

Auditoria House Manager Training Manual 2023-2024

Pre-show:

1. **Arrive at least 10 minutes prior to call time.** Have a radio & nametag.
2. **Talk to the Stage Manager to communicate any special requests and procedures for the event** (such as start times, if dressing rooms are being used, length of intermission, programs, if the event is ticketed, tables needed, reception set-up etc.). The House Manager should also introduce themselves to the event sponsor/organizer.
3. **In Ardrey, turn on lobby lights, TV's and open the shades.** Lobby lights and shades are operated by the buttons on the house right side of the lobby next to the statues. Do not open the shades when the sun is directly on the statues. Turn on the TV's using the remote, and make sure they are set to the marketing feed.
4. **Meet with ushers at the designated meeting spot at their call time to assign them tasks.**
 - a. Assign ushers to walk house. (And Balcony, if it will be open) Check every row and pick up all garbage and lost items. Remember to check for gum too.
 - b. Assign ushers to check restrooms for cleanliness. Inspect both restrooms for toilet paper, soap dispensers, garbage removal, toilet problems, etc. Extra soap is stored in the mechanical room. Note: our crew is not responsible for bodily fluids. If there are any, contact the venue manager or events coordinator. Call facilities for any emergency clean-up needed.
 - c. Assign ushers to vacuum house, if necessary. Backpack vacuums are located in the house right cove, while upright vacuums are in the Dimmer Room
5. **Put up signage as needed.** If there is reserved seating, put up "Reserved" signs on the designated rows/ seats. If the event is not ticketed and a large attendance is expected place some "Accessible Seating Reserved" signs on the accessible seating rows. Make sure your ushers know to ensure these rows are only used by patrons and their families who need accessible seating.
6. **Check in with CTO if the event is ticketed.** Get ticket scanners from the ticket office staff.
7. **Unlock Dressing Rooms for performers if needed.** The SM may have already done this before you arrived, but if the dressing rooms are in use it is the HM & ushers' responsibility to clean and lock them up at the end of the shift.
8. **Distribute programs throughout the entrances.** Check in with the SM and someone from the event to get programs if the programs are not already in the lobby.
 - a. Ardrey: One pedestal goes on either side of the lobby, one pedestal goes to the elevator entrance, and one pedestal goes to double doors.
 - b. Kitt: One music stand goes at each of the atrium entrances being used. For smaller events with only one house hand, we use just the house left entrance.

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House Open:

9. **Assign and position ushers. Go over event procedures and usher responsibilities.** Use your discretion for the size of the event to determine the most efficient placement of ushers. There must always be an usher at each entrance being used and an usher in the house with the patrons. Extra ushers can be placed in the lobby or in the house.
10. **Check with SM to confirm as to whether the House can be opened at half hour prior to curtain.** The house cannot be opened if there is a rehearsal or setup still going on. Pay attention to how many people are in the lobby. If there is an uncomfortable amount of people, alert the SM so that the stage can be cleared and the House can be opened early. Make sure patrons do not enter the house until you check with the SM and call for house open. Do not open triple doors as an entrance unless told otherwise by a supervisor; these doors are to be used as exit only.
11. **In Ardrey, unlock all entrances and the elevators once ushers are in place at entrances.** Unlock all lobby doors, unlock double doors, and prop open the elevator door. When unlocking the elevator, make sure floors 1-3 are set to "Security OFF" and include 4th floor if the balcony is being used. If the balcony is not being used the 4th floor should have "Security ON". The 5th floor mechanical room should always be set to "Security ON" during a show so that no patrons can access it. Unlock outside elevator.
12. **Open House. Verify again with the SM that they are ready for house opening.** If so, announce to the House Crew to open the house by taking down ropes and propping open doors.
13. **Remain available and visible to deal with any patron questions or problems.** Be polite, welcome patrons, appear approachable, and make eye contact.
14. **Ask for a hold if needed.** At 5 minutes to show start, observe how many people are in the lobby. If there is still a line for CTO or a lot of people are coming in, there might be a possibility to hold a couple minutes. Relay this information to the SM.
15. **At 3 minutes, direct the house crew to button all doors,** or if working in Kitt and only an HM is on house crew, button the doors yourself. A crew member should announce when their section of doors is buttoned. Example: "House right doors are buttoned"
16. **Give the house to the SM.** At curtain, after the audience is seated and doors are buttoned, call over the radio to the SM: "Doors are buttoned. The house is yours."

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Show Start:

17. **Switch the television feeds from marketing to stage feed.**
18. **Remain by double doors and the house to handle any emergencies and late arrivals.**
19. **Get the attendance number.** If it is a ticketed event, return the scanners and get attendance numbers from the CTO booth workers. If the event is not ticketed, get an estimated attendance number to put in the report later.

Intermission:

20. **Notify house crew to unbutton the doors.** “House crew, please unbutton the doors.” If only an HM is on house crew, unbutton house doors where needed.
21. **Remain available and visible to handle patron concerns.** Inform the crew of the time intermission will end.
22. **Button the doors.** Return the House to the SM: “Doors are buttoned and the house is yours”

Post-show:

23. **Unbutton House doors.** Pay attention to the show, and try to have the ushers quickly open the doors as the house lights come up, so that patrons are not trying to exit as you are unbuttoning.
24. **Direct traffic to keep it moving as people exit.** Wait for all patrons to clear the House.
25. **Assign ushers post-show cleaning tasks:**
 - a. Walk the House for trash and lost items. Take note of and place lost items in the lost and found bin. If it is a valuable item, give it to a MOD for safekeeping.
 - b. Checking bathrooms (call facilities if out of toilet paper, or if anything is broken.)
 - c. Take garbage out. If dressing rooms were used, also take out the trash from those rooms and make sure that they are clean/reset and locked up.
 - d. Put away any tables, tablecloths, or other equipment used in the lobby or atrium.
 - e. Take down any signs that were used and return them to the signage drawer upstairs by the cleaning cabinet.
26. **Release house crew to help with Stage strike as needed.**
27. **Ensure ALL House and Stage doors are locked, closed and secured.**
28. **Complete House Manager Report.** Return the HM Keys, your radio, and clock out.

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Radio Etiquette:

- Press the side button and wait a couple of seconds before speaking into the radio.
- To address a person, announce “[Your Name] to [Their Name]” (Ex. “Mindy to Joe”). That person should then respond with “Go for [Their Name]” (Ex. “Go for Joe”).
- Radio conversation must always be appropriate and shift-related. Patrons can and will overhear your communication.

When to Ask for Holds:

- If the sponsor of the group asks for a hold.
- If there is a long line for ticket sales at five till the scheduled start of the show.
- If seating is limited and people are still trying to find their seats (house crew should be helping).
- If there is a situation in the house that needs to be addressed which would be disruptive or dangerous after the show has started.
- Asking for a hold should be avoided when possible to upkeep a sense of professionalism for starting our shows on time. Ask for holds in 2-5 minute increments.

Accessible seating:

- If patrons are seated in the accessible seating rows who are not disabled and are not with a family member or friend who is disabled, and a handicapped patron must be seated, politely inform that patron, or those patrons, that the row is the designated accessible seating area and offer to help them find another seat.
 - Ardrey: Row F, Row X, and Balcony Row D
 - Kitt: Row C and Row N

Balcony:

- Ensure patron’s safety around the railing. Do not allow patrons to place any items on the railing. Do not allow patrons to lean over the railing, or touch any equipment on the railing.

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House Crew Responsibilities:

These are all things that the House Crew should automatically do, but the House Manager should be looking for, encouraging, and enforcing:

- Looking for opportunities to assist patrons in answering questions and providing directions.
- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for patrons by means of friendly greetings, smiling, pleasant conversation, and by being aware of one's own body language and appearance.
- Assist handicapped patrons to their seats. Store walkers out of the way and return the walker to its owner as soon as the show has ended
- Make sure aisles are clear of patrons or objects.
- See that patrons do not take food, gum, or drinks other than bottled water into the house.
- See that patrons do not abuse furniture in the house, such as climbing over or standing on chairs, putting their feet on the chairs, sitting or sliding on handrails, etc.
- Keep the facilities clean; pick up any trash left along the way, including in the hallways and lobby.
- Relay any incidents, problems, changes requested, or concerns to the House Manager.

Customer Service:

Every interaction with our customers (performers and patrons) is an opportunity to solve their problem and leave a positive impression. Customer Service in the Auditoria depends on patron and performer communication, interaction, and experience.

- Make yourself visible - do not stay hidden behind a wall or corner.
- The House Crew should never be standing around in groups or having personal conversations. Spread out around the venue and focus your attention on being of assistance.
- Greet patrons. "Hi", "How are you?", "Enjoy the show." ...etc.
- Make eye contact and keep body language in mind. Don't have your arms crossed, don't have your hands in your pockets, don't lean against the wall, etc.
- Look for opportunities to assist patrons in answering questions, pointing them in the right directions, and finding seats. Do not wait for patrons to come to you.
- Do not just say, "I don't know." Explain that you will find out the information or solve the problem in an alternative way. When you do not know how to respond to a question, request, or complaint, thank them for their comment and let them know that you will see what you can do.

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Customer Complaints:

It is policy of the Auditoria that all employees respond to the public in a courteous, caring and appropriate manner. If you cannot solve a problem, refer to the Manager on Duty (MOD) for help. Include all complaints in your House Manager Report.

Try this “formula” when speaking with a patron who is upset or angry:

- State the policy: “We do not allow food in the auditorium”
- Explain the purpose of the policy: “because we need to keep the space clean, and pest free for the enjoyment of all our patrons and performers.”
- Empathize with their feelings: “I totally get it, when I get super hungry I can’t think about anything else!” or “I understand you really feel hungry and need to eat.”
- Offer them an alternative solution that doesn’t break policy: “You can absolutely have your snack over the tile in the lobby and watch the performance on the TV in there until you’re done eating!”

Emergency Procedures:

Should you, a coworker, or a patron happen to injure themselves, you must fill out an incident/injury report and have the injury assessed to determine if emergency services should be called. You MUST fill out an accident report within 24 hours of the injury for workers compensation to apply. Give the report to a MOD or put it in the mailbox outside Stephanie’s office.

Fire Alarm Procedures:

Should an alarm be pulled during an event, the HM’s first duty is to their own and their crew’s safety. Their second duty is to the patrons’ and performers’ safety. Their third duty is to the venue’s safety.

- In the event of a fire, the HM will report immediately to the SM.
- The managers will call 911 and/or emergency services.
- The HM will assign one crewmember to stand on the corner of Knoles and Riordan to escort emergency services into the venue.
- The HM will assist in directing the patrons in the house to the fire exits.
- If it is safe to do so, the HM may assign one crewmember to alert patrons in the bathrooms that there is an emergency and they must exit the building.