

IU Auditorium Usher Manual

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY
AUDITORIUM

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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 400 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. Welcome to the IU Auditorium team!

REQUIREMENTS

In order to usher at the IU Auditorium, we ask that you meet the following requirements:

- Be a current undergraduate or graduate student attending Indiana University in Bloomington, IN.
- Be able to read small print on tickets and work in low light conditions.
- Be friendly and willing to interact with patrons, staff, and fellow volunteers in a courteous manner.
- Attend at least one usher training.
- Attend the annual Evacuation Drill.

Usher Training

All new ushers must attend an usher training before ushering. Three dates will be made available each semester, typically on weekday evenings. The training will cover usher roles, theatre seating, emergency procedures, uniform, signing up for events, and a tour of the theatre.

Evacuation Drill

The IU Auditorium hosts an annual Evacuation Drill in the fall semester of every year. All current ushers and staff are required to attend.

EXPECTATIONS

All Ushers Are Expected to:

- Abide by the dress code.
- Volunteer for a minimum of **6 events per semester**.
- Arrive on time in the required usher attire (see dress code below) to attend event briefing
- Sign in with a student manager to receive attendance points
- Keep everything neat and tidy: pick up programs, stray trash, candy wrappers, etc. you see throughout the building.
- Avoid leaning, sitting in the foyer, or lounging around the Auditorium during an event.
- Store all cell phones in the usher break room until the shift has ended.

Expected Event Timeline:

90 minutes before show begins.

1. Sign in with a student manager and receive position assignment
2. Put on volunteer nametag
3. Attend Usher Briefing and split into assigned teams.
4. Attend Team Briefing.

60 minutes before show begins:

1. Building opens for all guests to enter.
2. Curb ushers welcome guests into the building
3. Door guards are in position to block entrance into the house.

30 minutes before show begins:

1. House doors open to allow patrons into the seating area.
2. Seating ushers take patrons directly to their seats

Show-Time

1. All house doors close
2. Seating ushers assist in late seating for the first 10 minutes of the show.
3. Go enjoy the show or head out for the night!

DRESS CODE

Ushers are required to obtain and wear to their shifts:

- Black dress pants or a black skirt.
- A white buttoned-down shirt with a collar (tucked into your pants/skirt)
- Black dress shoes
- (Optional) A plain black or red tie. Long or Bow ties are acceptable.
- (Optional) An all-white cardigan.



Please note:

- No jeans (blue or black), shorts, or miniskirts.
- No polos, vests, sweatshirts, or jackets.
- No boots, sneakers, or open-toed shoes.
- No wrinkled or unwashed attire.

SIGNING UP FOR SHOWS

Sign Me Up!

You will sign up to usher shows at the beginning of every semester. In order to obtain your login information, you must attend one of the scheduled usher trainings.

Shows will become available on a specific time and date, announced at the beginning of each 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.

Once you have your login information, you can view and sign up for shows by following the steps below:

1. Log onto IUauditorium.com
2. Click 'Get Involved' under the 'About Us' tab
3. Click 'Student Volunteers'
4. Sign in to the Volunteer Information Center with your username and password
5. Click 'Sign Up For Shows Here' and select at least the minimum of 6 events.

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- we often have spots open in the days leading up to the event!

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory if you are signed up to usher an event.

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 **three** No-Show points, you will be removed from the usher corps for the rest of the semester.

Cancelling More than 48 Hours Before an Event

If you have a scheduling conflict, you can remove yourself from the schedule at the Volunteer Information Center on our up to **48 hours** prior to call time.

Cancelling Less Than 48 Hours Before an Event

If you have an emergency of some sort within 48 hours of call time, you can email housemgr@indiana.edu with your circumstance and we will remove you. If you try to remove yourself within 48 hours of the event, the option will no longer be available.

TEAM ASSIGNMENTS

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 – Orchestra

Seating Team Ushers personally escort every patron to their seat- a service that is becoming increasingly rare in public assembly venues today! The Stage Guard Ushers also serve as a protective barrier between patrons and the stage.

You will most often find yourself seating in the Orchestra for most events. 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!

There are five sections of seats: A, B, C, D, and E. 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). You will be assigned to a specific door, so you should be especially familiar with the numbers in your area.

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.

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. They are trained to help with these situations. Do not leave a group of patrons with their tickets in your hand **ever**. Should you be unable to find them again, they will have no idea where they are supposed to sit.

If you make a mistake while seating patrons, just explain and take them to the correct seat. It happens to the best of us.

Seating Team – Balcony

Balcony seating is extremely similar to orchestra seating, with just two exceptions!

Patrons can only enter through two doors (M or N) and the accessibility-seating row (balcony equivalent of row 20) is row 10. The Magic Aisle remains the same, and the rule applies the same way.

Seating Team – VOMs

A VOM's 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.

Pro Tip: 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 a nice personal touch.

Curious about why we call it a VOM? It's actually named after 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)

Seating Team – Stage Guards

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, which means to be a Stage Guard, you must plan on staying for the entire duration of the event.

However, for many events, you will be allowed to sit in row 1 during the performance (unless we anticipate a very rowdy crowd).

Seating Team – Mezz Directionals

Your position will be at the top of the Hall of Murals grand staircases. This position is designed to direct patrons that have balcony tickets up one more level, as many will think the mezzanine level is the balcony level.

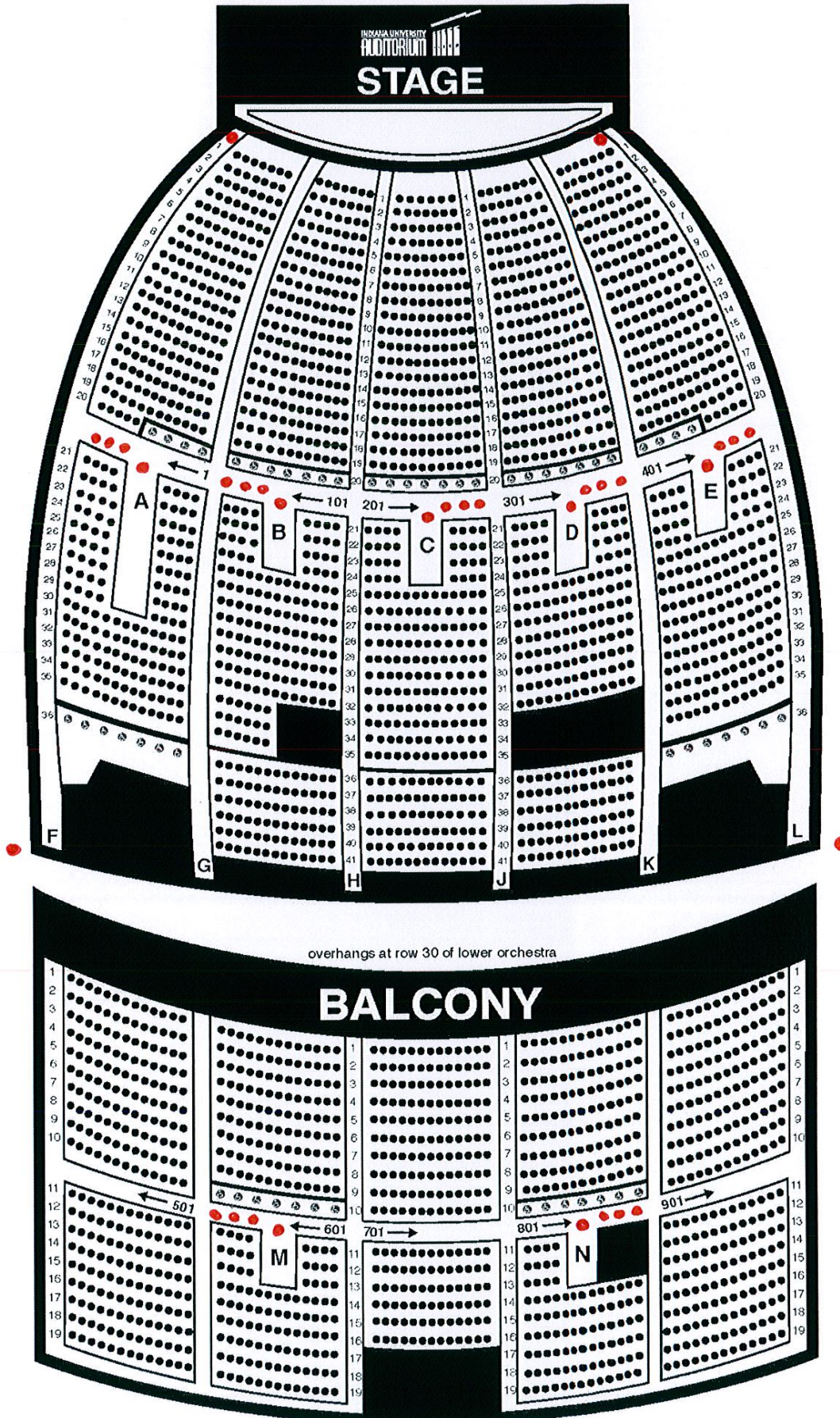
You will also direct any patrons who looking for them to the mezzanine restrooms, located on the same sides of the building as the grand foyer.

Seating Team – Door Guards

Door guards stand at each entrance to the house (A, B, C, D, and E) and inform patrons that the house is closed until the Stage Manager gives approval to open. Once the doors are opened, head into the house to assist with seating.

Remember not to leaning on the door entrances and be sure to stand far enough away from the door so that patrons can see you and you don't get hit by a swinging door!

Seating Team Positions Map



Curb Team – Door Attendants

Curb Team Ushers 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.

Door Attendants 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. However, if you have a black pea-coat or black umbrella, please feel free to bring it and use it!

Curb Team – Elevator Attendant

The Elevator Attendant assists by controlling elevator traffic and ensuring all patrons make it to the correct level with their designated seats. Make sure the elevator is brought back to first floor after every group of patrons uses it for the next group of awaiting patrons.

Curb Team – A-Ramp Attendant

The A-Ramp Attendant 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- many are actually looking for the restroom!

There should be a ticket taker here with you to ensure all accessibility patrons have their tickets scanned.

GENERAL USHER INFORMATION



Backstage Access

Unless specifically noted, no one should be entering to the backstage area using the stage stairs. All stage traffic should be directed to the door stage right of the stage pit.

Lost and Found

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 Jordin Perkins for 6 months. Nobody knows what happens to them after the 6 months have expired.



Usher Seating

All 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, cussing, etc.

Late Seating

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 and ushers adhere to the late seating policy for each event. Please attempt to explain to our guest that the policy is the **request of the show**. We must do as they request.



COMMUNICATIONS

Email

Email is the primary method by which we communicate information regarding added shows, changed report times, and additional 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. This is also the address you should use if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Social Media

We will post most social events, event updates, and other fun tidbits on our social media accounts, as well as emailing the information.

Facebook: Aud Squad (person)

Instagram: iuaudsquad

Twitter: IUAudVolunteers

GroupMe: https://groupme.com/join_group/44554582/ljUf0R

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES



Patron and Volunteer Emergencies

If a patron or volunteer has an accident, is injured, unconscious, vomiting, or trips, let a manager know immediately. Volunteers should never touch any human blood or bodily fluids. If possible, redirect patrons from the area.

Tornado/Severe Weather

In the event of severe weather, everyone in the theatre will be moved to the lowest levels of the building, including the basement and main lobby spaces.

The House Manager will assist you with sheltering these patrons and will give the all clear for patrons to return to their seats.



Evacuation

If the fire alarm is activated, you must evacuate the building.

If you are in seating and have been given an emergency position, please report to that position as quickly as possible. If you have not been given an emergency position, please evacuate with all other patrons to the nearest exit.

Minor Injuries

First Aid kits are located in the EMT room next to the student break room. These include Band-Aids, gauze, Neosporin, etc.

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.

Feminine products are available through coin operated dispensers in the women's restroom on all three levels.



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 or email housemgr@indiana.edu to find out your hours and redeem your rewards.

As you reach each new reward, know that it will not subtract that amount of points from your account- it continues to build for as long as you remain an usher!

Hours

2-3 hours for every event (adjusted accordingly)

1 hour for post-show clean-up

1 hour for every Social Event

1 hour for every usher referred by you!

Reward Scale

10 Hours	Auditorium Keepsake
20 Hours	Coupon for a free snack from the concession stand
30 hours	A Personalized Nametag
40 hours	Able to Order IU Auditorium Quarterzip (when available)
50 hours	Backstage Tour (when available)
75 hours	1 Set of Discounted Tickets (max 4)
100 hours	Complimentary best available pair of tickets to a season show
125 hours	Guest Services Manager's house seat tickets to an available show

* Previous semester hours accumulate and roll-over.

Restrictions

You may collect ushering rewards for up to 5 years of service.

STUDENT MANAGERS

While you are volunteering, you may notice other students dressed in a different uniform with a variety of leadership roles. These are **student managers**. They, like you, started as a volunteer and enjoyed the work so much that they chose to apply for a job here!

These managers, along with the volunteers, run the entire front of house team. They are in charge of the curb and traffic as well as seating and the lobby spaces.

Within the managers, there is a system called our chain of command, which shows the levels (or hierarchy) within the manager ranks.

Volunteers

That's you! You help with seating, greeting, and directing patrons.

Student Managers

Managers assist with everything from helping accessibility patrons into our building to being sure our shuttles are running smoothly and problem solving in seating.

Student Facilitators

Facilitators are one step above student managers. They have distinguished themselves as leaders and are placed in charge of specific managers, such as seating managers, curb managers, and the ushers.

Assistant Guest Services Managers

Assistant Guest Services Managers (AGSMs) are, while still students, often equal to the Guest Services Manager in responsibility. Being small in number (typically only 3), they oversee the entire staff, often tasked with larger responsibilities, like emergency management and overall event management.

Student Manager Applications

Applications for student manager positions become available at least once a year, typically in the Spring 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 along with other important dates and information.

CUSTOMER SERVICE AT THE AUDITORIUM

Providing expert customer service is our number two priority (second to keeping our patrons safe). It has made us famous. It is our brand, so 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

The seven deadly sins should be avoided at all costs. Please familiarize yourself and try not to fall into any of the traps listed below.

- **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 Damn.
- **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.
- **Robot-ism:** "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.

UNIVERSITY CLAUSES

Statement of University Compliance: This organization shall comply with all Indiana University regulations, and local, state and federal laws.

Anti-Hazing Policy: Hazing is strictly prohibited. Hazing shall be defined as any conduct which subjects another person, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, or psychologically, to anything that may endanger, abuse, degrade, or intimidate the person as a condition of association with a group or organization, regardless of the person's consent or lack of consent.

Personal Gain Clause: This organization, if raising funds, shall ethically raise and distribute profits from organizational functions to either the organization or to members who provide a service that directly benefits the organization. Individual members may not receive compensation from for-profit companies if acting as a representative of a student organization.