

Welcome & Thank You

We are very proud of and grateful to the many people who join the volunteer program. You will belong to a team of community members who are generous with their time and are committed to making every performance a special one for our patrons. Without this team effort, the show could not go on.

You have accepted an important position in providing customer service, safety, and comfort to the patrons of the Pioneer Center. Your actions and professionalism will “set the stage” for every patron’s experience. **All volunteer ushers are expected to always conduct themselves in a courteous and helpful manner to customers, staff, show personnel (crew) and fellow volunteers.** The duties you’ll perform may vary, but their importance does not. In order for patrons to experience maximum enjoyment, you must be well trained and ready to meet any challenge.

This handbook is designed to help you become one of our proud and efficient volunteers. We hope that you enjoy working at the Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts and will continue to help us as you become a crucial part of our organization. If you have any questions about anything in this book, please contact the House Manager for clarification.

Our History

The Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts (PCPA) is a private, non-profit organization. PCPA was established in 1988 and operates under an agreement with the Reno/Sparks Convention and Visitor’s Authority (RSCVA) to administer 120+ events annually. PCPA was formed to provide better service to its users and to address the area’s need for specialized expertise in the field of performance facility management.

The Pioneer Center is a 1500-seat proscenium theater located in downtown Reno. The facility was constructed in 1968 and still serves as the primary performance space for Reno’s major performance organizations, including the Nevada Opera Association, Reno Philharmonic Orchestra, A.V.A. Ballet Theatre, and Reno Concerts. The Pioneer Center hosts the “*Broadway Comes to Reno*” series, which currently has over 4,000 season ticket holders. PCPA’s primary goals are to maintain the Pioneer Center as the home of choice for Northern Nevada’s performing arts organizations, to promote collaboration within the downtown performing arts community, and to support downtown redevelopment.

Also at the Center

The gold dome building also contains a 6,000 square foot multipurpose 167-seat underground black box theater. The underground black box theater located below the plaza has a separate entrance on the corner of S. Virginia and Mill streets. Shows presented at the underground theater are not part of the Pioneer usher program. There is also a 4,000 square foot exhibit hall and a 50-seat cocktail lounge used by groups that rent the Pioneer.

Pioneer Mission and Goals

Mission Statement:

To facilitate and present the highest quality performing arts programming in Northern Nevada.

Goals and Objectives:

To provide leadership that promotes the performing arts as an integral element to the quality of life

- Ensure that performing arts are accessible to all patrons
- Support performing arts education and audience development
- Provide educational performing arts outreach programs

To promote and enhance the Pioneer Center as the facility of choice for local performing arts organizations

- Improve facility management and support services for existing and potential clients
- Affect repairs and improvements to the Pioneer Center’s physical plant and general building operations

- Restore and improve the main theater's production and technical capabilities
- Affect repairs, improvements, and policy adjustments in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act
- Restore and improve the aesthetic presentation and use of the building

To support downtown redevelopment efforts and demonstrate the integration of performing arts and use of the Pioneer Center as central to those efforts

- Further the development of the Downtown Arts District with the Pioneer Center as a cornerstone of that district
- Contribute to efforts to attract new business and industry to Washoe County through positive promotion of the Pioneer Center and Reno's cultural climate
- Establish partnerships with businesses that promote cultural tourism

To produce and present high quality cultural programs not already provided through other performance venues

- Attract touring performances and attractions in cooperation with local cultural organizations and businesses
- Encourage and support the production of local work and recognition of local performing artists

Volunteer Enrollment

PCPA maintains its own volunteer pool for all events in the building. **The Pioneer Center reserves the right to determine who is a volunteer. Volunteers who do not meet the standards of courtesy and service or are in violation of rules or procedures will not be eligible to usher.** Volunteers may not receive any monetary or gratis reimbursement for their time at the Pioneer Center. Volunteers serve mainly as ushers during events; however, there are occasionally other projects that require their help, such as stuffing programs. Clients are required to use PCPA's House Manager and ushers to ensure our ability to provide a safe and comfortable environment for every performance .

Usher Qualifications:

- At least 18 years of age
- Must be able to negotiate stairs in an emergency
- Well groomed
- Able to deal with the public, staff, and other volunteers in a friendly, courteous, and hospitable manner and act calmly in emergencies

Time Requirements:

Most events are held in the evenings and on weekends. Hours vary with each show. There are also some school shows during the day as well as matinee performances for many of the shows.

Volunteer Records:

The Pioneer Center maintains records of all volunteer activity, including applications, shows worked, no-shows, phone lists, mailing lists, and e-mail lists. It is your responsibility to inform the House Manager of any changes in your address, telephone number(s), or e-mail addresses. All volunteer records are private and are not to be used by anyone other than the Pioneer Center for any purpose.

Inactive Volunteers:

People who do not work at an event in a six-month period will be dropped from the active list. It is the volunteer's responsibility to notify the House Manager in writing by letter, fax., or email if they are unable to meet this requirement due to illness or extended travel. Inactive volunteers forfeit their right to any unclaimed awards, such as name badges or 50 point raffle coupons.

Monthly Newsletter:

A monthly newsletter is sent to all volunteers. It contains show information for the following month along with staffing confirmation and re-sign-up needs. Volunteer points will be updated semi-annually in the newsletter.

Usher Staff Policies

Signing In & Out:

It is very important that you sign in and sign out when working an event. This is the only way that the House Manager can determine how many points to award you for working an event. It is your responsibility to record the time. Those ushers who do not sign in or out will not receive points for working that event.

Dress Standard:

PCPA requests that you wear black slacks (or skirts for women) with a white dress shirt or blouse. Men are required to wear a tie; however, banded collar dress shirts are also acceptable. Vests with the Pioneer Center logo are provided when you come in to work. Tennis shoes, sandals, denim, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or multi-colored clothing are not permitted. How the ushers look reflects directly upon the Pioneer Center. Cooperation with the dress code ensures that a neat and professional appearance is presented to the public.

Patrons, Family or Friends:

At no time is any volunteer to allow access to any person who does not have a valid ticket or pass for the scheduled event. Any volunteer who willfully allows entrance without a valid ticket or pass to an event will be subject to immediate suspension and possible legal action. All volunteer comps are for a volunteer and guest only and will be clearly marked. All volunteer comps must have a volunteer present to enter. If there are any questions as to the validity of a ticket or ticket holder, please contact the House Manager immediately.

Viewing and Seating for Performances:

Watching the performances while you work is a side benefit of being a Pioneer Center Volunteer but is not guaranteed. Our first priority is to serve the patrons. You may be asked to perform a duty or to assist in an emergency that prevents you from watching an entire show. This is your first responsibility as a volunteer. Ushers should sit in the folding chairs at the back of the house during the performances. Ushers should never stand directly behind patron seats, should be as quiet as possible at all times, and should remain seated except when helping patrons.

Cancellation of a Commitment:

If you must cancel your commitment to work at an event, it is your responsibility to notify the House Manager at least **one business day** before the event, so that a replacement can be found. If you do not do this, you will receive a "no-show" on your record for that event. No-shows often leave us short handed. Although we understand that many of you have busy schedules, it's best not to sign-up for an event if there is a possibility that you cannot work. If you are a no-show, you will be notified of your status. If you have three no-shows in a year period (July 1 – June 30) you will be dropped from the active list.

We realize that emergencies occur. Exceptions may be made depending on the situation. If there is an emergency, please call the House Manager at 686-6615.

Gratuities:

No gratuities are to be accepted by volunteers except the Coat Check area personnel. We have a container for patrons to place gratuities should they choose to do so. Under no circumstances should you solicit patrons for gratuities. Any gratuities collected will go into a general pool for snacks, supplies, point awards, and the volunteer parties.

Alcohol or Drug Consumption:

Alcohol or drug consumption is not permitted during any work shift. Any volunteer in violation of that policy or who fails to have full control of his or her faculties at the time of check-in, will be dismissed.

Personal Belongings:

We recommend that you do not bring valuables to the theater when working events, including purses. We have had a few instances in which personal belongings were stolen. However, if you do have something that needs to be secured, the House Manager can put it in the ticket office. It is your responsibility to address this before an event begins. The House Manager will not have time to secure personal belongings during a performance and you will not have access to these items until the performance concludes.

Backstage:

No one without an approved pass or authorization by list from the client (including volunteers) will be allowed backstage before, during, or after an event. The passes for each production should be shown to ushers prior to performances as they vary from production to production. Some backstage personnel may not have passes, but will be wearing black and should have an I.A.T.S.E. (stagehands union) logo on a shirt or hat. If you are not sure, please ask the House Manager or Events Director. Exceptions must be approved by the client's official on-site representative and/or by the Pioneer Center's Events Director. Ushers should make sure that no unauthorized persons enter the backstage area before, during, and after shows. Side stage doors and hallway backstage entrances should be staffed until all patrons have left the theater.

Observance of Patron Policies:

To ensure our professional integrity, please observe all policies that apply to patrons. Some policies, such as whether or not food or beverage is allowed in the theater, may change for each event. Volunteers are not allowed to take food or beverages into the theater regardless of what the patron policy is for the evening.

Refreshments:

Refreshments will be provided for the ushers in the Coat Check area. All refreshments provided are to be consumed in the Coat Check area only.

Friends and Family:

Please do not bring friends and family members with you when working at the Pioneer Center unless they already are official volunteers of the Pioneer Center or have valid tickets for that event.

Solicitation:

Volunteers are not allowed to solicit in any manner. Volunteers cannot solicit employees, customers, or other volunteers of the Pioneer Center for any reason (to attend other events, to work other events, to join any group or entity, or to participate in any outside events). Our volunteer base and all data are the exclusive property of the Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts.

Training Sessions / Orientation:

The Pioneer Center staff holds training sessions for ushers twice a year, in the fall and the spring. One training session may be for new volunteers only as determined by management staff. These sessions are for new volunteers only and current volunteers may not attend unless the House Manager asks for assistance. Training includes introductions to Pioneer staff, a review of facility policies, general usher skill training, a tour of the Pioneer Center, and a review of emergency evacuation procedures. All active ushers who volunteer less than 40 points a year (July 1 – June 30) must attend a training session (can be a new volunteer training session) the next year to remain on the active list. Ushers who volunteer 40 points or more per year do not have to attend training sessions.

Usher Communications:

All ideas or concerns are to be in writing to the House Manager who will direct them to the proper management staff. The House Manager will communicate back to the volunteer with any outcome. Ushers who participate in any actions that may in any way compromise the Pioneer Center, its employees, or board will be subject to immediate dismissal.

Usher Procedure Violations:

Volunteers who do not comply with theater rules and handbook procedures as outlined in this manual will not be eligible for volunteer service. Written notification will be sent to any volunteer who is no longer eligible. All decisions relating to volunteer service are final and not subject to review.

Sign-Up Policies & Procedures:

All volunteer policies and procedures will be determined by Pioneer management and Board of Directors. At the Pioneer Center, usher positions are voluntary and any incentives (comps) are not payment for services.

Sign-Up Period:

- Sign-ups for events and raffles start the **Second Monday** monthly for five days (9:00am Monday – 6:00pm Friday) for shows the following month. Raffle sign-ups are limited to the first week.
- Re-sign-ups for shows that are not filled will start on the **Wednesday after the third Monday** monthly until all positions are filled.
- Signing up for a show indicates a commitment to work – it does not indicate possible interest.

How To Sign- Up:

The second Monday monthly there are five (5) ways to sign-up:

1. **At the Pioneer:** Monday through Friday 9:00am - 6:00pm or during events during the sign-up and re-sign-up periods. Please clearly print your full name on the appropriate sign-up sheet. The sheets will be posted in the upper lobby or coat check area.
2. **Online:** Anytime (24 hrs.) during the sign-up period and anytime during the re-sign-up periods.
Go to www.pioneercenter.com
Click Volunteer tab to the top right of the homepage
Click show sign-up link, fill out the name, and e-mail address fields (*your request will not be processed if you do not fill out these fields*)
Type your name in the show box you want to work.
(To enter raffles, type your name in the raffle box for the show you want)
Print a copy for your records and click "Submit".

Your sign-up sheet will automatically go to the Pioneer and your name will be put into the respective shows by staff. Also on the volunteer tab will be show staffing confirmation (who is working the different shows) and a copy of the volunteer handbook.

3. **By fax. (775-686-6630):** Anytime (24 hrs.) during the **first two days** of the sign-up period. Use the upcoming events sheet in newsletter. Write you name and phone number on top (*if you do not fill out name and phone number your request will not be processed*). Write your "name" in the box for the show or shows your want to work and "drawing" in the second box to enter a raffle. Check your entries and fax. to 775-686-6630.
4. **By mail:** Using the fax. sheet from the newsletter, fill out and mail to the Pioneer on the second Monday. Any envelopes postmarked before the second Monday will not be processed.
5. **By phone / out of Reno-Sparks area volunteers only (775-686-6615):** Anytime (24 hrs.) during the sign-up period and anytime during the re-sign-up periods. **Out of Reno-Sparks area or vacationing** volunteers use the upcoming show date information in the newsletter, mark your preferences before you call, clearly give your full name, telephone number, and the shows (show, day, time) you would like to volunteer for. You may also leave raffle preferences. All phone messages have a time and date stamp. Any volunteer who is out of town on vacation or business must specify where they are calling from and leave a contact number.
6. **Volunteers cannot sign-up for other volunteers** (the only exception is volunteer spouses).
7. **Initial show sign-ups** (the first week) are limited to one (1) Philharmonic, Opera and Ballet show per run, one (1) Broadway show per five (5) show run and two (2) Broadway shows per eight (8) show run.

The week following sign-ups: Staffing and Raffle winners are posted online and on the board at the Pioneer.

1. **Newsletter:** The newsletter for the following month will be mailed with the staffing and raffle winners for that month along with any shows available for the re-sign-up period. Included in the newsletter will be the show fax. sign-up sheet for the following month's shows.

Reminders:

There are no telephone or memo reminders of your event schedule. It is your responsibility to check if you are working a show. Reminder cards are kept next to the event sign-up sheets. We encourage everyone to fill one out and post it at home. Staffing will be posted at the Pioneer, online, and in the newsletter.

Points / Raffles / Complimentary Tickets:

Points:

You will receive points according to the number of hours that you have worked. Points are assigned based on the manpower required and the event's popularity. Points are marked on the event sign-up sheet. Letters are sent out whenever a volunteer passes a point marker. Accumulated points earn you the following:

<u>Every 50 points:</u>	<i>Coupon for entry into raffle for two (2) complimentary tickets</i>
<u>100 points:</u>	<i>Engraved name badge</i>
<u>250 points:</u>	<i>Name engraved on a plaque for dedicated service, which is permanently displayed in the upper lobby</i>
<u>500 points:</u>	<i>Wristwatch with Pioneer Logo</i>

Ushers earning 250, 500, 750 and 1000 points will receive a lapel pin that can be worn on their vests.

Coupons:

Whenever a volunteer earns 50 points, a coupon redeemable for two complimentary tickets will be issued. **You may then sign-up for a raffle for complimentary tickets. The coupon does not allow you to bypass the raffle procedure.** Coupons expire one year from the issue date and are only good while you are an active volunteer. Coupons cannot be given to other volunteers and are not transferable.

Complimentary Ticket Raffles:

Complimentary tickets will not be available for every event at the Pioneer Center; it depends on the contractual agreements. However, available complimentary tickets to events are raffled off each month. This is done so that every volunteer has a fair chance of winning. Sign-up sheets for raffles will be posted on the second Monday of every month along with the event sign-up sheets. Only volunteers who have earned at least 50 points are eligible for the raffles. Names are randomly drawn on the third Monday monthly. Only the winners will be notified by phone. Replacements will not be issued for lost coupons, so be sure to keep yours in a safe place. The use of these coupons makes each volunteer responsible for his or her own tickets, as well as cutting down on the amount of time and paperwork it takes to keep track of everyone's complimentary tickets. The complimentary tickets are for volunteers and a guest only; a volunteer must accompany the guest. Complimentary tickets are not to be given as gifts or sold.

Raffle and Complimentary Ticket Policy Overview:

- Coupons will be distributed as earned. They will expire one year from the issue date.
- Volunteer point totals will be updated semi-annually in the newsletter (January and July).
- All comps will be determined by random draw.
- **Note: Volunteers may not enter a raffle for a show they have signed up to work.**
- Volunteers can only sign-up for (1) Philharmonic, Opera, or Ballet and (2) Broadway **show raffles** per show run.
- Comp. tickets can be picked up at will call two hours before the performance by the winning usher.
- Comp. tickets are for the volunteer raffle winner and guest only, they are not transferable.
- Comp. tickets cannot be given as gifts or sold.
- Comp. tickets are for the stated show date and time only.

Facility Amenities

Administrative Offices:

The Administrative Office is located in the upper lobby. The office is open Monday through Friday from 9am to Noon and 1pm to 5pm. It is closed on weekends and most holidays. The phone number is (775) 686-6610. Voice mail will take messages after normal business hours. The fax number is (775) 686-6630. The mailing address is 100 South Virginia Street, Reno, NV 89501. Patrons who wish to contact the office personnel should do so during business hours. During most events, there are no administrative personnel on site with the exception of the House Manager and the Events Director. The House Manager will handle any patron complaints or problems during an event and inform the Events Director.

Box Office:

The Pioneer Center Box Office is open Monday through Friday from 11am to 6pm (summer hours may vary) and two hours prior to show times. The Box Office phone number is (775) 686-6600. The voice mail lists event information and will handle calls after normal business hours. During events in which PCPA is handling the ticketing, the Box Office generally will close one half-hour after the performance begins unless otherwise specified by the client. Box Office personnel will be available to handle ticketing discrepancies and to provide "will call" service. ShoWare provides our ticketing service. Patrons can purchase tickets at the Pioneer Box Office, by phone by calling 1-877-840-0457, and on-line at pioneercenter.com. **The Pioneer Box Office does not sell tickets by phone.** Additionally, the Reno Philharmonic Orchestra, the Nevada Opera Association, and the Magic Underground sell tickets to their own events from their locations. They are linked to our ticketing system through our website.

Will Call:

Patrons should be directed to the "will call" window at the Box Office if they have charged their tickets by phone or on the internet and need to pick them up the night of the performance. Box Office personnel will be available to provide "will call" service. Signs are posted on the Box Office wall to direct patrons to the appropriate window. No patron should be allowed beyond the rope stands without a ticket. A photo ID must be presented to pick up "will call" tickets.

Concession Stands:

Refreshments may be sold in the lobbies (upstairs and downstairs) before performances and during intermissions. Locations will depend on the attendance at the performance. Be familiar with the locations prior to patron arrival. Ushers should never stand in for a concessionaire or merchandise seller.

Novelty / Souvenir Stands:

Larger events generally have novelty/souvenir stands set up for patrons. These may be located in either or both lobbies. You should know where the novelty stand locations are prior to patron arrival. Ushers should never stand in for a concessionaire or merchandise seller.

Coat Check:

The Coat Check area is located in the upper lobby. There is no charge for checking items. Check in anything a patron wishes to leave, i.e., coats, telephones, pagers, cameras (see pages 9 and 17). Hearing devices also are available for check out in the Coat Check area. There is no charge for the hearing devices.

Restrooms:

Four restrooms are located in the lower lobby area. There is one to the left and right of the elevator and two more in front of the Exhibit Hall. Additionally, there are restrooms in the upper lobby located on the right and left sides of the elevator. You should be familiar with the locations, as patrons frequently ask for directions to the restrooms.

Drinking Fountains:

Drinking fountains are located in the upper lobby area across from both main entrances and in the lower lobby area near the restrooms.

Lost & Found:

Retrieval of lost items is an invaluable service offered by the Pioneer Center. If you find an item during or immediately following a performance while patrons remain in the building, please take it directly to the Coat Check area. Please fill out a **Lost and Found Card** available in coat check. Leave the item and the card on the desk in coat check. The House Manager will tag and lock up any unclaimed items in the Coat Check closet.

If a patron loses an item and asks for your assistance, direct them to the Coat Check area. If the item can not be found, get the following information from the patron:

1. A description of the lost item
2. Date
3. Name of event
4. Area in which the item was lost
5. Phone number and name

Leave this information with the House Manager. In the event the item is found, the patron will be contacted and able to pick it up during regular business hours. Sometimes items do not turn up for several days or even weeks after an event. Assure the patron that their information will be kept on file and that there is the possibility their item will be found.

First Aid:

The first-aid boxes are located in the Coat Check area next to the House Manager's desk, in the downstairs light booth, in the backstage area, and in the raceway near the safe area. The House Manager is required to fill out an accident report any time first-aid is administered. When an accident occurs, regardless of the severity, it is very important that the appropriate action is taken (see section on Emergencies page 18). If you become aware of an injury, please report it immediately to the House Manager. An accident report must be filled out by, or on behalf of, the injured party. This is vital so that our insurance company can effectively and accurately handle any claims and so that we can correct any problems and avoid accidents in the future. Depending on the type of event, an emergency medical team may be available.

Parking:

There is no parking on the Pioneer Center premises. Volunteers and patrons can park on the street at metered spots, which are in effect Monday through Saturday, from 9am to 6pm, or in one of several garages in the area (see parking locations in Appendix III). Cars parked on the loading dock behind the Pioneer Center will be towed. That area needs to be clear so that performers can load in and out and use the freight elevator, as well as emergency fire and medical services. The Box Office has parking maps showing all the available (free and paid) parking in the vicinity of the theater.

Security Considerations:

Safety issues are of paramount concern to PCPA. The safety and security requirements for the Pioneer Center change according to the type of event.

Security activities are in effect in all areas of the facility, but primarily are conducted in the front-of-house portion of the building. Security supervision is the responsibility of the Technical Director, although in some cases those duties may be assigned to the House Manager. A security person is always located at the stage door entrance during shows. Please be familiar with this location.

PCPA will meet with the client prior to the event to assess security needs, facility needs, and the needs of the artist as outlined in the artist's technical rider.

The following areas are off-limits to all patrons unless approved by the Events Director: on stage, backstage, dressing rooms, Box Office, Administrative Office, and loading dock.

In the absence of trained security personnel, **volunteers should not handle any potentially dangerous situation.** Should such a situation arise, notify the House Manager or Technical Director immediately. If necessary, the House Manager will contact the Police for assistance.

If patrons are not in full control of their faculties, they generally should not be allowed into the building until they are sober and coherent. If such a problem arises, contact the House Manager, Technical Director, or a security supervisor.

Disabled Access

Wheelchair & Limited Mobility Seating:

The Pioneer Center is equipped with up to 20 wheelchair seats located at both the front and rear of the lower house seating area and 16 limited mobility seats in the two side sections of the lower seating area (refer to the chart in Appendix II). The configuration will vary by event. The Pioneer Center's passenger elevator, located in the center of the upper and lower lobbies, is the only means of disabled access to those seats. Access ramps into the House are located at either end of the lower lobby. A wheelchair lift provides access into the Exhibit Hall and is located in the lower lobby in front of the elevator. The Pioneer also supports four to eight parking spaces for disabled patrons on Mill Street and State Street, adjacent to the building. Ramped access to the Plaza is available only on the south (State Street) side of the building.

According to the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) any disabled patron may transfer out of their wheelchair or mobility assist device into a theater seat if they so desire. Each disabled patron makes this personal choice for themselves and does so at their own risk. The following are **ABSOLUTE NO-NO'S** to adhere to when a disabled patron should decide to transfer into a theater seat:

1. **If asked, point out accessibility routes, accessible restrooms, etc. to disabled patrons for their convenience.**
2. **You may not transfer a patron from a wheelchair to a theater seat or vice-a-versa.**
 - You can stabilize/hold on to the chair while the patron transfers.**
 - You may never lift or carry a patron in order to get them in and out of a chair.**
 - In the event of an emergency, please notify the first available First Responder of the location of any disabled patrons in the theater and they will assist those patrons in and out of the theater seat(s).**
3. **You may not do anything that jeopardizes the safety of a patron or your own safety.**
4. **Once a patron has transferred into a theater seat, please take their wheelchair/mobility device and store it in the closet in the lower lobby which is across from the Slider Bar. Please inform any companions of its location so they can retrieve it after the performance.**

Disabled patrons generally will have contacted the Box Office concerning seating requirements prior to attending an event. Both the House Manager and the Head Floor Usher, as well as any ushers directing a disabled patron to their seat, should note the location of each disabled patron. The House Manager will advise the staff of any special needs required of disabled patrons. If a wheelchair patron has not arranged for handicapped seating, contact the House Manager and arrangements will be made to accommodate the patron according to our safety standards.

Hearing Devices:

PCPA has 24 hearing devices that work on radio frequency. Distribute the devices in exchange for a driver's license, keys, or credit card. The devices are small, rectangular black or red boxes that work like a Walkman radio-cassette player. They are stored in chargers located in the Coat Check area. Unplug the unit from the charger and connect the head phone or neck loop into the unit. Patrons will adjust the volume using the dial on the side of the device. There is a secured red metal box to store the licenses, keys, or credit card. Ask the House Manager to show you the device if you are uncertain how to use it.

Event Time Line

Prior to Usher Staff Briefing:

Generally, ushers arrive at least one and a half (1 ½) hours before curtain time (30 minutes before lobby doors open). The House Manager or other staff members will let you in through the upper lobby doors that are closest to the administrative office. Upon arrival, please report to the upper lobby Coat Check area.

You must sign in and pick up the following:

1. Usher vest
2. Usher instructions (if used)
3. Flashlight (mandatory)
4. Event programs (if used)
5. Seating chart (if used)
6. Vests and flashlights must be returned at the end of the event.

Usher Staff Briefing:

At this time, the House Manager will meet with you in the upper or lower lobby to make announcements and answer questions. The following information will be given out during this time:

1. Introductions
2. Assignments for Head Floor Usher, ticket takers, program attendants, coat check and aisle ushers
3. Any information about pre- and post-performance talks and activities
4. Seating arrangements
5. Information about concession and novelty/souvenir sales
6. Appropriate late seating policy

7. Number and length of intermission(s)
8. Unusual circumstances
9. Expected length of the event
10. Lobby & House opening times
11. Changes in plans / re-assignments
12. Answers to usher questions

The importance of usher staff briefings cannot be overstated. All volunteers, even if experienced, are expected to attend the full briefing, which generally takes no more than 10-15 minutes. You should study House floor plans and familiarize yourself with the House area you will be working. Be prepared to go directly to your assigned post immediately following the meeting. Always familiarize yourself with emergency exits closest to you and review the emergency exit plan for your area.

Lobby Opening:

The lobby generally opens one hour before the performance. Be at your assigned post when the Pioneer Center opens unless assisting with a special task such as stuffing programs with inserts.

Ticket takers MUST be in place as patrons enter the upper lobby doors. Generally, early patrons will have thirty minutes in the upper and lower lobbies before they can enter the theater itself (the House). Ushers should stand in front of their assigned House door while cordially keeping patrons in the lobby until the House Manager or Head Floor Usher opens the House.

Prior to House Opening:

Ushers must keep all doors to the House closed until the House Manager or Head Floor Usher instructs you to open them. **Never open the doors to the House until the signal to do so is given, no matter what time it may be.** This point cannot be stressed enough. Many times patrons become impatient and want to be seated immediately. However, there are no exceptions to this rule. Any patron who enters the House before it opens must be ushered out and the doors secured. Clients may ask that no one enter the house (including ushers) for certain periods of time prior to the house opening. If there are no restrictions, ushers may go into the House prior to its opening to acquaint themselves with seating and to make sure the area is clean and secure. By contract, the performers have control of the House for sound checks and rehearsal. Ushers in the House prior to its opening must be quiet and keep movements to a minimum as a courtesy to the stage crew and performers. Remain near the doors of the House and do not go near the stage. Only stay for as long as it takes you to complete your task. Please do not sit down or “hang out” in the House.

House Opening:

There is no fixed time at which the House will open. It generally takes place approximately thirty minutes before the performance time. When the House is ready to be opened, the Technical Manager will tell the House Manager, who will in turn notify the Head Floor Usher. **The House doors must not be opened until the Technical Manager indicates that it is time.** When the doors open, aisle ushers must be in position and ready to assist patrons to their seats.

5 Minutes Before Curtain:

Five minutes before performance time, the House Manager will make a five-minute announcement on the PA System. This is to encourage the last few patrons to take their seats. Ushers should notify the House Manager or the Head Floor Usher if there is a seating problem or if a large crowd has yet to be seated. If requested, ushers from other doors may assist at a busy door.

As the Performance Begins:

All doors should be closed as the House lights dim. If a door is left open, an usher should close it. From this time on, doors should be opened only at appropriate late seating times, during intermissions, and at the conclusion of the performance. Ushers should minimize going in and out of the House during the performance. At least one usher should be present at each entrance into the theater at all times in order to handle late patrons, audience problems, and to service the lobby doors. The House Manager will be on site at all times and will inform the ushers in the lobby if they are no longer required to remain at their posts. Early dismissal requires approval of the House Manager.

Late Seating Time:

Generally, once the performance begins, ushers should have late patrons wait in the rear of the House until they can be seated during an appropriate break in the program (i.e., during applause). All aisles should remain clear and unobstructed. Some performing groups will use a closed-door hold at the beginning of their performance. This means that late patrons will not be allowed into the House for a certain length of time (generally 5-10 minutes) once the doors have been shut and the performance has started. Volunteers will be advised of seating holds and their length during the briefing.

During a closed-door hold, one usher will be stationed outside of each door to the House and one usher inside at the door (not seated). The usher inside will carefully open the door when the hold has ended and patrons can then enter. Everyone must comply with a closed-door hold. A closed-door hold is determined by the client and must be observed even if patrons are not pleased.

During the Performance:

At times, patrons in lower-priced seats will try to move forward to better seats. House staff and ushers should prevent such a movement in reserved seating situations.

Ushers should remain alert and sensitive to theater temperature changes and other disturbances during a performance. Such problems should be reported to the House Manager or the Head Floor Usher and NOT to the technicians or other stage personnel.

Do not allow patrons to drape their feet over seats, stand on seats, throw items, or engage in any inappropriate behavior. Ushers should signal silently to those patrons to stop the disturbance. No one is allowed to stand or sit in the aisles during a performance. If a patron does not respond to an usher's request or becomes violent or angry, contact the House Manager or security personnel immediately. Do not attempt to remedy the situation.

Do not offer refunds or other policy-related solutions to any patron. Aisle ushers should contact the House Manager, the Technical Director, or security (at the backstage door) and let them handle the situation.

At Intermissions:

Designated ushers will open all doors as the House lights are turned on during an intermission. **DO NOT open doors until the House lights are on**, even though a performance appears to be over. It may not be, and we do not want to cut short applause. Remain on the lookout for patrons in need of assistance and those needing directions to the restrooms, drinking fountains, etc. Ushers should also ensure that unauthorized persons do not enter the backstage area during intermission. The House Manager will make a 5-minute announcement before the end of an intermission. Ushers should return to their designated posts to assist patrons. Designated ushers should close one of the two doors. Patrons will re-seat themselves. Once the lobby is cleared and the House lights dim, the designated ushers should secure the doors.

End of Performance:

At the end of the scheduled performance, there may be an encore. **Ushers should keep the doors closed until the House lights are on.** All doors should be opened only when the lights are fully on and aisle ushers should assist patrons out of the theater. In the event patrons leave early, open and close the doors for them. Do not leave the doors open.

After most of the audience has left, the remaining ushers should briefly check the House and pick up programs, trash, and any lost items. Return lost items to the House Manager.

Volunteers must be stationed in the House and lobbies while patrons are present. Side stage doors and hallway backstage entrances should be checked to prevent any unauthorized personnel from entering the backstage area. When all patrons clear the House, volunteers should return to the Coat Check area and return the vest, flashlight, and all other materials before signing out. The House Manager will secure the building once all patrons and ushers have left.

Organizational Structure

Under the direction of the Executive Director, the Technical Director is in charge of all the technical direction, and the House Manager is responsible for supervising the volunteer staff and ensuring the comfort and safety of everyone in front of the stage. That area, called the Front-of-House, includes the seating area of the theater, the lower and upper lobbies, and the exterior of the building.

Technical Director:

The Technical Director is responsible for all in-house technical, stage, facility, parking, security, and custodial direction including HVAC control systems.

Events Director & Manager:

The Events Director and Events Manager oversee all activities in the Front-of-House areas during an event. **However, volunteers must report only to the House Manager during an event.** You should not involve the Events Director or Events Manager yourself. The House Manager will report any problems to him or her.

House Manager:

The House Manager will handle problems and complaints, enroll and train new volunteers, produce the monthly newsletter, post event sign-up sheets, respond to general questions or concerns, and maintain current volunteer data including addresses, phone numbers, and point totals. The House Manager is also responsible for organizing, assigning, and supervising all ticket takers, program attendants, the Head Floor Usher, aisle ushers, special assistance ushers, and Coat Check personnel.

To ensure that all House operations run smoothly, the House Manager will check with ushers, ticket takers, security, etc. before, during, and after the performance to prevent potential problems.

Not everyone you encounter may be authorized to be in the building or in restricted areas. If you have any doubt as to whether an individual should be in a particular area, please contact the House Manager immediately.

You also may encounter other people working during performances:

- Pioneer Center Box Office Staff
- Pioneer Center Technical Crew
- Security Staff
- Medical Technicians
- Concession Staff
- Novelty / Souvenir Sellers
- Artists and Touring Company Members
- Caterers
- Pioneer Center Custodial Staff
- Members of the Press
- Pioneer Center Administrative Staff

Usher Job Description

Everyone's Duty:

The following job description applies to all Pioneer Center ushers. If you have any questions, please ask the House Manager. Descriptions for specific assignments will be available when you usher. **All ushers must be friendly, helpful, and courteous to patrons, staff, show personnel (crew), and other volunteers at all times.**

Remember that the audience is observing you. Your appearance, attitude, and work habits reflect upon the Pioneer Center. Please work together to present a positive image.

- Some productions do not allow anyone into the theater during rehearsals or sound checks, including ushers. **CHECK WITH THE HOUSE MANAGER PRIOR TO ENTERING THE THEATER FOR ALL PRODUCTIONS.** If you are allowed to enter the theater prior to opening, please be considerate of the

stage crew and performance when inside the House. Limit your movements and be extremely quiet. This is important when performers are rehearsing and/or when the sound crew is setting up the microphone(s).

- Inspect your area for safety and cleanliness. Contact your supervisor if you see a problem warranting immediate attention. If the problem is not pressing but needs attention, fill out a "Fix It" card. Those cards are available in the Coat Check area and should be returned to the House Manager.
- Ushers should check the restrooms periodically. Alert the House Manager or custodians if restrooms are in need of cleaning or other problems are evident.
- Know who is working as House Manager and Head Floor Usher so you can locate them easily in an emergency or if you have a question.
- Take pride in your work. Please explain any problems in private to the person to whom you report.
- Become well-acquainted with duties you are to perform as well as the tickets, the facility, seating locations, exits, the Box Office, restrooms, drinking fountains, elevator, telephones, the Coat Check area/First Aid station/Lost & Found, fire extinguishers, and concession stands.
- Report any suspicious activity or persons to the House Manager.
- Be well-informed about the event, such as what time the show begins, length of intermissions, and the full running time of the event.
- Greet patrons in the same manner you would welcome a guest into your home.
- People must sit only in the seats their tickets designate. If you discover people in the wrong seats, correct this immediately. If left unchecked, this problem multiplies.
- Seek your superior to help with difficult situations. Usually, people respond to a polite request to correct a problem, but sometimes additional reinforcement may be necessary.
- Please assist with other duties as needed. If this means leaving your post, tell the Head Floor Usher, House Manager, or fellow usher.
- When the performance is over, briefly check the House for trash, programs, and lost items (see section on Lost & Found page 7).
- Remember that viewing the performance is a side benefit of volunteering at the Pioneer Center and is not guaranteed. Even though your job may not require you to be outside the House, you may be needed to help with a task or assist in an emergency.
- Under no circumstances should an usher touch a patron, especially a child, unless he or she is offering an arm for assistance or when responding to an emergency.

Ticket Taker:

Ticket takers are stationed at both entrances to the building in the upper lobby. They greet patrons, take tickets, and point out seat sections for patrons. Ticket takers are supervised by the House Manager and should report any questions or problems to him or her. At no time is any volunteer to allow access to any person who does not have a valid ticket or pass for the scheduled event. Any volunteer who willfully allows entrance without a valid ticket or pass to that scheduled event will be subject to immediate suspension and possible legal action. All volunteer comps are for a volunteer and guest only and will be clearly marked. All volunteer comps must have a volunteer present to enter. If there are any questions as to the validity of a ticket or ticket holder, please contact the House Manager immediately.

General Ticket Taker Duties:

- **Do not allow anyone into the theater without a valid ticket**, with the exception of Pioneer Center staff and individuals with valid security passes. Refer others to the Box Office.
- Check every ticket for the correct event, date, time of performance, facility, and drop stub. Advise patrons whether their seats are located upstairs or downstairs.
- Tear tickets along the perforated line and place the smaller end, called the "drop stub," into the ticket stub receptacle. The larger portion of the ticket, called the "souvenir ticket," should be returned to the patron. (see "Ticket Sample" in Appendix IV).
- Ushers should be advised of the type of passes to expect for each event. Members of the press may be allowed admittance only with the approval of the client and the House Manager.

- Report any problems to the House Manager. If patrons have questions that cannot be answered by the ticket taker, please direct them to the House Manager. If patrons have ticket problems, direct them to the Box Office.
- If patrons need to pick up tickets in “will-call” but entered the building through the south doors, they must go outside and across the plaza to the north doors. Do not allow patrons past the ropes and across the lobby to the “will-call” window.
- After the show begins, one ticket taker must be in a position in the upstairs lobby to see both entry doors at all times for the entire show to take latecomers’ tickets and to help patrons coming out of the balcony. Ushers can take turns in this position.
- **Ticket takers must remove all obstacles to all exits in the lobby once the show has begun.**

Ticket Taker Evacuation Duties:

- Prop open all outer doors and go outside.
- Assist patrons as needed, keep out of the flow of traffic.
- Once the House Manager dismisses you, you do NOT have specific evacuation duties.

Greeters:

Greeters meet patrons at the north and/or south entry doors and direct those patrons who already have tickets to the ticket taker stations near the center of the upper lobby.

General Greeter Duties:

- Greeters will direct those patrons who already have tickets to the ticket taker stations near the center of the lobby.
- For patrons who need to purchase tickets, the Greeter will direct them to the Box Office window.
- For those patrons who need to pick up their tickets at “will call,” Greeters will direct them to the appropriate location, either the window at the Box Office or the table near the Box Office.

Greeter Evacuation Duties:

- Know the evacuation plan.
- Remove any sales stands, tables, or other obstructions that may impede an evacuation and go outside.

Program Attendants:

Program Attendants greet patrons in the upper lobby area near the Ticket Takers. They hand out flyers and programs and answer general questions.

General Program Attendant Duties:

- Handout material may range from programs and playbills to coupons or flyers.
- Occasionally, we have fewer programs than patrons. If necessary, ushers will be informed when and how to “ration” programs.
- Please answer any questions that patrons may have. Questions generally range from giving directions, i.e., restrooms, Coat Check area, concessions, telephones, etc., to pointing out seat sections.
- Report any problems and direct patrons with additional questions to the House Manager.
- Program attendants can rotate positions with the on-duty Ticket Taker and Coat Check ushers.
- Help clear any obstacles to all lobby exit doors after the show begins.

Program Attendant Evacuation Duties:

- Know the evacuation plan.
- Remove program sales stands that may be obstructing the evacuation and go outside.

Head Floor Usher:

The Head Floor Usher patrols the lower lobby and works directly via radio with the House Manager. The Head Floor Usher is a volunteer who has worked a significant number of performances. Ushers working the lower lobby should report any problems to the Head Floor Usher, who will then inform the House Manager.

General Head Floor Usher Duties:

- Communicate with the ushers in the lower lobby. The Head Floor Usher and the House Manager are the only staff members with authority to open the House.
- Answer any questions the patrons may have.
- Direct patrons to seating sections and other areas of the facility.
- Inform ushers when to close doors after the intermission.
- Meet any handicapped patrons at the elevator and assist them to their seats. The House Manager will inform you of any handicapped seating for the performance and will alert you via radio when they arrive.
- At the end of an event the Head Floor Usher and/or an assistant head floor usher will monitor the elevator to ensure that handicapped patrons and others have access to the elevator without overcrowding.

Head Floor Usher Evacuation Duties:

- Check for any obstructions to all emergency exits in the downstairs lobby (i.e. Exhibit Hall doors locked, items blocking hallways, etc.)
- Know the evacuation plan.
- The House Manager will notify the Head Floor Usher of any evacuation via radio.
- If the Head Floor Usher is the first to be notified of a problem, he or she should contact the House Manager immediately.
- If an evacuation is required, announce to patrons in the lobby that they must exit the building immediately. Calmly point out the nearest exit and assist them as needed.
- Remove anything that might be an obstacle, such as tables, displays, ropes, and stands.
- Stand in the middle of the lower lobby, between the two concession stand locations at the base of the stairs leading to the Exhibit Hall, and verbally instruct patrons to remain calm, but to move quickly.
- After staff report that the auditorium is clear, contact the House Manager to report on the status of the evacuation.
- Check all restrooms, the Lounge, and the Exhibit Hall for patrons before returning upstairs.
- Go to the safe wheelchair area at the top of the runway in the Exhibit Hall area and assist with wheelchair patrons.

Aisle Ushers:

Each section of the theater will have Aisle Ushers. These ushers should remain in their designated areas and assist patrons to their seats. Report problems or questions to the Head Floor Usher or House Manager.

General Aisle Usher Duties:

- The House Manager will give Aisle Usher assignments during the briefing.
- Be positioned along the aisles of each section and greet patrons as they enter through the doors.
- Examine the ticket stub for the section, row, and seat number.
- Direct patrons to their seats.
- Seating problems may arise for several reasons. Customers may not have located the correct seat when entering the theater and will need to be re-seated. Examine BOTH patrons' sets of ticket stubs for the event date, time, section, row, and seat numbers. Relocate patrons who are in the wrong seats to correct seats. If a seating problem arises in which two patrons appear to have the same seat, (no matter what the reason, i.e. wrong date, wrong times, etc.) take both sets of tickets and notify the Head Floor Usher (lower lobby) and/or the House Manager (upper lobby). Take the non-seated patrons to the back of the house. The House Manager and Head Floor Usher will have tickets used to reseat patrons when the situation is clarified. **Seating problems can be difficult because of time limitations, angry patrons, etc. Always refer to the House Manger or Head Floor Usher for these problems. DO NOT TRY TO RESEAT THE CUSTOMERS IN EMPTY SEATS. This may compound the problem.**
- **IF YOU MUST SEAT PATRONS IN THE BACK OF THE HOUSE BECAUSE THE SHOW HAS STARTED, RESEAT THEM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO SEATS THE HEAD FLOOR USHER OR HOUSE MANAGER HAS INDICATED. DO NOT LEAVE THEM SITTING IN THE BACK OF THE HOUSE.**

- During general admission events, aisle ushers are not required to direct patrons to their seats because seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. This information will be provided during the briefing, prior to opening the lobbies to the public.
- Aisle ushers should enforce House rules during the performance. Most companies do not allow photos, video, or recordings. For some performances, food and drink are allowed in the house and for others no food or drink are allowed. These policies will be announced at the briefing before all shows. If a patron is in violation of House rules or policies, politely inform them of the need to follow House policies. Most will comply and simply may have been unaware of the House policies. If problems occur, contact the Head Floor Usher or House Manager.
- Be on alert for any patron who appears to be “sick”. In such a situation, contact the Head Floor Usher or House Manager immediately.
- Once the performance begins, one usher should stand at the door at all times. Other ushers may be seated at the back of the house. Ushers may rotate between seats and door (but must be unobtrusive in doing so).
- When the performance is over, briefly check the aisles for trash, programs, etc.
- Assist any patron out of the House if needed.

Aisle Usher Evacuation Duties:

- When the announcement is given to evacuate, remain calm.
- Open all doors and leave the building by the Evacuation Plan routes. Do not attempt to direct traffic if there is an extreme emergency (fire).

Coat Check Personnel:

Coat Check personnel will check patrons’ coats, hats, gloves, telephones, etc. In addition, they will check out hearing devices to any patron who requests one. Coat Check personnel are supervised by the House Manager and should report any questions or problems to him or her. If the House Manager is not at his/her desk, use the radio located on the House Manager’s desk for this purpose. The House Manager will instruct Coat Check personnel on use of the radio. The phone at the House Manager’s desk may ring during events. The Coat Check usher should answer the phone as follows: “Good Evening (or afternoon), Pioneer Center, this is _____ may I help you?” If the call is an emergency, immediately notify the House Manager. For other calls, take a message and give to House Manager as soon as possible. For calls regarding ticketing, have the caller call the Box Office at 686-6600.

General Coat Check Duties:

- Be sure all hangers and claim tags are ready prior to the opening of the lobby.
- Greet patrons as they approach the counter.
- Provide claim tags in exchange for item(s) patrons want to check.
- Hand out hearing devices to patrons who request them in exchange for a driver’s license, keys, or a credit card. There is no charge for the hearing devices.
- Place item(s) on the hanger corresponding to the claim tag, except valuables, which should be stored out of sight.
- Answer patrons’ questions politely and accurately. If you’re not sure how to answer a question, direct patrons to the House Manager.
- Lost and found items will be collected at the Coat Check area. Patrons are to be directed to the Coat Check area to claim lost items.
- Report any problems or questions to the House Manager.
- During any event, a volunteer will ALWAYS supervise the Coat Check area. This may require volunteers to rotate shifts so that each person gets a chance to see the show.
- There is no charge for checking coats and other items. A gratuity container is provided.
- Volunteers should not solicit any gratuity from patrons checking coats or other items. All moneys collected go into the usher fund.
- Coat Check volunteers may “trade” with ticket takers and program attendants during shows, but be sure everyone knows about the telephone and other duties.

Coat Check Evacuation Duties:

- When an evacuation is announced, we ask that you stand in the lobby in front of the Coat Check counter.
- Inform patrons who come to claim items that there is no time and that they should exit.

Patron Policies

No Smoking:

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the Pioneer Center. Patrons who wish to smoke may do so outside on the Plaza.

Still Cameras / Video Cameras:

Cameras are rarely allowed during a performance at the Pioneer; however, exceptions may be made and the House Manager will inform you of any during the briefing. When you see a patron with a camera at an event where they are prohibited, ask him/her to check it in the Coat Check area or offer him/her a claim tag and check it yourself. If a patron refuses to check the camera, but promises not to use it again, that is acceptable as long as they keep it out of sight of other patrons. Inform the Head Floor Usher if you see the patron use the camera again.

Cellular Phones and Pagers:

Cellular phones and similar items can be left in the Coat Check area. Patrons who bring these items into the House should be asked to set them to the “vibrate” or “silent” mode or to turn them off.

No Standing or Sitting in the Aisle:

Persons needing to stretch may do so in the lobby area only. Be sure any folding chairs are not blocking the aisles or doors.

Food and Beverages in the House:

Generally, the Reno Philharmonic Orchestra and the Nevada Opera do not permit food and beverages in the House during performances. For all other shows beverages will be allowed unless otherwise instructed. You will be notified of the policy during the briefing.

Questions & Complaints

You are a vital member of the Pioneer Center staff and one who deals directly with our patrons. Generally, you are the first to hear complaints and questions. The manner in which you answer those complaints and questions is important. Please follow these guidelines.

Complaints:

1. Try to get the House Manager or Head Floor Usher involved as soon as possible.
2. Always thank the patron for taking his/her time to voice their concern.
3. Find out as much information as you can. That includes the patron’s seating and the exact problem. (For example: The problem may be that the patron couldn’t understand the words, or a seat may be double booked.)
4. Find the House Manager and relay the information privately. The Head Floor Usher can help you locate the House Manager, but **do not discuss patron complaints over the radios at any time.**
5. Invite the patron the talk to the House Manager personally. Have the Head Floor Usher help you locate the House Manager and then escort the patron to wherever the House Manager may be. Box Office personnel may also be able to help with ticketing complaints. If you cannot locate any of the above personnel, take the patron to the Coat Check area and have the patron write down their name, phone number, and concern. Leave the information for the House Manager.
6. NEVER say to a patron, “I’m just a volunteer. I can’t help you.”
7. Remember that you represent the Pioneer Center. Please refrain from affirming the patrons' complaint. Simply thank the patron and assure them that their concerns will be communicated to your supervisor.

Questions:

If a patron asks you a question to which you do not know the answer, a good response would be, "I'm not sure of the answer to your question; however, I will try to help you find the correct answer." Please don't guess.

If the question is about tickets, seating, or upcoming events, tell the patron to consult the Box Office. If the Box Office is not open at the time, tell patrons when it is open.

Box Office Hours:

11am to 6pm, Monday through Friday
and 2 hours before each performance
(775) 686-6600

Please do not try to answer questions regarding tickets, seating, and upcoming events yourself, as such information is always changing. Patrons are always welcome to direct their questions to the Administrative or Box Office staff during business hours.

Emergencies

Our first line of defense is knowledge. Know the evacuation plan including the backstage area exits and Exhibit Hall area exits. Learn the building phone system and be able to make a call from the House Manager's phone, Box Office, Administrative Office (if open), and the pay phones. Remember, you must dial 9 for an outside line when using the Pioneer Center's phone system. Our address is 100 S. Virginia Street. Know the location of fire extinguishers and hoses, phones, first aid stations, and every exit. Learn where the exits go once outside the building, i.e., what side of the building or what street they open to. Take this responsibility seriously.

Planning eliminates confusion. Depending on your job assignment, you will have a specific task to perform during an emergency. It is important that ushers refer to and understand the evacuation plan for each assignment. This is a PCPA volunteer policy.

Medical Emergency:

If you are faced with a medical emergency, the seriousness of the problem determines the course of action. Remember the following important guidelines:

- Never move a person who has fallen. Movement may cause additional injury.
- Keep the person still and calm until a Medical Technician arrives or the House Manager evaluates the situation.
- Make sure that you or someone you appoint stays with the person at all times.
- Send someone to get help.
- Notify the House Manager.
- **SPECIAL NOTE:** *Refer any questions concerning liability and insurance to the House Manager. Never discuss any details concerning an incident including fault or cause with anyone; that will be determined by staff and insurance carriers.*
- In the event of extreme trauma, such as excessive bleeding, loss of consciousness, not breathing, or heart attack, have someone call 911 immediately.
- Do only what you are medically trained to do.
- We recommend that you retain or obtain current certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

Power Failure:

PCPA has an emergency generator that starts automatically within seconds of a power failure. The generator powers the emergency lighting system, which lights the exits and exit signs. In the event of a power failure, advise patrons to remain in place. The biggest danger is having patrons panic and /or sustain injury while trying to move in the darkness. The Technical Staff will inform the House Manager if an evacuation is necessary. Open the house doors and balcony exits and direct patrons out of the building.

Fire and Evacuation:

PCPA has a silent alarm system. There are no fire alarms. Fire extinguishers and hoses are positioned throughout the building. Learn where they are located. There is a sprinkler system installed in the building. Emergency exits are labeled and are available throughout the theater. Learn their location also.

In the event of a fire, remain calm; notify the House Manager immediately. Use fire extinguishers or hoses if appropriate. When directed by the House Manager, inform all volunteers and proceed to evacuate the building following the Evacuation Diagram. In extreme emergencies, open all doors and leave the building; do not attempt to direct traffic. In an extreme emergency, patrons will exit at will; do not attempt to interfere.

The Technical Staff and or the House Manager will calmly announce the nature of the problem to the audience and will instruct patrons to exit the building under the direction. Aisle Ushers will open all doors and exit the building ahead of the patrons. House lights will be turned on if possible.

The Technical Manager is responsible for assisting all performers and crew out of the building.

Patrons in wheelchairs will be assisted as soon as possible and moved to the designated safe area at the west end of the runway hall in the Exhibit Hall (right side of the theater) and then evacuated through the exhibit hall exit if necessary (elevators may not be working). An usher or other staff member should stay with wheelchair patrons in the safe area at all times.

Once the Fire or Police Department has determined the building safe for occupancy, PCPA staff and ushers will either ask patrons to return to their seats or proceed to their vehicles and leave. This decision depends on the situation.

Robbery:

In the event of a robbery, stay calm and try to take note of the appearance of the person(s) committing the robbery and the type of weapon, if any, used in the incident. That is your ONLY responsibility. Provide the assailant with whatever he/she demands. Report the incident to the House Manager as soon as it is safe to do so. The House Manager is responsible for notifying the Police and Pioneer Administration and for preparing a full robbery report. Try to remember as many details as possible. This will aid the Police in apprehending the assailant.

School Shows

The unique idiosyncrasies of "bused-in" school performances require special mention. Those shows generally are hosted by a variety of local and national non-profit groups working with local school districts. Students are usually bused to the Pioneer Center from their schools to attend performances designed for young audiences.

Generally, the client and participating school districts are responsible for their own business arrangements, scheduling, and transportation. That includes any street closures required for bus loading, unloading, and parking.

Seat arrangements at the Pioneer Center are handled by the House Manager. The client/school district is required to supply the Pioneer Center with attendance figures, wheelchair seating requirements, and any other special seating considerations. The House Manager will create and provide seating charts that designate assigned locations for all schools attending. Copies of those charts are provided to all House personnel on duty.

Because each show may warrant a different seating policy, you must follow the policies set by PCPA staff or the House Manager for that performance. The House Manager MUST approve changes in the policy before they are initiated. Because clients, parents, teachers, and school district personnel often are on site to assist with the program, there may be several opinions presented by those individuals to alter policy for the performance. To maintain order, all changes in policy must come from the House Manager.

An usher will be assigned to escort a school group to its seats once the group is identified, assembled, attendance verified, and the lobby is clear enough to permit access into the House. Under no circumstances is any school group to find its own seating.

In the event that the seating chart fails to match the number of students, ushers should contact the House Manager. Such situations may be due to the following problems:

1. The number of students present exceeds seats assigned
2. The school wasn't expected to attend
3. Wheelchair seating needs were either unexpected or increased

All school groups must be seated in their assigned locations. Students must fill every seat, leaving no empty seats between them. Encourage teachers/chaperones to assist in the process to maintain control of the group. Once each group is seated, ushers should return to the lobby to receive the next group.

Once the performance is over, open all doors into the theater and all doors leading outside. Generally, there is a "mass" exit. Schools do not leave by section or by row. Ushers should be stationed in the aisles and at doors to prevent students from running during the mass exit. The side exit doors in the balcony are never used unless there is an emergency situation.

Glossary of Terms

Back-of-House: Any area reserved for the technical/production aspect of performance, typically the backstage area and production booths.

Comp: Free ticket (complimentary). Ticket will show a \$0.00 dollar amount. (See ticket sample in Appendix IV)

Exhibit Hall: The open area to the rear of the Center used for smaller events and meetings.

Front-of-House: All public areas including the seating area of the theater, the lower and upper lobbies, and the exterior of the building.

General Admission: Events in which there are no assigned seats. Patrons are given seats on a first-come-first-serve basis. (See ticket sample in Appendix IV)

Hard Tickets: Any ticket not produced through the electronic ticketing system.

Hearing Impaired Devices: Electronic receiver and headphone device used to amplify sounds for the hearing impaired.

House: The theater itself.

House Left: As you face the stage, the left side of the theater.

House Right: As you face the stage, the right side of the theater.

Kill: Seat locations not used because of sight or sound problems.

Limited Mobility Seat: Seat designed with a rolling arm for handicapped patrons with disabilities located on the outside aisles in Sections A and E. Not to be used for wheelchair patrons.

Lounge: Located in the House's right side lower lobby, often used for receptions and small parties.

Removable Seat: Seat that can be removed, allowing a wheelchair patron to occupy that space.

Reserved: Events in which every patron has an assigned seat.

Resident Company: Performing groups that consider the Pioneer Center their "home". Resident companies have representation on the Board of Directors and qualify for special rental rates. Resident companies are the Reno Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO), Nevada Opera Association (NOA), Washoe County Concert Association (WCCA), and the MasterWorks Chorale (MWC).

Ropes & Stanchions: Removable barriers generally used for traffic control in lobby areas.

Run: Length of days the show is at the theater.

Running Time: Number of hours the show is in length.

Seating Hold: Not allowing late patrons into the House for a certain length of time after the performance has started and the doors have been closed.

Seating Pass: A pass issued by the box office to replace lost tickets. Second copy (yellow) is kept by ticket takers.

Sound Kills: Seats in the theater the soundboard may obstruct. These seats are not sold.

Stage Left: As you face the audience, the left side of the stage.

Stage Right: As you face the audience, the right side of the stage.

Underground Theater: Independent small theater located in the lower level, north west corner of the building. Underground Theater events are not part of the Pioneer Center's events.

Wheelchair Patron: A disabled patron unable to leave their wheelchairs. Wheelchair patrons must be seated in wheelchair seating. They cannot be transferred to other seating.

Appendix #I – Organizational Chart

Appendix #II – Seating Chart

Appendix #III – Parking Map

Appendix #IV – Ticket Sample
