



# ★ USHER ★ HANDBOOK

# USHER QUALIFICATIONS

Music Theatre Wichita Ushers are the first contact patrons have with the organization. Our goal is to give patrons a memorable, magical experience from the moment they enter the building until they get in their cars to leave. No matter your position assignment, you can make the patron experience great with your attitude, friendliness, and willingness to help. Since interaction with our Ushers might be the only interaction patrons have at the theatre, we need Ushers to demonstrate exceptional customer service, and avoid disturbing or upsetting scenarios whenever possible.

Not everyone who applies to be an Usher is selected. An applicant must complete the

online form and read the handbook. Those selected as Ushers will be contacted by the Patron Services Manager.

If selected as an Usher, we need a commitment to fulfill your obligations to the program. The most important of these is attendance!

Volunteers are needed to assist with the front of house needs of Music Theatre Wichita and help patrons. (If your goal is to see a free show, being a Music Theatre Wichita Usher is not for you!)



# FRONT OF HOUSE

**Patron Services Manager:** Responsible for all house operations, functions, and activities prior to, during, and after the show. The Patron Services Manager is in charge of pre-show meetings, coordinating with stage managers, opening the house, handling patron complaints, ticketing problems, double-seating, accidents and maintenance concerns.

**Box Office Staff:** Box office personnel are always on duty before the shows and through intermission. They oversee all aspects of the theatre dealing with tickets and are in direct communication with the Patron Services Manager.

**Head Usher:** The Head Usher is a member of the box office staff and directly supervises other volunteers, deal with double-seating issues, answer questions, and help solve problems. The Head Usher is the primary contact for all ushers to resolve any problems.

**Ushers:** Ushers are responsible for patron satisfaction, thus making this position one of critical importance. Ushers greet patrons, give directions, seat patrons, answer questions, provide hearing devices, and perform various other assigned duties.



# THEATRE INFORMATION

**Restrooms** are located in the lobby on the first and second floors for Concert Hall. Both levels have Accessible Restrooms. There are no restrooms in the balcony.

**Drinking Fountains** are located on the inside lobby walls on the first and second floors for Concert Hall.

**In Case of Tornado:** The Concert Hall is the safest place for patrons to be. Audience members on the main floor should remain in their seats, while balcony patrons should move to the main floor and find a seat. If no seats are available, they should stand near the wall. Ramp areas are not considered safe areas. Patrons in the Box seating should remain there with the doors closed.

**Parking Lots:** The main parking lots are to the east and south of Century II. There is a smaller parking area on the west side of the building that is only Accessible Parking. There is additional Accessible Parking in all lots to the east and south of Century II. Please check the Park Wichita website or signs for enforced hours and pricing.

**ATM:** The closest is located at Intrust Bank across the street.

**Elevators** are located on both sides within the Concert Hall.

**Concessions** are available before the show and during intermission and can be found on both sides of the main floor. Beverages can be taken into Concert Hall.

**Box Office:** Located in the outer lobby of Concert Hall. During show days, the box office is open from 9am-intermission Monday-Friday, and 12pm-intermission on Saturdays and Sundays.

**Lost and Found:** Found items should be delivered to the Head Usher/Hearing Device table as soon as possible with information as to where it was found. If items are not picked up, they will be stored in the Century II box office.

**Hearing Assist Devices** are available at a table near the center of the inside lobby. There is no cost to the patron, but we ask for a driver's license, phone number, and seat location. Any patrons who use any ReSound or Beltone wireless capable hearing aids may connect to the transmitter at the table, as well.

**Accessibility:** The main entrances to Concert Hall have push button doors. Rows M and S on the main floor and the box seats on second floor are designated for patrons who use a mobility device. For those patrons able to sit in a theatre seat, the wheelchair or walker will be kept at a safe convenient place for use during intermission and after the show.

**Wheelchairs/Golf Carts:** MTWichita provides several wheelchairs for the use of patrons who need assistance getting to their seats. Please request a wheelchair from the Box Office, Head Usher, or Patron Services Manager. The volunteer who requests the wheelchair is responsible in assisting the patron in finding the correct wheelchair at intermission and after the show, and then returning it to the Box Office. When volunteers are available, golf cart drivers will be present to assist patrons from the main CII parking lot to the Concert Hall entrance.



# THEATRE POLICIES

**Smoking** is not permitted in any area of Century II. Patrons are allowed to go outside to smoke and will need to show their tickets to re-enter the theatre.

**Cameras/Phones/Recording Devices:** Cameras and phones are allowed in all venues before the show until the lights go down and the show starts, during intermission, and after the show. If a patron is using a phone or camera during the performance, it is the Usher's job to kindly inform the patron to put the phone away. Ushers **MUST** be willing and able to remind patrons about this policy for phone and cameras.

**Food and Beverage:** Only food and beverages purchased at concessions are allowed in the Concert Hall. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed outside the building.

**Tickets/Babies and Toddlers:** Every patron, regardless of age, must have a ticket to enter the theatre. All patrons under the age of five (5) are not allowed unless MTWichita is presenting a show specifically for 3- and 4-year-olds. Ticket-takers should very carefully look at the ticket before a patron enters the theatre to confirm it is the right show, date and time.

**Seating Patrons:** Every patron should sit in the seat for which they are holding a ticket. Only the Patron Services Manager or Box Office may relocate the patron. Never move or place a patron in a different seat without contacting the Head Usher.

**Patrons with Special Needs:** Treat all patrons the same, giving no overt or highly visible attention to patrons with special needs unless there is a request

for it. You may kindly offer to help patrons who appear to need help, but never assume your help is needed.

**Service Animals:** These animals are always allowed in the theatre, and typically wear a vest or some other service animal designation. As an Usher, you do not have the right to ask a patron if it is a service animal. Never touch or speak to a service animal. Service Animals may lie under the patron's chair, or to the side of the patron's chair if on an aisle.

**Assisting Physically Impaired Patrons:** We expect most patrons who will need assistance with wheelchairs or walkers to have someone with them who will be able to care for them if needed. For liability reasons, we do not push wheelchairs unless necessary.



# USHER INFORMATION

## IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Only authorized staff are allowed to enter the theatre before the house is open.
- The Patron Services Manager will open the theatre when it is released by the Stage Manager.
- The Patron Services Manager and Head Usher will have radios with them at all times.
- Patrons must be seated only in the seat assignment that is on their tickets.
- Patrons may be relocated by the Patron Services Manager or Box Office only.
- No one is allowed backstage. Only authorized staff may escort someone backstage.
- Volunteers must be drug and alcohol free. Consuming alcoholic beverages or being under the influence is not allowed while ushering.
- Century II is a vape and smoke-free environment.
- When seats are available, Ushers are permitted to sit during the show. Ushers should NEVER cross over patrons or ask them to move.
- Ushers are still on duty during the show. They should be active in making sure cell phones are not being used.
- Be kind, helpful, and cheerful. A positive attitude is a must!
- Make yourself available for questions.
- Be on time for pre-show meetings.
- Ushers must stay at their assigned area until patrons are safely out of the Concert Hall after the performance.
- Ushers must be 16 years of age.
- Ushers must be willing to tell patrons to quit talking or put cell phones away during the show
- No food or drink is to be consumed while ushering (in the Concert Hall).
- Personal cell phones should never be visible or used unless in a medical emergency.

**Pre-Show Meetings:** These meetings are mandatory and begin 1 hour and 30 minutes before the scheduled start of the show. After the meeting all Ushers will report to their assigned area.

**Playbills and Stuffers:** Each production will have playbills for distribution, which will be found on the ramps, in both lobbies, and in the balcony. If you don't find any playbills, please contact your Head Usher.



# ACTIVE SHOOTER TRAINING

All potential Usher candidates will watch the Active Shooter Training Video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYw0WNgbNoc>

## **RUN/HIDE/FIGHT**

### **RUN**

**Inform:** Receive and give information over your radio, talk to patrons in plain language, call 911 informing them of what's happening.

**Evacuate:** Lead patrons towards exits and listen for information/updates.

**To help, or not to help? That is the question:** Use common sense; will your action endanger you or anyone else?

### **HIDE**

**Close Doors:** Secure with locks and/or objects and distance yourself from the door.

**Turn everything off:** Turn lights and phones off. Make any room appear as if it is unoccupied.

**Be Quiet:** Crying, whispering, and talking will attract unwanted attention.

### **FIGHT**

**Moving Target:** Move erratically and flee if you can. Use your knowledge of the building to your advantage.

**Improvise Weapons:** Anything can be a weapon; distract and confuse, disrupt the plan.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

They have come to put an end to the situation and may yell commands at you and will not stop to help the injured. They don't know who the shooter is and will treat everyone with suspicion.

## **HOW SHOULD I REACT TO POLICE?**

**DO NOT** argue, point, yell or scream, or attempt to stop and interact with the police.

**DO** comply with their commands and keep your hands up and fingers spread. Only answer questions when asked and move past them and continue away from the building.



# SPECIFIC DUTIES

## TICKET SCANNERS

- Begin admitting audience members into the lobby when the pre-show meeting is over and the Patron Services Manager has asked you to open the doors.
- Scan the ticket to make sure it is for the correct show and performance.
- Direct patrons to the LEFT or RIGHT.
- Balcony is on the third floor and patrons can take an elevator if needed.
- Please point patrons to the box office if there is any dispute.
- Scan tickets until the Patron Services Manager or Head Usher excuses you.

## RAMP USHERS

- All ramp doors and elevator doors are to remain closed until the Patron Services Manager or Head Usher notifies you. DO NOT open these doors until this time.
- While waiting for doors to open, ramp ushers should stand guard at the doors to the second level and ramp doors not allowing patrons to enter until the designated time.
- When the signal is given, open and prop ramp doors open and move to your designated area.
- One usher should be stationed at the first set of steps to remind patrons "watch for steps."
- Ramp ushers should position themselves at different rows on the ramp and continue to assist patrons in finding their correct row and seat
- When the curtain speech begins, ushers should shut all entry doors, unless notified differently in meeting.
- Latecomers may only be seated during timeframe discussed at pre-show meeting.
- Once the lights come up for intermission and end of show ushers should allow patrons to open the entry doors first but assist if needed and make sure they remain open.
- Once Act II begins or the majority of patrons are inside, shut all entry doors.
- Once the show is over wait near the ramp area to make sure all patrons have made it out safely and begin clean up.



# SPECIFIC DUTIES

## BALCONY USHERS

- Balcony ushers will stand in front of the elevators and stairwells on the first floor until the Patron Services Manager opens the house.
- Once the house is open, you will take the first group of patrons up in the elevator with you to the third floor.
- Assist patrons with seating and playbills just inside the wooden doors.
- When the curtain speech begins, ushers should shut all entry doors. Latecomers should be seated at the time discussed at the pre-show meeting.
- Balcony ushers may find a seat behind row E as long as they do not have to cross any patron.
- Once the lights come up for intermission, ushers should immediately see that all entry doors are opened.
- Once Act II begins or majority of patrons are re-seated, shut all entry doors.
- Once the show is over and the lights come up, open all entry doors and wait outside the brown door area to make sure all patrons have made it out safely.

## BOX SEAT USHERS

- Help guard elevator and doors to the stairs before the house is open.
- Help distribute playbills to patrons by standing on top of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor entry once the house is open. Patrons may use stairs or elevator to second floor so they may not encounter an usher on the ramp.
- Assist patrons trying to find the balcony on the third floor or the back of the main floor.
- Patrons in the box seats may need extra assistance.
- The doors will need to be opened and closed at the appropriate times because of the acoustics in this room.
- Monitor the talking and use of cell phones and remind those in the box seats that the noise is carried out into the Concert Hall.



# ALL USHERS AND VOLUNTEERS

- For the required pre-show meetings prior to each performance, all ushers should arrive at 6:00 on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, 6:30pm on Friday and Saturday evenings, 5:30pm on Sunday evenings and 12:30pm for the matinees.
- All ushers **MUST** stay for the entire performance. Sit or stand in the area in which you were assigned so you can assist patrons throughout the performance.
- Dress appropriately for the theatre. No jeans, shorts, or t-shirts.
- If you receive a sound or temperature complaint, thank the patron for letting you know and find out the nature and location of the complaint. Tell the patron you will let the Head Usher know about it. Then, do just that!
- NEVER make derogatory remarks about the sound or temperature.
- Listen, respond, and report.
- If you cannot easily solve a problem regarding patron misconduct, report it to your Head Usher or Patron Services Manager.

## EMERGENCIES

- When an accident occurs, tend to the patron's needs immediately. Offer to call for an ambulance. One usher needs to stay with the injured patron(s) and another needs to notify the Head Usher immediately.
- The Head Usher needs to know the exact location of the accident (i.e. - outside, inside, what row, left or right, etc.) and what type of injury it is.
- If you can't find the Head Usher or the Patron Services Manager, go directly to the box office and they will contact the Head Usher.
- Do not attempt to move the injured patron. Do not offer advice (medical or otherwise, expect to encourage them to stay where they are and wait for help).
- Keep bystanders, including other ushers, away from the accident area.
- You may be asked for a brief statement for the accident report.
- Even if you think something is "minor" please notify the Head Usher or if a patron fell but didn't ask for help, please still notify the Head Usher or Box Office.
- In the event that the theatre must be evacuated because of an emergency, your job is to remain calm and listen to and follow instructions.

## SEATING DISPUTES/DUPLICATE TICKETS

- Check the ticket stubs of BOTH parties to determine seating, performance, and date. Often, it is either a wrong row or seat.
- Many times, it is balcony vs. the main floor, or the wrong seat.
- If both sets of tickets are exactly the same after carefully looking for the correct date, time, section, row, and seat, bring both sets of tickets to the Head Usher or Patron Services Manager.
- Allow the patrons sitting in the seats to remain seated and have the other patrons wait on the ramp.
- Box Office will resolve the issue and, if possible, assign new seats for the patrons.



## MISSION STATEMENT

MUSIC THEATRE WICHITA **ADVANCES THE MUSICAL THEATRE ART FORM BY  
EDUCATING & NURTURING CREATORS, ARTISTS & AUDIENCES.**  
PRIMARILY THROUGH THE PRODUCTION OF **BROADWAY-CALIBER** SHOWS.

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