

POLICY NUMBER: 6.20	DATE ADOPTED: Historic
POLICY TYPE: Production Job Descriptions	DATE AMENDED: Mar. 10/2020
POLICY TITLE: Front of House Department Head	

Front of House Department Head

In general, the person in charge of Front of House (FOH) is responsible for the comfort and safety of the audience. The appearance, friendliness and efficiency of the FOH crew create the audience's first impression. Never underestimate its importance. The person in charge of Front of House is responsible to the Administrative Producer.

Three Weeks Before Opening

1. Contact people on the list of current volunteers (in separate document). List to be obtained from FOH Co-ordinator.
2. Prepare schedule – normally four people per performance. For popular shows, five may be required for some performances, especially Thursdays. Ensure that all volunteers scheduled have taken the safety training seminar within the past 12 months. Their last training date is noted on the volunteer list. If necessary, contact FOH Co-ordinator for names of those taking the course immediately prior to the production.
3. Obtain production door code from show producer.

One to Two Weeks Before Opening

1. Ensure that there are two large laminated posters for the sandwich board. Programme person prepares these. (Use only sticky tac or masking tape on the back of the posters.)
2. Check Front of House drawer in filing cabinet in the office for:
 - Concession Price Lists (three)
 - Quick Checklists (one per performance) – photocopy more if needed
 - Seating Chart (one for each Thursday), unless alternative method, below, is used
 - Opening Night Invitations (inviting people to stay after the show)
3. Contact Treasurer for current safe and Tech room door codes. Check the Concession float (\$100) and that the Askew's card is in the float bag. Take Askew's card when shopping for cookies and other supplies to receive discount. Mention the discount to the cashier to be sure they give it.
4. Email schedule to all volunteers. Include everyone's contact information. Encourage people to find someone to switch with if they are unable to be at their scheduled performance and only contact you if they can't find anyone. (It is useful to note on the schedule the names and phone numbers of those who are able to substitute.) Tell volunteers to arrive 75 minutes before curtain. Invite them to attend the Dress Rehearsal.

One to Two Days Before Opening

1. Purchase needed supplies – napkins, plastic glasses (9oz for juice, 7oz or Dixie Cups for water jug), teas, cream, milk, juice, sugar, cookies (from Askew's).
2. All receipts should be placed in the Treasurer's slot upstairs in the office, both charged and paid by you. (Concession is not a Production Expense, so receipts don't have to go through the Admin. Producer.)
3. Check coffee supplies and water jugs (purchased by the Building Manager).
4. Tidy inside the kitchen, including emptying the fridge of unnecessary items.
5. Clear pathway through Scene Shop for patrons with mobility problems.
6. Post Price Lists.
7. Check with Stage Manager about the length of each act and estimated finishing time. Post this information inside the kitchen for volunteers. Stage Manager will also tell you how far in advance of curtain the House doors will be opened and how you will be given the signal to open them before each performance. (This might vary slightly for each show.)
8. Find out from person in charge of sponsorships which performances have Bronze level sponsors – individual performance sponsors. Ensure that the programme person has delivered the Bronze sponsor posters. Post each for the appropriate performance.
9. Find out from person in charge of programmes how/when they will be delivered.

On Performance Days

1. If possible, put the sandwich board on the sidewalk at the corner of Hudson and Shuswap on the morning of each performance.
2. As FOH head, arrive at the Theatre at least 90 min before curtain. (Doors open one hour before.)
3. Move sandwich board from corner of Hudson and Shuswap and place on sidewalk outside Theatre.
4. FOH volunteer coats etc. should be put upstairs in the office.
5. Use a 'Quick Checklist' for each performance, with volunteers checking off each item as they complete it.
6. Put on VOLUNTEER tag.
7. Fill coffee carafes with hot water to warm them. Boil kettle for tea.
8. Get concession float from safe and organize in drawer.
9. Have one pot of regular and one of decaf ready to go if someone requests it before the show. (Don't run it through until someone asks.) Pour into warmed silver carafes when ready. Put out milk, cream, sugar and spoons, teas, cookies.
10. Mix up two kinds of juice.

11. If necessary tidy up Green Room, House, check bathrooms, including paper towel, toilet paper. All extras are under the sink in the Women's washroom. Sweep outside if necessary – broom in Scene Shop.
12. Check programmes (probably need to be folded and assembled with covers).
13. Post signs on main doors to point to Entrance door (third door from right when outside, looking at the doors). Set up portable posts inside the lobby - one at the centre of the 4 main doors with the belt pulled out to meet the second post as close to the box office stand as possible. The third post stands towards the Green Room, at an angle to the second, with the belt pulled out 2 - 3 feet. These posts are not required on "Pay as You Can Thursdays".
14. One hour before curtain, unlock both sets of front doors (including brass bolts) and the side door to the alley (fire regulations).
15. Check with Box Office personnel to find out how tickets are being handled for this show. (They may be scanned at the box office, or at the top of the stairs. You may or may not be asked to rip tickets as patrons enter.)
16. One volunteer should greet people at the door as they arrive, steer them towards the Box Office stand to buy tickets or have theirs scanned, and hand them a programme.
17. Make sure patrons know that they are allowed to take bottled water into the House, but no coffee, tea, juice or food.
18. When House doors open, one volunteer continues to greet people at the main doors, one sells refreshments, and two stand at the top of the stairs, helping people locate their seat. These volunteers also ensures that no food or drink other than water is taken into the House.
19. On 'Pay What You Can' Thursday, have a jar or basket for donations on the Box Office Kiosk (or at the entrance door – see below) and use the double rolls of tickets (under the counter in the kitchen) to give each person a double ticket. One of the double tickets is taken as they go into the House. Check a seat off on the seating chart for each audience member.
20. On 'Pay What You Can' Thursday, patrons should start lining up on the right hand stairs, with the lineup snaking through the Green Room. This helps keep the entrance way and the outside doors clear.

Alternatively, for very popular shows, on Thursdays where a large audience is anticipated, prepare cards (use the backs of old production tickets in a bin in the kitchen) numbered 1 to ___ (the number of seats available for use for that performance) and hand one to each person at the entrance door as they arrive and give their donation (2 people needed for this). One person may be given a second ticket for a companion not yet present. The number on the card represents that person's position in line. When the House doors open, one Volunteer calls out the numbers in groups of 20 (1-20, 21-40, etc) and people with those cards are admitted to the House, seated, and then the next group of numbers is called, progressing until all are seated. Patrons' places in line are assured, so lining up in front of the House doors is not required, and should be

discouraged. Patrons can even leave the building and return shortly before the House doors open.

After all patrons have cards, note the number of the next ticket to be used. This shows the number of tickets given, which is needed to calculate the average donation per person.

21. Patrons with mobility issues can be taken through the Scene Shop to avoid the stairs. Those in wheelchairs must enter through the alley door. (Box Office personell can tell you if any wheelchair tickets have been sold for that performance.) One volunteer goes outside to meet patron while another opens the door from the inside. Two chairs need to be removed from the front row – Row B, to accommodate one wheelchair. The chairs can be stacked in the Scene Shop. It is best to seat wheelchair patrons and those going through the Scene Shop before opening the House doors if possible.
22. If a patron with hearing aids asks about the 'Auris Loop' tell them that they simply have to switch their hearing aid to the 'T-coil' setting and the sound from the stage will stream straight to their hearing aids. (A T-coil has to be activated by their audiologist.) The House Technical Producer will check the Auris Loop before each performance. If a patron indicates there is a problem, talk to the HTP.
23. Open the House doors when Stage Manager or Lighting Operator gives the word, usually about 20 minutes before curtain. Never open the doors before the word is given.
24. Start ushering people in at the 5-minute buzzer. Check the washrooms and the street for latecomers. Everyone needs to be in the House as soon as the 2-minute buzzer sounds.
25. At curtain time, let the lighting technician know when everyone is seated. You may have to ask patrons still standing to sit. (Give the "thumbs up" to the window in the House.)
26. Two volunteers go into the House (with flashlights from the kitchen). One sits on the stool inside the door and one sits on the far side of Row M for the whole performance. The third volunteer stays in the Foyer with the FOH in Charge. The FOH in charge doesn't go into the House but stays outside to deal with anything that might arise.

The volunteers in the House are responsible for the audience, ensuring that anyone who comes late or has to leave, does so as quietly as possible.

Latecomers must sit or wait at the back until an appropriate break in the play. If their seats are in the middle of a row or near the front, it's best if they sit at the back till the intermission, as it's too disruptive to the audience and the actors to seat them during the performance. These volunteers also watch for patrons needing help and notify the FOH in charge to arrange for aid, and direct patrons to exits in the event of an emergency evacuation.

27. The volunteer in the Foyer escorts any latecomers up the stairs quietly, handing them over to the volunteer just inside the House doors. This person also ensures that the noise level in the lobby is kept very low.

28. Turn off stair and entranceway lights as House doors are closed.
29. On Thursdays, after the House doors close, count the donation money and calculate the average donation per person for the treasurer and Admin. Producer. (Count the tickets taken, or refer to the seating chart to calculate the average donation per person.)
30. When the House doors close, position 2 of the portable posts in front of the concession stand, to form a line-up corridor for intermission, leaving about 3 feet at the wall side for patrons to exit with their orders. About 5 feet of belt is sufficient. Move the third post to a spot out of the way.
31. Prepare coffee and boil kettle for tea about 10 minutes before the end of Act One.
32. At intermission, open House doors, turn on the lights over the stairs and in the Green Room. Serve refreshments as quickly and efficiently as possible.
33. One volunteer stands at the top of the stairs as people go in for the second act, making sure no one enters with food or drinks.
34. After the second act starts, the FOH in charge and the other volunteer in the foyer count the concession money, wash the dishes - washing them in the sink first and putting them in the sanitizer (instructions on the sanitizer door) – and tidy up the kitchen and Green Room.
35. After the show, volunteers empty garbage cans if necessary, including in bathrooms. If there is a full bag of garbage, put it in the dumpster in the alley. (Key is hanging up to the right of the Cillascope.) Or bags can be put temporarily by the back door of the Scene Shop.
36. Volunteers check House, collecting programmes etc. Return all seats to upright position.
37. Note any supplies that are getting low.
38. Put plastic bag with concession money and float in the safe. If smaller denominations are needed for the float, take some bills with you to the bank the next day for change and return the money to the safe.
39. Bring in the sandwich board.
40. Flush the urinals!
41. Remove VOLUNTEER tags.
42. If you are the last to leave, turn off all lights except the one in front of the ticket booth and the stair light up to the office. Ensure the side door and Scene Shop door are locked and lock the front doors as you are leaving including engaging all the brass bolts. Do this even if there are still people backstage.

Striking

1. Tidy Front of House area including the inside of refrigerator. Discard or give away items that will not keep.
2. Empty trash cans (always needed after the Cast Party!)

3. Return bottles and cans and waste paper to recycling depot. (Good to check the office for used paper as well.)
4. Ensure that all FOH volunteers receive a special thank you for their contribution, preferably in writing.