

GUIDELINES FOR FRONT OF HOUSE MANAGERS – 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.**

- Arrive at 6.15pm for a 7.30 start
- Switch on interior lights at the bank of switches behind the bar.
- Put out car park cones
- Unlock/unbolt all exits and check no obstacles in the way – Five doors
- (keys to front door and main car park door kept behind the bar)
- Switch on emergency exit signs (switch is to the rear of stage right)
- Depending on time of year, switch on outside flood lights (switches in paint store)
- Turn on the TV in the foyer using the remote control found in the Box Office
- Decide whether Balcony door should be opened and staffed (if not, rope off the staircase)

Get all stewards/volunteers together and use fire safety sheet to brief them

THERE MUST ALWAYS BE A MINIMUM OF THREE STEWARDS IN THE AUDITORIUM DURING THE SHOW, TWO AT THE FRONT AND ONE AT THE REAR

- Ensure all stewards have a working torch
- 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. There is no need to assign a “ticket distributor” (unless there is no specific volunteer) as this role is a separate volunteer duty.
- Give all stewards “steward” badges (**NOT** a volunteer lanyard) – this is a legal requirement
- Allocate stewards to each exit door (with relevant seat tickets)
- **Tell them about evacuation procedure. When they hear announcement ‘Mr Green is in the House’ or When FOH manager/Stage manager/Technical manager comes in and announces evacuation. All stewards to open their auditorium door and outside exit door. Tell audience to leave in a quiet and orderly manner.**
- FOH manager to wear fluorescent jacket to be point of contact for emergency services

Tell all stewards to check dates and performance time on the tickets.

- In the unlikely event of double booking of seats tell stewards to contact FOH manager who will try to find alternative seats and, if necessary, offer free drinks to those who have had to move. Collect tickets from both sets of customers for future interrogation of the system (double booking is impossible in normal circumstances)
- Allocate two stewards to sell ice creams in the interval, other stewards to be allocated to specific fire doors
- Give stewards programmes and programme money bags (from box office)
- Tell all stewards to give out flyers for the next production at the end of the show.
- Give stewards their tickets

Early in the evening ascertain with the technical manager who is locking up at the end of that evening. If no one can be found please phone Anna Reynolds, Chairman (07788 994398)

- Collect House Managers keys from Box Office
- Meet with stage manager and test radio contact.
- When informed by the Stage Manager get stewards to open auditorium doors (about 7pm).
- After last call for the start of show ensure all of the audience have gone in and then collect unsold programmes and money bags from all stewards.
- Inform the Stage Manager that they may start the show.

PRIOR TO AND DURING THE INTERVAL

- Ten minutes before the interval set up the Ice Cream freezer with the cash float from the Coffee Bar Foyer (key in coffee bar till).
- After last call for the interval ensure all of the audience have gone in and make sure all doors are closed
- Inform the Stage Manager that they may start the show. Communication devices (e.g. walkie talkies) will be provided to easier facilitate FOH/backstage dialogue.

DURING THE SHOW

- All fire doors (Bar, Coffee bar, and front lobby) should be closed during a performance. (These doors can be open during the intervals).
- Give programme money bags to Box Office for counting of money
- Write up the Managers report sheet.
- Move all car park cones from main car park only adjacent to building. On last night of run bring in all cones.
- Patrol the theatre to ensure security of theatre and contents.
- Switch on outside flood lights (switches in paint store) If not switched on previously
- After the interval, restock ice creams and return Ice Cream freezer to its stored position under the stair case, money and freezer key to be returned to the coffee shop

AFTER THE SHOW

- Ensure stewards open auditorium doors and outside exit doors. (FOHM to open fire doors adjacent to Coffee bar/Stage lobby)
- Stewards to give out flyers
- Everyone to check auditorium for litter
- Collect radios and put on charge next to Stage Manager's desk
- When most of audience have left, lock all exits except the one at the far end of the bar
- Turn off the TV and some lights in the foyer using the switches adjacent to the door in the Box Office
- Put Box Office keys back in the Box Office
- Advise the lock up manager/bar staff when the FOH manager has completed his duties.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Any accidents or injuries details should be entered in the accident book in the Box Office, there is a first aid box for patron use in the Box Office.
- If in any doubt use a mobile phone or Box Office phone to call 999 for an ambulance

OUTSIDE COMPANIES PROVIDING THEIR OWN FOH VOLUNTEERS/STEWARDS

- This is perfectly acceptable subject to the following caveats:
- They **MUST** be included in any FOH fire/safety briefing prior to performance – this should include evacuation/emergency procedures.
- Whilst accommodating an outside company's volunteers as much as possible, it **MUST** be made clear that The Little Theatre FOH stewards and FOH Manager can override the wishes of any outside company in all FOH matters.
- It is recommended that the outside company's organisers/producers are contacted, prior to opening performance, so that the FOH rules are clarified.

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