



Volunteer Handbook

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Overview

Welcome to Orlando Shakes in partnership with UCF (“Orlando Shakes”), and thank you for volunteering with us! Without your participation in our volunteer program we would not be able to provide the community with quality entertainment for all ages. It is our desire to make each visit to Orlando Shakes special for both you and our patrons. As ambassadors for the organization, it is important that you help each guest to feel welcome and at ease. Your actions, appearance, and general conduct will influence a patron’s perception of Orlando Shakes. Our general rule is that we treat patrons in the same manner that we would like to be treated, and always greet patrons with a ready smile and willingness to help them with their needs.

We hope that you will find the information contained in this Volunteer Handbook to be helpful to you in your capacity as a volunteer.

Contact Information:

Gift Shop & Concessions Positions

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Ushering & Other Positions

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Benefits

Free Performance

Front of House volunteers are invited to attend any Signature or Children's Series performance during their shift if seats are available. Volunteer seating is done in conjunction with late seating and seats are assigned by the House Manager.

Due to the size of our venues, we cannot always accommodate volunteer seating for a performance. When this occurs, volunteers may receive one (1) voucher to return for a future performance.

(Please refer to page 7 for information regarding Vouchers.)

Free Coffee

All volunteers receive free coffee, hot tea, or cocoa while they are working. In order to receive your drink, please ask for a cup at the concessions register and make them aware that you are volunteering. Patrons always take priority in the concessions line or the coffee area. We suggest obtaining your cup at the beginning of your shift. Even if you don't want your drink immediately, this will keep the line clear for paying patrons. Feel free to label your cup and place in the House Manager office until you are ready for your drink.

Volunteer Salute

At the end of each season, usually in April, Orlando Shakes invites all volunteers to attend the Volunteer Salute. This event is provided as an annual thank you for your service. Dinner is provided along with an award ceremony to honor those volunteers that have gone above and beyond.

General Policies

Front of House

Volunteers in positions that interact with patrons, particularly during a performance in the Lobby or Venues, are considered to be Front of House volunteers.

Back of House

Volunteers in positions that do not interact with patrons are considered Back of House volunteers.

Enrollment in the Volunteer Program

Participating as a member of Orlando Shakes volunteer staff is a privilege, and volunteers who fail to follow policies and procedures, or do not meet our standards of courtesy in dealing with patrons, will be dismissed from future participation in our volunteer program.

Qualifications

- Must be 16 years of age or older. (Require parent/guardian approval if younger). Those under 16 years of age are invited to volunteer with a parent/guardian present.
- Must be 21 years of age or older for positions handling alcohol sales.
- Must be able to negotiate stairs.*
- Must be willing to make a commitment to work an average of one performance per production.
- Excellent customer service skills.
- Well groomed.
- Must be friendly and polite.
- Must be a team player who is able to work well with others and the ability to work and communicate effectively with people of diverse cultural backgrounds.

*Volunteers who cannot negotiate stairs will need to notify the appropriate Volunteer Coordinator in advance. Orlando Shakes will make every reasonable effort to accommodate someone interested in volunteering.

Physical Demands

While performing duties, volunteers are regularly required to use their hands to finger,

handle, or feel objects or controls; reach with hands and arms; and talk and hear. Volunteers are also frequently required to sit, stand, walk and climb or balance. A volunteer is occasionally required to stoop, kneel or crouch and will occasionally lift and/or move up to 15 pounds. Specific vision abilities required to perform this job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision and depth perception.

Appearance and Conduct

Orlando Shakes' approved uniform for a volunteer working Front of House consists of a white shirt/blouse with black pants (no jeans) or a skirt and black closed-toe shoes. Skirts should be no shorter than just above the knee. If you prefer to wear a jacket or sweater over your shirt/blouse, it must also be black. Since Front of House volunteers serve as representatives of the theater, we ask that you dress conservatively and in the proper uniform so that you are easily recognizable by patrons. A vest will be issued to you at the beginning of your shift and must be checked back in when you leave. Depending on the performance, themed clothing may be allowed as an alternate option. The Volunteer Coordinator will notify you of this option prior to your shift.

Gentlemen should be clean shaven (neatly trimmed beards and mustaches are permitted). Simple jewelry is acceptable, but large or excessive jewelry should be avoided. Political or religious buttons are not permitted. While in public view, volunteers are to refrain from eating, drinking, or chewing gum; smoking; voicing negative opinions concerning any production, performer, or patron; lounging or leaning against a wall; or cell phone use.

Periodically, a reception may occur in conjunction with a performance. While Orlando Shakes will make its best effort to include volunteers, it is not always possible. Unless permitted by the House Manager, please do not participate in or eat food at receptions.

Volunteers in positions Back of House do not need to maintain a dress code. Volunteers should dress comfortably for their position. Typically jeans and a t-shirt are acceptable. If you have any questions regarding dress code, please contact the appropriate Volunteer Coordinator.

Punctuality

Your reliability as a volunteer is important to the success of Orlando Shakes. Signing up for a volunteer slot is a commitment to work, so please show up and be on time. When a performance or event is understaffed, it presents safety issues in our ability to properly manage patrons.

If you cannot make a shift, please call or email at least 24 hours in advance so that arrangements can be made. Volunteers who miss two or more shifts without advance notification will not be permitted to volunteer with the organization.

Front of House start times are generally one hour before the scheduled curtain time, but this can vary from production to production. The start time is when you are to be at the

Lowndes Shakespeare Center ready to work; not when you are to arrive.

Each performance or event will have a short orientation meeting to discuss items such as length of performance, intermissions, rental events, and seating of late patrons. These meetings will be led by the House Manager for the Ushers, and by the Concessions Lead for Concessions

Patron & Staff Interaction

Orlando Shakes expects all staff members and volunteers to treat patrons and each other with courtesy and respect. Discourteous service and offensive language is unacceptable. It impedes the effective and efficient operation of our business.

If you encounter an issue during a shift, please notify the House Manager or Concessions Lead.

Harassment & Discrimination

Orlando Shakes welcomes all races and ethnicities, all religions, all countries of origin, all gender identities, all sexual orientations, all abilities and disabilities, all spoken and signed languages. Orlando Shakes strives to keep the workplace free from all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment. Harassment of another volunteer/patron/staff member on the basis of his or her race, color, mental or physical disability, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, gender, gender identity, marital status, sexual orientation is not tolerated and could result in dismissal from the volunteer pool.

Vouchers

Vouchers allow volunteers the opportunity to see Orlando Shakes productions for free when they are unable to watch the performance. For Front of House volunteers, vouchers are issued when a volunteer seat is not available or if the volunteer is not interested in seeing a performance the night of their shift. To receive a voucher, the volunteer must complete an entire shift as scheduled.

For Back of House volunteers, vouchers are issued after each completed shift.

Vouchers are redeemable for any future performance during the season for Price Level B, C, & D seats. Reservations must be made in advance with the Box Office. Up to four (4) vouchers may be redeemed at a time by the volunteer or their guest for any Signature or Children's Series performance. If you would like to redeem more than four vouchers, please contact the Box Office as this is determined on a per-performance basis. Volunteers in need of special accommodations should let the Box Office know at the time of reservation.

Volunteers may contact the Box Office on the day of the performance to upgrade to Price Level A seats if they are available. Alternately, if you are unable to attend a performance for which you have reserved seats, you must inform the Box Office a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours prior to the performance so the seats may be

released for sale. If you fail to notify the Box Office, vouchers must still be redeemed before additional tickets can be reserved. Repeated occurrences of unused reserved tickets will be cause for removal from the voucher program.

Front of House Policies

ADA & Wheelchair Access

If you encounter a patron with an ADA or wheelchair ticketed seat, please escort him/her to the proper section. If you encounter a patron that has a ticket for an area other than the ADA or wheelchair sections and needs to have access to seating in that area, please notify the House Manager.

There is an elevator in the Margeson Theater to provide access to the house left loge handicapped seats. Please ask the House Manager for assistance with using the elevator if you feel uncomfortable.

Aisle, Stairs and Landings

All aisles, stairs and landings are to be kept clear per Fire Regulations and Code. Patrons are not allowed to stand or sit in these areas.

Autographs

Volunteers are not allowed under any circumstance to approach a performer, or celebrity patron attending a performance, to ask for an autograph or to pose for a photograph.

Backstage

No volunteers are allowed backstage unless instructed by the House Manager. If a patron asks you to do something that requires you leaving the venue or lobby, please contact the House Manager.

Cell Phones

Volunteers are not allowed to use cell phones while working. We request that you turn them off. If there is an emergency that you must attend to, tell the House Manager so that you may be excused to make a phone call.

Emergency Policies

In case of a fire, bomb threat, tornado, or hurricane emergency, ALL volunteers should assist the House Manager.

Fire or Bomb Threat

Be aware of all exits of the venues and lobby. The Stage Manager will make a calm, official announcement to hold the performance and ask audience members to exit the building via the nearest exit.

An example of the announcement is as follows: "Actors please hold and exit the stage. Ladies and gentleman of the audience, in a calm and orderly manner please make your way to the nearest building exit and meet your party in the parking lot. Thank you for your cooperation."

All volunteers will be trained concerning the evacuation route and assisting audience members to the parking lot.

Tornado or Hurricane

The Stage Manager will make a calm, official announcement to hold the performance and ask members to remain calm and await further instructions from the House Manager.

An example of the announcement is as follows: "Actors please hold and exit the stage to your dressing rooms. Ladies and gentleman of the audience the House Manager will be with you momentarily. Thank you for your cooperation."

All volunteers will be trained to assist the House Manager in assessing the situation.

Electronic Devices

There is an announcement at the beginning of the performance to turn off cell phones, pagers and similar items. All patrons should have their devices set to vibrate or silent mode.

First Aid

If a patron becomes injured please notify the House Manager immediately!

To decrease the spread of bloodborne pathogens it is necessary that any individual administering first aid must wear latex gloves. Gloves and all first aid supplies are one-time use only. Do not return contaminated supplies to the kits, please throw away. DO NOT administer first aid without informing House Manager first. If you feel uncomfortable, please do not attempt to administer first aid. If you or another volunteer becomes injured, notify the House Manager immediately.

Food & Drink

Food is not allowed in the venues. Ushers are responsible for monitoring for food entering the venue, particularly following an intermission. Drinks are allowed in the venues.

Parking

You may park wherever you would like; however, we encourage volunteers to park on the north end of the lot near the concession stand entrance. This will allow patrons to park closer to the main entrance. Based on other events taking place in Loch Haven Park, there may be times that parking will take place in an alternate location. This information will be provided to you in advance of your arrival.

Personal Belongings

A location for your personal belongings will be determined by the House Manager, Concession Lead, or Gift Shop Lead at the beginning of your shift. Orlando Shakes is not responsible for lost or stolen items, so please leave valuables and large sums of money at home.

Photography & Video

Photography (including pictures taken by a cell phone) and audio or video recording is not allowed during a performance with members of Actor's Equity Association (all Signature Series productions). If you see someone that is violating this policy, please inform the House Manager immediately. For Children's Series productions, we do allow photos during the performance provided the patron is not using a flash and/or impedes other patrons from viewing the performance. Audio and video recording is not allowed.

Prior to the performance, during intermission, and after the performance, patrons are allowed to take photographs and audio or video recordings in the venues.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in the Lowndes Shakespeare Center or within 25 feet of the main entrance. Patrons and volunteers may smoke outside the concessions stand entrance or in the Courtyard.

Front of House Positions

Below is an overview of each volunteer position available during a performance. These descriptions are meant to be general and may not include every detail of the position. Each volunteer will be given more in-depth direction prior to their shift.

Some positions require that the volunteer is a member of the Orlando Shakes Guild. The Guild is a volunteer organization dedicated to the promotion and support of Orlando Shakes. Membership in the Guild offers the opportunity to attend monthly social meetings and participate in higher level positions. If you are interested in becoming part of the Guild, please contact Cindy Reemsnyder. Contact information for Cindy is at the beginning of this Handbook.

Concessions

As a volunteer in concessions, your main responsibility is to provide the patron with timely and quality service. Before each performance or event, you are to inspect your assigned work area for cleanliness and report any problems to the Concessions Lead. You must also make certain that you are familiar with your surroundings including the venues and the location of restrooms, emergency exits, fire extinguishers, and fire alarm pull stations. Please remember that viewing a performance is a side benefit of volunteering and when you are required to do something, or a patron needs assistance, it is imperative that you respond immediately. Failure to do so could result in your dismissal for the remainder of the evening and possibly your removal from the volunteer pool.

Respond to all patron comments and/or complaints in a prompt and friendly manner.

Concessions Lead

Concessions Leads are responsible for the management of the concessions area during performances. The Lead will assign duties to volunteers each evening along with providing information regarding all events that are occurring in the building. Typically the Lead will manage one of the cash registers. They are responsible for counting the drawers before each shift, ensuring the inventory is properly displayed, dealing with any patron complaints, and cashing out the drawers at the end of the evening. Leads are currently required to be members of the Guild for at least one year prior to taking on this role. They are required to receive approval from a Volunteer Coordinator before being assigned this position.

Cashier

Cashiers are responsible for operating a cash drawer during a shift. Cashiers should count their drawer prior to a shift, expedite patron sales, and count their drawer at the end of their shift. This is a cash and credit card handling position, and volunteers are required to be a member of the Guild and receive approval

from a Volunteer Coordinator before being assigned this position.

Bartender

Bartenders are responsible for providing patrons with the appropriate beverages upon request. Volunteers must be at least 21 years of age. The bartender is responsible for ensuring that the cooler is stocked with all available beverages at the beginning of their shift, ensuring they are familiar with the beverages available, expediting patron requests, and restocking the cooler at the end of the evening.

Snacks

Volunteers handling snacks are responsible for setting up the snacks and displays at the beginning of their shift, greeting patrons in line, expediting patron requests, helping restock other areas of concessions as needed, and clearing the display and snacks at the end of their shift. Volunteers handling snacks are the patrons' first experience with the concessions area and therefore need to be outgoing and welcoming.

Coffee

Volunteers handling coffee are responsible for making coffee at the beginning of their shift along with setting up the display, greeting patrons in line, expediting patron requests, ensuring that coffee is available, and removing excess coffee and the display at the end of their shift. Volunteers handling coffee are responsible for cleaning the air pots and coffee pots at the end of each shift.

Gift Shop

As a volunteer in the Gift Shop, your main responsibility is to provide the patron with timely and quality service. Before each performance or event, you are to inspect your assigned work area for cleanliness and any problems and report any problems to the Concessions Lead. You must also make certain that you are familiar with your surroundings including the venues and the location of restrooms, emergency exits, fire extinguishers, and fire alarm pull stations. Please remember that viewing a performance is a side benefit of volunteering and when you are required to do something, or a patron needs assistance, it is imperative that you respond immediately. Failure to do so could result in your dismissal for the remainder of the evening and possibly your removal from the volunteer pool.

Respond to all patron comments and/or complaints in a prompt and friendly manner.

Assistant Lead (Gift Shop)

Gift Shop Leads are responsible for the management of the Gift Shop area during performances. They are responsible for counting the drawer before each shift, ensuring that the inventory is properly displayed, assisting the raffle volunteer with setup, dealing with any patron complaints, and cashing out the drawer at the end of the evening. Leads are currently required to be members of

the Guild for at least one year prior to taking on this role. They are required to receive approval from a Volunteer Coordinator before being assigned this position.

Raffle

Volunteers managing the 50/50 raffle (or donation prize depending on the type of performance) are responsible for inviting patrons to donate money in exchange for tickets. Volunteers should count their drawer before their shift and make sure the display is appropriately set up. During their shift they are not only responsible for interesting patrons in making a donation for a ticket but also serve as an information point for patrons. During the performance the volunteer is responsible for counting his/her drawer, selecting a winning ticket, and providing the Gift Shop Lead with accurate information.

Ushering

As a volunteer Usher, your main responsibility is the safety and comfort of patrons. Before each performance or event, you are to inspect your assigned work area for cleanliness and any problems such as loose seats, torn carpet, unstable handrails, or burned out lights, and report any problems to the House Manager. You must also make certain that you are familiar with your surroundings including the seating area and the location of restrooms, emergency exits, fire extinguishers, and fire alarm pull stations. The seating of patrons usually begins a ½ hour before the scheduled curtain time. Please remember that viewing a performance is a side benefit of volunteering and when you are required to do something, or a patron needs assistance, it is imperative that you respond immediately. Failure to do so could result in your dismissal for the remainder of the evening and possibly your removal from the volunteer Usher pool.

Ushers will be assigned responsibilities for seating, intermission, and end of performance. You must be present for all jobs as they are imperative to providing a wonderful experience for our patrons. Positions are detailed below.

In the case of an emergency, the House Manager must know where you are at all times. If you are going to watch the performance, please sit in available seats in the venue. Ushers may be assigned specific locations to sit and should be spread throughout the audience. During the performance Ushers must continue to monitor patrons and watch for unruly behavior, as well as potential medical emergencies. In the case of a medical emergency, contact the House Manager IMMEDIATELY. If you witness unruly behavior such as loud talking, running up and down aisles, dancing in aisles, or behavior that is bothering other patrons, please ask the offending party to be quiet or take their seats as politely as possible. Ushers are also responsible for ensuring that no food is eaten in the venues by patrons. Should you witness a patron eating in the venue, please remind the offending party. If the problem is beyond your control or comfort level, bring it to the attention of the House Manager.

While in the auditorium watching a performance, do not talk with one another as it is disturbing to patrons. If there is need to speak with another Usher, leave the auditorium and go to the lobby area. If there is a need to speak to a patron, please do so quietly. Respond to all patron comments and/or complaints in a prompt and friendly manner. Once the venue is clear of patrons after the performance, all ushers should perform a thorough sweep of the venue for trash and lost items. Once completed, please check in with the House Manager for dismissal.

Ticket Takers

Ticket Takers are responsible for greeting patrons, reading/tearing/scanning tickets, and splitting patrons. Splitting patrons is reading the seat locations on tickets and directing the patrons to the correct seating side of the venue. Ticket Takers also help to monitor the front entry doors at intermission and at the end of the performance.

Program Distribution

Program Distributors are responsible for distributing programs and will have intermission and end of performance duties.

Ushers

Ushers stationed in the venues are responsible for reading tickets and seating patrons in the correct seat location for which they hold a ticket. Ushers also answer questions and provide directions to various amenities in the Center such as restrooms, water fountain, concession stand, etc. Ushers will also have intermission and end of performance duties.

Greeters

Greeters are responsible for directing patrons from the front entrance to the appropriate locations within the Center. Greeters are also responsible for holding the door for elderly or disabled patrons, or with providing any additional assistance that may be needed. Greeters need to be aware of what events are occurring throughout the entire building, along with the location of the Box Office, concession stand, restrooms, and the water fountain.

Parking Attendants

Parking Attendants are responsible for helping patrons to locate available parking on busy evenings. Attendants need to be familiar with the layout of Loch Haven Park, along with events that are occurring at the different cultural facilities.

Back of House Positions

Below is an overview of each volunteer position available during a performance. These descriptions are meant to be general and may not include every detail of the position. Each volunteer will be given more in-depth direction prior to their shift.

Administrative Support

Volunteering for the administration department involves assisting the staff with mailings, distributing marketing brochures and posters within the local community, inputting data into either the financial or ticketing system, and other various administrative projects that may arise during the season.

Costume Support

Costume department volunteering requires a knowledge of hand sewing. Machine sewing is also a plus. Volunteers will assist with the final preparations on costumes such as trim and buttons along with other projects that may arise during the season.

Development Support

Volunteering for the development department involves assisting the staff with mailings, researching contacts through the internet, preparing for special events, and other various projects that may arise during the season.

Education Support

Education department volunteers assist the staff with programs at the Shakespeare Center throughout the year. These programs include summer camps and Saturday classes. Volunteers may be required to complete a Level 2 background check for these positions.

Thank You

Thank you for being a volunteer. Without your assistance, Orlando Shakes could not produce the quality and number of productions that we do for the community. We appreciate your support to help make it all happen!

If you ever have any concerns as a volunteer, please bring them to the attention of the House Manager. We always welcome feedback from our volunteers.