

# INDIANA UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM

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## Student Volunteers Manual

INDIANA UNIVERSITY  
**AUDITORIUM**



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## INTRODUCTION

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### **WELCOME!**

Welcome to the Indiana University Auditorium! You have chosen to volunteer at one of the best places on campus (we promise!). IU Auditorium is home to approximately 800 volunteers that comprise the usher corps. You have accepted a vital role in providing safety and comfort to the patrons of IU Auditorium. *Remember – no single show or performance is exactly like any event that has previously occurred.*

As a volunteer you will learn the intricacies of customer service, venue management, crowd management, and much more. While seeing the shows for free is certainly a perk of the job, being a part of the team, making new friends and finding a place to belong in this large university will likely become the benefits that keep you coming back.

*Your appearance and demeanor are the first impressions that patrons will receive when they enter our doors on an event night.* Look your best! Naturally, we would like to put our best foot forward when greeting the people we work so hard to entertain.

It is important to read this manual in its entirety. If you have any questions about any of the information, or about any aspect of your position as an usher, please email [housemgr@indiana.edu](mailto:housemgr@indiana.edu).

## THE BASICS

### GENERAL TIMELINE ON EVENT NIGHT FOR ALL USHERS

- Arrive 90 minutes before the event is scheduled to begin
- Sign in with a student manager and get your position assignment
- Grab a nametag and a flashlight
- Attend general usher briefing given by the Assistant House Manager
- Break off by position and attend team specific briefings
- Play fun games
- Patrons will be allowed to enter the building one hour before the event starts
- Provide expert customer service as patrons enter the building
- Patrons will be allowed to enter the house half an hour before the event starts
- Stay five minutes past the beginning of the performance to help with late seating
- Turn in your nametag and flashlights and watch the rest of the performance or feel free to leave

### GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL USHERS

- Keep everything neat and tidy: pick up programs, stray trash, candy wrappers, etc. you see on the floor, benches or tables. Look for anything out of place: bench, trashcan, plants.
- Work at least five shows per semester.
- Leaning, sitting in the foyer or lounging around the Auditorium during an event is unacceptable.
- Cell phones will not be tolerated at any time. Do not talk on them or let them ring while you are on the clock.
- Abide by the dress code.

## DRESS CODE

### *For all formal events:*

#### **Women, please wear...**

Skirt or slacks:	Black.
Skirts:	Straight or gently flared, knee or suit length. <b>Please do not wear floor or full-length skirts, jeans, shorts or miniskirts.</b>
Dress blouse:	White, short or long-sleeved with collar. <b>Please do not wear polo shirts, blouses with colored appliqué, jackets, vests, sweatshirts or scarves.</b>
Hose/socks:	Black or off-black.
Dress shoes:	Black and closed-toe. <b>Please do not wear boots, sneakers, or flip-flops.</b>
Cardigan:	All white. Optional for cold weather.

#### **Men, please wear...**

Dress slacks:	Black. <b>Please do not wear jeans.</b>
Dress shirt:	White, with collar. <b>Please do not wear band collared shirts, or polo shirts.</b>
Tie:	Plain, dark.
Dress shoes:	Black, must be closed-toe and 'shine-able.' <b>Please do not wear boots, sneakers, or white socks.</b>

**For all casual events:**

Pants:	Khaki. Women may wear knee-length khaki skirts. No extravagant zippers, appliqués, or embellishments.
Polo Shirt:	White, short or long-sleeved with collar. Does not need to be full button front.
Tennis shoes:	Clean.

**EXPERT CUSTOMER SERVICE**

Providing expert customer service is our number two priority (second to keeping our patrons safe). It has made us famous. It is our brand. Please remember these guidelines:

- Greet patrons and clients with a smile, making positive eye contact.
- Practice good communication. Give clear, concise directions from the patron’s vantage point and use landmarks. (ex. “The women’s restroom is through the archway marked D.”) Never use wide sweeping gestures or point. You might smack a lady in the head.
- Treat patrons with hospitality and goodwill. Keep personal conversation low and to a minimum. *Never* talk inside the house during the performance unless *absolutely* necessary. VOM’s are not quiet zones and should never be used for discussion. Due to the acoustics in the VOM’s, your voice will be amplified.
- Demonstrate an enthusiastic willingness to help. Seek immediate solutions to problems.
- Practice personal cleanliness in order to present a positive image. Respect the dress code which may include ironing. Do not eat, smoke, or chew gum at any time while on duty.
- Have pride and respect in yourself and treat patrons, student managers, and fellow ushers with mutual pride and respect.
- Most importantly, strive to work as a team in order to create a positive work environment.

**The Seven Deadly Sins of Customer Service**

- Apathy:

A just-don’t-give-a-darn attitude on the part of the customer-contact person, or an impression conveyed to the customer expressed in terms of what comedian George Carlin described as “Dilligad” – Do I Look Like I Give a Darn.

- Brush-Off:

Trying to get rid of the patron by brushing off his or her need or problem: trying to “slam dunk” the customer with some standard procedure that doesn’t solve the problem but lets the service person off the hook from doing anything special. Regular answer in situation: “This isn’t my department,” when a customer asks for help in finding something.

- Coldness:

A kind of chilly hostility, curtness, unfriendliness, or impatience with the customer that says, “You are a nuisance, please go away.” It is amazing that so many restaurants carefully select the most moody, depressed, hostile person they can find for the hostess-cashier job, making sure the customer’s first and last moments of truth are bad ones.

- Condescension:

Treating the customer with a patronizing attitude, like many health-care people do. They call doctor “Doctor Jones,” but they call you by your first name and talk to you like you’re four years old. They don’t think you’re qualified to know what your blood pressure is- the doctor will take care of everything.

- Robotism:

"Thank-you-have-a-nice-day-NEXT." The fully mechanized worker puts every customer through the same program with the same standard motions and slogans, and with no trace of warmth or individuality. A variant of this is the smiling robot who gives you a permanent "star" smile, but you can tell nobody's home upstairs.

- Rule Book:

Putting the organizational rules above customer satisfaction, with no discretion on the part of the service person to make exceptions or use common sense. Banks are famous for this. They usually do everything possible to eliminate all traces of human thought and judgment, with the result that no one is authorized to think. Any customer problem with more than one moving part confounds their system.

- Runaround:

"Sorry, you'll have to call (see) so-and-so. We don't handle that here." Airline people have made this into an art. The ticket agent tells you the gate people will take care of it, and the gate people tell you to see the ticket agent when you get to your destination, and the agent at your destination tells you to have the travel agent care of it.

## **EMAIL**

Email is the primary method by which we communicate information regarding added shows, changed report times, and additional responsibilities for certain events. *It is your responsibility to check your email frequently*, to stay abreast of any changes. Please promptly answer any e-mail received from the House Manager.

You will receive all email communication from [housemgr@indiana.edu](mailto:housemgr@indiana.edu). This is also the address you should use if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

## **SIGNING UP FOR SHOWS**

You will sign up to usher shows at the beginning of every semester.

- Log onto IUauditorium.com
- Go to the 'Volunteer' tab under the 'Get Involved' heading
- Sign in to the Volunteer Information Center with your username and password
- Sign up for shows, or adjust your schedule after you have signed up

The initial sign ups are scheduled for a specific time and date at the beginning of the semester. To get the shows you really want, it's a good idea to be hitting 'refresh' as fast as you can on the site about two minutes before it will be open.

If you don't get exactly what you want, don't fret. You can shoot us an e-mail about ushering for your very favorite show and we'll try to accommodate. It's also a good idea to recheck the schedule a few days before events that you wanted but weren't scheduled for: often, ushers have to drop an event as they realize their schedules have changes.

As long as you do so more than 24 hours before call time, you can automatically remove yourself from the schedule through the Volunteer Information Center.

**ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is mandatory if you are signed up to usher an event. If you have a scheduling conflict, you can remove yourself from the schedule at the Volunteer Information Center on our website. This must be done 24 hours prior to call time.

If you have an emergency of some sort within 24 hours of call time, you can email [housemgr@indiana.edu](mailto:housemgr@indiana.edu) with your circumstances.

If you fail to show up for an event with no explanation or an unacceptable excuse, you will be given a “No-Show” point, and you will be e-mailed. Once you have accumulated two No-Show points, you will be removed from the usher corps for the rest of the semester.

## GENERAL INFORMATION FOR ALL USHERS

- Baby changing stations can be found in both grand foyer restrooms and the family restroom off the north side of the seating area. There are no changing stations in the mezzanine or balcony.
- The Producers hospitality suite is on the South. Directors on the North.
- Unless specifically noted, traffic should never be directed from house to stage via stage steps once the house is open. All stage traffic should be directed to the door stage right of the stage pit.
- All lost and found inquiries should be directed to coat check. Items found are labeled and kept in coat check during an event. After the event, all items are held by Martha Mathis for 6 months. Nobody knows what happens to them after the 6 months have expired.
- Ear plugs are stored under the south television in the foyer, in coat check, and in the EMT room.
- VOM's may remain at their doors throughout a performance or sit in an available row 20 seat as long as they are willing to keep an eye on their door and continue to direct guests. All other volunteers must sit in assigned sections, determined night of show.
- Eating in view of the public is strictly forbidden at all events. Same goes for sitting, hugging, backrubs, fist-fights, etc.
- Late seating policies are mandated by event/client management, which is why the rules change. Late seating is a constant area of irritation for our guests, but it is vital that all student managers adhere to the late seating policy for each event and attempt to explain to our guest that the policy is the request of the show which we are required to comply with.
- The doors between the box office vestibule and the Hall of Murals are referred to as the *old leathers*. The doors between the Hall of Murals and the Grand Foyer are referred to as the *new leathers*.
- Feminine products are available through coin operated dispensers in the women's restroom on all three levels.
- Medicine is available to guests and staff in the EMT room through a coin operated dispenser. Neither the EMT nor any Auditorium employee is allowed to distribute medicine to our guests, volunteers or co-workers. Employees may purchase the medicine for a guest and deliver it, however.

## TEAM MANUALS

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There are four teams of student managers: Seating, Curb, Float, and Foyer. As ushers, you may work in seating, foyer, or curb positions. Each team has a unique set of responsibilities, opportunities, and activities. Below is a thorough look at each team. Please read through all of the team manuals as you will undoubtedly work every position at some point in your career.

### SEATING TEAM MANUAL

#### Purpose

To personally escort every patron to their seat, a service that is becoming increasingly rare in public assembly venues today, and to serve as a protective barrier between patrons and the stage.

<b>Positions</b>	Orchestra Seating
	Balcony Seating
	VOMs
	Stage Guards

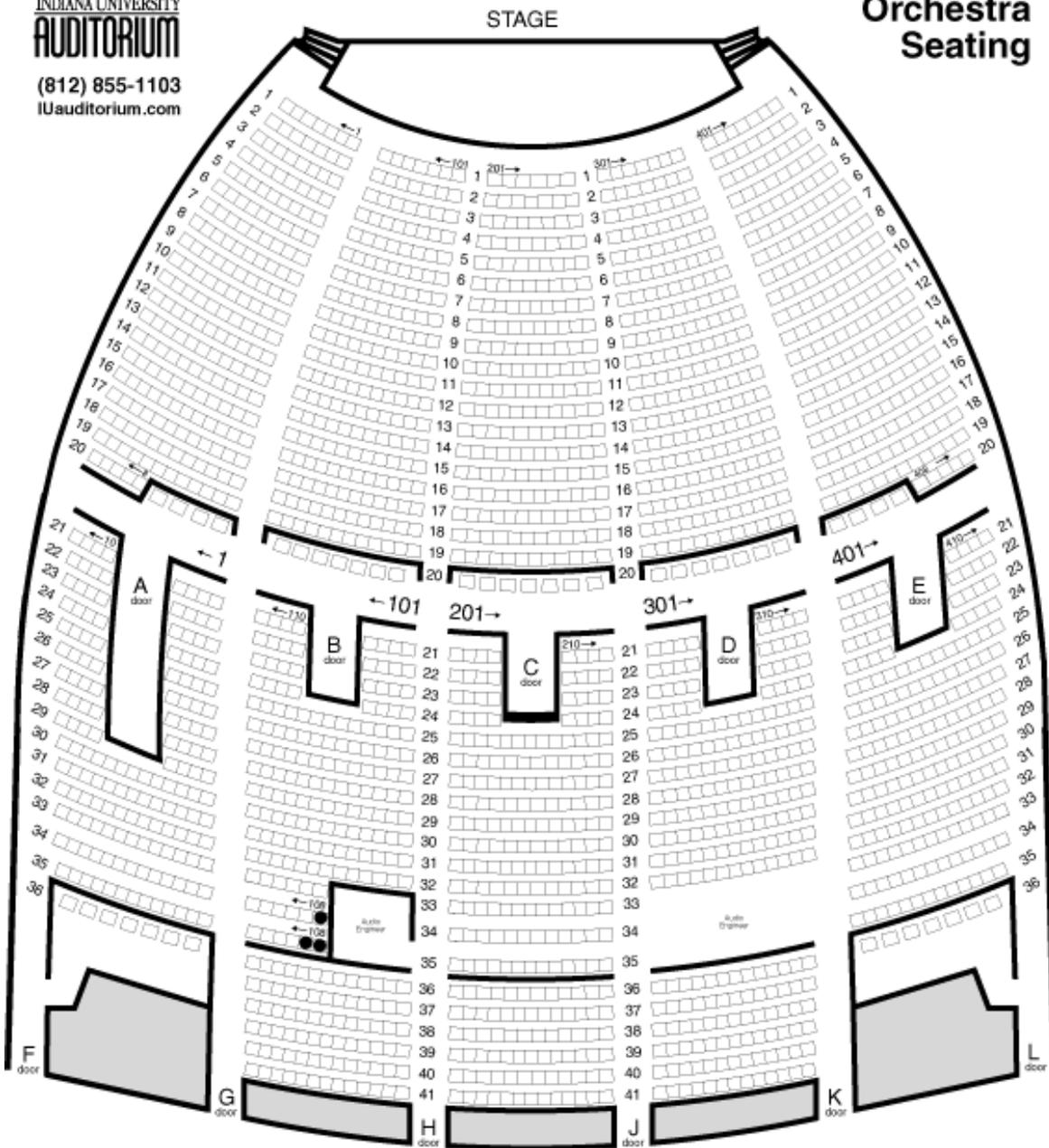
#### *Orchestra Seating*

- You will be in orchestra seating most often as an usher. Your job is to personally escort each group of patrons to their seats. This, of course, means that you must know where their seats are! (On the next page is a map of the seating area)
- There are five sections of seats: A, B, C, D, and E. The seats in A section are numbered from 001 to 012, the seats in section B are 101 to 112, and so on, finishing with 401 to 412 in section E. There are never more than 12 seats in a row, but in rows closer to the stage, there may be as few as 6.
- The all important “Magic Aisle” is the aisle between sections B and C. In every section, the aisle seat closest to the magic aisle will be the 01 seat (i.e. 001 or 301)
- Row 20 divides the lower orchestra from the upper and is where we have the most commonly used accessibility seating. An easy trick for remembering which is row 20: You have to be 21 or over to get into a bar, and rows 21 and up are past the center bar at row 20.
- You will be assigned to a specific door, so you should be especially familiar with the numbers in your area.
- If you make a mistake while seating patrons, just explain and take them to the correct seat. It happens to the best of us.
- If you are having any problems with patrons and you don’t feel comfortable dealing with them yourself (or if you are unsure how to handle the situation) come find a student manager to help you out.
- Some general rules while seating:
  - Talk to every patron you escort
  - Don’t ever lean on the wall while waiting to be assigned patrons
  - Never chew gum or have your cell phone on your person
  - Remember where you are – we like to have fun, but it must remain appropriate

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**Orchestra  
Seating**



9/13/99

### *Balcony Seating*

- Balcony seating is not much different than orchestra seating. Patrons can only enter through two doors, M or N. In the balc, the first section of seats is numbered 501 to 512, beginning where the orchestra left off. The last section of seats is numbered 901 to 912.
- The balcony equivalent of row 20 is row 10.
- The Magic Aisle remains the same, and the rule applies the same way.
- The same general rules for orchestra seating also apply to the balcony.

### *VOMs*

- Firstly: you are called VOMs because of the area in which you stand, the vomitorium.
  - Vomitorium: n. in a theater or stadium, esp. ancient, a passageway leading to and from the seating
- Your job is to take every patron's ticket and hand them off to the appropriate usher at your door.
- The key is to be fast, yet thorough. Make sure you know which way your patrons should be headed (left, right, down, up) to make your ushers' jobs easier.
- Learn the names of all ushers at your door. Then, you can say to a patron, "Jessica will lead you to your seats." It's nice and personal that way.

### *Stage Guard*

To be stage guard, you must plan on staying for the entire duration of the event for which you are ushering.

- This is an excellent position from which to people watch. You stand at either entrance to the stage (in front of row 1), and – you guessed it – guard the stage! You serve as a deterrent for any crazed fan who feels like rushing the stage.
- You must stand and look professional pre-show, during intermission, and post-show.
- For many events, you will be allowed to sit in row 1 during the performance (unless we anticipate a very rowdy crowd).

### **FOYER TEAM**

**Purpose:** To manage the flow of traffic from the front doors to the seating areas.

**Positions**                      Door Guards  
    Mezzanine level directionals

### *Door Guards*

- Door guards stand at each entrance to the house (A, B, C, D, and E).
- Inform patrons that the house is closed until the Stage Manager gives approval to open.
- No leaning on the door entrances.
- Once the doors are opened, stand aside so patrons can get through, but stay in the doorway.
- Try to make sure patrons are going through the appropriate door.

### *Mezzanine Level Directionals*

- Your position will be at the top of the Hall of Murals grand staircases.
- Help patrons that have balcony tickets get where they need to go – direct them up more stairs.

## **CURB TEAM MANUAL**

**Purpose:** To provide an unparalleled greeting service that will set the IU Auditorium apart from other venues by demonstrating our commitment to the welcoming of every patron. “There’s no harm in charm” is the motto of the curb team.

**Positions**                      Door attendants  
   Elevator attendant  
   A ramp attendant

### *Door attendants*

- You will be assigned to one of the glass doors at the front entrance of our building
- You will personally open the door for each patron that comes up to your door.
- Smile and offer a hearty, “Welcome!”
- Gigantic, ill-fitting, yet warm coats will be provided during the winter, and umbrellas will be provided during the rain.

### *Elevator attendant*

- Control elevator traffic to keep it running smoothly. Make sure elevator is brought back to first floor after every group of patrons uses it.

### *A Ramp attendant*

- You will stand in front of the ramp next to coat check to ensure it is clear for accessibility patrons. When this position is present, no one without accessibility needs outside of his or her group members should be passing through the ramp.

## **USHER REWARDS PROGRAM**

We will keep updated records of how many hours you have accumulated throughout your ushering experience at IU Auditorium. Check with one of the Assistant Guest Services Managers to find out your hours and redeem your rewards.

### Hours

- 2 hours for every event (adjusted accordingly)
- 1 hour for post-show clean-up
- 1 hour for every Community Engagement Committee Meeting/Event

### Scale

- 20 hours – “no late seating coupon” & eligibility for personal nametag
- 35 hours – free soda coupon
- 50 hours – meet a stagehand
- 70 hours – free merchandise or signed poster to a show
- 85 hours – 45 minute call-time coupon
- 100 hours – Guest Service Manager’s house seats (if available)
- 125 hours – Complimentary best available pair of tickets to a season show

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Auditorium is committed to giving back to the community. Before season shows, the CEC organizes service projects for seating team ushers in the downtime between training and actual seating. These range from decorating cd covers for overseas soldiers to making holiday cards for local nursing homes. Throughout the year, the CEC also organizes events to volunteer outside the Auditorium for places like Habitat for Humanity or Bowl for Kids’ Sake.

If you are interested in joining the CEC to help plan the events or have an idea for a service project, please email [audcec@indiana.edu](mailto:audcec@indiana.edu).

## **APPLYING TO BECOME A STUDENT MANAGER**

Applications for student manager positions become available at the end of every semester. Volunteers must have ushered for one full semester before being eligible to apply for the Student Manager position. The Assistant Guest Services Managers will send out application forms when the application process nears at the end of each semester.