



# **WALTER KERR THEATRE**

## **FIRE SAFETY & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

UPDATED 7/13/2021

**THIS SAFETY EVACUATION AND FIRE EMERGENCY INFORMATION IS INTENDED TO HELP YOU PROTECT YOURSELF IN THE EVENT OF FIRE OR OTHER EMERGENCY EVACUATION. THIS SAFETY EVACUATION PLAN CONTAINS:**

- Basic fire prevention and fire preparedness measures that will reduce the risk of fire and maximize your safety in the event of a fire
- Basic information about the different ways of exiting the building
- Emergency fire safety and evacuation instructions in the event of a fire or emergency in the building

**PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ THIS SAFETY EVACUATION PLAN. FIRE PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS, AND AWARENESS CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE!**

**IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE OR EMERGENCY**

**CALL 911**

**OR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT DISPATCHER, AT**

**Manhattan (212) 999-2222**

**BASIC FIRE PREVENTION AND FIRE PREPAREDNESS MEASURES**

1. Carelessly handled or discarded cigarettes are the leading cause of fire deaths. As you already know, there is absolutely no smoking permitted on the theatre premises. If you are smoking outside the theatre, be sure that you completely extinguish every cigarette. Never leave a lit or smoldering cigarette on any equipment outside.
2. Never overload electrical outlets. Replace any electrical cord that is cracked or frayed. Never run extension cords under rugs. Use only power strips with circuit breakers. If you think there is a possibility of overloading an outlet, please ask for the house electrician's (Vinnie Valvo) advice.
3. Keep all doorways and windows leading to fire escapes free of obstructions, and report any obstructions or accumulations of rubbish in the hallways, stairwells, fire escapes or other means of egress to the Theatre Manager.
4. Familiarize yourself with the location of all stairwells, fire escapes and other means of egress. If you would like a complete tour of the theatre, please feel free to ask the House Manager, Brian Busby, or his associate, Molly Corcoran to show you the premises.

## **BUILDING INFORMATION**

### **Means of Egress**

There are several different types of egress:

- **Interior Stairs:** The Walter Kerr Theatre has several stairs leading to the street level. These stairs may be enclosed or unenclosed. Unenclosed stairwells (stairwells that are not separated from the hallways by walls and doors) do not prevent the spread of flame, heat and smoke. Since flame, heat and smoke generally rise, unenclosed stairwells may not ensure safe egress in the event of a fire on a lower floor. Enclosed stairs are more likely to permit safe egress from the building, if the doors are kept closed. It is important to get familiar with the means of egress available in our building.
- **Fire escapes:** The Walter Kerr Theatre is equipped with fire escapes on the North and South side of the building. Fire escapes are considered a “secondary” or alternative means of egress, and are to be used if the primary means of egress (stairwells) can not be safely used to exit the building because they are obstructed by flame, heat or smoke.
- **Exits:** In addition to the main entrances to the Walter Kerr Theatre, there are separate side exits, roof exits and exits to the street from stairwells. Both 48<sup>th</sup> Street and 49<sup>th</sup> Street can be reached through various exits.
- **Backstage:** There are five ways to exit the building from the dressing room areas. 1) Across the stage to the stage door, 2) Down the steps to the basement level and across the basement, then up the steps to the stage door, 3) Using the underpass on the stage level that brings you into the orchestra area and the House Left orchestra exits (Exits 8 and 9), 4) Using the alcove off the Dressing Room #1 area that exits directly into the Kerr alley (as do Exits 8 and 9). In the alley, there is a double door that leads into an alleyway that goes to 49<sup>th</sup> Street. When using this exit, go straight through the plastic curtain to get to 49<sup>th</sup> Street (going to the left will lead you to a dead end), 5) If there is a fire that is blocking these exits or stairs to the basement, go up the stairs to the top dressing room level. There is a ladder that leads to a hatch that will take you to the roof. Please note that there are no fire escapes on the dressing room windows.

## **EMERGENCY FIRE SAFETY AND EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE, FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS OF FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL. HOWEVER, THERE MAY BE EMERGENCY SITUATIONS IN WHICH YOU MAY BE REQUIRED TO DECIDE ON A COURSE OF ACTION TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND FELLOW CAST AND CREW MEMBERS.**

**THIS FIRE SAFETY PLAN IS INTENDED TO ASSIST YOU IN SELECTING THE SAFEST COURSE OF ACTION IN SUCH AN EMERGENCY. PLEASE NOTE THAT NO FIRE SAFETY PLAN CAN ACCOUNT FOR ALL OF THE POSSIBLE FACTORS AND CHANGING CONDITIONS; YOU WILL HAVE TO DECIDE WHAT IS THE SAFEST COURSE OF ACTION UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES.**

### **General Emergency Fire Safety Instructions**

1. Stay calm. Do not panic. Notify the fire department as soon as possible. Firefighters will be on the scene within minutes.
2. Because flame, heat and smoke rise, generally a fire on a floor below your floor presents a greater threat to your safety than a fire on a floor above you.
3. Do not overestimate your ability to put out a fire. Most fires cannot be easily or safely extinguished. Do not attempt to put out the fire once it begins to quickly spread. If you attempt to put a fire out, make sure you have a clear path of retreat from the room.
4. If you decide to exit the building during a fire, close all doors as you exit to confine the fire.
5. Heat, smoke, and gases omitted by burning materials can quickly choke you. If you are caught in a heavy smoke condition, get down on the floor and crawl. Take short breaths, breathing through your nose.
6. If your clothes catch fire, don't run. Stop where you are, drop to the ground, cover your face with your hands to protect your face and lungs and roll over to smother the flames.

### **Evacuation Instructions**

1. Listen for instructions from your direct report within the Emergency Communication Pyramid.
2. Listen for instructions from firefighters unless conditions become dangerous.
3. If you must exit your room, first feel the door and doorknob for heat. If they are not hot, open the door slightly and check the hallway for smoke, heat or fire.
4. If you can not exit the building, call 911, tell them your address, floor, and number of people with you.
5. Seal the doors to your room with wet towels, sheets, and seal air ducts or other openings where smoke may enter.
6. If conditions in the room appear life threatening, open a window and wave a towel or sheet to attract the attention of the firefighters.
7. If smoke conditions worsen before help arrives, get down on the floor and take short breaths through your nose.

**If you've been alerted to a Fire Alarm, but there is NO VISIBLE FIRE OR SMOKE on your floor...**

- Stand by for instructions from DIRECTOR or WARDENS.
- If there is need to evacuate, your WARDEN or DEPUTY will inform you.

*The following are reminders on prevention and escape tactics:*

**PREVENTION:**

1. Do not allow any accumulation of rubbish anywhere
2. All wastepaper must be removed on a daily basis (please put your trash out)
3. Observe No Smoking signs
4. Electronic Equipment should not be kept on after hours
5. Learn how to utilize portable fire extinguishers including type and application

**EARLY WARNING:**

1. Be familiar with fire exits
2. Become familiar with your building's Fire Safety System.
3. Know the Fire Warden and Deputy for your location in the theatre.

**SELF ESCAPE:**

1. Personnel should think through their reaction to different emergencies on a regular basis
2. Participate in all fire drills
3. Fire drills could save your life

**IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION CLEAR COMMUNICATION IS THE  
HIGHEST PRIORITY**

With a minimum of 85 staff members working throughout this building on a regular basis and up to 937 patrons during performance times, when an emergency occurs it is very important the information is distributed quickly and clearly to all building staff so the proper action can be taken.

- 1) First and foremost, when a problem is discovered, either by notification from the police, detection by the staff, or even by a television or radio overheard backstage, the House Manager, ("DIRECTOR") must be notified immediately. This can be done via radio or by contacting stage door at 212-459-3937.
- 2) DIRECTOR will directly, or if they cannot reach stage door, indirectly through the Stage Door Attendant, communicate with NYPD Representative(s) for a briefing/recommendation on the situation. If they are unable to reach a NYPD Representative and the determination is made that the emergency warrants an immediate response, they will dial 911. In the event that phone lines are down and they are unable to reach the police, DIRECTOR, after consulting with Stage Manager, will assess the perceived threat and decide the necessary steps to take including possible evacuation.
- 3) All instructions will be communicated via our internal radio system. If the radio system is down, Stage Manager should contact DIRECTOR by calling Stage Door from the nearest telephone. The Stage Door attendant will then assist in getting DIRECTOR on the phone.
- 4) If a performance is in progress, the decision must be made promptly as to whether or not to stop the show. DIRECTOR and Production Stage Manager will make decision jointly, if possible, and abide by any guidance given by emergency service.

- 5) Any information/decisions will be disseminated in a pyramid system flowing from DIRECTOR to Stage Manager, Head Electrician, and Chief Usher ("SUPERVISORS"). DIRECTOR can contact Chief Usher, and Security on **HM Channel 1**; Head Electrician can be reached by having stage door page him using the back stage PA system. The SUPERVISORS then distribute the information to the WARDENS. The WARDENS then in turn communicate to rest of the staff for whom they are responsible. (See Kerr Theatre Emergency Communication Pyramid).
- 6) The Stage Manager calling the show will be responsible for making any announcement to the audience if they are in the house. All information will be communicated by DIRECTOR to Stage Manager, so they can provide the audience with proper instructions. DIRECTOR will make announcements via bullhorn if the audience is not all inside the house, or if time does not permit the DIRECTOR to alert the Stage Manager immediately.
- 7) A Fire Safety Drill will be performed every six (6) months. Additionally the Fire/Life Safety team should meet for one (1) hour quarterly to review the Fire Safety and Emergency Procedures. This team includes the DIRECTOR, DEPUTY DIRECTORS, SUPERVISORS and WARDENS.

#### **COMMUNICATION PYRAMID DETAIL**

**The House Manager (DIRECTOR) will communicate emergency information to the following SUPERVISORS:**

- 1) PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER (SM calling the show)
- 2) HEAD ELECTRICIAN
- 3) CHIEF USHER

*STAGE DOOR and SECURITY (DEPUTY DIRECTORS) will remain in contact only with the DIRECTOR unless otherwise instructed.*

**The STAGE MANAGER SUPERVISOR will communicate emergency information to the following WARDENS:**

- 4) STAGE MANAGER ON DECK
- 5) DRESSING ROOM TOWER STAGE MANAGER

**The HEAD ELECTRICIAN SUPERVISOR will communicate emergency information to the following WARDENS:**

- 6) HEAD CARPENTER
- 7) HOUSE PROPS
- 8) SPOT BOOTH

**The DRESSING ROOM TOWER STAGE MANAGER WARDEN will communicate emergency information to the following DEPUTIES:**

- 9) INDIVIDUAL PERSONNEL IN DRESSING ROOM TOWER

**The DECK STAGE MANAGER WARDEN will communicate emergency information to the following DEPUTIES:**

- 10) PERSONNEL ON DECK
- 11) CONDUCTOR
- 12) MUSICIANS

**The HEAD CARPENTRY WARDEN will communicate emergency information to the following personnel:**

- 13) PERSONNEL ON FLYFLOOR

**The HEAD PROPERTYMAN WARDEN will communicate emergency information to the following personnel:**

- 14) WARDROBE DEPARTMENT
- 15) HAIR DEPARTMENT

**The CHIEF USHER will communicate emergency information to the following WARDENS and personnel:**

- 16) TREASURER(S)
- 17) DIRECTOR(S)
- 18) ENGINEER
- 19) PORTER

**DIRECTOR (EARLY)/CHIEF USHER (LATE) will communicate emergency information to the following personnel:**

- 20) LOBBY LEVEL TICKET-TAKERS, CONCESSIONS, MERCHANDISE, INFRARED
- 21) ORCHESTRA LEVEL USHERS, SOUND BOARD OPERATOR

**The DIRECTOR (LATE) will communicate emergency information to the following personnel**

- 22) MEZZANINE LEVEL USHERS, CONCESSIONS

**The PORTER will communicate emergency information to the following personnel:**

- 23) ALL CLEANING STAFF

## **GENERAL PROCEDURE WHEN PATRONS ARE PRESENT:**

### **1) NON EVACUATION:**

- a. If an emergency occurs during a show and it is required to stop the performance, but not necessary to evacuate the building (i.e. very ill patron in the house), audience members will be instructed by Stage Manager and FOH Staff to stay in their seats unless emergency personnel have specifically instructed DIRECTOR differently. Staff will also remain in their regular positions unless instructed otherwise.
- b. If it is determined that situation was caused by a false alarm and emergency personnel have deemed the premises safe, the performance can be resumed upon the agreement of DIRECTOR and Production Stage Manager. If performance is to resume, Stage Manager will make the following announcement:

*Ladies and Gentlemen, May I have your attention please. We are very sorry for the delay. The performance will resume momentarily. Thank you for your patience.*

- c. If DIRECTOR and Production Stage Manager decide not to resume performance, Stage Manager calling the show will make the following announcement:

*Ladies and Gentlemen, May I have your attention please. We are very sorry, but due to circumstances beyond our control, we are unable to continue tonight's (today's) performance. Thank you for your cooperation.*

Ushers will then direct patrons out the normal lobby exits.

## **2) EVACUATION:**

- a. If emergency personnel have ordered an evacuation of the premises DIRECTOR will inform SUPERVISORS and Stage Manager will make the following announcement to the audience:

*Ladies and Gentlemen, May I have your attention please. We have been instructed by local authorities to stop our performance at this time. For safety reasons, we must begin an orderly exit from the theatre. Please follow the exit instructions given by the Usher in your area. Remember to take your personal belongings with you as you leave. We apologize for this inconvenience. Thank you for your cooperation.*

- b. Unless instructed otherwise by the police or other emergency personnel, all patron evacuations should take place with the audience exiting onto 48th Street utilizing all the exits located on the house left and house right side of the mezzanine and orchestra level. Building staff will be positioned at each exit to assist them. If it is deemed too dangerous to use one or more of the exits, DIRECTOR will notify Stage Manager who will in turn make a public announcement.
- c. Mezzanine levels should exit using the House Right or House Left fire exits to bring them out to 48th street unless otherwise instructed by DIRECTOR.
- d. Unless it is unsafe, WARDENS must sweep their areas for those staff members for whom they are responsible. Staff should all use closest available exit. The last person out of any space is to close all doors behind them upon exiting.
- e. Once patrons have exited to the street, Security and Building staff will direct them away from the building to keep the exits clear. It is very important to keep the crowd moving away from the building to allow for everyone to evacuate and emergency personnel to enter as quickly as possible.
- f. The emergency evacuation assembly area for all building staff (patrons are responsible for themselves once outside) is at the Crowne Plaza breezeway on 49th Street. If this area is inaccessible or dangerous, our secondary evacuation meeting place is in front of the Newsstand Store near the SE corner of Broadway on 48th Street. It is very important that all staff meet at this designated place, so it can be determined quickly that everyone has made it out of the building safely.



## **GENERAL PROCEDURE WHEN PATRONS ARE NOT PRESENT:**

### **3) NON EVACUATION:**

- a. In the case of an emergency where exiting the building is not advised by emergency personnel, and an audience is not present (i.e. the Blackout of 2003), the SUPERVISORS would communicate with the WARDENS to account for their people and await further instructions. The back of the orchestra is designated the in building relocation area during non-performance times.
- b. The Stage Door Attendant would be responsible for contacting the House Manager and Jujamcyn Main Office to advise them should they not be on site at the theatre.
- c. In this situation, the Stage Door Attendant would assist in securing the perimeter of the building while the DIRECTOR once on site would respond to any incident accordingly (notifying the Engineer to shut down the HVAC System, notifying the House Electrician to shut down power, etc.)

### **4) EVACUATION:**

- a. Unless it is unsafe, WARDENS must sweep their areas for those staff members for whom they are responsible. All Staff should be familiar with all exits so they can use closest available exit at time of incident. The last person out of any space is to close all doors behind them upon exiting.
- b. The emergency evacuation assembly area for all building staff (patrons are responsible for themselves once outside) is at the Crowne Plaza breezeway on 49<sup>th</sup> Street. If this area is inaccessible or dangerous, our secondary evacuation meeting place is in front of the Newsstand Store near the SE corner of Broadway on 48<sup>th</sup> Street. It is very important that all staff meet at this designated place, so it can be determined quickly that everyone has made it out of the building safely.

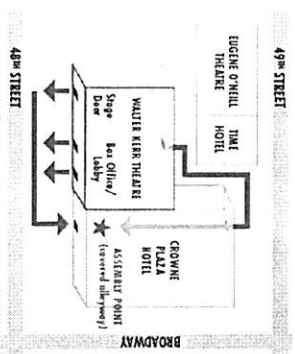
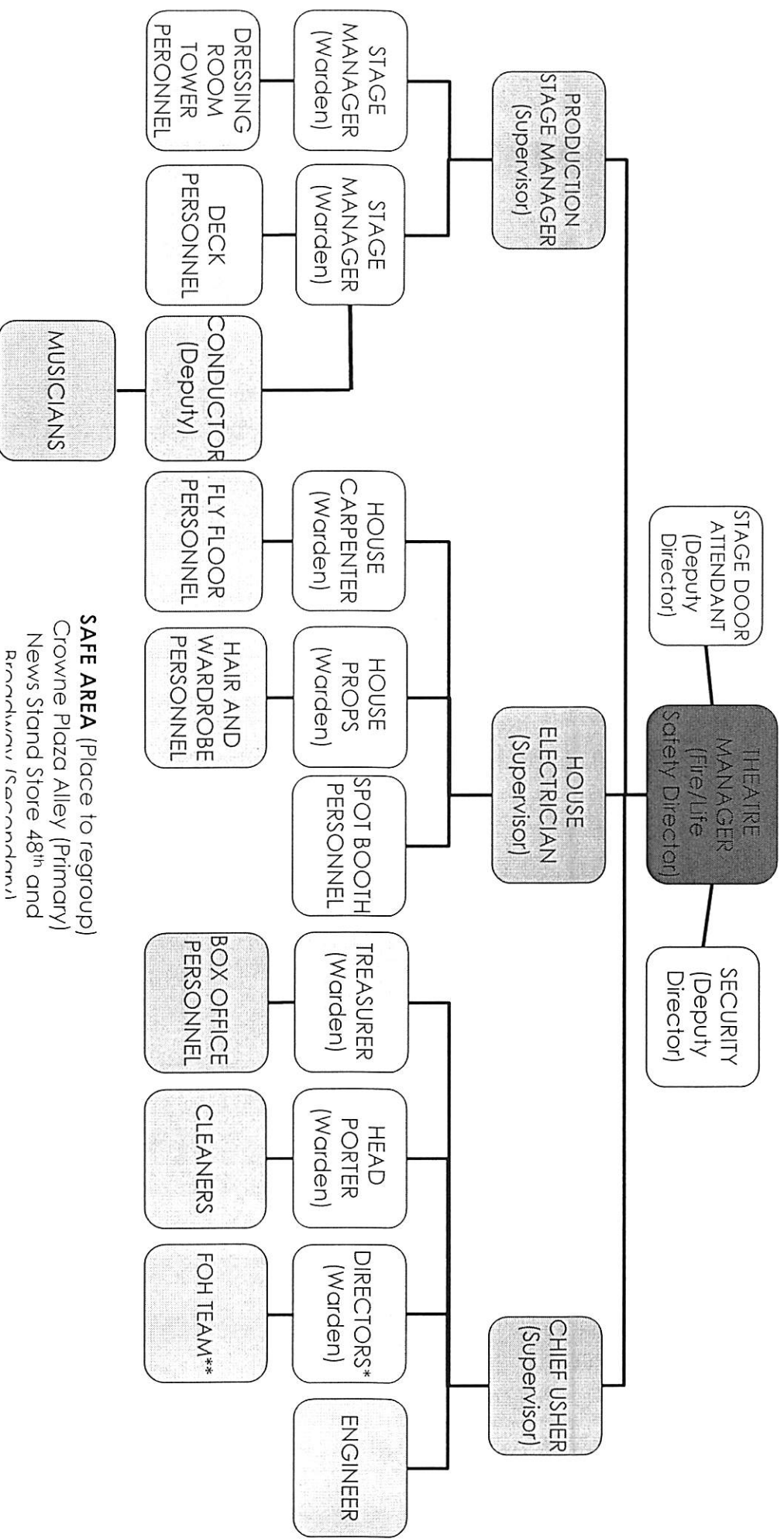
## **Emergency Evacuation** **"Do's & Don'ts"**

1. DO NOT USE DOOR STOPS in fire exit doors.
2. Evacuation should be conducted in a calm and deliberate fashion. Patrons and personnel should be instructed to listen carefully for further information and announcements (this should reduce cross talk and noise without telling everyone to be quiet).

3. SHUT DOORS BEHIND YOU when you are last to leave an area (WARDENS to check for this).
4. If you are ever in a smoke-contaminated area KEEP LOW, and if necessary, crawl down a fire exit stairwell in a real disaster to stay below the smoke (noxious gases).
5. Do not allow patrons to use telephones as they are evacuating.
6. DO NOT GO TO YOUR LOCKERS OR OFFICES
7. If you have a radio, communicate all pertinent facts with the rest of the team but keep radio traffic brief and concise ("Just the facts"). Please suspend normal pleasantries for the sake of speed – do not become rattled
8. Follow instructions of authorized team leaders - DIRECTOR, SUPERVISORS, WARDENS and DEPUTIES.
9. Do not re-enter the building until provided the all clear by the authorities.
10. Become familiar with building layout from posted diagrams. Learn locations of fire exit doors, manual pull station, and fire extinguishers.
11. Medical Emergency-Immediately communicate:
  - a. Notify DIRECTOR and Stage Door to call 911
  - b. Location
  - c. Gender of victim
  - d. Approximate age
  - e. General condition-is the person conscious?
  - f. Obtain name early - record name, telephone number and address when convenient

# WALTER KERR THEATRE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION PYRAMID

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISORS, WARDENS and DEPUTIES:** Pass along information and account for everyone



For Pre-Early release, the Early Director is the Warden for the Orchestra.  
The Late Director is the Warden for the Mezzanine.  
The FOH Team includes Ticket Takers, Ushers, Concessions, Merchandise, Infrared and Sound Board.