

Thank you for joining the State Theatre Volunteer Corps!

As the face of the theatre, volunteers are a valuable resource providing the first and continuing impression of our organization. The following manual outlines the volunteer program. If you have questions contact Sheryl Fishel, Volunteer Coordinator at (607) 277-8283 ext. 898/ emergency (607) 229-3873 or sheryl@stateofithaca.com.

**A volunteer's primary responsibility is to provide excellent customer service.
At each event volunteers are to be proactive with patrons, have a positive attitude and work as a team.**

To be a volunteer you must:

- Attend a yearly training
- Be 18 years of age (accompanying children not permitted)
- Submit a signed copy of the volunteer contract
- Participate in the required number of community performances

AREAS OF PARTICPATION

Event Team	Support the front of house operations during performances. Jobs include ticket takers, door ushers, aisle ushers, runners, and concessions attendants.
Crew Team	Provide backstage and technical support before, during, and after events. Jobs include load in/out, fly system, loader, carpentry, electrics, properties, wardrobe, and dressers. Additional training required.
Hospitality Team	Welcomes the cast & crew of incoming events before, during, and after shows. Jobs include setting up, serving, and tearing down meals. Additional training required.
Facilities Team	General maintenance, cleaning and organizing of the facilities. Jobs include scraping windows, changing light bulbs, refreshing signage, and organizing storage areas.
Liaison Committee	The liaison committee serves as an interface between volunteers and the volunteer coordinator. An appointed group of four to six volunteers meet bi-monthly to discuss volunteer policies and concerns.

DRESS CODE

To project a professional, unified image a dress code is enforced for all front of house volunteers. It is essential to be easily identifiable. Volunteers improperly dressed are unable to participate in the event.

Men

Solid white dress shirt, black dress pants, socks and closed-toe shoes

Women

Solid white blouse/ dress shirt, black slacks or skirt, black socks or flesh tone hose/ tights and closed-toe shoes

Unisex Items

Solid black or white jacket, sweater or vest (no patterns)
Gloves black/ white are permitted if close to an exit

Name Badge

A name badge will be supplied to all volunteers

Personal Hygiene

Insure clothes are clean and pressed

Required Accessories

A working flashlight
A writing utensil
A positive attitude and smile

The following items of clothing and/or accessories are not appropriate for event volunteers.

Pants: denim, stirrups, sweats, leggings, leather or suede, short skirts, and short shorts
Shirt: spaghetti straps, tube tops, or midriffs and undershirts
Shoes: snow boots, sneakers, open-toed shoes, and sandals
Accessories: Hats, bandannas, and MP3 players

GENERAL BEHAVIOR

Prior to the house opening

Main event contact is the House Manager

- Arrive **90 minutes** before show time
- Store all outdoor wear in volunteer lockers
- Sign in with head usher and collect tools (name badge, apron etc.)
- Attend pre-show meeting
- Familiarize yourself with assigned area, locations of bathrooms/ supplies, concessions, and seating layout.
- For safety reasons, refrain from going backstage
- During sound checks stay in the lobby and remain quiet

House Opens

- The house normally opens one hour before show time. A few minutes prior to opening take your assigned post. Patrons are not allowed in the theatre until the house opens.
- **Welcome all patrons with a smile and positive attitude**
- **Never argue with a patron!**
- Mobility Impaired Patrons
 - If the patron arrives before the house opens, they will be seated before all other patrons. An orchestra volunteer will need to escort the patron to their seat.
 - Read the tickets. See house manager if tickets are in the balcony.
 - If using a wheelchair check to see the tickets are in wheelchair accessible seating (orchestra row B right/ left side or right orchestra row N seat 28). If one of these seats has not been assigned to the patron, ask if they will be transferring out of the wheelchair (if “no” see house manger).
- Ticketing issue: **patrons with the “same tickets”**
 - Re-check the patron’s tickets for the proper event, date, time and location. If this does not solve the problem, then:
 - Check the seated patron’s tickets for the same problems.
 - If neither of these work, write the full names of ticket buyers on the tickets, escort the standing patrons to the back of theatre/ lobby and inform the house manager of the issue.

Show Begins

- **Help latecomers!** Latecomers should not disturb other patrons. Seat latecomers in the back of the orchestra and balcony. They may take their designated seats after intermission.
- In the case of a sold out, reserved seating show, wait in lobby until a break in the performance to escort customers to assigned seats
- In the case of a sold out general admission show, encourage the patrons sit in the balcony
- Remain at your post until the house manager gives you permission to be seated. Volunteer seating is in the last row of the orchestra and the second section of the balcony.
 - At sold out events, volunteers are allowed to stand in the back of the orchestra or exit hallways of the balcony
 - Never sit in front of or with the patrons

Intermission/s

- Take assigned post
- After all patrons have been seated at the close of intermission you may retake your seating or standing area
- If you would like a snack from concession wait until the close of intermission

After Event

- All volunteers are required to stay for clean up
- Return all reusable programs to the volunteer area
- Pick up trash in seating areas and lobby
- Give all lost and found items to the House Manager
- Return tools borrowed: nametag, apron etc.
- Sign out with head usher

POSTIONS & DUTIES

Each Volunteer is responsible for conducting proper “General Behavior” as well as position tailored tasks.

Head Usher

- Assist House Manager with sign in/out and program setup
- Distribute/ collect nametags and supplies
- Check in with volunteers throughout the event and relieve them for breaks if needed
- Direct clean up after show

Concessions Attendant

- Set up and organize concession upon arrival
- Keep a tally of all food and beverages taken by staff and volunteers (tally sheet provided)
- Clean and stock concession bar. The cash drawer will be brought to you.
- Once the show begins (depending on crowd flow) only one attendant will need to be at the stand. Attendants rotate at concessions during the show.
- If concessions will not operate the entire show, close the area by stowing all products neatly in the concessions closet and give the drawer to the house manager.
- After the show return all remaining products NEATLY to the storage closet.
- Check with house manager if coffee and hot water urns and ice chests need to be emptied.

Door Ushers

- Stuff/ unstuff old programs upon arrival
- Once house opens remain at theatre entrance to WELCOME patrons
- Hand out programs
- At intermission collect all leftover programs, unstuff, and put away in the volunteer area

Aisle Ushers

- Stuff/ unstuff old programs upon arrival
- Specific aisles will be assigned Orchestra ABC or Balcony ABC.
- Concentrate on directing patrons to their seat, instead of handing out programs. If necessary escort patrons to their seats.
- Be proactive and pleasant
- Seat late comers during the performance

Ticket Taker

- Stuff/ unstuff programs upon arrival
- Ensure scanners are working properly
- If entrance line is long rip tickets and return to scanning after the line ceases. **Keep all ticket stubs.**
- Remain at your post until all tickets are scanned.
- Depending on the show, one ticket taker must stay in the lobby to check tickets and hold remaining will call tickets. Ushers may rotate in this position.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The following actions may result in a warning, probation, or dismissal from the program. The strictness and length of the penalty will depend on the violation and vary by case.

- Repetitive no shows, last minute cancellations, rule breaking, and/ or inappropriate attire

- Failure to complete duties assigned
- Arguing with patrons, staff, or other volunteers
- Continuous complaining and/ or lack of cooperation
- Eating in view of patrons
- Refusing to help with end of night cleanup

Immediate Dismissal

Consuming alcohol at the event
 Admitting patrons with out a ticket
 Joining patrons as an audience member
 Physical violence and/or verbal abuse

SCHEDULING

A list of shows scheduled will be emailed to all volunteers two weeks prior to the sign up date. Only choose shows from the current session fall or spring.

Sign up dates:

Dates will be emailed to all active volunteers. No sign ups will be accepted before the date specified.

Sign-up Medium:

E-mail

Events:

You may email requests of as many shows as you like within a given session. Use a numerical ranking system (number 1 being your top choice).

Note** the ranking system does not guarantee you will be schedule for all performances requested.

All volunteers are required to sign up for one community show in the fall and two in the spring. Community events will be labeled “community” in the sign up email.

The number of volunteers scheduled will depend on the type of show and selling power. The volunteer coordinator reserves the right to remove and add volunteers from the schedule as needed.

Added Events:

If new shows are added to the season, a sign-up e-mail will be sent out to all volunteers.

Confirmation:

To confirm events, a volunteer will receive a confirmation e-mail from the volunteer coordinator.

CANCELATIONS

Please notify the Volunteer Coordinator ASAP if you need to miss an event. If the notification is in advance, an email will suffice. **E-mail cancelations will not be accepted the day of the event.** Excessive tardiness will result in your removal from the volunteer team. After three absences without notice, your name will be removed from the volunteer roster.

BONUS

Volunteers have the opportunity to see most of the shows they are scheduled to work. An additional bonus is given to volunteers who show their dedication repeatedly through the season.

If a volunteer works:

- six shows in the fall or spring session, including at least one community show, they earn one comp ticket to be used in the next session
- ten shows in the fall or spring session, they earn 2 tickets to be used in the next session
- tickets, concessions, headusher and/or merchandise 5 or more times in a given session they earn two tickets to be used in the next session (these positions have no guarantee to view all of the show, but allows volunteers to rotate in the position)

The maximum number of reward tickets per volunteer and session is two. Comps are only valid in the session following the one they were earned in.

Volunteers are unable to earn hours or credit for shows if they...

- arrive after the call time
- did not sign-in/out with the head usher
- did not participate in the end of show clean up
- are asked to leave by management

Hours from the 07-08 season will be honored until June 30, 2009 before expiring. Volunteers will be able to earn hours to the next 25 hour increment before switching to the new hours system.

Each month remaining hours will be posted on the State Theatre Volunteer hours page <http://statetheatrevolunteers.googlepages.com/home>.

COMPLIMENTARY TICKET REQUESTS

Requests for comps will begin on a start date specified by the Volunteer Coordinator. No requests will be accepted prior to the date specified. Hours earned must equal the total trade in value before tickets can be requested.

Ten complimentary tickets will be set-aside for volunteers at most events, however comps will not be available for every performance. Due to selling power comps may be limited to the upper balcony or standing room. Tickets can be picked up at the State Theatre Box Office one hour before the start of the performance.

Current volunteers will take precedence to non-current volunteers when requesting complimentary tickets.

FEEDBACK

New Ideas

Please use email, set up a meeting, or call the volunteer coordinator with new ideas. For your great ideas to be heard effectively, give feedback in the ways suggested above, instead of verbally at an event.

Liaison Committee

Volunteers may discuss their concerns with a committee member(s) and request a member to speak on their behalf at bi-monthly meetings. The volunteer may also speak with all committee members by requesting (through the volunteer coordinator) to be placed on the meeting's agenda.

Evaluation

At the season end a program and self evaluation will be given to all volunteers to discuss the volunteer's progress and program feedback.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. The State Theatre of Ithaca is a 1609 seat venue.
2. The State Theatre opened on December 6, 1928. We are the last of Ithaca's 17 historic theatres.
3. We are owned and operated by Historic Ithaca, a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit organization.
4. Our season runs September through June including approximately 80 events. We are currently dark for the summers (no air conditioning).
5. Every person, regardless of age, must have a ticket to enter the theatre. Children seated on the lap or in the arms of an adult will not be allowed to enter the theatre without a ticket. Send patron to the box office if this is an issue.
6. Doors open one hour before show time, however this aspect is at the discretion of the tour manager or written into the contract. Each event may be different.
7. A security team will be hired for all events selling alcohol. Guests disrupting the safety of others will be removed from the theatre. If you witness a threatening situation notify the house manager and/or security personnel immediately.
8. Photography is prohibited at most events. The house manager will tell you the specific policy for each event. If volunteers witness picture taking or recording during a prohibited event, they should notify security and the house manager. Never confiscate the personal property of a patron.
9. Smoking is not permitted in the theatre. If you see someone smoking inside the theatre, ask him/her to extinguish the cigarette. If the patron continues to smoke inform security. Smoking areas are available outside the theatre.
10. Office telephones are not available for personal use.
11. Volunteers are strictly prohibited to drink alcohol at the event.
12. If given gratuity, volunteers are asked add the tip to the concessions drawer.
13. Volunteers are permitted to have a free bottle of water, a soda, a cup of tea or a coffee. A tally will be kept of all items taken from concessions by volunteers and staff.
14. After three months lost and found items are donated to charity.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

Emergency Evacuation

At the sound of the fire alarm, flashing lights and/ or flames the building must be evacuated. Do not wait for instructions, validation from staff or the alarm if you see flames. Treat every alarm as if it is a real emergency! Direct patrons to the nearest exits (balcony ushers tell patrons to use ALL upstairs exits). It is imperative to do this in a calm, but firm, manner. Volunteers should exit with the crowds and lead them to a safe distance from the theatre.

Safe Distances:

- The Tompkins County Library
- The Commons near Center Ithaca
- The Dewitt Mall on the corner of E. Seneca and N. Cayuga
- The corner of W. State and N. Geneva in the parking lot

Since we are located downtown, it will be impossible to keep track of every patron in the city setting. Remember many patrons will return to their cars, but they can wait/watch from a safe distance. If patrons are from out of town, they may need directions from a safe spot. Once you feel you have helped the patrons as best you can please meet the house manager at Shortstop Deli on the W. Seneca block between N. Geneva and N. Albany for a safety check-in.

Our plan will be practiced at all trainings and at specified shows before the doors open.

Weather Emergency

In case of a weather emergency the house manager will interrupt the performance and make a public announcement of the emergency plan. Volunteers should help patrons remain calm and follow instructions from the State Theatre staff.

Illness of an Audience Member

If a patron becomes ill or injured, inform the house manager or a State Theatre staff member immediately. No volunteer should give first aid or medicine to patrons (unless required to by law). If another patron chooses to administer aid of any kind, they do so of their own free will and should not be interrupted. Only management personnel will make decisions whether an ill or injured patron should be moved. The house manager will fill out an accident report for every incident.

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

As a volunteer, I agree to follow the policies, procedures and job descriptions in the State Theatre Manual in a professional manner and to maintain a courteous demeanor when interacting with the public, staff, and other volunteers.

Signing this document means you have read and understood all items in the 2008-2009 State Theatre Volunteer Manual and hereby agree to follow all procedures stated.

Print Name

Sign Name

Date

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

The principle of confidentiality is basic to the maintenance of professional ethics and community respect. As a State Theatre Volunteer, I will maintain the confidentiality of all information that is identified as proprietary and/or privileged. I am aware that any breach of confidentiality is grounds for removal from the position of a volunteer.

Print Name

Sign Name

Date