## Front of House.

Front-of-house personnel have multiple responsibilities that impact audience safety, and these responsibilities begin as soon as the public arrives, continue throughout the performance, and are not finished until the audience members exit the facilities.

Front of house can also help ensure the safety of the performers during the performance. Fire and life safety duties are first and foremost. Beyond fire and life safety responsibilities, front-of-house personnel are also responsible for:

* signs and notices
* food safety including licensing and permit compliance.
* safety inspections
* safe facility conditions
* incident investigations

Advance Preparation Actions must be taken in advance of the performance to ensure the front-of-house staff is ready. Getting ready includes the establishment of an Emergency Evacuation Plan, training the staff, preparing the facilities, and routine maintenance. Front-of-house staff responsibilities often vary from one location to another. They generally include the lobby, the auditorium, the ticket office, restrooms, and refreshment areas. Some may also include heating, ventilation, and air conditioning; the exterior of the building; gift shops; and cloak rooms.

## Training the Staff

Front-of-house staff includes paid personnel and volunteers involved in managing the front of the house, box office sales, and ushers. Each position has responsibilities that are detailed in the job description, and these responsibilities need to be reviewed during training sessions conducted well in advance of the arrival of patrons.

The training should include:

1. Specific job duties
2. Dress codes
3. House rules
4. Hazard recognition
5. How to deal with difficult and/or unruly patrons
6. Emergency response duties

## Food Safety

Food is often made available during intermission and may vary from concession tables that dispense prepackaged beverages and retail food items, such as candy and chips, to the serving of hot and cold beverages from bulk containers and the dispensing of “homemade” food items. The front-of-house staff must ensure compliance with the local authority food and beverage rules. In many cases, EH&S officers will oversee reviewing and approving plans related to serving food and a food permit will need to be obtained through your local EH&S office. Contact your local EH&S office for assistance well in advance (at least two weeks) of planning to serve food or drinks at any event. Campuses will also have policies related to serving and consuming alcohol at events. Beyond these local-specific procedures, other considerations that may need to be addressed include:

1. Ensure an adult will oversee the concessions.

2. Verify at least seven days prior to the event the appropriate food license has been obtained from the local authority having jurisdiction. This authority has been granted. Check with the EH&S office early in the planning process.

3. Obtain local alcohol permits and ensure all local requirements for serving alcohol have been met. You may need to verify whether alcohol permits from the California Department of Beverage Control are required for your event. Work with local officials in charge of your local alcohol policy to determine all requirements have been met.

4. Ensure food license and/or alcohol permits, when required, are clearly displayed in the concession area.

5. Ensure the handling of food and beverages for public consumption meets California Department of Health requirements. Patron Safety Ensuring patron safety is essential. Patron safety begins prior to their arrival and continues until their departure from the facility.

## Life Safety Inspection

1. Ensure the Fire Marshal has the approved the seating layout for the venue.

2. Ensure routine documented safety inspections are conducted and appropriate corrective action taken. This inspection should include the exterior of the building and night lighting conditions.

3. Ensure routine inspection and testing of the emergency lighting system, including the testing of the back-up generator when one is present.

4. Check emergency lighting fixtures to ensure they illuminate the pathway without blinding the evacuees.

5. Check all illuminated exit signs to ensure they are functioning properly.

6. Ensure the show program has been printed with the appropriate warnings regarding the planned use of:

* Strobe lights
* Laser lights
* Pyrotechnic effects
* Live animals

7. Ensure there is a back-up plan to provide production warnings in case the programs are printed without the required warning information.

8. Ensure arrangements are made with facilities maintenance personnel to clear and clean exterior entrance aprons and sidewalks of slip and trip hazards. Conditions that might create these hazards include wet leaves, twigs, gravel, sand, wet grass clippings and in some locations, snow, and ice.

9. Ensure arrangements are made to provide additional entrance mats in case of sudden adverse weather.

## Performer Safety and House Rules

The House Manager must:

1. Ensure the program contains prohibition language regarding:

* The use of flash photography
* Video recording
* Food in the auditorium
* Beverages in the auditorium

2. Plan for extra security if necessary. Prior to Each Performance Although routine safety inspections are made of the facility, the House Manager must ensure the facilities are inspected again prior to the performance and arrival of patrons to identify hazards that may have developed since the last routine safety inspection. The House Manager should ensure all hazardous conditions are immediately corrected and, if necessary, cancel the performance and evacuate the building.

Use a checklist to document the inspection; this will help to ensure all areas of concern are observed and can also be used to document corrective actions taken. Fire and Life Safety The focus of fire and life safety is the reduction of the possibility of fire and ensuring the ability to safely evacuate patrons in the event of a fire.

## Accessible Exits

1. Ensure aisles, corridors, exit pathways, and exit doors are unobstructed.
2. Ensure aisle widths meet building code and Fire Marshal specifications in venues equipped with portable seating.
3. Ensure aisles and corridors along the exit pathway are not reduced.
4. Ensure no concession or vending tables obstruct access to the exits.
5. Ensure no curtains or decorative hangings obstruct or obscure the view of the exits or access to the exits.
6. Remove any decorations or posters from the surface of exit doors.
7. Ensure there are clear areas on both sides of the exit doors to allow the convergence of evacuees. The clear area on each side of the door must be at least the width of the exit doorway and at least 6-feet deep.
8. Ensure exit doors are unlocked and open with ease.
9. Check the exterior side of all exit doors to ensure the required exterior area is clear.
10. Ensure the immediate removal of any exit constrictions or obstructions.
11. Ensure there is a clear exit path from the building to a safe place of refuge on the exterior side of all exit doors.
12. Remove any mirrors placed near an exit in any manner.
13. Remove any items stored in or under stairways.

## Emergency Lighting and Illuminated Exits Signs

1. Test the emergency lighting system.
2. Inspect the emergency back-up generator test record to ensure the generator can be expected to function properly.
3. Check all illuminated exit signs to ensure they function properly and are unobstructed.
4. Check the aisle lighting to ensure aisle pathways are properly illuminated.

## Fire Extinguishers, Fire Alarm Pull Stations, and Fire Hose Stations

1. Ensure all fire extinguishers are in place and intact (the seal has not been broken).
2. Ensure all fire extinguisher “charge indicator gauges” are in the green zone of the gauge.
3. Ensure all fire hoses are properly mounted and undamaged.
4. Ensure access to the fire extinguishers, fire alarm pull stations, and fire hose stations, is unobstructed and un-obscured. The clearance vertically must be from the floor to the ceiling and must extend horizontally 36 inches from all sides of the fire extinguisher (except the mounting side).

## Patron Awareness

Some special effects and special features of the performance may pose a hazard for patrons. It is essential the patrons be notified in advance.

1. Ensure signs are posted in the lobby advising patrons of the planned use of:

1. Strobe lights
2. Laser lights
3. Pyrotechnic effects
4. Live animals

2. Ensure signs are posted in the lobby advising patrons of the prohibition of:

1. The use of flash photography
2. Video recording
3. Food in the auditorium
4. Beverages in the auditorium

3. Ensure informational signs are positioned to ensure patrons see the notice prior to entering the auditorium but not in a manner that obstructs or obscures the exit pathways.

## Facility Conditions

The facilities must be checked for cleanliness and the absence of slip, trip, and fall hazards:

1. Ensure entry rugs are level and do not pose trip/fall hazards.
2. Ensure the lobby floor is dry and will remain dry as the patrons arrive. Provide extra entry mats if necessary.

3. Ensure the exterior of the entry way and sidewalks are free of wet leaves, twigs, gravel, sand, wet grass clippings and in some locations, snow, and ice.

4. Ensure the restrooms are:

* 1. Clean
  2. Dry – no water on the floors
  3. Safe – toilet seats are secure.
  4. Stocked with:
     1. Soap
     2. Hand drying materials or functioning dryer machines
     3. Toilet tissue

5. Ensure cleaning tools and materials are immediately accessible should it become necessary to clean up spills or respond to patron illnesses.

While the Patrons are Present The front-of-house personnel are responsible for making safety announcements, crowd control, safety rule enforcement, emergency response, and incident investigation.

**The House Manager must be on premises prior to patron arrival and stay until all patrons have left.**

# In an Emergency

1. The House Manager will go to the stage and provide information regarding the nature of the emergency and instruct the audience as to expected actions, i.e., evacuate, shelter in place, etc. The Stage Manager is generally responsible for evacuating the back of the house.
2. The ushers will direct patrons to exits during evacuations and lead them to assembly points specified in the Emergency Response Plan.
3. After the emergency is over, cooperate with EH&S and Risk Management to complete an incident investigation.
4. Venue-specific Emergency Response Plans may vary; check the Emergency Response Plan for your venue to ensure you understand the procedures.

Crowd Control

1. Take steps to prevent patrons from accessing the stage uninvited.
2. Take steps to control unruly patrons.
3. Enforce house rules regarding the use of:
   1. Flash photography
   2. Video recording
   3. Mobile telephone use
   4. Food and beverage consumption

## Patron Injury/Illness Response and Investigation

Immediately provide first aid for minor injuries using universal precautions to reduce the risk of transmitting bloodborne pathogens.

1. Universal precautions include:
   1. Allow the injured person to clean, bandage, and/or apply pressure to wounds if he or she is able.
   2. Wear latex gloves.
   3. Wear a safety CPR mask when administering CPR.

Summon emergency medical services by dialing 9-1-1 for nonminor injuries.

1. Examples of non-minor injuries include:

a. Head injuries

b. Unconsciousness

c. Heart attack or symptoms of heart attack

d. Stoke

e. Deep wounds

f. Not breathing.

g. Broken bones

1. Use the automated external defibrillator (AED) (if one is available) in accordance with the instructions and any training you have received.
2. Notify the person in charge immediately of injuries and illnesses that are not minor.
3. Post personnel along the route from the building entry to the injured person to assist the prompt arrival of emergency medical personnel.
4. Begin the gathering of information for the investigation as soon as the injured or ill person’s medical needs are met.
5. Begin incident investigation.
6. Obtain information regarding the injured/ill patron from the patron and/or persons with the patron.

a. Name

b. Address

c. Telephone number

d. Medical conditions and/or medications being taken; this information must be provided to emergency medical personnel as soon as possible.

1. Obtain information from witnesses:

a. Name

b. Contact information

c. What they saw and/or heard.

1. Document investigation on the appropriate investigation form.
2. Report the incident to the EH&S office and Risk Management Department. After the Performance To ensure the safety of the patrons and premises, the House Manager must remain on the premises until all patrons have departed.

Additional measures must be taken to ensure the security of the site and must ensure:

1. All patrons have departed.

2. Clean-up operations are initiated.

3. Food and beverages are safely stored and secured.

4. Exit doors are secured.

5. Incident reports are completed and filed.

## COVID 19 rules

* All audience, staff and volunteers are required to wear masks while in the building and throughout the entirety of the show. Masks will be available free of charge or patrons may bring their own. All masks must be worn properly in accordance with CDC guidelines, covering both the nose and mouth.
* For the protection of our patrons, volunteers, and staff, we will not allow mask exemptions of any kind, including medical exemptions. We will be offering an online streaming option to watch performances from home as an accommodation. Those who are unable or unwilling to wear a mask for the duration of their visit should call the box office to exchange their ticket for a streaming code or to obtain a refund. We appreciate everyone’s cooperation in helping us maintain the safest environment possible.
* Audience members are required to self-screen for a fever and symptoms of illness prior to arriving at the venue. Those with fever or other symptoms may exchange their ticket at no cost. To view symptoms of COVID-19, please [click here](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html).
* Those picking up tickets at will call are asked to adhere to the six-foot line spacing marked on the floor outside of the Box Office. Plexiglass barriers have been installed in and around the Box Office to better protect our patrons, staff, and volunteers. Cash-free payments are encouraged, and touchless credit card transactions are being offered.
* The theatre will open 30 minutes prior to the start of the show. For those who wish to line up outside of the theatre, please adhere to the six-foot line spacing marked on the floor outside of the theatre. For those who wish to wait in the lobby, please maintain at least six feet of space between your group and other patrons.
* For shows with festival, ushers will help guide you to an available seat. Seating is general admission, and seats are socially distanced, with groups spaced at least 6 feet apart. Ushers may ask patrons to sit in specific areas to help maintain safe social-distancing measures.
* In the case of assigned seats, seats are pre-set in groups of two. Please do not touch any seat you do not plan to occupy for the duration of the show. If you would like a seat moved to accommodate a third member of your party, please ask an usher for assistance.
* Once your party is seated in the theatre, please do not abandon your seats to sit elsewhere. Do not touch any seats in the theatre other than your own.
* A plexiglass barrier surrounds the perimeter of the stage to provide a safe separation between guests and performers.
* At the conclusion of the performance, please remain seated and wait until your group is dismissed by the ushers. Ushers will be dismissing those closest to the exit first to maintain safe social distancing.
* Upon dismissal, we ask that you promptly exit the building. Please do not gather in lobbies or common areas.
* We will no longer be hosting post-show meet-and-greets with the actors in the lobby.
* Lobbies, reception areas and lines have been arranged and marked to encourage social distancing. Please do not congregate with patrons outside of your party.
* Common areas and performance halls are being cleaned and sanitized daily with both cleanser and electrostatic technology.
* All restrooms have been outfitted with touchless fixtures. Restrooms are being sanitized daily and throughout performances.
* Public water fountains will be closed. A vending machine with water and soda will be available in the lobby.