



## Volunteering Guidelines: 2021-2022 Season

### Welcome to the Team!

Thank you for donating your time to Waterville Opera House. Your contribution supports the performing arts in our community and helps us continue our mission of providing arts experiences for all.

Our team of volunteers is an integral part of the Waterville Opera House (WOH). We depend upon the professionalism of our volunteers from the moment the patrons enter the lobby until the last guest has left the theatre. For many patrons, the volunteers are the only WOH representatives with whom they have face-to-face contact. A positive volunteer/patron experience can foster positive public relations for WOH, but the reverse is also true. We appreciate your generous gifts of time and talent.

### WOH Staff List and Contact Information

Opera House Main Number: 207.873.7000 (**Call first.** Leave a voicemail anytime, messages are checked regularly.)

Michelle Sweet, Executive Director

Erik Thomas, Assistant Executive Director

Bryant Cyr, Production Manager

Michael Churchill, Technical Director

Emilienne "Em" Ouellette, Box Office Manager

Sara Stewart, Volunteer Coordinator: [volunteer@watervillecreates.org](mailto:volunteer@watervillecreates.org) 949.579.0510

If you need to cancel on the day of your shift due to illness or emergency, please notify Sara Stewart, Volunteer Coordinator, at [volunteer@watervillecreates.org](mailto:volunteer@watervillecreates.org) or 949.579.0510

### Physical Requirements

There are physical requirements for ushering and working events. To ensure your safety and the safety of our patrons, all volunteers must be:

- Able to open theatre doors and remain standing for moderately long periods of time.
- Confident on the stairs and sloped floors.
- Able to read tickets in a darkened theatre with a flashlight.
- Able to quickly obtain assistance in medical matters and assist in evacuation in the case of an emergency.

### Code of Conduct

Our volunteers are ambassadors of goodwill who serve the patrons of our theatre and our community. Your attention to customer service is greatly appreciated. Volunteers should act in a welcoming, courteous, and respectful manner. Every encounter with a patron should be handled with this in mind. Please consider your choice of words, gestures, and tone of voice.

Behaviors to Avoid:

- Consuming alcoholic beverages before or during your shift.
- Chatting during performances. If you need to communicate something urgent, do so as discreetly as possible.

- Discussing sensitive subjects such as politics, religion, etcetera.
- Wearing perfumes or strongly scented products.
- Excessive cell phone use.
- Soliciting patrons for personal gain.

## Dress Code

A dress code is designed to facilitate the ease with which patrons can identify volunteer staff. In order to maintain a consistent and professional appearance, please observe our simple volunteer dress code:

- Black and white clothing (patterns are acceptable).
- Clothing should be modest and not too revealing.
- Your WOH nametag (provided) in plain view. Please remember to return it at the end of the show.
- Face masks are required while inside the WOH building.
- A welcoming smile!
- **Prohibited:** T-shirts, jeans, mini-skirts, athletic apparel, brightly colored athletic shoes, and any graphics with political or controversial meaning.

## Arrival Time & Attendance

Our volunteers are important, and we count on your attendance and punctuality. Patrons have a much better experience and events run more smoothly when all our ushers are present.

- Please arrive 1 hour and 15 minutes prior to the event time. For example, volunteers should arrive at 6:45pm for an 8pm event. Event times do vary, and you can double check event times at [www.operahouse.org](http://www.operahouse.org)
- We ask that you remain for the duration of the performance. If you are not able to stay for the entire show, please notify us prior to the event.
- Volunteers will not always know in advance how long an event will last when signing up. Please expect at least a 3-hour commitment for any event and some events may require 4-6 hours of service.
- Although you likely signed up for a specific job (we do take preferences into consideration), please be prepared to assist with any job that is assigned to you. This is dependent upon where the need is greatest at that particular time. We appreciate your flexibility.
- Volunteers with limitations regarding job assignments need to provide this information to the Box Office Manager, Em Ouellette.
- Multiple no-shows may result in your dismissal from the volunteer program.

## Policies and Procedures

### Upon Arrival

- Store your belongings in the office adjacent to Concessions.
- Check in with WOH Staff.
- Put on your nametag.
- If needed, assist WOH Staff in preparing the theatre for patrons.

### Pre-Show Meeting

- A short pre-show briefing will be held prior to every event.
- The acting House Manager will review the Show Information Sheet. (Assignments, running time, intermissions, etc.)
- Assignments will be reviewed, and any changes will be given at this time.

- New volunteers will be introduced to the team.

#### Volunteer Equipment

- Flashlights, ear plugs, gloves, etc. are provided.
- Empty boxes will be provided for post-show cleanup.
- Lost and Found items should be given to a WOH Staff member.

#### Things to Know

- Location of Rest Rooms, Concessions, Box Office, Side Theatre Entrance, Elevator, Office, and all Exits.
- Be familiar with the seating layout, including the location of the ADA section.
- Theatre rules and regulations.
- Emergency and Evacuation procedures. (See below)

#### Emergency Procedures

- In the event of a fire/emergency alarm, ushers should open all doors to the theater.
- Please direct any handicapped patrons to gather in front of the Concessions window until Emergency Personnel can evacuate them.
- Ushers and patrons should exit using the stairs. **DO NOT USE THE ELEVATORS.**
- Ushers and patrons are to gather in Castonguay Square park until the building is cleared by Emergency Personnel to reenter.

#### Medical Emergencies

- In the event of a fall, please alert the acting House Manager or WOH Staff.
- If a patron has an accident that results in bodily injury, ask the patron if they need medical assistance. If so, please call 911 and alert the acting House Manager, WOH Staff, and/or Security.
- **Do not** move an injured person and **do not** assist a fallen patron with standing up. This is due to liability.
- In the event a patron has experienced head trauma or is rendered unconscious, immediately call 911, be sure someone is with the patron and summon the acting House Manager or nearest WOH staff member.
- There is an AED located in the WOH lobby, next to the elevator.

#### General Theatre Rules

- Aisles must remain clear of obstructions.
- Wheelchairs, canes, crutches, and walkers will be stored near the patron in most cases (when possible, place larger items in the rear right corner of the orchestra section).
- Other large items (strollers, baby carriers, large bags, etc.) that cannot be stored in the theatre can be stored elsewhere during the performance. Please contact WOH Staff or the acting House Manager.
- Any ticketing issues should be directed to the Event Box Office (downstairs lobby).
- Children aged 3 and above must have a ticket. Children under 3 may sit on an adult's lap.
- Only water bottles, soda, and snacks purchased at WOH Concessions are permitted inside the theatre.
- Alcohol is allowed in the theatre during most events. Alcohol must be in a WOH cup.
- When seats are available, Volunteers may sit in the back of the theatre. Generally, there are seats available for all volunteers, but if the event is sold out you may stand at the back of the house. Do not obstruct walkways or theatre exits.

#### Accessibility & ADA/Handicapped Seating

- Row O is the ADA seating. This is an "invisible" row that we fill with chairs and wheelchairs (if a patron has one).
- Patrons with mobility issues should have been assigned seats in the Orchestra section. If not, direct them to the Event Box Office or the acting House Manager.

- Please keep in mind, accessibility needs can include conditions other than wheelchair needs (i.e., hearing and visual impairments, using crutches due to injury, etc.).
- Assistive Listening devices are available at the Sound Board. WOH Staff should assist in obtaining one.

#### Late Seating

- Please seat latecomers in the back of the theatre to avoid disruption to other audience members, unless it is a very full performance. They can move to their assigned seats during a break or scene change.
- The side door of the Orchestra section is located by the Lobby Rest Rooms and should be used to seat latecomers.

#### Cell Phones/Recording Equipment

- Cell phone usage by patrons is distracting and should be minimal. If a patron is using their cell phone excessively during a performance, please ask them to put their phone away until the conclusion of the show.
- Policies concerning photography/videography/recording vary by artist, renting organization, and event. This information will be indicated on the Show Information Sheet.
- If use is prohibited, it is the usher's responsibility to ask the patron to comply. Ushers can ask for assistance from the House Manager if the patron does not comply.

#### Health and Safety

- Please alert the acting House Manager if you notice a tripping hazard or other health/safety concern.
- Do not to give medication of any kind to patrons.
- Due to liability, please **do not touch patrons**.
- Please do not assist individuals in wheelchairs moving to theatre seats.

#### Difficult Patrons

Occasionally, you will come into contact with an upset or angry patron. It is important that their concern is addressed. Please tell the patron you will have a WOH staff member assist them and inform the House Manager about the issue.

Potential problems may include:

- Parties who are not seated together. (The Box Office may be able to fix this depending on availability.)
- Patrons who do not like our policies.
- Intoxicated patrons. (Get WOH Staff and/or Security if someone is out of control.)
- Patrons who are upset by the content of a performance. (We do our best to provide content warnings.)
- Patrons who do not like their seats. (The Box Office may be able to fix this depending on availability.)
- Patrons with the same exact tickets. (This is *very rare*, contact Box Office staff to resolve.)

#### Volunteer Positions & Duties

##### All Volunteers

- Arrive on time and report to WOH Staff.
- Greet patrons with a friendly smile.
- Answer questions.
- Monitor for distractions, violations of theatre policy and safety concerns, report to the acting House Manager.
- At the conclusion of the event, tip up theatre seats, collect any playbills, garbage, or lost items from the theatre.

##### Ushers (Orchestra and Balcony)

- Point people in the direction of their seats.
- Hand out program guides and playbills (if provided).

#### Ticket Scanner

- Stand at your assigned post as patrons arrive to the performance.
- Operate a handheld ticket scanner.
- Scan the barcode on each ticket. Tickets will either be on a cell phone, printed on paper, or traditional tickets.
- Direct patron to the Event Box Office if the barcode is unreadable or if the tickets are for the wrong date.

#### Will Call

- Locate patron's tickets in the Will Call box and direct them upstairs.
- Direct patrons with ticketing issues to Event Box Office for resolution.
- Expect to stay downstairs at least 15-30 minutes after the performance has started.

#### Concessions

- Assignment must be approved by WOH Staff.
- Sell concessions during the event and at intermission (this includes alcohol) using our Square system.
  - Plays – 1 hour prior to show time and during intermission.
  - Concerts – 1 hour prior to show time and throughout the performance.
- ID patrons for alcohol purchases if necessary. Our policy is you must ID a patron if they look younger than 35 years old. For larger events, such as concerts, Security Staff will ID patrons upon entry and provide anyone who is 21+ with an event bracelet.
- Restock as needed from inventory located behind the bar and in the office.

#### Merchandise

- Assignment must be approved by WOH Staff.
- Sell merchandise (t-shirts, cd's, stickers, posters, etc.) for visiting entertainers.
- The assignment is 1 hour prior to show time and throughout the performance.
- Keep track of what is sold. This may involve using a Square system and/or tracking cash sales.
- At the conclusion of the event, give all proceeds to the designated contact. This may involve helping them count their sold and/or remaining items.

#### School Show Usher

- School Shows are a morning commitment from 8:45am to 11am, 11:15am to 1:30pm, or both.
- Lead homeschool and local school groups to their seats by using a color-coded map.
- Help oversee the dismissal process following the performance.
- Do not touch the children.
- Lunch is provided to those who usher for both shows.

### Signing Up for Events

Signing up for events is a paperless system. We utilize a web-based program so that you may schedule yourself for events at your convenience from any computer.

- Direct Link: <https://signup.com/group/1186281718085>
- Through the WOH Website: Access our website ([www.operahouse.org](http://www.operahouse.org)). Click on the "Get Involved" tab and then choose "Volunteer" from the drop down menu. Scroll down to find the link for SignUp.

Please be aware of the type of event and assignment that you are signing up for. We offer a wide range of events, from straight plays and musicals, to concerts and comedians. Each event is different, attracts a different group of patrons, and offers a different volunteering experience. Concerts are loud, the theatre doors are generally left open, there is alcohol being purchased throughout the event, there is dancing, there are cell phones, etc.; this is a very different experience from an afternoon matinee. Please keep this in mind when choosing events to volunteer for.

### Thank You Benefits

- Meeting new people and supporting the arts in your community!
- Ability to see performances you usher for free.
- Earn a complimentary ticket to an Opera House produced performance for every 5 performances that you volunteer.
- 25% off Opera House merchandise.

### Sample Ticket (Physical Tickets)



### Sample Ticket (Electronic Tickets)



1 Common Street  
Waterville, Maine 04901  
207.873.7000  
OPERAHOUSE.ORG

**COLLINS, BRENT**  
Femmes of Rock  
Fri, Aug 27, 21 8:00 PM  
**Row: CC Seat 30**  
Order#: 21-AP-0MY1

**Femmes of Rock**  
Fri, August 27, 2021 8:00 PM

**COLLINS, BRENT**  
First Balcony  
**Row: CC Seat: 30**  
Premium | Regular |  
\$45.00

**Waterville Opera House**  
1 Common St, Waterville, ME  
207.873.7000 | www.operahouse.org



THANK YOU TO OUR 20-21 SEASON SPONSORS



PLEASE SUPPORT OUR RESTAURANT TICKET SPONSORS:

*Entire ticket must be presented to redeem coupon. All coupons expire one month after performance.*



**Enjoy 20% off  
your food order**

**SELAH TEA CAFE**  
177 Main Street  
Waterville, Maine  
207.660.9181  
*Coupon expires one month after performance.*



**10% off  
your purchase  
over \$50**

**OPA**  
It's all Greek to me

**OPA GREEK & MEDITERRANEAN DINING**  
139 Main Street  
Waterville, Maine  
OPAWaterville.com  
*Coupon expires one month after performance.*



**10% off  
dine in  
food purchase**

**GRAND CENTRAL CAFE**  
10 Railroad Square  
Waterville, Maine  
207.872.9135  
*Coupon expires one month after performance.*



**10% off  
your food order**

**AMICI'S CUCINA**  
137 Main Street, Waterville, Maine • 207.861.4440 • AmicisCucina.com  
*Coupon expires one month after performance.*

## Event Parking

There are several free parking lots within walking distance of the Opera House, including The Concourse and Head of Falls. Due to construction, parking on Main and Common Streets are limited at this time.

There are 2 ADA Handicapped parking spaces in the City Hall lot behind the Opera House, but the rest of that lot is currently closed due to construction.

