Buskirk-Chumley Theater

Volunteer Usher Handbook

2020 Version
Table of Contents

1. Welcome ........................................................................................................2
2. Requirement ..................................................................................................3
3. Expectations ..................................................................................................4
4. Grounds for Dismissal ..................................................................................5
5. Benefits ........................................................................................................5
6. Signing Up to Usher Events ..........................................................................6
7. Cancelling for Events ....................................................................................6
8. What to Wear ................................................................................................7
9. Primary Usher Assignments .........................................................................8
10. Theater Seating & Tickets ..........................................................................10
11. Accessible Seating .....................................................................................13
12. Emergency Procedures ...............................................................................14
13. BCT Services & Restrictions .....................................................................17
14. Most Important Things to Remember .........................................................18
15. General Theater Information ....................................................................19
16. FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) .............................................................20
17. Using TimeCounts .......................................................................................21
18. Thank you! ..................................................................................................28
Welcome!

Thank you for volunteering to usher at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater (BCT)! We value all of our volunteers and know that you are critical to the success of the theater. This document has been developed to explain, in as specific a manner as possible, what the BCT offers to and expects from our volunteers. This year, we have over 130 ushers, including 35 VIP ushers!

Because the audience, performers, staff, and volunteers change for each event, it is important that BCT volunteers are prepared and able to handle themselves in a professional, courteous, and poised manner, no matter the situation. Please read this handbook carefully and prepare yourself to be a representative of this historical performing arts venue. We are happy to have you as a member of the Buskirk-Chumley Theater team!
Requirements

Requirements to Usher

- Be 18 years of age or older (*Teens age 15-17 can apply to usher by submitting an essay in 150-200 words about why they would like to volunteer as an usher.)*
- Be able to stand for the length of the performance and move within the theater quickly and easily
- Be able to read the small print on tickets and work in low light conditions
- Be friendly and willing to interact with patrons, staff, and other volunteers in a courteous manner
- Feel comfortable managing large crowds in normal and emergency situations
- Attend usher training

Usher Training/Orientation

All new ushers must attend a volunteer orientation and training session before ushering. These sessions are held once a month at the theater, usually on a weekday evening. The training sessions cover a brief history of the theater, the roles of ushers, theater seating, emergency procedures, and a tour of the theater.

Yearly Emergency Training

As an usher, it is important to stay up to date on emergency procedures. The BCT offers an emergency procedure training session at the BCT three times a year. VIP ushers are required to attend one of these each year, but all of our ushers are encouraged to attend one per year.

BCT Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of the BCT that there will be no discrimination or harassment in its programs, activities or employment based on race, color, sex, sexual preference, marital or parental status, religion, national origin, age or mental or physical disability. Questions or concerns related to affirmative action, nondiscrimination or equal opportunity should be directed to the Executive Director by email at director@buskirkchumley.org or phone at 812-323-3022.
Expectations

These are the expected commitment levels that we have for our ushers.

All Ushers

- Volunteer on a regular basis throughout the year. Though we, currently, do not have a minimum number of times you must usher, it is most beneficial to the theater if volunteers usher for at least 6 **events per year**
- Only sign up for events that you are seriously committed to ushering
- **Arrive on time** (Call time is **30 MIN BEFORE DOORS OPEN**) and look professional in the appropriate usher attire (described in detail on pg. 7)
- Seek to improve your skills and knowledge as an usher
- Avoid cancellations as much, as possible, but if you must cancel, do so at least 24 hours in advance by calling the Box Office at **812-323-3020** during business hours.

VIP Ushers

All of the above, plus...

- Volunteer **36 hours or more in a year**
- Attend one emergency procedure training session at the theater every year
- Be a positive example and resource for people who are new to ushering at the BCT
- Be knowledgeable about the various roles of ushers
- Be willing to step in and help, when possible, for events that need more ushers

House Managers

The House Manager will be in charge of the front of house coordination during any event. This includes managing all of the ushers. Ushers are expected to follow the instructions of the House Manager throughout the entire event.
Grounds for Dismissal

Canceling Without Notice
Cancelling for an event less than 24 hours in advance is only acceptable in the case of emergencies. If this happens more than two times in a year, the volunteer is subject to dismissal. If a volunteer does not show up for a scheduled shift and does not cancel the shift ahead of time, then the volunteer is subject to dismissal.

Drugs and Alcohol
Volunteers are subject to immediate dismissal if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol while performing their volunteer duties.

General Grounds for Dismissal
Grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, failure to perform assigned duties, inability to perform assigned duties, failure to follow the BCT’s policies and procedures, failure to meet minimum standards of performance, abuse of patrons or staff, alcohol or illegal drug use while volunteering, theft of BCT property, misconduct or insubordination.

Benefits

- Helping to keep this Bloomington historical theater alive!
- If you usher for two or more events within a 30-day period, you can request a complimentary ticket to an event within the next 90 days.
- If you usher 36 hours or more times in a calendar year, then you will become a VIP usher and receive your own BCT name tag, and have the first opportunity to sign up for BCT Presents events.
- You will be involved in the community and stay in-the-know about events happening at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater.
Signing Up to Usher Events

In order to sign up to usher, you will need to have a personal email account and access to a computer with internet. Each volunteer must individually sign up to usher by creating and logging into their TimeCounts account. You will not be able to sign up for friends or family members on your own account. There are instructions for using TimeCounts on page 21 of this handbook. If you need assistance signing up online, please contact the volunteer coordinator at volunteer@buskirkchumley.org.

It is your responsibility to keep track of the times and dates of your commitments.

Cancellation Policy

Cancelling A Shift That is More Than One Week Away

You can cancel an usher shift online through your TimeCounts account. If the shift is more than one week away, it is not necessary to contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

Cancelling Less Than 24 Hours Before an Event

In this case, please cancel the shift in Timecounts. Follow up by contacting the box office at 812-323-3020. Give the staff your full name, which event you were scheduled to usher, and briefly why you cannot usher the event.

We understand that sometimes things come up, however, it is important that volunteers consistently follow-through with ushering the events for which they sign up.
What to Wear

Please look professional and clean; wear nice solid pressed black pants or skirt, with dark comfortable dress shoes and a crisp white (not beige) formal top. If the shirt is a button up, please tuck in your shirt and wear a black belt. Once you are at the theater, you will pick up your usher name tag or lanyard to wear as well.

Please do not wear strong perfume or cologne, as some people are sensitive to them. Also, please refrain from wearing jewelry that may make noise as you walk.
Primary Usher Assignments

Greeter
Greeters stand at the front doors to welcome patrons and direct those picking up will call to the Box Office. At intermission greeters need to watch to see that patrons do not take alcohol outside of the theater. It is also a good idea to watch for patrons with accessibility issues and ask if they need any assistance.

Ticket Taker
Ticket takers tear tickets and direct patrons using these terms for direction: “Main Floor right/left” and “Balcony right/left.” Ticket takers will need to remain outside of the doors for at least 10 minutes into the event, in order to assist in seating latecomers. At intermission ticket takers may need to check the ticket stubs as patrons re-enter the theater.

Program Passers
Program passers hand out programs, assist with tickets, and help to direct patrons, particularly those with wheelchairs or other accessibility needs. It’s important to keep your hand gestures small in this role, as the area will be crowded. At intermission program pushers may need to direct the flow of the concessions line and direct patrons to the bathrooms.

Seater
Seaters stand in the theater and assist patrons who need help with finding their seats. At intermission seaters will be available for patrons who have questions.

Security
Security stand or sit at the doors that lead backstage, restricting access to only performers and BCT staff. Security must stay at their station until a House Manager releases them - no exceptions. During intermission Security will stay at their assigned door. However, if a bathroom break is needed at this time, ushers working security can flag down an usher or House Manager to take their place during their break. This may also be arranged with the House Manager before the show.
Other Occasional Usher Roles:

**Merchandise Seller**

Merchandise Sellers sell artist merchandise before the show, during intermission, and after the show. They help to inventory the merchandise at the beginning and end of the show.

If we know that a volunteer merchandise seller will be needed, the Volunteer Coordinator will contact the volunteers in advance and arrange for someone to arrive earlier to get set-up to sell.

**Will Call Assistance**

Will Call ushers assist the Box Office staff by taking charge of Will Call tickets. This allows the Box Office Associates to focus on selling tickets. Will Call ushers should call out for anyone picking up Will Call or pre-purchased tickets. Ask for the patron’s last name and a photo ID, locate the tickets in the Will Call box, and give them to the patron.
Theater Seating and Tickets

All directions are from the perspective of the audience looking toward the stage.  
*See diagram on next page.*

**Orchestra Level**

The Orchestra Level is where you will find 100-300 numbered seats. 100 on the left, 200 in center, and 300 on the right. Rows are lettered U-W in the orchestra pit (when these extra seats are added). The fixed seat rows are lettered A-M front of theater to back in the center and A-R from front to back on the left and right.

**Box Seats**

The Box Seats are numbered 001-005. Box Seat rows are lettered YL & ZL on the left and YR & ZR on the right.

**Lower Balcony**

In the Lower Balcony seats are numbered 400-500. 400 on the left, 500 on the right. The rows are lettered AA-CC from front to back.

**Bench Seat**

The Bench Seats are numbered in line with the upper balcony (600-800). The Bench Seat row is lettered XX.

**Upper Balcony**

In the Upper Balcony seats are numbered 600-800. 600 on the left, 700 in the center, 800 on the right. The rows are lettered DD-KK from front to back in the center and DD-JJ from front to back on the sides.
Seating Charts

Orchestra (with pit)

Balcony
Ticket formats

General Seating Ticket:

Baskirk-Chumley Theater
114 E. Kirkwood Ave.
Bloomington, IN

The Ryder Film Series Presents
Gauguin from the National Gallery,
London

Feb 2 Sun 7:00 PM
General Admission Price $0.00
Forrest, Maureen
ORDER #PR 73423638
The Oscar Shorts Film Festival Day Pass

Assigned Seating Ticket:

Baskirk-Chumley Theater
114 E. Kirkwood Ave.
Bloomington, IN

BCT Presents
Guster Acoustic
An Evening of Acoustic Music & Improv

Mar 13 Fri 8:00 PM
Sec BAL Row KK Seat 714 Price $41.00
Upper Balcony
Osborne, Sarah Or Rory
ORDER #PR 73423193
Accessible Seating

**Wheelchair**

Ushers will escort patrons in wheelchairs to the far-right aisle of the orchestra level in order to access the wheelchair seating area easily. The Buskirk-Chumley Theater does not have elevators, so all accessible seating is on the orchestra level.

![Wheelchair Seating Map](image)

**Things to Remember About Wheelchair Accessible Seating**

- **Ask permission** - Always ask wheelchair users if they would like assistance before you help.
- **Be respectful** - Individual’s wheelchairs are part of their body space. Don’t hold onto or lean on them unless given permission.
- **Speak directly** - Be careful not to exclude the wheelchair usher from conversations. If the conversation lasts more than a few minutes, you may sit or kneel to get yourself on the same level as the individual in the wheelchair.
- **Further Assistance?** - Ask if there is any other way that we can assist them.

**Hearing Assistance Devices** - Hearing Assistance Devices are available in the tech booth. The devices work best in the orchestra level seating above row L. If the patron needs to move seats to use the device during a reserved seating show, please ask a House Manager for assistance.
Emergency Procedures

In an emergency it is important to act calmly, quickly, and efficiently.

**Patron and Volunteer Emergencies**

If a patron or volunteer has an accident, is injured, unconscious, or vomiting, *immediately* report this to a House Manager. Volunteers should never attempt to clean up any human blood or other body fluids. If there are body fluids, keep patrons away from the area.

**First Aid Kits**

We have first aid kits in the usher closet, in the tech booth, and in the concessions area.

**Tornado - Take Shelter**

In the event of a tornado warning (meaning a tornado has been sighted in the area), everyone in the theater will be asked to take shelter until the warning is clear. If patrons choose to leave the theater and go elsewhere, they can do so.

The House Manager and Technical Director will assist you with sheltering patrons in these areas, in this order, beginning with the Orchestra Level:

- **Basement** - Dressing Rooms, Storage Rooms, Machine Room
- **Auditorium Hallways** - Audience Left, Audience Right
- **Auditorium** - Tech Booth, On Stage Dressing Room
- **Main Floor** - Bathrooms, Closets
- **Inner Lobby** - Away from glass doors

The House Manager or Tech Director will announce when the threat is clear.

**Fire - Evacuate**

Always evacuate if the alarm goes off.

**Greeters, Ticket Takers, and Program Passers** should return to the lobby and ensure that any patrons there are evacuating, directing patrons evacuating from the balcony.
Seaters and Security ushers take the lead in directing the crowd as follows:

**Orchestra Level Evacuation Procedure**

**Audience Right Exit:** Move to the Exit Door, raise your hand, calmly, but loudly say, “*We are evacuating the theater. Please exit here.*” You may need to say this multiple times. If there are two ushers, it is ideal that one holds the first door and the other directs the patrons outside at the sidewalk.

**Audience Left Exit:** Move to the Exit Door, raise your hand, calmly, but loudly say, “*We are evacuating the theater. Please exit here.*” If there are two ushers it is ideal that one holds the first door and the other directs patrons at the far door to the parking lot.

**Caution:** Open the door leading to the parking lot very slowly, as it opens onto an alley road.
Balcony Level Evacuation Procedure

**Balcony Left & Right Exit:** Move to the Exit Door, raise your hand, calmly, but loudly say, “*We are evacuating the theater. Please exit here.*” You may need to say this multiple times.

Patrons on the left side of the balcony will exit out of the left Exit Door. Patrons on the right side will exit out of the right Exit Door. When patrons get to the main floor, they will exit out the front theater doors and go east on Kirkwood and then south on Washington. Everyone will meet on the far side of the parking lot behind the theater.
BCT Services & Restrictions

Food/Drink - Only BCT concessions and Blu Boy Cafe food and drinks are allowed in the theater.

Bathrooms - Accessible bathrooms are on the main floor, mens/womens bathrooms are upstairs.

Drinking Fountains - There are two drinking fountains on the main floor and one upstairs.

Recycling/Trash - There are trash cans throughout the theater and recycling available for cans, plastic, and paper.

Cell Phones/Photo/Videos - Using phones to call or text people is not allowed in the auditorium during an event. The policy for photos and videos changes according to the performance. The House Manager will brief ushers on this before the event.

Smoking - The BCT is a “smoke-free” facility. Patrons who want to smoke should directed outside of the front doors on the sidewalk along Kirkwood away from the theater doors.

Alcohol - Alcohol may be available for sale in concessions, depending on the event. No outside alcohol is allowed into the theater and alcohol purchased inside the theater cannot be taken outside.
Most Important Things to Remember

Before the Show

- If you must cancel less than 48 hours before the show, then call the box office at 812-323-3020. Do not send an email, as it may not be seen before the event. Understand that not showing up without notice is grounds for dismissal.
- Be on time and dressed in the appropriate usher attire.
- Listen carefully to the House Manager’s instructions and ask questions to clarify.

During the Show

- Remain outside the theater 15 minutes into the show in order to seat latecomers.
- When assisting patrons with late seating, use your flashlight discreetly, keeping it at no more than a 30-degree angle to your body.
- Once you are released into the theater, stay in the seats assigned to you and keep an eye out for patrons who need assistance and also for disruptions that need addressed.

Intermission

- Return to your original assigned stations at intermission, unless asked by the House Manager to do something else.
- Remember to close the auditorium doors once the patrons are back inside.
- Return to your seats in the theater only after House Manager has released you.

After the Show

- Prop open the doors and return to your assigned stations, unless the House Manager has directed you elsewhere.
- Wish patrons a good night on their way out and collect returned programs.
- Assist the House Manager with light clean up once the patrons have left the theater.
General Theater Information

**Buskirk-Chumley Theater/BCT Box Office Address**
Buskirk-Chumley Theater  
114 E. Kirkwood Ave  
Bloomington, IN 47408

**BCT Box Office** - The BCT Box Office is next door to the theater. The box office sells tickets for events at the BCT, as well as events at other locations (i.e. Bloomington Playwrights Project).

**Box Office Phone Number**  
812-323-3020

**BCT Box Office Hours**  
Monday - Friday 11am - 6pm  
Saturday - Sunday 12pm - 5pm  
*All nights with events at the BCT, the box office stays open 30 minutes into the event.*

**BCT Events Manager**  
Sami Marshall  
[events@buskirkchumley.org](mailto:events@buskirkchumley.org)  
812-676-3030

**Executive Director**  
[director@buskirkchumley.org](mailto:director@buskirkchumley.org)  
812-323-3022
FAQ

Where can I park?
There is metered parking all around downtown. Parking is free at the meters only on Sundays and federal holidays. The parking lot behind the BCT is free after 5pm. There is a parking garage on Walnut and 4th St. It is currently under construction, but once open will have free parking after 6pm. The surface lot located across from the Convention Center, on the East side of College Ave, is open and free to the public. More information about parking is available at www.bloomington.in.gov/parking.

Where can I put my personal belongings during my usher shift?
There is a limited space for jackets and purses in the ushers’ closet located in the front lobby. This closet is not locked, so you may request that the House Manager lock valuable belongings in the office upstairs if necessary. Volunteers are cautioned not to leave valuables in the building. The BCT cannot be responsible for loss of personal property in locked or unlocked rooms.

May I bring a family member or friend to usher with me?
Since the BCT requires that all volunteer ushers complete usher orientation and training, ushers are generally not allowed to bring friends or family members to usher with them. Even if your friend or family member is a BCT trained usher, all ushers are required to sign up individually for the events that they usher. This way the House Manager will have an accurate list of who will be ushering prior to the event. *Occasionally, there are special events, labeled “Bring a Friend” events, where ushers are allowed to bring one friend or family member to usher with them. These will be noted on the event sign up list.

Is there a Lost and Found?
There is a permanent lost and found box that is kept in the box office; all Lost and Found items should be turned into the box office. If the box office is locked, please give the item to the House Manager. If a patron is missing an item, please notify the House Manager, who can check for the item in the Box Office. Patrons can also call or return to the box office during business hours if the lost object has not been found during or immediately after the event.

What do I do if I’ve lost my name tag?
Contact the Events Manager. In the meantime, please take an usher lanyard from the usher closet.
Using TimeCounts

TimeCounts is the online sign up application that you will use to sign up to usher events. In order to use TimeCounts you will need to create an account.

Once you have completed usher training, you’ll receive an invitation from the Buskirk-Chumley Theater to join the Buskirk-Chumley Hub. The email will look like this. Click Visit Hub.

This will take you directly to the Buskirk-Chumley Theater community hub in TimeCounts. Click either the Join-Us button on the right or Join Buskirk Chumley Today, both will take you to the sign-up form.
Fill out the Join Our Volunteer Community form and click Submit.

Next you will need to verify your address. Check your email using the same email address you used in the form. You will find an email from TimeCounts in your inbox asking you to verify your email address.
Once you have verified your email address, you’ll be invited to create a TimeCounts account. In order to sign up online through TimeCounts, you must have an account. You can do this with your email address or by signing up via Facebook.

Once you have created an account, you are ready to begin using TimeCounts to sign up for events. At any time, you can Log In at TimeCounts.org to view a complete list of ushering opportunities. Click Log In at the top of the screen.
This will take you to your Community Hub. Click **Open Community Hub**.

Now you can look at all of the upcoming usher opportunities.

Click on the opportunity you would like to usher. On the event page click the orange “Volunteer” button. If the event is full the button will state, “Join Waitlist” you can sign up and be immediately added to the waitlist to usher the event. If an event is not available for sign up, It will say “Applications Closed.”
If there are multiple shifts available, after you click to Volunteer or Join Waitlist, you will be directed to a page where you can select your preferred shift.

Next you will fill out the simple sign-up form, which gives you the opportunity to state your preferred usher roles.
Once you click Submit, you will receive an immediate confirmation message that states Thank you for signing up. This message will show up on the screen in TimeCounts. It will not be sent to your email address.

The Volunteer Coordinator has now been notified that you’ve signed up. Once she has a chance, she will confirm your shift. The Volunteer Coordinator is usually in the office Thursday through Monday, in the afternoons and evenings, so it can take up to 2 days for the shift to be confirmed if you sign up on a Tuesday morning.

Once your shift has been confirmed, it will appear in your ‘My Activities’ tab.
How to Cancel a Shift in TimeCounts

1. Go to ‘My Activities’.
   This page will contain a list of every event for which you have been confirmed.

2. Click on the arrow next to the orange box saying ‘Confirmed’.

3. Select ‘Cancel’.
   The effect is instant, so be very careful about doing this. You will need to sign up again and wait for me to confirm the shift.

If you do cancel accidentally, please email me to let me know and I can make sure you are added again and that I don’t fill the spot from the waitlist.
Thank You

Thank you for volunteering at the Buskirk-Chumley Theater. We hope you enjoy your experience as a volunteer. As you learn your volunteer duties, feel free to ask questions or share suggestions. Our staff are happy to help you and also value your input. It is your commitment and that of volunteers like you that allows the BCT to serve this wonderful community. Thank you!