Geva Theatre Center Volunteer Manual

The following information is designed to help increase our Patrons’ enjoyment while visiting Geva Theatre Center.

If you have questions, please ask the Front of House or other Staff members for assistance.

Volunteer Hotline: (585) 420-2028
E-mail: house@gevatheatre.org

Geva Theatre Center
Attn: House Management
75 Woodbury Boulevard
Rochester, New York 14607
Thank You.

Thank you for participating as a Geva Theatre Center Volunteer. The unique strengths and perspectives that each of our Volunteers gift us with during their assignments are greatly appreciated – as well as the sense of teamwork crafted for each and every performance.

Our main goal is to provide assistance to our Patrons and one another, while celebrating the gift of live theatre in Rochester. Thank you for deciding to be a part of that goal.

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Volunteer Pledge

Community interaction, be it in the form of our Patrons, Donors, or Volunteers, is the core of Geva Theatre Center’s success. To this end, we ask all of our Volunteers to commit to the following main tenets:

1. I will be punctual for and committed to all of my assigned responsibilities.
2. I will treat my fellow Volunteers, Patrons, and Geva Theatre Center’s Staff with respect;
3. I will bring any problems, criticisms or suggestions to a Front of House Staff member;
4. I will accept necessary coaching, guidance, or direction from the Front of House.
5. I will endeavor to be professional, personable, and welcoming to all.

Volunteer Guidelines

All Patrons and fellow Volunteers deserve a wonderful experience while attending our theatre. Not adhering to the following guidelines means that this positive experience may not take place. Therefore, any violations could ultimately result in your status as a Volunteer being limited or revoked. This is completely avoidable, so please: don’t risk that!

1. **Greet all Patrons, Volunteers, and Staff in a friendly, courteous, and helpful manner.**
2. Bring a small working flashlight. Always point towards the ground when in use.
3. If a Patron asks for assistance in finding their seat, either walk them directly to that location or hand them off to another Volunteer who is able to do so.
4. Should Patrons have questions you cannot answer, please check with your House Manager. If they specifically concern ticketing, subscriptions, or seating issues, you may also refer Patrons to the Box Office.
5. Remain at your assigned duty throughout intermission, unless directed otherwise.
6. Complete your assigned closing task after the performance, so that the theatre is fully prepared for the group of Patrons and Volunteers that comes after you.
7. Allow the audience’s focus to remain on the stage, not on your interaction with those around you. Always ask your House Manager for assistance, if you are unsure.

Name Tags

Volunteer identification tags are available at the beginning of each assignment, and are required for all Volunteers. Once an assignment has finished, please return your tag to the House Manager. Personalized tags are available twice per year, for a small fee. If interested, ask your House Manager.
General Theatre Etiquette

Our Volunteers act as a second pair of eyes and ears during each performance. As such, please be aware of the following theatre etiquette:

1. Use of cameras, cell phones, tablets, or any other electronic device within the theatre is strictly prohibited during performances.
2. Patrons cannot bring open food, snacks, or glassware into the theatre.
3. Trafficked areas, such as aisles, entrances, or steps should be clear of items at all times. This also includes the edges of the balcony and stage.
4. Should a Patron need to speak with a Volunteer, another Patron, or answer a phone call during a performance, please direct them to the lobby or café area.
5. Repeatedly entering and exiting the theatre should be avoided. Monitors have been set up in the lobby for any Patron feeling ill, restless, or otherwise unable to sit quietly.
6. Children under 5 are not permitted in the theatre, unless specifically stated by the House Manager. *This is especially true for infants.*

Behaviors to Avoid

1. Talking or whispering during a performance. Theatres are designed to amplify sounds.
2. Leaning on walls, counters, railings, etc. Please keep a standing position when possible.
3. Pointing flashlights at the stage, at Patrons’ faces, or across the theatre.
4. Talking in a derogatory way – about people, a performance, Geva Theatre, or anything else. If you feel that something does require constructive criticism or correction, please discuss such in private with your House Manager.
5. Sitting in front of patrons, or sitting before late arrivals have been seated.
6. Unprofessional behavior. This one shouldn’t need an explanation.

Evacuation Procedures

*Should the fire alarm sound, the building must be evacuated immediately.*

The most important role a Volunteer can play in emergency situations is to remain calm and organized. Be sure to instruct Patrons to walk, not run.

Volunteers are asked to stand by all fire exits and doors, guiding Patrons through these emergency exits. Once a section of seating has been cleared, the Volunteer is asked to escort them to the park across Woodbury Blvd (the front of the building). The House Manager will then do a search of the building to ensure everyone is out safely.

If you are not aware of, or would like a refresher on, the evacuation routes, please ask the House Manager for an appointed time before your regularly scheduled shift.
Attendance and Rescheduling Policies

Being punctual for each of the Volunteer assignments that you have accepted impacts not only the other Volunteers within your group, but also Patrons and – possibly – the artists on and off our stage. There are a number of ways to let us know if you are not able to fulfill your assignment, be it one time or for the rest of the season.

1. **Attendance Policy** – There are 7 shows per year for the Wilson Stage, and 4 shows for the Fielding Stage. Volunteers can miss up to 2 shows per year. Rescheduling an assignment for the same show does not count as missing said show.

2. **Cancelling or rescheduling** – If you need to cancel or reschedule, we ask that you do so via your online Volunteer Portal.

3. **Attendance Openings** – Your Volunteer Portal contains the most up-to-date information on performances that need Volunteer coverage. You can use this information to decide which dates to swap your assignment, if necessary.

4. **Full coverage** – Full coverage means that there are already 16 Volunteers scheduled for a Wilson Stage performance, or 6 for the Fielding Stage. As such, we can’t accept more volunteers for those performances.

5. **E-mail** – For questions or concerns that cannot wait until your next assignment, you can reach us at house@gevatheatre.org.

6. **Volunteer Hotline** – Should you have an emergency, or cannot otherwise access your Volunteer Portal, you can leave a message on the Volunteer Hotline: 585-420-2028. Please make sure to state your name, your phone number, and the relevant information. The Hotline is typically checked in the evenings, before performances.

**Office Hours.** The Front of House office is open 2 hours before each performance, and closed any day the theatre is dark. While we try to respond to all correspondence, there may be a delay due to time constraints. Please be patient when expecting responses, as we will get back to you as soon as possible.

**No Shows.** We work very hard to inform our Volunteers of their upcoming assignments. From the Volunteer Portal, to e-mail reminders, and even the occasional phone call, a lot of work goes into ensuring that the Volunteer experience is as pleasant and easy as possible. As such, Volunteers who consistently miss their assignments without notifying us beforehand will be asked to reconsider their schedules and/or their Volunteer status.

**Extended Leave of Absence.** From time to time, a Volunteer’s personal life may throw them an unexpected curve ball: family, medical, or other major issues. Should you need to take an extended leave from your assignments, please let us know. We’ll clear your schedule for the allotted timeframe, and then check back with you once it’s over.
Wilson Stage Volunteers

Call Time – Volunteers are required to arrive 90 minutes before the scheduled curtain time.

Dress Policy – Wear solid black slacks/skirts and white shirts/blouses. Black ties, if applicable. Black shoes that are comfortable, but closed-toed. Sports or evening coats, as well as sweaters, are optional, but need to be solid white or black.

Perfume/Cologne – Please be conscientious to our Patrons, and other Volunteers, when considering the strength and/or fragrance of your cologne or perfume. The closed, confined space can often aggravate any allergies or sensitivities others around you may have.

Assigned Positions – The assignment of positions, special tasks, and other Volunteer projects is at the sole discretion of the House Manager at the beginning of your Volunteer shift. Given the nature of live theatre (and its audiences), Volunteers need to be flexible. Any position, or task asked of you, is subject to change when necessary – including during your performance.

Regular positions, and their general responsibilities, are as follows:

- Right/Left Scanners – Scan tickets during prologue and general let-In. Empty the program return towers after performances.
- Balcony Scanner – Take tickets during general let-In.
- Concierge – Operate the desk at all times Patrons are in the lobby.
- Coat Room – Operate the Coat Room at all times Patrons are in the lobby.
- Aisle Greeter – Stand at the door and direct Patrons to their correct aisle, supplying programs as requested. During intermission, standing in the inner lobby. After performances, cleaning the theatre.
- Top of Aisle – Walk Patrons to their seat, as requested. During intermission, standing at the top of the aisle for patrons. After performances, cleaning the theatre.
- Aisle near Stage – Walk Patrons to their seat, as requested. During intermission, acting as a stage guard. After performances, cleaning the theatre.
- Balcony – Walk Patrons to their seats and provide programs, as requested. After performances, cleaning the balcony.

Any unused programs are to be placed in boxes provided by the House Manager, so that they may either be checked for potential use during the next performance or recycled.
Fielding Stage Volunteers

**Call Time** – Volunteers are required to arrive 60 minutes before the scheduled curtain time.

**Dress Policy** – Wear dark slacks/skirts and dark shirts/blouses. Shoes should be black or brown, comfortable, and closed-toed. Sports or evening coats, as well as dark sweaters, are optional. *Important note: brightly colored clothing can be distracting to both the patrons and the actors during a performance. Please dress accordingly.*

**Perfume/Cologne** – Please be conscientious to our Patrons, and other Volunteers, when considering the strength and/or fragrance of your cologne or perfume. The closed, confined space can often aggravate any allergies or sensitivities others around you may have.

Regular positions, and their general responsibilities, are as follows:

- **Ticket Scanner** – Scan tickets during general let-in. Act as door guard during intermission. Help the coat room after performances.

- **Coat Room** – Operate the coat room at all times Patrons are in the lobby.

- **Stage Usher** – Hand out programs and direct Patrons to the correct aisle/row during let-in. Help Patrons during intermission in the lobby. Clean the theatre after performances.

- **Top Usher** – Walk Patrons to their correct aisle/row during let-in. Act as stage guard during intermission. Clean the theatre after performances.

Any unused programs are to be placed in boxes provided by the House Manager, so that they may be used during the next performance.

**A Final Note**

The goal of all Staff and Volunteers at Geva Theatre Center is to enjoy the art of live theatre, in all of its facets. For Patrons, this begins as soon as they enter our front doors. Volunteers, in particular, are key to that experience, as you are the smiling face to help them relax, unwind, and escape into the story that Geva’s performers and artists are about to display.

Please help us create that story together, so that everyone from Patrons to Volunteers are able to leave each night, amazed at the fun that Geva Theatre Center has to offer.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full Name (Printed)</th>
<th>Tag #</th>
<th>Position during Patron Seating</th>
<th>Intermission Position</th>
<th>Position as Patrons Leave</th>
<th>Cleaning Duties</th>
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<tr>
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Patron Tickets

Below are examples of the new tickets that are used at Geva Theatre. Please note that we often have performances in both theatres at the same time. **Knowing which ticket goes into which theatre is extremely important.**

Some Patrons will not have a paper ticket, asking instead that you scan the barcode that appears on their phone. If, at any time, you have difficulty scanning a ticket, please ask your House Manager for assistance. As an easy reminder, “Green means go, red means refer to House Manager.”

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Some patrons will use both sides of the paper for Print-At-Home tickets. Please check to make sure you don’t miss these.
Code of Ethics, Confidentiality, and Harassment Policies

Code of Ethics

Geva Theatre Center insists on the highest ethical standards in conducting its business. Doing the right thing and acting with integrity are two driving forces behind our success. When faced with ethical issues, volunteers are expected to make the right decision consistent with Geva Theatre Center’s principles and standards.

Volunteers shall not abuse, and shall avoid the appearance of abuse, their status and shall strive to bring credit to Geva. Volunteers shall not make unauthorized use of Geva’s resources for private purposes or gain.

Volunteers shall not solicit or accept for personal benefit or the benefit of any family or household member, either directly or indirectly, any gift, loan, or any item of substantial monetary value from any person or firm which has sought, or is seeking, contractual, business, or financial relations with Geva. Meals, accommodations, and travel services provided while volunteers are on Geva business may be accepted if clearly in support of Geva.

Violations of this code of ethics will be grounds for the loss of volunteer status, if so warranted.

Confidential Information

Much of the information that volunteers have access to at Geva regarding donors, subscribers, artists, finances, and the Theatre’s programs is confidential. It is the responsibility of each volunteer to keep such information confidential. Our customers, suppliers, patrons and artists entrust Geva Theatre Center with important information relating to their businesses and personal lives. The nature of this relationship requires maintenance of confidentiality. In safeguarding the information received, Geva Theatre Center earns the respect and further trust of our customers, suppliers, patrons and artists.

No one is permitted to remove or make copies of any Geva Theatre Center records, reports or documents without prior management approval. Your status with Geva Theatre Center assumes an obligation to maintain confidentiality of the organization’s proprietary information even after you leave us.

Any violation of confidentiality seriously injures Geva Theatre Center’s reputation and effectiveness. Unauthorized disclosure of proprietary, confidential information is not permitted.

Due to its seriousness, disclosure of confidential information could lead to loss of volunteer status.

Non-Harassment, Anti-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy

Geva Theatre Center is committed to providing an environment in which volunteers are treated with respect, fairness and dignity, and that is pleasant, healthful, comfortable and free from intimidation, hostility, harassment, including sexual harassment, discrimination or other offenses which might interfere with a volunteer’s performance. Harassment, including sexual harassment, is against the law and will not be tolerated. Harassment is offensive, is a violation of our policies and subjects Geva to liability for harm to victims of harassment. Harassers may also be subject to liability. Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of volunteer status.

The use of Theatre facilities, property or equipment (including email and voice mail) to send, distribute, duplicate, store or display discriminatory or harassing materials is prohibited.
This Policy applies to all volunteers, employees, applicants for volunteer status, interns, whether paid or unpaid, contractors and persons conducting business with Geva Theatre Center.

What Is Harassment?

Harassment can take many forms. It may include, but is not limited to, words, signs, offensive jokes, cartoons, pictures, posters, e-mail jokes or statements, pranks, intimidation, physical assaults or contact, or violence. Please review our Policy below and address any questions to your supervisor, any other member of management, or Employer Services Corporation, our outside HR Consulting firm, at 716/ 691-4455 or HR@myesc.com.

Our Policy

We believe that all volunteers are entitled to an environment free from discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment. We strictly prohibit any conduct which constitutes harassment based on race, color, citizenship status, religion, creed, age, weight, sex, disability, marital or familial status, parental status, pregnancy, military or veteran status, political affiliation, ancestry, national origin, gender, gender identity, gender expression, transgender status, sexual orientation, or any other factor protected by law. Disciplinary actions will be taken against any volunteer guilty of committing such conduct. This policy is based on Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, as amended, and other applicable federal, state and where applicable, local laws and court decisions.

Harassment is defined as any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct, which is based on a volunteer’s personal characteristics when:

- Submission to the harassment is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition for volunteering
- Submission to or rejection of the harassment is used as a basis for decisions affecting an individual’s volunteer status
- The harassment has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s volunteer performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive volunteering environment, even if the complaining individual is not the target of the harassment.

Sexual Harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and transgender status. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Sexually-oriented language, verbal abuse or “kidding”, “teasing”, or “joking”; verbal comments about an individual’s body or their appearance; sexuality or sexual experience
- Using sexually oriented, degrading or demeaning words to describe an individual
- Unwanted sexual advances, propositions, molestation or attempts to commit assaults
- Unwelcome or repeated requests for dates or other social engagements
- Unwanted, offensive, or abusive touching, pinching, grabbing or other physical contact
- Unwelcome requests or demands for sexual favors accompanied by promises or threats
- Displaying sexually suggestive, demeaning or pornographic objects or pictures on the Geva Theatre property
- Sexually oriented looks, noises or gestures, whistles, cat calls, etc.
- Interference with another individual’s volunteer performance through any type of sexually-oriented activity
- Creating a volunteer environment that is hostile or offensive because of sexually-oriented or other conduct that interferes with another person’s ability to do the job

Unlawful sexual harassment is not limited to the physical workplace itself. It can occur while volunteers are traveling for business or at Geva sponsored events. Calls, texts, emails and social media usage by volunteers can constitute unlawful workplace harassment, even if they occur away from the workplace or not during work hours.
Other types of harassment include but are not limited to:

- Verbal abuse or kidding that speaks about another person’s personal characteristics
- Using derogatory words, phrases or epithets regarding another’s personal characteristics
- Non-verbal actions such as the use of gestures, eye-rolling, disrespectful or dismissive body language
- Making threats to another person in words, gestures or pictures
- Interfering with, destroying or damaging a person’s workstation, tools or equipment or otherwise interfering with another’s ability to perform their job
- Comments about an individual’s skin color or other racial/ethnic characteristics
- Unwelcome comments about a volunteer’s religious beliefs
- Unwelcome comments regarding a volunteer’s birthplace or ancestry
- Unwelcome comments about a volunteer’s age
- Unwelcome comments about a volunteer’s mental or physical abilities
- Unwelcome comments about a volunteer’s sexual orientation or gender identity
- Other conduct, even if acceptable to some employees or volunteers, which creates a volunteer environment that may be considered by others to be offensive or hostile

**Supervisory Responsibilities**

In fulfilling their obligation to maintain a positive and productive work environment, supervisors are expected to halt any harassment of which they become aware. They are required to report any complaint they receive, or any harassment they observe to any member of senior management. Any supervisor who fails to report suspected harassment or knowingly allows harassment to continue will be subject to disciplinary action.

**Reporting Harassment**

Any volunteer who believes they have been harassed by a fellow volunteer, staff member, supervisor, customer or vendor should bring the matter to the attention of any one of Employer Services Corporation’s Human Resources Representatives (716-691-4455 option 3), their supervisor or any member of management immediately.

Geva has developed a complaint form for all associates, including volunteers to report harassment; it can be found on the Geva everyone drive, or a hard copy is available from the House Management Team. If someone is not comfortable completing a complaint form, a verbal report can also be made to any supervisor, member of management or Employer Services Corporation.

**Investigations**

All complaints of harassment will be investigated promptly, fully and fairly, ensuring due process for all parties, whenever management receives a complaint. Appropriate corrective action up to and including volunteer status termination will be taken whenever harassment is found to have occurred after the completion of an investigation.

All volunteers are required to cooperate with any internal investigation of harassment. Confidentiality will be maintained to the maximum extent possible. If there is a legitimate business need, you may be directed to maintain confidentiality of the investigation.

**Retaliation**

We will also ensure a no retaliation policy against employee volunteer who, in good faith, reports harassment, provides information, or assists in any investigation of any harassment complaint. If a volunteer believes retaliation has taken place, they need to notify any one of Employer Services Corporation’s Human Resources Representatives (716-691-4455 option 3), their supervisor or any member of management so appropriate action may be taken.

**Recourse**

Volunteers have the legal right to an environment free from harassment, including sexual harassment. Volunteers can enforce that right by filing a complaint internally, or with a government agency such as the EEOC or NYS Division of Human Rights, or in court under federal, state or local anti-harassment and discrimination law.
Whistleblower Policy and Procedures

Scope

This policy and procedure addresses:

- The submission, receipt, and treatment of concerns regarding questionable accounting or auditing matters by employees, trustees, and other stakeholders of Geva Theatre Center (Geva), on a confidential and, if desired, anonymous basis.
- The protection of complainants from retaliatory actions.

Policy

Each employee, trustee, or other stakeholder of Geva has an obligation to report questionable or improper accounting or auditing matters to the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee will investigate all reported concerns and make appropriate recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

No complainant who, in good faith, reports a concern will be subject to retaliation or, in the case of an employee, adverse employment consequences. Moreover, a volunteer or employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a concern in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including dismissal from the volunteer position or termination of employment.

Acting in good faith means there is reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates an improper accounting or auditing practice. The act of making allegations that prove to be unsubstantiated, and that prove to have been made maliciously, recklessly, or with the foreknowledge that the allegations are false, will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

Reports of concerns, and investigation pertaining thereto, will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation. Disclosure of reports of concerns to individuals not involved in the investigation will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

A failure to act in good faith or to maintain confidentiality may result in discipline, up to and including dismissal from the volunteer position or termination of employment. Such conduct may also give rise to other actions, including civil lawsuits.

The Audit Committee has the authority to retain outside legal counsel, accountants, private investigators, or any other resource deemed necessary to conduct a full and complete investigation of the allegations.

Procedure

Employees should first discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor. If an employee continues to have reasonable grounds to believe the concern is valid, the employee should report the concern to the Executive Director. The Executive Director must immediately report the concern to the Chair of the Audit Committee. If the employee is uncomfortable speaking with his/her supervisor and/or the Executive Director about the concern, s/he can report the concern directly to the Chair of the Audit Committee.

Trustees and other stakeholders should submit their concern directly to the Chair of the Audit Committee. Concerns may also be submitted anonymously in writing to the Chair of the Audit Committee.

The Audit Chair’s information can be found in the Board Handbook. For employees of the Theatre, you can access the Board Handbook on the everyone drive subtitled Board Handbook.

The Chair of the Audit Committee will immediately notify the Audit Committee, the Board Chair, and the CEO of the reported concern and will also notify the individual raising the concern of its receipt. All reports will be promptly investigated by the Audit Committee and appropriate corrective action will be recommended to the Board of Trustees, if warranted by the investigation. In addition, action taken will include a follow-up with the complainant.

Approved by the Board of Trustees
Geva Theatre Center Volunteer Agreement

As a Volunteer, I agree to abide by all applicable guidelines and codes of conduct of Geva Theatre Center, and to fulfill the Volunteer responsibilities I am assigned to the best of my ability.

I understand that I am not an employee of Geva Theatre Center, and as such will receive no monetary benefits in return for the Volunteer service I provide.

**Responsibilities include:**

1. Be a positive ambassador for Geva Theatre Center at all times.
2. Maintain a positive and supportive relationship with Geva Staff and other Volunteers.
3. Promptly apprise House Management of any necessary changes in contact information, availability, or Volunteer status.
4. Arrive for each agreed-upon assignment on time, or notify House Management that such assignment may need to be rescheduled as soon as possible.
5. Perform all duties as assigned or requested by Geva Staff and/or supervisors.

**Training:** Volunteers will be given adequate training for assignments, responsibilities, and/or duties requested via Geva Staff either before or during said assignments. Should a Volunteer feel that adequate training was not provided, it is their responsibility to inform House Management of such.

**Liability Insurance:** Volunteers are covered under Geva Theatre Center’s liability insurance in accordance with the law when engaged in the performance of assignments and duties as requested by Geva Staff and/or supervisors.

**Confidentiality:** At times, Volunteers are given confidential information in order to better perform their responsibilities. Volunteers shall keep all such information confidential, in whatever form produced, prepared, observed, or received by the Volunteer to the extent that such information is confidential by law.

**Corrective action and Loss of Volunteer Status:** Geva Theatre Center strives to be welcoming and professional to both Volunteers and Patrons. There may be times, however, when corrective action, coaching, or possibly termination of a Volunteer’s eligibility may be enacted. Geva holds the right to do so, based upon the company’s own internal reviews and management decisions.

*By signing below, I verify that I have read and understand the Volunteer Manual, and ascertain that I am physically able to complete the tasks requested of me. I also agree to promptly inform the House Manager should I suddenly not be able to perform such tasks, be it for either a limited or extended period of time.*

Volunteer’s Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________