

TGS CODE OF CONDUCT AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Overview: *The Theatre Guild of Simsbury (TGS) enlists its membership in understanding its performing policies and member duties. TGS expects all members to dedicate to the highest traditions of theater in providing our audiences the best performance possible. The best preparation for delivering this begins with mutual respect for fellow cast members and the Production Team, by accepting personal responsibility and by recognizing the rights, satisfaction, and safety of fellow cast and crew members. To accomplish this goal, TGS willingly identifies stated practices expected of members, and what position TGS takes in enforcing them.*

Becoming a performing member

TGS performing members are expected to contribute a minimum annual membership, as ticket sales and ads only cover a fraction of operating costs.

- a. Individual scripts, chorus books or sides are distributed when the cast member has paid a current level of membership.
- b. Annual memberships are contributions that are available at multiple levels. Depending on the point during the season for entering membership, minimum performing membership level requirement will vary.
- c. If a prospective member cannot afford a minimum membership, special arrangements may be requested with the TGS President.
- d. When minimum membership is contributed, TGS does not request any additional fees, such as a costuming fee.
- e. Cast members have both an Onstage Role and an Offstage Role.

Your Onstage Role:

- i. learn lines, songs, dance steps and blocking by given timeline,
- ii. show up on time for scheduled rehearsals, and
- iii. be a positive, supportive team member.

Your Offstage Role:

- i. Be willing to help in any way you can to make this a successful production. Community Theatre is a collaborative creation.
- ii. Observe all expected "professional" behaviors, report any unprofessional behaviors.
- iii. Promote the show, distribute posters and flyers, sell tickets, sell program ads.
- iv. As capability and safety allows:
 1. help build the set and/or help find set components,
 2. assist stage crew with requested backstage assistance, and
 3. assist during set-up and strike.

Auditions and casting:

1. TGS considers a person who presents an audition to be making a serious offer to be considered for a role. Non-serious auditions are discouraged.
2. Auditions are announced with sufficient advance notice, and include suggested audition requirements and prep materials.
3. At the discretion of TGS, auditions may be either open or closed door auditions.

4. TGS may request resumes and review performance video from candidates.
5. TGS may conduct background checks on candidates.
6. Depending on the production, the process may be conducted by scheduled appointment or by walk-in. If someone is unable to audition on the specified dates, special arrangements may be requested.
7. The appointment system is conducted through the TGS website using a signup process. It will register a time, date and place for the auditioner.
8. The Directors (artistic, music, choreography), along with select TGS Board members, constitute a "Casting Committee." The Committee meets after final auditions and casts the production from the list of performers who have formally auditioned.
9. The Casting Committee exercises a series of objective and subjective criteria to cast the best combination of available talent possible. The Casting Committee balances casting new talent, current Members from within, and best talent that presented auditions. TGS does not condone any branding or type-casting of individuals according to talent type.
10. All roles are open at auditions: TGS does not pre-cast for any part. TGS does reserve the right to invite (without prejudice) performers to compete for roles.
11. Call-backs are at the discretion of the Casting Committee. A callback should not be necessarily construed as candidacy for only a specific role, nor does a lack of a callback mean not being cast.
12. All auditioners will be contacted after final casting decisions have been made.
13. If a member of Casting Committee or a member of their family is being considered for a role, the Casting Committee member is expected to recuse from the Casting Committee.
14. The decision of the Committee is final. All Casting Committee discussions concerning people who have auditioned remain confidential. Casting Committee will not share comments or comparisons about others who have auditioned.

Expected Attendance:

1. Rehearsals are planned and scheduled around sections of the production and may not require all cast members to attend if they are not engaged in those sections. Otherwise, attendance is required at all rehearsals. If an individual cannot attend due to significant conflicts, emergencies or illness, the President, Producer, Director, or Stage Manager must be notified.
2. ALL cast members are required to be at all rehearsals during the "tech" week prior to performance, at pick-up rehearsal(s), and at all performances (NO EXCEPTIONS). Absenteeism or failure to support the expected promptness to attend rehearsals or performances may result in recasting or dismissal from the cast at the discretion of TGS.
3. Rehearsal call time is the expected ready-to-start rehearsing time, it is not an arrival time! If your preparations to rehearse interfere with the start of the rehearsing, arriving early will allow more time for warm-up, costuming, prop checks, reviewing script, or just getting into the right frame of mind. Some performers may be scheduled for some time after the general start time; it is necessary to arrive and be ready at that appointed individual start time.
4. Cast members should have lines, blocking, and dancing memorized by the date established by the director.
5. ALL cast members are required to attend and assist strike.

Responsibility for costumes, props, and show materials

1. All rented show materials (scripts, music, etc.) must be signed out at the beginning of rehearsals AND

must be signed back in, erased and clean, before the last performance. Members who deface, tear, do not erase, or do not return their assigned materials are responsible for the costs of replacement and any other charges imposed by the provider.

2. A costumer will work with directors to determine and provide the costumes and wigs that fit the overall concept for the show. These costumes and wigs may be rented, purchased or borrowed. The performer should only provide feedback on comfort issues. The performer may not choose to change, embellish, or choose not to wear any piece of the costume or wig.
3. The performer is to provide proper care to sustain the costume by avoiding damage other than normal wear and tear, by hanging up all costume pieces after use, and by practicing personal hygiene to keep costumes as fresh as possible. Do not eat anything or drink anything other than water when in costume.
4. Props provided may be rented, purchased, or borrowed. As such, proper care to sustain their condition and protection is expected. There are rules for props: never play with a prop, especially prop weapons, and always check props before each show.
5. Setting and returning a prop is between user and the prop master. To guarantee predicted placement, readiness and condition, only the staff and the performer utilizing a prop may handle or move a prop. All others must refrain from any handling.

Responsible "Professional" Behavior and Conduct

1. "Professional" stage etiquette demands toleration, acceptance, kindness, and mutual respect of each cast member for all others, including fellow cast, crew, and staff, and at all times as each person prepares, develops and responds differently.
2. Cast members should be direct-able and try the things asked of them, even if they disagree. A cast member should accept notes from the director or discuss concerns about them privately with the director, but the director has the final say.
3. Cast members should respect others by remaining quiet and concentrated while they are working. This even applies to whether offstage or standing onstage while another actor is receiving direction. It is not a time for sidebar discussions.
4. No cast member should "helpfully" or disapprovingly instruct another cast member on performance, interpretation, or responsibility, unless that is an appointed duty.
5. Cast members minimize interpersonal temperament, outbursts, tension, blame, criticism, remarks, gossip, ridicule, profanity, disagreements, misunderstandings, miscommunication, etc.
6. No cast member or other participant in the production should feel bullied, discriminated against, harassed, or intimidated by anyone associated with TGS.
7. If any cast member or other participant (including stagehands and volunteers) feels bullied, discriminated against, harassed, or intimidated by anyone associated with TGS, that person should immediately contact the TGS President, Producer, or Director. Any cast member or other participant who witnesses any such behavior should contact the TGS President, Producer, or Director. Directors and producers are required, immediately following receipt of information about any unacceptable behavior, to notify the President or a responsible board member. Search notification should be oral (or telephonic) followed by written (email or text).
8. Consumption of alcohol, intoxicants, or illegal substances is prohibited before or during rehearsal or performance. It is unprofessional and a safety issue. Failure to adhere to this policy could result in dismissal from the show and possibly arrest.
9. Personal smoking or vaping is strictly prohibited in all rehearsal and performance venues. Smoking by

performers as part of a production is permitted.

10. Bare feet, open toed shoes, flip-flops and sandals are not allowed backstage or onstage (unless part of a costume).
11. Personal electronic communicator devices must be turned off during rehearsals and performances, except for use on stage as part of the show or during break time.
12. Voices carry. All cast and crew must remain vocally and physically quiet backstage during performances; quiet demeanor should be maintained in dressing rooms, hallways, etc. Walk quietly backstage – shoes noise can be especially heard.
13. Safety is a priority. Any person observing any unsafe obstruction, hindrances, exposed wires, exposed nails or screws, sharp or protruding objects, pinch-points, or other safety risks must immediately notify the stage manager. If any minors or children are performing, safety also must be considered from their perspective.
14. If an injury occurs, notify a stage manager IMMEDIATELY! Unless medically qualified, do not attempt to treat the injury. In the event of a fire or other emergency, dial 911 and then contact the stage manager.
15. Any cast member or other participant requesting a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in the production should contact the TGS President, Producer, or Director. TGS may request additional information, including documentation from a health care provider, to ensure any accommodations are reasonable and safe.
16. Unwanted behavior such as inappropriate or unwelcomed touching, conduct or comment, bullying, harassment, intentionally causing physical or emotional harm in-person or by cell phone or online should be reported to the TGS President, Producer, or Director, whether experienced or observed. Physical confrontations, threats of physical or emotional harm, taunting, and personal insults are strictly prohibited and may result in dismissal from TGS. Directors and producers are required, immediately following receipt of information about any unacceptable behavior, to notify the president or a responsible board member. Search notification should be oral (or telephonic) followed by written (email or text).
17. It is the policy and commitment of TGS that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, physical or mental disability, religion, or any other protected status under federal or state law. Nor does TGS tolerate any negative humor, derision, or divisive treatment in its theatrical community. Any inappropriate behaviors by cast, crew, or bystanders should be reported to TGS staff, whether experienced or observed, and may result in dismissal from TGS.
18. TGS will not tolerate retaliation against anyone making a complaint in good faith. Individuals who feel retaliated against should immediately contact the TGS President, Producer, or Director.
19. All complaints will be reviewed and, to the extent necessary, investigated and remedied. TGS may retain outside investigators or legal counsel for assistance. Violation of the criminal laws may be referred to the local police.

Special behaviors for the protection of minors and children

1. There are important behaviors for the protection of minor children which ALL ADULTS are expected to observe, enforce, and report. We define “minor” as all individuals under the age of 18. We further define “child/children” as all minors under the age of 13.
2. All adults are prohibited from touching any minor in any way, however innocently, except on stage as an accepted or directed part of the production. Only parents and guardians may touch their own minor children.
3. Adults should not bring any children to any associated TGS event intended solely for adults, especially

where alcohol might be served.

4. It is expected that children will be chaperoned by responsible volunteer parents or guardians. At least two parents, guardians, or chaperones must be present in the children's dressing area whenever any child is present. This includes dress rehearsals as well as performances. It is our policy that children come already dressed in basic costume.
5. Doors to occupied adult dressing rooms must remain closed unless the dressing room has been declared open for all cast to enter.
6. Children are not permitted to enter or remain in occupied men's or women's dressing areas while cast is changing clothes or costumes. If an adult in the cast has a child in the show, the adult should maintain contact with the child outside the dressing room or arrange for another adult family member or guardian to maintain contact with the child.
7. Likewise, only a child's parents, guardians, or designated adults are permitted to enter a children's dressing area.
8. No children should be alone in the children's dressing area. A child's parent, guardian, or other designated adult should be present.
9. Anyone observing a child alone should immediately notify TGS staff.
10. Unless children are about to perform, they are to remain or return to their designated safe area (i.e., dressing room). They are not to congregate in open areas or backstage with adults. The chaperones need to maintain headcount and whereabouts at all times.
11. A children's chaperone must be present for any child using a male or female only rest room.
12. All cast and crew must be mindful of adult costume changes that must be accomplished backstage or in an open area, and all children must be removed or shielded from such events. Likewise, adults responsible for assisting children's costume changes backstage or in an open area must also assure maximum privacy from other children and adults for the costume change.
13. Minor teenagers are permitted to participate in productions as long as parental permission is given in writing, and for as long as the expected corresponding adult decorum is maintained by the minor teenagers. Failure to properly observe adult rules may mean notification of parents and/or dismissal from the cast.
14. Any concerns about safety for minors or children should be brought to the attention of the TGS President, Producer, or Director.

Acknowledgement

1. All cast members and crew will acknowledge and confirm receipt of this Code of Conduct.
2. Any cast members or crew who have questions about the Code of Conduct should contact the TGS President, Producer, or Director.

Revised July 2020.