, if possible.

**Tips:** Tips are graciously accepted from patrons, and are expected to be turned in to the Floor Supervisor. Tip money goes into the volunteer party fund.

**Performance Attendance:** Volunteers must have a ticket to see a show, unless ushering. "Sneaking in" to a performance is grounds for immediate dismissal.

**Solicitation Policy:** CAA volunteers are prohibited from distributing literature or written material of any kind, other than materials authorized by CAA. Unauthorized solicitation is prohibited.

**Respect:** CAA involves volunteers and serves patrons from many different communities and cultures. Therefore, respect for all cultures and their various traditions should be extended to all volunteers, staff and patrons, regardless of personal opinions. Comments made by any member of the Front of House staff which are interpreted in a negative manner will not be tolerated.

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**Access:** Volunteers are welcome in all areas of front of house and the volunteer area. However, the following areas are off limits to volunteers and patrons: all stages, backstage areas, dressing rooms, backstage corridors, box office and production offices. Being in an unauthorized location is grounds for immediate dismissal.

## **SEPARATION**

Amended 6/05, superseding any previous policy/procedure in place

A volunteer may be removed from the program immediately, and without warning, for any of the following:

- Disrupting performances (that includes cell phones, moving, or talking)
- Imposing personal, religious or political views on others
- Use of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Unauthorized possession of firearms, weapons, or explosives on CAA property
- Engaging in threats of violence, coercion, harassment, or acts of intimidation toward anyone on CAA premises or when representing CAA (includes using obscene or abusive language and acts of indecency)
- Theft from the Aronoff Center, its guests, staff or other volunteers
- Telling sexist, racial, ethnic jokes or slurs
- Accessing restricted areas (such as backstage, on stage, or off limit corridors)
- Repeated violation of volunteer policy/procedures

As a general rule, CAA expects each staff and volunteer to act in a mature and responsible manner at all times. However, to avoid any possible confusion, some of the more obvious unacceptable behaviors are noted below.

- Drinking or eating in front of house
- Leaving a facility early without being released by a supervisor
- Spreading rumors and/or malicious gossip; engaging in behavior designed to create discord and lack of harmony
- Observed or reported rudeness or disrespect to anyone on CAA property
- Excessive late arrivals
- Leaving assigned position or failure to be at assigned position
- Presenting self unprofessionally in manner, dress, or attitude

Unacceptable behavior may be dealt with in the following manner:

1. Verbal Warning
2. Written Warning
3. Dismissal

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## Events



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## OVERVIEW OF A TYPICAL P&G EVENT:

Amended 7/15, superseding any policy/procedure previously in place

These are procedures for ushers to follow while ushering at the Aronoff Center.

**Check-in Procedures:** Enter, on time, through the Weston Art Gallery door on 7th street. Take the elevator to the first floor and check-in with the Usher Captain. You must always enter through the Weston Art Gallery entrance to get to the volunteer workroom or to use the orchestra house left restrooms prior to the MOD meeting.

**Volunteer Workroom:** Vests are available to borrow for the night and need to be *returned at the end of your shift*. CAA supplies lockers for volunteers to store their personal effects while volunteering. At the end of the evening please leave the key in the locker for the next volunteer to use. Please leave valuables at home when volunteering.

**MOD Meeting:** The MOD will conduct a brief meeting within 5-minutes of your call time to discuss any late seating rules established by the production company and will share other information about the show. The tables in the volunteer room are numbered to determine random floor assignments by the MOD, who is also available for questions.

**Volunteer position assignment:** Floor Supervisors assign individual usher positions on their floor on a *rotating* basis, to ensure ushers are familiar with the entire theater. Floor Supervisors conduct meetings to review evacuation, any extra duties and assignments. Ushers begin stuffing programs for their floors afterwards.

The eight Aronoff Center Front of House Usher positions are: Ticket Takers, Greeters, Outside Door Ushers, Orchestra Aisle Usher, Triple Door Usher, Usher, Coatroom Attendant, and Sound Board Guard.

**Program stuffing:** Enough programs must be stuffed for each patron. **All** front of house ushers help with program stuffing on each individual floor within the theater.

**Safety Information:** Patron safety is the only thing an usher monitors which is more important than being friendly and courteous. Regardless of position, keep your eyes open for emergencies inside and outside of the house and get your Floor Supervisor involved.

**Floor Supervisor Location:** Ushers should immediately find the Floor Supervisor for any concerns, patron issues, or emergencies reported to them. Floor Supervisors are typically in their assigned floor lobby unless working with a patron. If not immediately available find the Floor Supervisor on the next floor, find an Usher Captain to radio the paid staff or contact a bartender to call for help

- In a time sensitive serious situation (ill patron/security issue) *when no one with a radio or access to a phone is available*, call over the rail to the Event Guard on the marble of the P&G Hall to get help to you NOW (only time sensitive AND serious situations).

*Any accident, no matter how big or small, must be reported to your supervisor.*

**The perimeter is open:** One hour prior to curtain, the perimeter of the theater (lobbies, bars, and restrooms) is open to the public. *All volunteers assigned to outside positions (in*

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*the lobbies) must be in place at this time, and greeting the patrons. Restroom breaks must be taken care of before perimeter opens.*

**The House is Open:** Staff backstage will let the MOD know when to open the theater doors. This is typically a half-hour prior to the curtain time, although it sometimes varies. The MOD will inform the Floor Supervisors to "open the house," and the Floor Supervisors inform the ushers; ushers do not open the house without notice from staff.

**Show time:** Around 8, 5, and 2 minutes before curtain, a signal is given to the patrons in the lobbies to alert them that the show is about to begin. The Floor Supervisor will alert you officially when it is time to close the doors of the theater.

**Patron Late Arrivals:** Production companies sometimes require a **Seating Hold**. It is imperative that we get as many people inside the theater doors before this begins. Often we have to keep late comers in the lobby for periods in excess of 15 minutes. Have the program on hand for the late arrivers stranded in the lobby. As more late patrons arrive, they should be greeted and given an approximate time when they can be seated. Direct them to the video monitors in the P&G Hall. Floor Supervisors will advise when the doors may be opened for late seating.

**Usher Seating:** Only when all latecomers have been seated and after the seating hold may ushers take an empty aisle seat in the house, closest to their assigned door. These

three (3) conditions must be met for ushers to sit:

- A) Empty seats available within 3 rows of your doors,
- B) Seat is on or one seat in from the aisles,
- C) No patrons are crossed. It is **critical** that patrons are not disturbed in this process.

**P&G THEATER STANDING POLICY:** Ushers are trained staff and have the expertise in aiding patrons in a safe exit. Due to the number of doors and patrons, we always position an usher to stand at the doors of this theater. Every volunteer who works a P&G performance is required to stand for **no less than 30 minutes** at a door.\* This timing is set to limit the amount of distraction to patrons when volunteers rotate at the door.

You are advised to rotate standing responsibilities *very discreetly* (i.e. *during applause, during scene changes*), and so that no one stands the entire performance. **There must be an usher standing at every exit in this theater – no exception.**

\*If you cannot stand for long periods of time, or quickly evacuate the theater for medical reasons, ushering may not be for you. Please contact the Volunteer Manager for other possible options within the program.

**Intermission:** Is a break for patrons and performers only; you are still on duty. **All** ushers must be on their feet, return to pre-show positions immediately, to assist patrons.

**Final Curtain:** The show is over only when the house lights go up. **Doors do not open until this point;** however, some patrons will begin leaving the theater before the house lights come up. Please do not prop open the doors for those who exit prior to house lights going up.

**Reminder:** have flashlights ready to assist patrons choosing to leave early. Avoid allowing light to enter the theater from the lobby.

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Anytime house lights come up, ushers stand at their positions for visibility. Patrons will turn in any found items to you, and report any concerns/comments they experienced. Please pass along items and concerns/comments to Floor Supervisors when you leave.

This is your last opportunity to make a lasting impression on the patrons. **SMILE!** Be friendly. **Thank them for coming and invite them back.**

**Empty House:** All ushers walk the rows near their assigned doors to retrieve lost articles and unwanted programs and then assist with other areas of their assigned floor as needed. Lost articles should be turned in to the Floor Supervisor. Good condition, used programs are brought downstairs and placed in the Volunteer Workroom. Ushers may not leave their floors until dismissed.

**Post Show Activities:** When necessary, a few ushers may be asked to remain for a post-show event, to ensure the safety of patrons or help controlling access to backstage.

**Check Out:** All ushers must be dismissed by the Floor Supervisor from their floor. Then they are checked out by the Usher Captain via the door across from the box office. Please return the CAA vest (hanging it up, emptying pockets).

## **EDUCATION SHOWS**

Local and regional schools attend *SchoolTime* performances during the weekday and the shows typically last an hour. Since the events are shorter than usual, and the students arrive en masse, procedures are a little different than a “typical event.” The process is generally as follows:

### **Usher arrival:**

- Generally an hour and a half prior to curtain
- MOD assigns ushers to escort a school back to their bus on the go out
- Ushers receive house map with schools blocked out in pre-assigned seating areas

### **Go In procedures:**

- ALL busses unload students on 7<sup>th</sup> St, and ushers unload all busses; there are no assignments for particular schools at this time – all ushers help any school
- Busses are assigned numbers, and the number is also handed to corresponding school/teacher
- Students are walked in the North Plaza doors, up the marble staircase and into assigned seating area as directed by map

Do not use Art Gallery elevator unless there are patrons with disabilities.

### **Go out procedures:**

- Event Manager will dismiss from the stage, stating where bus is to be found
- When your school is called, lead your school to their bus

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

- SMILE! Welcome students and teachers as soon as you see them.
- Red ponchos are to be worn for ease of visibility to the students and teachers

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- P&G Standing Rotation does not apply to Ed shows, but ushers should always be on an aisle to assist. At curtain, ushers should be standing near their dismissal group.
- In case of emergency evacuation, ushers are responsible for their assigned school group. If no group assigned, assist the nearest group.
- If students are loud or unruly, immediately ask teacher to quiet students and alert Floor Supervisor to the event. If students remain loud or unruly, students may be removed by the Floor Supervisor.
- If a student is ill or needs the restroom, a teacher must stay with them. If you find yourself in an emergency and you are alone with a student, get another usher to be with you. It is best to avoid being alone with students, and also to refrain from physically assisting them (i.e. hand on back, touching a head to guide, etc...)

## **Inclement Weather:**

Amended 7/15, superseding any policy/procedure previously in place

In the event of inclement weather, and there is a change in show status it will more than likely be announced on the news, especially if it's a Broadway show. *Not only would we have to contact you, but every ticketed patron.* In general it is RARE for a show to cancel, so expect the show to go on unless you hear otherwise.

As soon as there has been a change in the event, the greeting on the message hotline: 513-977-4117, ext. 4 will change to indicate what is known. (once you listen, you can hang up.)

If there is enough time, we will attempt to email/call volunteers. It remains in your best interests to call the message hotline if you have any doubts.

We want you to be safe, so if there is a snow emergency in your area where travel is restricted, or you do not feel safe traveling at all, please stay home, and call us to let us know you won't be in. All usher cancellations need to be called in to the message hotline: 513-977-4117, ext 4.

CAA Education shows will be announced by 7:30a. Cancellations for CAA Ed shows will also be announced on the news. If last minute decisions are made, we will do our best to get in touch with all ushers, so please check your email before leaving the house. However, please rely on calling the hotline and listen for a change in the message: i.e. "Today is January 3...."

## **FOH VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS**

Amended 7/15, superseding any policy/procedure previously in place

### **Ticket Taker**

**General Responsibilities:** Take or scan all patron tickets, direct patrons into facility, and return all ticket stubs to Floor Supervisor or Union Ticket Taker.

**Pre-Show & During Show Duties:**

- Read tickets effectively. **NOTE:** Event name and date
- Re-direct patrons to other spaces within the facility when needed
- Direct all patrons to proper entrance door
- Tear or scan tickets
- Encourage the flow of patrons to keep moving
- Remain at your post until released by supervisor

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- Remain near assigned door during performance
- Participate in standing rotation at assigned door during performance (**in P&G only**)
- Assist patrons in evacuation of theaters during emergency

**Intermission Duties:**

- Remain at assigned door to assist patrons

**Post-show duties:**

- Assist in the gathering of unwanted programs and lost & found items
- Remain on floor until released by Floor Supervisor

**Reports to:** Floor Supervisor

## Greeter

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**General Responsibilities:** Welcome all guests to the Aronoff Center, provide assistance to arriving patrons with disabilities, direct all patrons inside the facility to elevators and restrooms.

**Pre-Show & During Show Duties:**

- Smile and welcome all guests arriving at the Aronoff Center
- Offer patron assistance in getting to the correct area of theater
- Read tickets effectively. **NOTE: Date, Floor, Row, and Seat Number**
- Direct patrons with disabilities and their guests inside the facility, indicating elevator and rest room locations
- Remain at your post until instructed by Floor Supervisor
- Remain near assigned door during performance
- Participate in standing rotation at assigned door during performance (**in P&G only**)
- Assist patrons in evacuation of theaters during emergency

**Intermission duties:**

- May be asked to assist in maintaining perimeter
- Offer patron assistance in getting to the correct area of theater
- May be asked to assist in keeping alcoholic beverages within the Aronoff Center

**Post-show duties:**

- Assist in the gathering of unwanted programs and lost & found items
- Remain on floor until released by Floor Supervisor

**Reports to:** Floor Supervisor

## Guest Services Attendant (trained position, P&G only)

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**General Responsibilities:** assist patrons attending events with distribution of ALD units and Children's Booster Cushions; to share information with guests on CAA, downtown and the Resident performing companies; and to monitor the safety of the Aronoff Center and its patrons. Return borrowed items from patrons at the end of performance give all documentation, report any patron issues and turn in to Floor Supervisor.

**Pre-Show & During Show Duties:**

- Report to Information Desk after checking in with Usher Captain
- Answer questions from and give general directions to patrons
- Hand out brochures/information
- Provide an ALD unit to any patron in exchange for a valid driver's license or other ID.
- Record the proper unit number and other relevant information on Event Log
- Stay alert to emergency situations (If an emergency occurs, call Security at 4128 or get Event Guard
- Log comments from patrons
- Provide explicit theater directions for accessible needs

**Intermission duties:**

- Exchange faulty ALD units
- Answer questions from and give directions to patrons
- Distribute/receive Children's Booster cushions

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- Log comments from patrons

**Post Show duties:**

- Receive ALD units in exchange for patron specific identification
- Accept all Lost & Found items & give to Floor Supervisor
- Remain at position until released by Floor Supervisor
- Receive & put away Children's Booster Cushions

**Reports to:** MOD

## **Access Ambassador** (trained Usher Captain; P&G only)

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**General Responsibilities:** to personally assist patrons with disabilities or anyone with potential access needs to get to the correct seat location; to share information with guests on CAA and the performance; and to monitor the safety of the Aronoff Center and its patrons. Assist patrons with any needs during intermission or after performance; report any patron issues and turn in to Floor Supervisor.

**Pre-Show & During Show Duties:**

- Retrieve keys and radio from administration; attend MOD meeting
- Review nightly needs with MOD and verify equipment/space availability
- Potentially assist with running elevator
- Answer questions from and provide explicit theater directions to patrons
- Direct patrons with disabilities to correct floor via elevator, alerting FOH staff to expect patron
- Escort expected patrons directly to their seat
- Share information regarding ALD units; facilitate procuring unit for patron as needed
- Stay alert to emergency situations; If an emergency occurs, radio MOD

**Intermission duties:**

- Assist any patrons to/from restroom, concessions, other areas
- Answer questions from and give directions to patrons
- Aware of any concerns and communicate any needs with staff
- Ask for/receive feedback on their experience so far

**Post Show duties:**

- Assist patrons from theater to street level
- Accept all Lost & Found items & give to Floor Supervisor
- Roam between Upper Art Gallery, Budig lobby and Orchestra lobby to further assist
- Ensure all wheelchairs used are returned
- Potentially assist with running elevator

**Reports to:** MOD

## **Outside Door Usher**

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**General Responsibilities:** Welcome all guests, assist patrons to seats when able but always keep flow of patrons moving, direct to Orchestra Aisle Usher as appropriate (P&G only), maintain the perimeter when needed, assist with program distribution and inform Floor Supervisor of any patron issues.

**Pre-Show & During Show Duties:**

- Keep all patrons from entering the theater prior to "House Opening"
- Assist in opening House Doors and closing House Doors prior to curtain
- Pass out programs to all patrons entering the House
- Personally escort patrons to proper seat within the theater and keep flow of patrons moving
- Read tickets effectively. **NOTE: Date, Floor, Row, and Seat Number**
- Assist the Floor Supervisor with "Late Seat Holds" and assist seating patrons afterwards
- Remain near assigned door during performance
- Participate in standing rotation at assigned door during performance (**in P&G only**)
- Assist patrons in evacuation of theaters during emergency

**Intermission duties:**

- Open house doors for intermission and close at the conclusion
- Remain at assigned door during intermission

Please note that this manual is a work in progress and updates are given in your Newsletters.

- Provide patron assistance when needed

**Post-show duties:**

- Assist in the gathering of unwanted programs and lost & found items
- Remain on floor until released by Floor Supervisor

**Reports to:** Floor Supervisor

## **Usher**

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**General Responsibilities:** Assist patrons in your area by reading tickets and seating, keep flow of patrons moving by directing to Orchestra Aisle Usher (P&G only) as appropriate, assist with program distribution, and inform Floor Supervisor of any patron issues.

**Pre-Show & During Show Duties:**

- Assist with maintaining perimeter
- Assist with stuffing programs
- Pass out programs to all patrons entering the House
- Read tickets effectively. **NOTE: Date, Floor, Row, and Seat Number**
- Personally escort patrons to proper seat within the theater
- Keep flow of patrons moving
- Provide additional assistance and support to patrons with disabilities as needed
- Remain near assigned door during performance
- Participate in standing rotation at assigned door during performance (**in P&G only**)
- Assist patrons in evacuation of theaters during emergency

**Intermission duties:**

- Open house doors for intermission and close at the conclusion
- Remain at assigned door during intermission
- Provide patron assistance when needed

**Post-show duties:**

- Assist in the gathering of unwanted programs and lost & found items
- Remain on floor until released by Floor Supervisor

**Reports to:** Floor Supervisor

## **Triple Door Usher (P&G Only)**

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**General Responsibilities:** Maintain corridors of theater prior to House doors opening, assist directing patrons to correct boxes & floors, assist patrons with disabilities using lifts (Orch only), when needed, and inform Floor Supervisor of any patron issues.

**Pre-Show & During Show Duties:**

- Keep public out of side corridors prior to House opening
- Read tickets effectively. **NOTE: Date, Floor, Row, and Seat Number**
- Direct to patrons in wheelchairs to other ushers for use of chair lifts (Orch)
- Remain near assigned door during performance
- Participate in standing rotation at assigned door during performance (**in P&G only**)
- Assist patrons in evacuation of theaters during emergency

**Intermission duties:**

- Assist patrons with use of the accessible chair lift (Orch) during intermission
- Remain at assigned door during intermission
- Provide patron assistance when needed

**Post-show duties:**

- Assist patrons with disabilities with the lift (Orch) while exiting
- Assist in the gathering of unwanted programs and lost & found items
- Remain on floor until released by Floor Supervisor

**Reports to:** Floor Supervisor

Please note that this manual is a work in progress and updates are given in your Newsletters.

## Coat Room Attendant

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**General Responsibilities:** Receive patron items (coats, hats, umbrellas, packages, cameras, and/or food – either as individual item or as group) at a charge of \$1 per item, and provide patron with the proper voucher for items. Return checked items to patrons at the end of performance give all documentation and change box, report any patron issues and turn in to Floor Supervisor.

**Pre-Show & During Show Duties:**

- Report to assigned coatroom when directed by Floor Supervisor
- Pre-hang numbered tags/voucher on hangers
- Receive all patron items at a charge of \$1 per item
- Hang all patron coats on provided racks and patron hats and/or umbrella's in spaces provided
- Provide each patron with proper item claim voucher
- Flash lights when chimes ring as a reminder for patrons to enter the theater
- Provide any necessary information to patrons as needed
- Stay alert to emergency situations (If an emergency occurs, call Security at 4128)
- Remain near assigned door during performance
- Participate in standing rotation at assigned door during performance (**in P&G only**)
- Assist patrons in evacuation of theaters during emergency

**Intermission duties:**

- Maintain coat room for patrons who wish to leave early
- Assist with light flashing reminders to enter theater

**Post Show duties:**

- Return all checked items to patrons
- Accept all Lost & Found items and give to Floor Supervisor
- Remain on floor until released by Floor Supervisor

**Reports to:** Floor Supervisor

## Orchestra Aisle Usher (P&G only)

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**General Responsibilities:** Assist patrons directed to you from doors 1, 8, 4, 5 by seating patrons in rows AA-O, keep flow of patrons moving by remaining in lower aisle, assist with program distribution, and inform Floor Supervisor of any patron issues.

**Pre-Show & During Show Duties:**

- Read tickets effectively. **NOTE: Date, Floor, Row, and Seat Number**
- Personally escort patrons to proper seat within the theater in rows AA-O
- If working doors 1 or 8, hover around & always return to aisle area near row GG, unless seating a patron (pre-show only)
- If working doors 4 or 5, hover around & always return to aisle break at row P, unless seating a patron (pre-show only)
- Keep flow of patrons moving
- Assist with stuffing programs
- Provide additional assistance and support to patrons with disabilities as needed
- Remain near assigned door during performance
- Participate in standing rotation at assigned door during performance
- Assist patrons in evacuation of theaters during emergency

**Intermission Duties:**

- Remain near assigned door during intermission
- Provide patron assistance when needed
- Walk aisle, remaining alert for any patron concerns

**Post Show Duties:**

- Assist in the gathering of unwanted programs and lost & found items
- Assist patrons while exiting
- Remain on floor until released by Floor Supervisor

**Reports to:** Floor Supervisor

Please note that this manual is a work in progress and updates are given in your Newsletters.

## **Sound Board Guard (P&G Door 5 only)**

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**General Responsibilities:** Prevent patrons from crowding, touching or crossing in front of Sound Board, direct patrons to Orchestra Aisle Usher, and inform Floor Supervisor of any patron issues.

**Pre-Show & During Show Duties:**

- Assist with maintaining perimeter
- Assist with stuffing programs
- Remain in position; do not leave post to seat patrons
- Prevent patrons from getting too close to, touching or walking in front of sound board
- Read tickets effectively. **NOTE: Date, Floor, Row, and Seat Number**
- Direct patrons for further assistance to Orchestra Aisle Usher
- Remain at assigned door during performance
- Participate in standing rotation at assigned door during performance
- Assist patrons in evacuation of theaters during emergency

**Intermission duties:**

- Return to position during intermission & resume duties
- Prevent patrons from getting too close to, touching or walking in front of sound board
- Provide patron assistance when needed

**Post-show duties:**

- Return to position post-show & resume duties until all patrons have exited
- Assist in the gathering of unwanted programs and lost & found items once ALL patrons out
- Remain on floor until released by Floor Supervisor

**Reports to:** Floor Supervisor

## **Usher Captain (invited & trained position; P&G only)**

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**General Responsibilities:** Supervise FOH volunteer administration during events; to provide excellent customer service to all patrons and volunteers; to assist ushers in understanding policies and expectations; and to monitor the safety of the Aronoff Center and its patrons

**Pre-Show & During Show Duties:**

- Retrieve keys and radio from administration; attend MOD meeting
- Retrieve voicemail and return calls; manage nametag/raffle prize distribution
- Supervise FOH usher check in and monitor compliance with dress code
- Potentially assist with running elevator
- Answer questions from and provide explicit theater directions to patrons
- Personally escort patrons with disabilities to seats
- Stay alert to emergency situations; if an emergency occurs, radio MOD
- Assist patrons in evacuation of theaters during emergency

**Intermission duties:**

- Assist any patrons to/from restroom, concessions, other areas
- Answer questions from and give directions to patrons
- Alert to any concerns and communicate any needs with staff
- Assist staff as needed

**Post Show duties:**

- Check out FOH ushers across from Box Office
- Retrieve borrowed items from ushers
- Accept all Lost & Found items & give to Floor Supervisor
- Potentially assist with running elevator
- Secure volunteer workroom and return keys and radio to administration
- Turn in written report to Volunteer Manager

**Reports to:** MOD, Floor Supervisor

Please note that this manual is a work in progress and updates are given in your Newsletters.



## **In the Event Of an Emergency**



Please note that this manual is a work in progress and updates are given in your Newsletters.

## **Injuries and Accidents**

Amended 7/14, supersedes any previous policy/procedure in place

In case of an accident, or serious illness, see to the patron's immediate safety first. Make sure that the patron is not in danger of being trampled by other persons, or in danger of causing further injury to themselves or others. Then get, or send for, a Floor Supervisor or the MOD.

Your Floor Supervisor is typically in the lobby of your floor. If they are assisting another patron and are not easily found in the lobby, you have three options:

1. Go to another floor to find Floor Supervisor or Usher Captain with a radio to get immediate help on your floor
2. Have the bartender on your floor call Security to get the Floor Supervisor and other staff to you.
3. In a time sensitive serious situation (ill patron/security issue) *when no one with a radio or access to a phone is available*, call over the rail to the Event Guard on the marble of the P&G Hall to get help to you NOW (only time sensitive AND serious situations).

**Make sure everyone is clear that help is needed immediately for an ill patron.**

Whenever a patron is injured, or ill, no matter how slightly, it **MUST** be reported immediately to the MOD or floor supervisor. The staff will call emergency responders when necessary, and will complete the necessary paperwork afterwards.

## **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

Amended 4/15, supersedes any previous policy/procedure in place

### **Guidelines for FOH Volunteers in the Procter & Gamble Hall**

#### **Fire Evacuation**

##### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- ◆ There are 18 doors in this theater, 8 open into the front lobby, 10 open into the side corridor. The patrons do not know the way out and our trained ushers must lead them.
- ◆ If you exit the theater through **doors that open into the lobby**, you will leave the building through the main entrance on **Walnut Street**. (away from the stage)
- ◆ If you exit the theater through **doors that open into the side corridors**, you will leave the building via the **Turnaround or Seventh Street** by walking in the corridors toward the stage to the fire exit doors.

A. **Leaders**: If you are at the door when the fire alarm goes off, you are automatically "leader".

- ◆ At the first chance, wave arms and say: "**Please follow me. Everyone please follow me.**"

(Remember, state **Please follow me** 2x, as people will not listen the first time)

Leaders then walk the correct evacuation route and **do not stop** to hold doors open for people.

Please note that this manual is a work in progress and updates are given in your Newsletters.

B. **Crowd:** When the fire alarm goes off, you are on your feet & part of the crowd. **You, as trained staff, walk along with the audience until you FIND A JOB.**

If you get to a door and an usher is holding it open, you keep walking with the crowd until you find something else to do.

General examples of jobs:

- ◆ Hold open doors for patrons to exit quickly
- ◆ Discourage restroom use and Prohibit use of elevators
- ◆ Encourage patrons' to remain calm and continue moving, following the leader

### **EVACUATION ROUTE THROUGH MAIN LOBBY:**

- ◆ Orchestra Doors **3, 4, 5, 6** - exit away from stage to lobby, down the marble stairs & out to Walnut St.
- ◆ Loge Doors **2, 3, 4, 5** – exit away from stage to lobby, down stairs to Walnut St.

### **“Crowd” Jobs for Front Lobby Evacuation:**

Loge:

1. Stand in the lobby between patrons and side corridors.
2. Discourage restroom use & use of elevators.
3. Encourage patrons to remain calm.

Orchestra:

1. Stand in the lobby between patrons and side corridors.
2. Discourage restroom use & use of elevators.

### **EVACUATION ROUTE THROUGH SIDE CORRIDORS:**

- ◆ Orchestra Doors **1, 2, 7, 8** – exit toward stage in the side corridors and out emergency doors to street
- ◆ Loge Doors **1, 6** – exit toward stage to side corridors & into emergency stairwell & out
- ◆ Balcony – **all doors** – exit toward stage to side corridors & into emergency stairwells to street
  
- ◆ People exiting through emergency exits will leave the building via the **Turnaround** (house right) **or Seventh Street** (house left).
- ◆ Remember to look for **EXIT signs** and doors marked with **Emergency Exit**. There are many Box doors which may confuse patrons and we need to be very confident in our actions.
- ◆ Encourage people to exit through the Emergency Exit stairwells and not go out toward the lobby.

### **Jobs For Side Corridor Evacuation:**

Balcony:

1. One usher should be between Balcony doors 1 and/or 4 and the corridor to the front lobby area. This is a VERY strategic spot to discourage patrons for going to the front lobby.
2. One usher (not the leader) should hold the door open to the fire stairwell and encourage people to keep moving.

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3. One usher should stop on the landing in the fire stairwell on the Loge level, if Loge usher not present already, to insure patrons don't go back into the side corridors via Loge doors marked NOT AN EXIT. Be aware of patrons exiting from this door sporadically.

Loge:

1. One usher should be between Loge doors 1 and/or 6 and the corridor to the front lobby area. This is a VERY strategic spot to discourage patrons for going to the front lobby.
2. One usher should hold the door open to the fire stairwell and encourage people to keep moving.

Orchestra:

1. An usher should be positioned between doors 2 and/or 7 and the main lobby to direct people towards the fire exits, directly exiting to the Turnaround or the administrative hallway leading to Seventh Street.
2. Ushers at doors 2 and 7 should be aware of patrons in wheelchairs by doors 1 and 8, and assist Wheelchair Buddies and patrons with lift, when necessary.
3. An usher should hold the door to the fire exit open for patrons.

**OUTSIDE THE BUILDING:**

- ◆ Once people are on the street, move them away from the building quickly. **Do not let patrons stop on the sidewalk.** Position yourselves comfortably between the building and the patrons.
- ◆ There is not enough room on the sidewalk for all patrons, so you may have to lead patrons out across the street. Please be safe & aware of traffic.
- ◆ The fire and police departments will manage crowd control on the street. This is not your responsibility.

**ALL CLEAR:**

- ◆ Do Not Allow A Patron To Enter the Building for Any Reason **Until An All Clear Is Given.**
- ◆ Only when an Aronoff Center Manager, or identified staff person states an ALL CLEAR, can ushers reenter the building through the main entrances.
- ◆ It is important that volunteers are the first back into the building to assist in leading patrons back to their seats.

**PATRONS IN WHEELCHAIRS**

- ◆ An available usher (i.e. not the leader) will assist patrons in wheelchairs or others with mobility challenges in the event of an emergency.
  1. When the alarm sounds, the usher should go to the patron and introduce themselves to stating that they will be lead to safety. Wait with the patron(s) out of the way, until the crowd thins.
  2. When you have a clear path to the door, assist the patron to the House Left Ladies restroom and close the door. This is the rescue area.
  3. Once in the rescue area, explain that elevators cannot be used and that an usher will wait with them until the supervisor arrives with a radio.
  4. When the Floor Supervisor arrives, and dismisses the usher, the usher may leave and assist others in exiting the theater on their way out of the building.

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5. The Floor Supervisor then radios the MOD who contacts the fire department. The Floor Supervisor stays with the patron until the fire department arrives to assist the patron out of the building.

- ◆ Ushers by **Orchestra doors 1 and 8** should wait with your patron out of the way, until the crowd thins. Then you, with the help of the patrons' partner, assist the patron in the wheelchair up the lift and to the House Left Ladies Restroom. This is always your first choice of egress.
  - If everyone involved feels comfortable doing so, you may assist the patron using the wheelchair with the one or two stairs just outside doors 1 and 8. This allows them to exit via 7<sup>th</sup> Street or the turnaround, and be outside the building quickly.
- ◆ Ushers should scan the crowd, on their way to the House Left Ladies Restroom, for anyone else who may have trouble negotiating stairs (particularly on the balcony and loge levels).
- ◆ If you see a person who might have trouble with stairs or is moving slowly, ask if they would like to wait at the rescue area with you until the fire department arrives to assist them out of the building.

### **Procter & Gamble Hall Tornado Policy:**

In the event of extreme weather during an event, the MOD and production company will determine if any interruption of the performance is necessary to inform patrons of weather conditions.

In that event, remember these things:

1. The safest place to be during a tornado is away from windows and inside the theater.
2. The lights will come up and an announcement regarding the current situation will be made from the stage by the MOD.
3. The MOD will remain visible and on stage to answer patron questions and to provide further instructions.
4. Ushers should be on their feet at their assigned doors, listening to the MOD instructions (if any) and visible to assist patrons.
5. Flashlight should be ready for possible power failure.
6. If someone is determined to leave the building, let them.
7. If someone seeking a safe place wants to enter the theater without a ticket, let them.
8. Lead by example and remain calm.

## **Guidelines for FOH Volunteers in the Jarson-Kaplan Theater**

### **Fire Evacuation**

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- ◆ There are 8 doors in this theater, 2 open into the front lobby, 6 open into the side corridor.
- ◆ If you exit the theater through **doors that open into the lobby**, you will leave the building through the lobby to **Walnut Street and/or Sixth Street plaza**.
- ◆ If you exit the theater through **doors that open into the side corridors**, you will leave the building via the **front lobby** house left by walking up the stairs by box office or via **the Sixth Street plaza** house right by walking in the corridor to the fire exit doors (toward stage). The patrons do not know the way and our trained ushers must lead them.

Please note that this manual is a work in progress and updates are given in your Newsletters.

A. **Leaders**: If you are the first person at the door when the fire alarm goes off, you are automatically “leader”.

◆ At the first chance, wave arms and say: “**Please follow me. Everyone please follow me.**” (Remember, state **Please follow me** 2x, as people will not listen the first time)

Leaders then walk the correct evacuation route and **do not stop** to hold doors open for people.

B. **Crowd**: When the fire alarm goes off, if you are not nearest the door, you are part of the crowd. **You, as trained staff, walk along with the audience until you FIND A JOB.**

If you get to a door and an usher is holding it open, you keep walking with the crowd until you find something else to do.

General examples of jobs:

- ◆ Hold open doors for patrons to exit quickly
- ◆ Discourage restroom use and Prohibit use of elevators
- ◆ Encourage patrons’ to remain calm and continue moving

**EVACUATION ROUTE THROUGH MAIN LOBBY:**

- ◆ Orchestra Left and Right doors use the main lobby as an exit to Walnut Street.

**Jobs For Front Lobby Evacuation:**

1. Discourage restroom use.
2. Prohibit Elevator use.

**EVACUATION ROUTE THROUGH SIDE CORRIDORS:**

◆ **House Left** If you exit the theater through **doors that open into the side corridors**, you will leave the building via the **Lobby**, by walking in the side corridor (toward stage) to the restroom level, then up the steps to the Box Office and out to the left of Box Office onto Walnut St. The patrons do not know the way and our trained ushers must lead them.

◆ **House Right**: If you exit the theater through **doors that open into the side corridors**, you will leave the building via the **Sixth Street plaza** by walking in the side corridor (toward stage) to the fire exit doors. The patrons do not know the way and our trained ushers must lead them.

**Jobs For Side Corridor Evacuation:**

Balcony 1:

1. One usher should be at the bottom of the stairs, before the lobby entrance, encouraging patrons in the stairwell to exit the side Fire Exit door leading to the Sixth Street Plaza.
2. One usher should hold the House door open to the stairwell and encourage people to keep moving.

Balcony 2:

1. One usher, each side of the house, should be between the stairwell and the door which goes to the open balcony leading house left/right. This is a VERY strategic spot to discourage patrons from going to an area, which is NOT a fire exit.
2. One usher should hold the House door open to the stairwell and encourage people to keep moving.

Please note that this manual is a work in progress and updates are given in your Newsletters.

### **OUTSIDE THE BUILDING:**

- ◆ Once people are on the street, move them away from the building quickly. **Do not let patrons stop on the sidewalk.** Position yourselves comfortably between the building and the patrons.
- ◆ There is not enough room on the sidewalk for all patrons, so you may have to lead patrons out across the street.
- ◆ The fire and police departments will manage crowd control on the street. This is not your responsibility.

### **ALL CLEAR:**

- ◆ **Do Not** Allow A Patron To Enter the Building for Any Reason **Until An All Clear Is Given.**
- ◆ Only when an Aronoff Center Manager or identified staff person states an ALL CLEAR, can ushers reenter the building.
- ◆ It is important that volunteers are the first back into the building to assist in leading patrons back to their seats.

### **PATRONS IN WHEELCHAIRS**

- ◆ An available usher (i.e. not the leader) will assist a patron in a wheelchair in the event of an emergency.
- ◆ When the alarm sounds, an available usher should go to the patron and introduce themselves to inform the patron that they will be lead to safety.

Orchestra Level: When you have a clear path, ask the patron to accompany you to the front lobby.

Balconies 1& 2: When you have a clear path, assist patron to the House Left Elevator Alcove. This is the rescue area.

1. Once in the rescue area, explain that we cannot use the elevators and that you will wait with them until the supervisor arrives.
  2. Once crowd thins, go through the door to the left of the elevator (as you're facing it), look over the rail for the Floor Supervisor & alert them to your situation.
  3. The Floor Supervisor will radio the MOD who contacts the fire department. Someone needs to stay with the patron until the fire department arrives to assist the patron out of the building. That could mean an usher and/or staff person.
  4. The usher may leave the patron only when dismissed by the Floor Supervisor.
- ◆ Ushers assisting patrons in wheelchairs will scan the crowd, on their way to the House Left Elevator Alcove, for anyone else who may have trouble negotiating stairs.
  - ◆ If you see a person who might have trouble with stairs or is moving slowly, ask if they would like to wait at the rescue area with you until the fire department arrives to assist them out of the building.

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### **Jarson-Kaplan Tornado Policy:**

Review the written policy on the back of every event sheet, and remember these things:

1. The safest place to be during a tornado is away from windows and inside the theater.

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2. The lights will come up and an announcement regarding the current situation will be made from the stage by the Floor Supervisor.
3. The Floor Supervisor will remain visible and on stage to answer patron questions and to provide further instructions.
4. Ushers should be on their feet and visible to assist patrons.
5. Have your flashlight ready for possible power failure.
6. If someone is determined to leave the building, let them.
7. If someone is seeking a safe place wants to enter the theater without a ticket, let them.
8. Lead by example and remain calm.

## **Guidelines for FOH Volunteers in the Fifth Third Bank Theater**

### *Fire Evacuation*

#### GENERAL OVERVIEW

- ◆ There are 4 doors in this theater, 2 open into the front lobby, 2 open into backstage area.
- ◆ Remember to look for **EXIT signs** and doors marked with **Exit**. Patrons will be confused and we need to be very confident in our actions.
- ◆ If you exit the theater through **doors that open into the lobby**, you will leave the building through the lobby to **Main Street**.
- ◆ If there's a large crowd or the main lobby doors are blocked, you exit the theater through **doors opposite the lobby**. These doors will have you leave the building by walking straight and taking your first right (either down a ramp or down a few stairs) towards the Security Desk and out to **Seventh Street**. The patrons do not know the way and our trained ushers must lead them.

A. **Leaders:** If you are the first person at the door when the fire alarm goes off, you are automatically "leader".

- ◆ At the first chance, wave arms and say: "**Please follow me. Everyone please follow me.**" (Remember, state **Please follow me** 2x, as people will not listen the first time)  
Leaders then walk the correct evacuation route and **do not stop** to hold doors open for people.

B. **Crowd:** When the fire alarm goes off, if you are not nearest the door, you are part of the crowd. **You, as trained staff, walk along with the audience until you FIND A JOB.** If you get to a door and an usher is holding it open, you keep walking with the crowd until you find something else to do.

#### General examples of jobs:

- ◆ Hold open doors for patrons to exit quickly
- ◆ Discourage restroom use and Prohibit use of elevators
- ◆ Encourage patrons' to remain calm and continue moving

#### EVACUATION ROUTE THROUGH MAIN LOBBY:

##### **Jobs For Front Lobby Evacuation:**

1. One usher discourages use of stairwell corridor and restroom use.
2. Prohibit Elevator use.

Please note that this manual is a work in progress and updates are given in your Newsletters.

**EVACUATION ROUTE BACKSTAGE (doors opposite main lobby):**

**A. Double doors behind black curtain, leading to dressing rooms:**

1. Proceed straight to corridor ramp and turn right.
2. Follow ramp through doors, into Security/Stage Door.
3. Guide patrons out onto Seventh Street and away from the building.

**B. Single door leading to a stairwell:**

1. Proceed past stairs and turn right.
2. Exit single door into Security/Stage Door.
3. Guide patrons out onto Seventh Street and away from the building.
4. Please note actors and stagehands will be exiting the theater by these routes also.

**OUTSIDE THE BUILDING:**

- ◆ Once people are on the street, move them away from the building quickly. **Do not let patrons stop on the sidewalk.** Position yourselves comfortably between the building and the patrons.
- ◆ There is not enough room on the sidewalk for all patrons, so you may have to lead patrons out across the street.
- ◆ The fire and police departments will manage crowd control on the street. This is not your responsibility.

**ALL CLEAR:**

- ◆ **Do Not** Allow A Patron To Enter the Building for Any Reason **Until An All Clear Is Given.**
- ◆ Only when an Aronoff Center Manager, or identified staff person states an ALL CLEAR, can ushers reenter the building.
- ◆ It is important that volunteers lead patrons back to the main doors on Main Street to assist in leading patrons back to their seats. This is the only return entrance to the theater to use.

**PATRONS IN WHEELCHAIRS**

- ◆ An available usher (i.e. not the leader) will assist a patron in a wheelchair in the event of an emergency.
- ◆ When the alarm sounds, the usher should introduce themselves and inform the patron that they will be led to safety.
- ◆ Ushers guide patrons using wheelchairs out to the main lobby **OR** through the backstage double doors, turn right down ramp, into Security/Stage Door and out to Seventh St.
- ◆ The **single door leads to stairs** and is NOT ACCESSIBLE.

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**Fifth Third Bank Tornado Policy:**

The 5/3 Bank Theater has one wall that is large windows covered by heavy black drapery, therefore this is the only theater we move patrons during this situation. Remember these things:

1. The safest place to be during a tornado is away from windows and inside the building. Ushers assist patrons to stay inside the theater.
2. The lights will come up and the Floor Supervisor will make an announcement regarding events.
3. Ushers stand at doors on both sides of the house, remaining visible to assist patrons.

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4. The Floor Supervisor will remain available to answer patron questions and to provide further instructions.
5. If instructed by the Floor Supervisor, lead patrons and actors into the interior stairwell (single door opposite lobby) to level 1.
  - a. Patrons in Wheelchairs evacuate through the double doors opposite the lobby into the backstage/loading dock area of the P&G Hall.
6. Have your flashlight ready for possible power failure.
7. If someone is determined to leave the building, let them.
8. If someone on the street is seeking safety and wants to enter the building without a ticket, let them.
9. Lead by example and remain calm. Listen to the Floor Supervisor for instructions.

**VOLUNTEER USHERS SHOULD REMAIN CALM, AND WAIT FOR THE ALL CLEAR SIGNAL.**

## **AFTERWARD**

If all of this seems like a lot of information and responsibility, you're right. It is and it all has to be absorbed. The volunteers are an integral part of the CAA team at the Aronoff Center and share a great responsibility to provide excellent customer service. We're glad you decided to join us. Always keep in mind that because we are a team, anybody and everybody will be glad to help you if you run into trouble. All you need to do is ask!

# **THANK YOU!!**

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### How to Read Aronoff Center Tickets

Certain events will not be scanned. Correctly reading the ticket and properly directing the patron is an important part of the job of all front of house staff.

#### **Important information on a ticket (please note ticket colors & stock will change periodically)**

1. **EVENT NAME.** This is located in the middle of the ticket. Make sure the event name corresponds with the event name that you are working.
2. **EVENT DATE/TIME,** located in the bottom of the ticket. It is listed by day, month, date, and year. Time of event is listed closely after the date.

You may encounter some patrons will come to the right event on the wrong date. And because we have three theaters in operation at the Aronoff Center, some will come on the right date but to the wrong theater. Please make sure that you are checking all the information on the ticket.

**Once you've confirmed the right NAME and DATE/TIME, direct them to enter the theater and to their seats** (refer to House Maps for Specific Locations)

#### A. **SECTION name** refers to the level of the theater.

- a. The section name is located on the top line of each ticket.
- b. Both of the large theaters have different section names:  
Procter & Gamble Hall: orchestra, loge, balcony, & boxes on all three levels  
Jarson-Kaplan Theater: orchestra, balcony 1, balcony 2, & boxes on all three levels  
5/3 Bank Theater: Seating is general on one level; there are no sections.

#### B. **ROW letter** refers to the rows of seats in the theater.

- a. Located directly after the section name on the top line of each ticket.
- b. Row letter tells how far from the stage a patrons' seat will be
- c. All theaters skip row I but run consecutively otherwise.  
Procter & Gamble Hall: orchestra begins with AA and runs through Z, loge & balcony begin with row A and run consecutively.  
Jarson-Kaplan Theater: all three levels begin with row A, boxes are AA-EE on both sides of theater and will be listed R Box AA 2 or as L Box AA 2.  
5/3 Bank Theater: Seating is general with no labeled rows.

#### C. **SEAT number**

- a. The seat number is located directly after the row letter on the top line of each ticket.
- b. The seats read from house left to house right, as you face the stage.  
Procter & Gamble Hall: starts with 101, after an aisle break re-starts with 201, another aisle break re-starts with 301. Continuous rows with no aisles breaks are numbered continuously from 101. Box seats are numbered 1-4.  
Jarson-Kaplan Theater: starts with 1 in all rows, box seats numbered 1-10.  
5/3 Bank Theater: Seating is general with no seat numbers.

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## CAA TICKET

Section    Row    Seat Number

EAG0515E ORCH RORCH T 309 67.00 EAG0515E  
 Enter Door 5  
 Fifth-Third Bank Broadway Across America  
 Presents Legally Blonde  
 Procter & Gamble Hall  
 Saturday, May 15, 2010 8:00pm  
 23 JUL 10  
 101524  
 EAG0515E 2180V  
 Visit www.CincinnatiArts.Org  
 67.00 ADY1  
 RORCH  
 T  
 309  
 101524  
 REPRINT  
 CINCINNATI ARONOFF CENTER MUSIC HALL  
 CINCINNATI ASSOCIATION

Event Date/Time    Event Name

**Other samples of tickets for different productions and theaters:**

## CINCINNATI BALLET TICKET

PG1218E ORCH SECTION A 202 A PG1218E  
 SEASON PRESENTING SPONSOR  
 THE OTTO M. BUDIG FAMILY FOUNDATION  
 CINCINNATI BALLET PRESENTS  
**Frisch's Presents The Nutcracker**  
 Procter & Gamble Hall  
 ARONOFF CENTER FOR THE ARTS  
 Friday, December 18, 2015 07:30 PM  
 1415236  
 Frisch's Presents The Nutcracker  
 CINCINNATI Ballet  
 99010023004520673489

## BROADWAY SUBSCRIBER TICKET

FIFTH THIRD BANK  
**BROADWAY** ACROSS AMERICA  
 CINCINNATI 20th anniversary  
**WICKED**  
 THE LONGEST SHOW ON BROADWAY  
 Wednesday, January 16, 2008  
 8:00 PM  
 Procter & Gamble Hall  
 Aronoff Center For The Arts  
 Account # [REDACTED]  
 Location    Row/Box Seat  
 CBALC    C    136  
 Event Code    Admission  
 CPG8A16E    \$45.00

## JARSON-KAPLAN THEATER TICKET

JK0514E BAL1 CENTER B 9 0.00 JK0514E  
 Cincinnati Music Theatre  
 GYPSY  
 Book by Arthur Laurents  
 Music by Stephen Sondheim  
 Jarson-Kaplan Theater  
 Thursday, May 14, 2009 7:30pm  
 Ticket Price Includes Facility Maintenance Fee  
 14 MAY 09  
 5656  
 JK0514E 110  
 Visit www.CincinnatiArts.Org  
 0.00 C  
 BAL1 CENTER  
 B  
 9  
 99010023004520673489

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Patrons appreciate and expect a confident answer when they have questions about finding their way. Good customer service means knowing how to quickly and correctly read a ticket and direct patrons accordingly. To that end, here are some quirks to note.



- A questionable ticket that is now deemed good by the Box Office will be stamped with a thumbs-up on the ticket and ticket stub.

- A thumbs-up ticket will not scan therefore it will have to be torn.

Keep the ticket stub

## Procter & Gamble Hall Nuances:

“Box and continental rows, direct them from one floor below”

**Continental Rows:** Below are listed the continuous rows in the P&G, including the range of seat numbers and the half-way point in each row is in parentheses.

### Orchestra (Orch)

AA101- AA114 (AA108)

BB101-BB122 (BB112)

CC101-CC128 (CC115)

DD101-DD131 (DD117)

EE101-EE134 (EE118)

FF101-FF137 (EE119)

### Loge

A101-A165 (A133)

B101-B166 (B133)

C101-C166 (C133)

### Balcony (Balc)

A101-A165 (A133)

B101-B166 (B 133)

C101-C165 (C133)

N101-N167 (N134)

**Directions to Boxes and Lower Doors:** The box seats and first three rows of the continental seats can be directed as follows for the quickest seating.

**HL** = House Left, as you face the stage    **HR**=House Right, as you face the stage

### From the Orchestra Lobby

Orch Box A, Orch Doors 1 & 2 – Direct patrons DOWN the HL corridor

Orch Box B, Orch Doors 7 & 8 – Direct patrons DOWN the HR corridor

Loge Boxes A,B,C, Loge Door 1 – Go UP HL corridor from ORCH lobby

Loge Boxes D,E,F, Loge Door 6 – Go UP HR corridor from ORCH lobby

### From the Loge Lobby (get off elevator at 4)

Balcony Boxes A,B,C, Balcony Door 1 – Direct patrons UP the HL corridor

Balcony Boxes D,E,F, Balcony Door 4 – Direct patrons UP the HR corridor

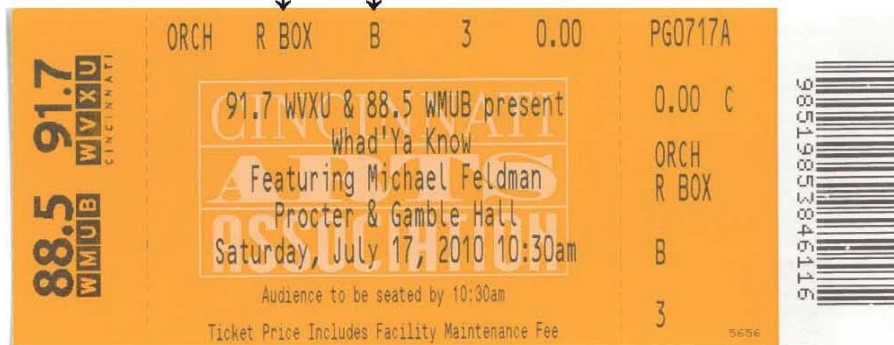
Please be sure to study the house maps and these pages as well, so that you can provide the best service possible.

Good Luck!!

Please note that this manual is a work in progress and updates are given in your Newsletters.

**More samples of tickets for different productions and theaters:**

Note - Box    Box Letter



**NON-SUBSCRIBER BROADWAY TICKET**



When looking at a ticket for a patron's seating location, please note that there is an L (Left), C (Center), or R (Right) added to the floor name. Please look at each ticket closely to make sure you are directing the patron to the correct floor.

- |                                 |                            |                               |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>LORCH (Left Orchestra)</b>   | <b>LOGEL (Loge Left)</b>   | <b>LBALC (Left Balcony)</b>   |
| <b>CORCH (Center Orchestra)</b> | <b>LOGEC (Loge Center)</b> | <b>CBALC (Center Balcony)</b> |
| <b>RORCH (Right Orchestra)</b>  | <b>LOGER (Loge Right)</b>  | <b>RBALC (Right Balcony)</b>  |

**NOTE:** Ballet tickets do not have Left, Center or Right indicators listed on the floor name.

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## Basic Operations Handheld Scanners

Almost all shows in the Aronoff Center are now scanned. We will not always know if scanning is definite, so it is imperative volunteers know how to **read** a ticket and how to **scan** the ticket. Your MOD will let you know if a show is scanned or torn. Please follow the directions below when using a scanner.

To use a scanner:

1. **Slide** hand in elastic on back of scanner or place lanyard around your neck. The units are expensive & we need to protect them.
2. Hit **any trigger button** (screen must say "online")
3. If screen goes **off**
  - Hit power button- wait until it says "online"
4. **Press any trigger** to scan complete ticket bar code
  - Barcode may be scanned in any direction
  - Hold scanner far enough from ticket to hit entire barcode (4"-6")
  - Please do not shine laser light in any patrons' eyes! This is harmful.
5. Listen for the "good" scan sound & keep scanning.
  - The Scanner screen also says "**go**" – that's a good ticket
6. Listen for a distinctive sound for "Already scanned" (screen says this too) and let patron in - it is most likely that the ticket was accidentally scanned twice in 15 seconds
7. Listen for the "bad" scan sound & stop. The Scanner screen also says "**stop**" & should tell you why:
  - If the scanner says anything else-  
**P&G shows** - get Box Office Representative on the marble level  
**JK shows** - send patron to Box Office  
**5/3 show** - send patron to Box Office Representative in the 5/3 lobby
8. Mobile tickets printed out (square scan code) should be sent directly to Box Office. They cannot be scanned.

### Additional Scanning tips:

- Make sure the number of tickets matches the number of patrons. It is easy to get focused on the scanner and to forget to look at the patrons – remember, they're why we're here!
  - **Mobile tickets** have multiple tickets on one device. Have the patron hold their own phone & scroll their screen to get to the new ticket while you scan. Be sure the number of tickets you scan matches the number of patrons you let through.
- It is difficult to handle more than 2 tickets at a time. Fan the tickets or ask patrons to hold tickets separately
- Let the patron hold the ticket to scan it; this moves the line much quicker.



- A questionable ticket that is now deemed good by the Box Office will be stamped with a thumbs-up on the ticket and ticket stub.

- A thumbs-up ticket will not scan therefore it will have to be torn.

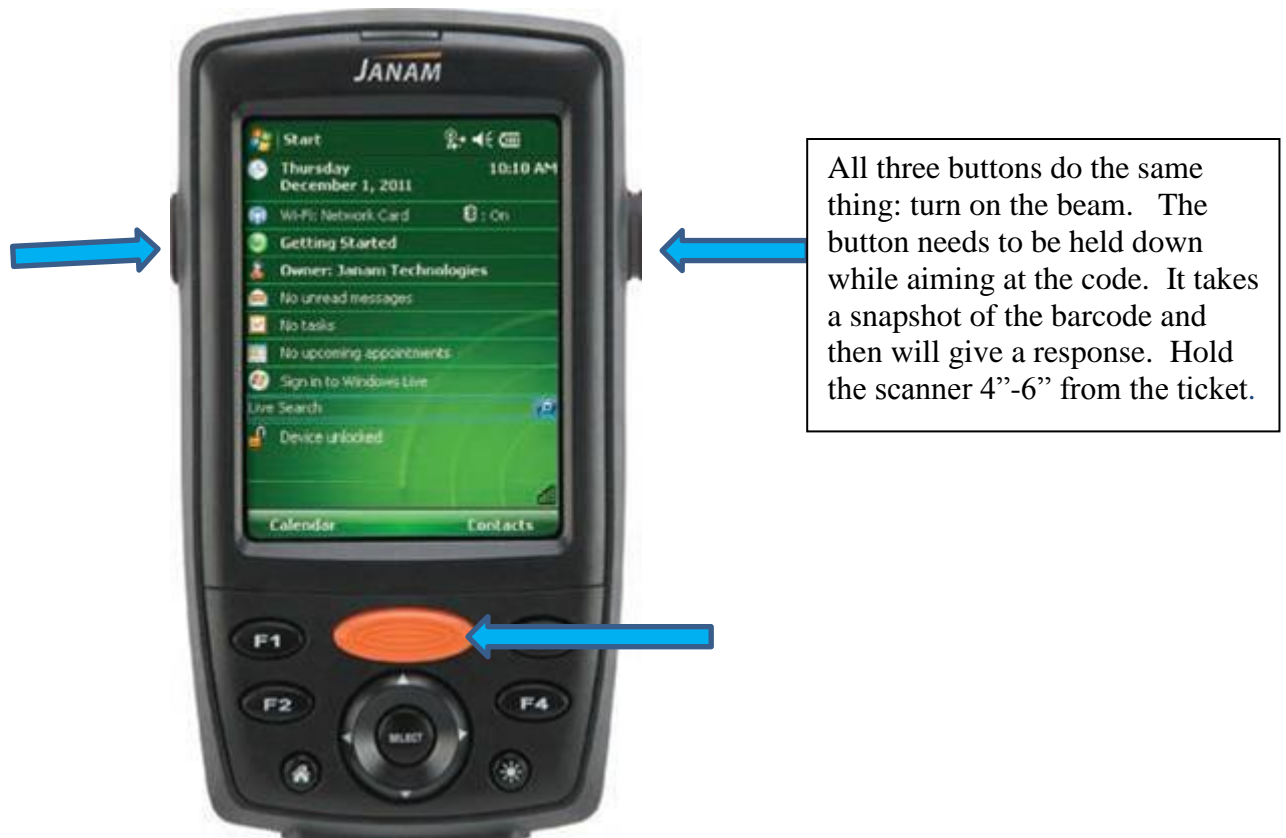
Keep the ticket stub

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## Operating Buttons

There are three (3) buttons used to operate the handheld scanner:

1. The **Trigger** Buttons are either of the two buttons on the upper sides or the center orange button near the bottom. Only one needs to be pressed so use whichever is most comfortable.
2. If the screen goes dark or to start your session, press any trigger button
3. Press and hold the button down while aiming beam at barcode, 4”-6” from the ticket.
4. Focus the cross hairs right in the middle of the black code.
5. The scanner is like a camera & will take a snapshot prior to giving a response. Wait until you get the response, as it might take a second for it to focus & “grab” the image of the bar code.



## Power On/Off

The handheld device may be powered on by pressing any Trigger button.

## Scanning Tickets

To activate the laser, press and hold either of the Trigger buttons and face the unit toward the barcode on the ticket. The recommended distance between the device and a ticket is around 4 to 6 inches. The laser light must cover the entire width of the barcode in order for the barcode value to be read.