Thank you for your interest in volunteering as an usher for Ford’s Theatre Society for performances in the historic Ford’s Theatre at 511 10th Street, N.W. These policies and procedures are applicable to all of the Society’s volunteer ushers. Please take some time to review these policies and procedures, and then sign and return to the Society the attached acknowledgment letter. We regret that the Society will be unable to accommodate you as a volunteer usher without such signed letter.

A. Volunteering at Ford’s Theatre

Please note that your services to the Society will be on a purely voluntary basis without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation or benefits of any kind from the Society or any other party. Nothing in these policies and procedures creates, or is intended to create, an employer-employee relationship between you and the Society or any other party. These policies and procedures may be updated at any time and from time to time. You may stop providing services to the Society at any time, and the Society may decline to accept, or stop accepting altogether, services from you at any time.

B. Usher Standards and Requirements

1. All ushers must be at least 15 years of age, even if accompanied by an adult during their shift.

2. As an usher, you may need to stand and/or walk for at least 30 minutes at a time. Please notify the House Manager if this is not possible for you.

3. Dress Code

   (a) Ushers should wear solid black bottoms and solid white tops. Please do not wear gray or navy bottoms. Black jackets and sweaters also permitted.

   (b) Neckties are permitted, and, if desired, you may wear a black jacket or sweater over your white top.

   (c) Jeans, graphic and logo tops, sneakers and open toe shoes are not permitted.

4. Conduct

   (a) Please do not talk or whisper during performances.

   (b) Electronic devices such as cell phones, pagers and tablets must remain in fully silent mode during your shift. Use of electronic devices during performances is not permitted.
(c) Please refrain from eating, drinking and chewing gum. Gum, food and drink, other than bottled water are not permitted in the theatre.

5. Usher Shifts

(a) We will do our best to accommodate requests for dates and times for your volunteer usher shifts, but we cannot guarantee that we can fulfill any requests. We appreciate your flexibility.

(b) The time ushers are required to be at the theatre, also known as the “call time,” is one hour before curtain for all performances unless otherwise specified by the House Manager. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curtain Time</th>
<th>Usher Call Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:30 p.m.</td>
<td>6:30 p.m.</td>
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(c) A full usher shift starts at the call time and ends 30 minutes after the performance ends.

(d) Please use the main lobby, located north of the theatre on 10th Street, to enter the theatre for the start of your shift.

(e) Your belongings may be left in the front of house (FOH) office. Please travel light and limit the size of any purses or bags containing your personal belongings as there is limited space in the FOH office.

(f) Please collect a ‘Volunteer’ tag at the FOH office and proceed to the theatre balcony for the pre-performance meeting with the House Manager where you will receive your assignments.

(g) Allow plenty of time to get to the theatre, drop off your belongings in the FOH office and take care of any personal matters before your call time. If you arrive at or after your call time, please proceed directly to the theatre balcony.

(h) If you arrive more than 15 minutes after your call time, the House Manager may elect not to use your services as an usher for that performance.

(i) The theatre opens for seating approximately 30 minutes before a performance, or at the discretion of the House Manager. When the theatre does open for seating, please be in your assigned pre-performance location with programs and flashlights or ticket scanners.

(j) When the performance begins, please remain in your assigned location and be prepared to quickly seat latecomers. The House Manager will assist you in determining when and how to seat latecomers.

(k) If available and appropriate, the House Manager may be able to designate an area for you to watch the performance. If you do not have the opportunity to watch the performance during your shift, you may be able return to see the performance another time. Please refer to the Usher Privileges section below.
(l) If the performance includes an intermission, please report to your intermission assignment location at the end of the first act and remain there until the beginning of the second act.

(m) When the performance ends, please proceed to your post-performance assignment. Once the audience has cleared the theatre, please look around your designated seating area for any items left behind and deliver those you find to the House Manager.

(n) When your shift has ended, please exit through the main lobby onto 10th Street or via the elevator to the parking garage. Most importantly, have a safe trip home!

6. Attendance Policies

(a) Absences. Please inform the House Manager at least 48 hours before your call time if you are not able to usher during a scheduled shift. This advance notice is important to allow the House Manager to find a replacement for you and ensure all patrons will be able to enjoy the performance. You can reach the House Manager to report an absence by phone at (202) 639-1597 or via e-mail at volunteer@fords.org.

(b) Late Arrival/Cancellation. If you know that you are going to be late for your call time or find that you unexpectedly need to cancel less than 2 hours before your call time, please notify the Box Office by phone at (202) 347-4833 as soon as possible. Ushers who arrive more than 15 minutes late for a shift may be sent home at discretion of house management.

(c) Early Departure. You are expected to stay at the theatre for the duration of your shift. If you are unable to do so, please notify the House Manager as soon as possible.

(d) No Shows. If you do not arrive for a scheduled shift three consecutive times, we will assume that you no longer wish to serve as a volunteer usher, and you will be removed from our usher list.

C. House Policies

1. No Smoking. Smoking is strictly prohibited anywhere on Society or theatre property.

2. No Photos or Recordings. Cameras and recording devices may not be used during any performance. However, because the theatre is a national historic site, patrons are allowed to bring cameras into the theatre for use before and after the performance. If you see a patron using a camera or other recording device during a performance, politely ask them to refrain from such activity. If they nevertheless continue, please inform the House Manager.

3. No Food or Drink. Food, gum and beverages, except for bottled water, are not allowed in the theatre.

4. Tickets. All patrons – adults and children - are required to have a ticket to enter the theatre. Please don’t hesitate to remind a patron of this policy if they attempt to bring someone into the theatre without a ticket. Simply direct them to the Box Office where they can purchase a ticket and learn about the age recommendations for each performance. If a problem persists, please contact the House Manager.

5. Greeting Patrons. Please always greet our patrons in a pleasant and professional manner. If patrons come to you with a problem or complaint that you cannot easily solve, please ask the patron to wait where they are while you find the House Manager.
6. **Exits.** After the performance ends, all patrons should exit through the doors directly off the theatre that lead onto 10th Street. The two exit doors next to the stage lead to the back alley and should only be used during an emergency.

7. **Backstage.** Patrons are not permitted backstage.

D. **Facilities**

1. **Elevator.** There are two elevators located in the main lobby. The elevator located near the men’s restroom serves the parking garage below the lobby. The elevator next to the Box Office serves the main lobby, the balcony level, the Board Room level and the museum on the basement level of the theatre.

2. **Restrooms.** Restrooms are located in the main lobby, on the balcony level near the elevator, and in the museum.

3. **Gift Shop & Concessions.** There are two gift shops serving the theatre. The gift shop in the museum is open pre-performance, but will be closed once the performance starts. The gift shop and concession stand in the main lobby is open pre-performance and during intermission. All gift shops and concessions close during the final act of evening performances.

4. **Box Office.** The Box Office is located in the main lobby and closes 30 minutes after the start of evening performances.

5. **Drinking Fountains.** Drinking fountains are located near the balcony level restrooms and in the museum.

6. **Coat Check.** Coat and parcel check services are not available.

7. **Parking.** There is a public parking garage located north of the theatre under the main lobby. This garage is managed by a separate party. Parking validations for the garage are not available.

E. **Accessibility**

1. The theatre is accessible to patrons using assistive devices in both the orchestra and balcony levels.

2. Assisted listening devices are available for every performance by request. If you receive a request from a patron, please make note of their seat location and inform the House Manager.

3. Open captioned and signed (ASL) performances and audio description services are offered at certain performances during the run of a show and may be available with an advance request. If a patron inquires about any of these services, please refer them to the House Manager.

F. **Emergencies**

1. **Injuries/Illness.** If a patron falls ill or is injured, either locate or send someone to locate the House Manager who will then contact emergency responders. Do not move the patron or administer any sort of medical aid yourself.

2. **Evacuation.** If the theatre needs to be evacuated because of a fire alarm or other emergency situation, please exit the building, helping to open doors on your way out and directing patrons to the other side of 10th Street. House Management will take care of clearing the theatre.
Remain with the patrons on 10th Street until directed by the House Manager to re-enter the theatre.

3. **Behavior.** If unruly or unpermitted behavior by patrons occurs during a performance, ask the individual(s) politely to stop such activity. If they persist, or if the behavior is unlawful or could result in injuries to people or damage to property, notify the House Manager immediately.

G. **Usher Privileges.** The Society greatly appreciates the contributions that its volunteer ushers make to both the goals of the Society and the experience of the Society’s patrons. To show its appreciation, the Society is pleased to offer certain privileges to its volunteer ushers. **To qualify for these privileges, you must usher a full shift at one performance of each of the fall and winter shows, and at two performances of each of *A Christmas Carol* and the spring musical.** These privileges are extended at the sole election of the Society and may be adjusted or withdrawn at any time. No privilege shall be, or be deemed to be, compensation of any kind for performance of volunteer usher services.

1. **Show Tickets**
   
   (a) For each run of a show, qualified ushers will receive one free ticket and the option to purchase one ticket at half price. Such tickets are not available for Saturday evening performances, extensions, any performance of *A Christmas Carol*, or any Dress Circle seating. Tickets are subject to availability and are not transferable.

   (b) Qualified ushers may reserve and purchase such tickets only through the Box Office, either in person or via phone at (202) 347-4833.

   (c) Qualified ushers can reserve tickets when tickets first go on sale to the public. “Sale to the public” does not include member and group pre-sale dates.

2. **Special Events.** Qualified ushers may receive invitations to special Society events throughout the season, such as readings, technical rehearsal look-ins and conversations with the Director.

3. **Gift Shop Discount.** Qualified ushers will receive a 20% discount on merchandise in the gift shops located in the main lobby and in the Society’s building at 514 10th Street N.W. This discount does not apply at the gift shop in the museum.

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