

GUIDELINES & COMPANY POLICY FOR FRONT OF HOUSE VOLUNTEERS & STEWARDS - July 2022

IMPORTANT: During performances, the FOH Manager is in charge of all things front-of-house. Please do not undermine the authority and responsibility of this position with personal demands. Overall legal responsibility, for all FOH matters, rests with the premises licensee:

JON MANLEY (in emergency tel: 07815 323982)

The FOH (Front of House) team is the forward-facing department at any venue. Its primary concern is the enjoyment, comfort and safety of members of the public who visit the venue. Effective FOH service encourages repeat custom and makes sound business sense. The term 'Front of House' also describes that physical area of a venue forward of the performance and back stage areas, i.e. all public access areas including the foyer, bar, café, box office and auditorium. The purpose of this document is to familiarise volunteers with the functions of the FOH team and the roles and responsibilities contained within it.

Premises licence legal obligations:

1. The licensee shall take all due precautions for the safety of the public, the performers, employees and volunteers and, except with the approval of the Council writing, shall retain control over all licensed portions of the premises.
2. All FOH personnel should recognise there is a mandatory difference re FOH **volunteers** and FOH **stewards**. The term "**steward**", whether in the singular or plural, shall be any person employed as a steward who has the authority of the licensee exclusively or mainly to assist patrons escape in the event of fire and/or other emergencies requiring evacuation of the premises. Stewards **MUST NOT** include bar, café, box office, ticket distribution volunteers.
3. One steward shall be provided for **each 75 people based on the maximum permitted capacity** for the premises. This means The Little Theatre **MUST** have a minimum of four FOH stewards, including the FOH Manager, at each performance.
4. All stewards **MUST** wear distinctive ID different from that of other volunteers (badges will be provided).
5. All stewards **MUST** be independently able/willing to carry out an emergency evacuation if the need should arise. Any person who feels unable to take on this responsibility, for any reason, **MUST NOT** volunteer as a FOH steward.
6. During a performance, if a patron should leave the auditorium, for any reason, a FOH steward **MUST** exit after the patron to assist if necessary.
7. **IMPORTANT: The primary role of a FOH steward is one of public safety – to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all persons present at a performance. The licensee, in conjunction with FOH Managers and the management committee, reserves the right to refuse a volunteer the option of being a steward if said volunteer is deemed unsuitable, for any reason, for the role. Public safety is paramount.**

DRESS CODE

Black & white has traditionally been the dress code for FOH volunteers – this will not be strictly enforced; however, reasonably smart attire is recommended + the legal requirement of either a TOADS lanyard (**volunteers**) or badge (**steward**). Remember: you are the first impression our patrons will experience.

These guidelines apply to **ALL** FOH volunteers as follows:

those marked **(S)** = steward

those marked **(V)** = other FOH volunteer

In addition to the following guidelines, café, bar, box office and ticket distribution will have their own roles & responsibilities which will be communicated via their respective managers.

BEFORE THE SHOW

- **(S, V)** Arrive at 6.30 pm for a 7.30 p.m. start
- **(S)** Familiarise yourself with the position of the Fire Extinguishers and Fire Points.
- **(S)** Listen to fire safety briefing by the FOH Manager
- **(S)** Ensure you have a working torch
- **(S)** You will be allocated to an exit door (with relevant seat ticket) - This will be your designated door for evacuation
- **(S)** Specific details of the show will be discussed
- **(V)** The “**ticket distributor**” may attend the performance but **MUST** book their free member’s ticket via box office – this volunteer **MUST NOT** occupy a FOH steward seat

(S) Evacuation procedure:

- **When you hear the announcement ‘Mr Green is in the building’**
- **When House lights suddenly go up.**
- **When the FOH Manager comes in and announces evacuation**
 - **Open your auditorium door and outside exit door**
 - **Tell audience and other volunteers to leave in a quiet and orderly manner and meet in the main car park (assembly point)**
 - **Do not allow people to hold up the free flow by asking questions**
 - **Take charge and ensure patrons/volunteers **DO NOT** wander off or leave**
- **(S)** Wear a TOADS Steward badge or **(V)** TOADS Volunteer lanyard
- **(S)** When informed by the Stage Manager, open the auditorium doors (usually about 7 pm)
- **(S)** Greet patrons, sell programmes, informing them they are £1 and use programme money bags
- **(S)** There must always be a minimum of three stewards in the auditorium during the show, two at the front and one at the rear.
- **(S)** Check dates on the tickets as patrons enter the auditorium.
- **(S)** In the unlikely event of double booking of seats, contact the FOH manager who will try to find alternative seats and deal with any issues. Collect tickets from both sets of customers in order to ascertain why/how this came about
- **(S)** When all of the audience are seated, the Manager will collect unsold programmes and money bags from you. Then inform the stage manager that he can start the show
- **(S)** Two stewards will be allocated to sell ice creams in the interval. Other stewards to take responsibility for allocated fire doors

DURING THE INTERVAL

- (S) Open and secure the nearest auditorium doors
- (S) Allocated stewards to sell ice creams
- (S) If not selling ice creams stewards to manage allocated fire doors

AT ANY TIME DURING THE EVENING

- (S, V) Any minor accidents or injuries should be reported in the accident book which is kept in the box office. NB: A first aid box is available in the box office which may be offered to patrons for their use
- (S, V) Please inform the Front of House Manager immediately. He/She will call an ambulance if appropriate
- (S, V) NB: A defibrillator is available in the bar.

AFTER THE SHOW

- (S) Open the auditorium doors and outside exit doors
- (S) Give out flyers and bid patrons goodnight
- (S) Check and clear litter from the auditorium
- (S, V) Return your steward badge/volunteer lanyard to the FOH Manager's office

**THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING,
WE COULD NOT RUN THE THEATRE WITHOUT YOU**