

DIRECTORS' HANDBOOK

PRODUCTION GUIDELINES

FOR DIRECTORS OF

ICCT PRODUCTIONS

ICCT Mission Statement:

The Iowa City Community Theatre is a non-profit community organization dedicated to promoting the theatre arts in the Iowa City area. ICCT strives to provide an open avenue for individual creative expression through participation in all aspects of producing high-quality amateur theatrical productions.

Additionally, ICCT is committed to increasing community interest in the performing arts, providing educational and recreational opportunities and in creating an organizational environment which encourages the participation of community members from all age groups and interest levels.

Congratulations on your selection as a director with the Iowa City Community Theatre (ICCT). The Board of Directors, Play and Director Selection Committee, and Production Council are eager for this to be a rewarding experience for you.

These pages contain information about ICCT, its resources and facilities, and about expectations of you as a director. These guidelines are intended to be used along with the Policies and Procedures Handbook of ICCT.

ICCT Officers, Board of Directors, and other individuals listed below may be of assistance to you as you mount your production:

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Past President
Board Members (6)
Office Manager
House Manager
Volunteer Coordinator
House & Risers Consultant
Lighting Consultant
Orchestra Consultant
Costume Consultant
Properties Consultant
Sound Consultant
Hair/Wig/Makeup Consultant

You may recruit an assistant director, stage manager, technical director, costume, lighting, and set designers, crew chiefs, and light and sound board operators. New light rig crews and light and sound operators will need to be trained by the appropriate consultant in the use of ICCT equipment.

All directors are part of a directing team and must participate throughout the season in production, membership, and fund raising activities to support ICCT as well as the other directors. All directors are expected to participate in our Insodus(load-in), the strike for each show, the Exodus, and the 'End of the Year' awards program.

Please note, in staffing your production, that ICCT is a volunteer organization and policy prohibits payment to personnel.

MEMBERSHIPS

As a volunteer organization, ICCT survives on the active participation of its members. Of course, membership is entirely voluntary, but all directors are asked to become members of ICCT by the start of the season in which they are directing, and we hope that you will

encourage your cast and crew to become members as well. Dues are \$10 per year and entitle members to receive newsletters, audition and show notices, and to become involved in all theatre activities including voting and holding office.

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PARTICIPATION RECORD

ICCT keeps track of the hours its volunteers spend working on theatre activities, for purposes of volunteer recognition and for statistics to help with grant and funding applications.

For each production, the director should appoint someone (Assistant Director or other designee) to maintain a log of all hours put in by cast and crew involved in mounting, rehearsing, and performing in an ICCT production. After the last performance, a report of volunteer hours should be submitted to the office manager.

NOTE: Mileage (round trip from your home) for ICCT activities including rehearsals, performances, meetings, etc., is deductible on both federal and state tax returns even if you do not itemize deductions.

See the next page for a diagram of the layout of ICCT facilities.

SCRIPTS AND ROYALTIES

Scripts are ordered, and royalties are paid, by the office manager after the beginning of ICCT's fiscal year, July 1. You will need to let the office manager know how many scripts will be needed to accommodate the number of cast members and production staff, including designers and crew members who will need copies of the script. Be sure to include a copy of the script for the ICCT office as a reference for publicity, etc. The office manager will obtain the rights for performance of the play and pay royalties which will be billed to Iowa City Community Theatre. For a production requiring rental scripts or orchestra parts, you will be responsible for their prompt return to the office in good condition (with marks erased). ICCT will be billed for any missing parts and they are very costly. Any charges not recovered from the individual responsible for lost or damaged scripts or music will be charged to your production expenses.

AUDITION INFORMATION

Publicity

ICCT will publicize your auditions through a combination of the newsletter, postcards, newspaper notices, social media, and emails sent to individuals who have requested audition information. You can provide ICCT office personnel with additional names of potential actors. You will need to work with office personnel to develop copy for audition notices. NOTE: Audition notices can target specific groups, e.g., children, singers, dancers, etc.

Location

Auditions may be scheduled at the Theatre (subject to availability) or, more frequently, at the Robert A. Lee Community Recreation Center or the Iowa City Public Library. See ICCT office personnel for scheduling arrangements at either of these locations.

Audition Forms

You may adapt the sample audition form (see attached) or create your own. After auditions, give the ICCT office personnel the names and addresses of your cast members and of any actors who auditioned but were not cast. Their names may be added to the list of those who receive information about future auditions. The cast list will be announced on ICCT's web site.

Iowa City Community Theatre
Audition Form
Title of Play
by (Playwright's name)
Director's name

Name _____

Preferred Pronouns _____ Phone _____

Address _____ E-mail _____

List representative theatre experience (actor, director, production work). Use reverse if necessary.

List any other areas you would be interested in helping with on this or other ICCT productions (lights, costumes, usher, house manager, etc.)

Performances: (list dates)

Rehearsals begin (date)

List any rehearsal conflicts between (date of first rehearsal/opening)

PRODUCTION PUBLICITY

Media. The Publicity Coordinator will contact you for a preliminary meeting and will set up initial contacts with several papers who may contact you for interviews, etc. Also, a day and time for an appearance on “The Green Room” on KICI Radio will be arranged for you. It is important that you cooperate fully with these publicity efforts.

Programs and Posters. You will need to collect bio material for the program and to proofread the program carefully. Bio forms are usually distributed and collected by the assistant director. (See Sample Bio form at the end of the Handbook.) Cast/crew lists, biographies, acknowledgments, etc., must be given to the program editor at least two weeks prior to the invited dress rehearsal. Unavoidable last-minute acknowledgments, if any, will be placed on a program insert. The program editor will submit program copy to the director of the production at least 24 hours before the copy must be submitted to the printer. Any changes in instructions to the printer must be authorized by the program editor. Printed programs are delivered to ICCT or to the program editor. Posters for the entire season may be prepared by the publicity staff. If not, you or someone you designate can prepare poster art work. The ICCT logo must appear on all posters and programs.

SAFETY & HEALTH

Safety for our audiences, volunteers and staff is a top priority. Only individuals trained in the proper use of power equipment shall be allowed to operate such equipment; safety glasses and ear protectors are required as appropriate. No one will work on high ladders or scaffolding without someone else present. Alcohol and/or illegal substances are not permitted on Johnson County Fairgrounds property, and ICCT has been designated as a smoke-free environment.

The director, assistant director, and stage manager should make sure that they and all crew members know the locations and operation of fire extinguishers. First-Aid kits are available in the kitchen and backstage in the shop area.

REHEARSAL SCHEDULING

You may use the ICCT building for rehearsals at any time. Each season, the Board of Directors and Production Council may designate one evening per week as Work Night. If you schedule a rehearsal on a work night, be aware that tech work (construction, hanging lights, etc.) may be noisy and may require use of the stage area.

If you need more than one rehearsal space (as for a musical, with concurrent dancing, staging and musical work) this will need to be coordinated with the office personnel. If a fee is involved for the use of such facilities, the cost must be included in your production budget.

All spaces in the building *or at other locations* will be scheduled on the master calendar in the Office. The Iowa City Public Library and the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center require that one ICCT individual be responsible for scheduling. Requests for use of these facilities should be made to the office manager at least one week in advance of the event.

Mainstage productions always have priority in the use of ICCT space; however, this does not preclude more than one activity from being scheduled in the building. Multiple activities in different spaces shall be allowed. If the lobby is used for any activity, it must be returned to its usual arrangement upon completion of the activity. During the run of a show, the set area will not be used for any other purpose without the express permission of the current director.

BOARD LIAISONS

You will be contacted by two member of the Board of Directors, who will ask to attend your first (or another early) rehearsal to express ICCT's appreciation to your cast and crew for their involvement and invite any who do not hold membership in ICCT to become members. You and your cast and crew are invited to direct questions or concerns to the board liaison at any time.

All directors must provide the office with a contact sheet of your cast and staff immediately following auditions. The rehearsal calendar must accompany this. You must provide at least one work night per week.

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULING

When the season is announced, you will know the dates of your production. In addition to the regularly scheduled dates, ICCT may sell up to three benefit performances of your production. You will be informed of benefit performances prior to holding auditions for your production.

Adding Performances. If the demand for tickets exceeds the number of available seats, ICCT may wish to add a performance or performances. This will be done only if there is time for adequate publicity and on condition that you and your cast and crew are able to facilitate the additional performance(s).

OTHER SCHEDULING

Previews. The schedule for your production will include a preview on the Wednesday or Thursday night before opening. Preview audiences are invited from several groups and will include people who might otherwise be unable to go to the theatre. The office manager will handle invitations for the preview performance. The preview is not intended for family and friends of cast and crew members.

Lobby and Publicity Photos. The theatre photographer will contact you to schedule a time for taking Lobby and publicity photos. A maximum of 7 lobby photos will be posed

and may include individuals and/or groups, depending on the production. Cast members will be photographed as themselves, not as the characters they portray. These photos will be captioned with names or signed by cast members and will be displayed on the lobby photo board. Publicity photos, to be used for advertising purposes, will consist of action or posed shots of scenes selected by the director.

Production Photos. A photographer will take photos of your production at a dress rehearsal. These photos will be the permanent record of the production and the photographer will make them available to you so that your cast and crew can order copies if they choose. Photos are taken during a regular run-through of the show, with the photographer coming close to the actors at times. Generally, if actors are made aware of this ahead of time, they will be able to forget about the camera. A group photo of cast and crew will usually be taken at the end of the evening and can be included in photo orders.

PARKING

Parking is available in the main parking lot. During the run of the show, cast and crew should be encouraged to park near the west entrance or near the north end of the lot, leaving the parking spaces nearer the theatre free for the audience.

OFFICE

Access to the office and its equipment should be limited to those individuals having business in the office. It will remain locked at all other times. Only office personnel are authorized to make long-distance telephone calls or to use office computers. All ticket sales must be made by office personnel.

ARCHIVE MATERIALS

You should select and order up to 20 prints/photographs from the set of proofs which are representative of your production. These will be duplicated and submitted, along with the negatives, to become part of the ICCT archives for historical purposes and for future publicity purposes. The cost of these prints/photographs will be paid by ICCT.

LOBBY DISPLAY

The Lobby Display Coordinator is responsible for arranging appropriate displays for each production. A sponsoring organization or the Board of Directors may have a special display request. If you have suggestions or a specific request for a lobby display, contact the Lobby Display Coordinator.

PROPERTIES AND COSTUMES

Properties and costume collections are located above the lobby in the primary storage area for the theatre. Contact the appropriate consultant to schedule time in the loft to survey what may be available for your production or to schedule a meeting for your designer(s) with the appropriate consultant(s). Access to the loft is limited to the appropriate consultant on the Production Council, the office manager, or a member of the Board of Directors.

Many local business and surrounding theatres have been generous in lending furniture, properties and costumes for use in our productions. In order to maintain good relationships, it is your responsibility to see that all borrowed or rented items are returned promptly upon the conclusion of your production. If items are not returned within two weeks, the production council may arrange to return the items and costs will be charged to your production budget.

When ICCT borrows materials and/or equipment from an individual, business, or other theatre organization, a written agreement outlining the terms of the loan is required. Each lender may have a standard form; however, samples of forms used by ICCT to borrow items from individuals, businesses, or other organizations, are attached.

HAIR & MAKEUP

Actors will furnish their own makeup, except for special effects (ghost makeup, special colors, etc.) required for a specific production. Wigs, hair pieces (braids, beards, etc.) and special coloring products for hair effects (graying, etc.) will be furnished by ICCT.

Sample page(s) of forms for borrowing items.

KEYS / BUILDING SECURITY

Security for the ICCT building and its equipment therein is of vital importance to the livelihood and safety of the theatre.

A limited number of keys for the building doors and for the ICCT office are issued. Current policy has included keys issued upon receipt of deposit check to the Executive Committee of the Board, the Office Manager, and the director and assistant director of an ICCT production. Each person issued a key must sign a Key Contract, stating the purpose for which the key will be issued, when it will be issued and when it will be returned and accompanied by a deposit check of \$100.00 to be returned when the key is returned. Keys issued for a specific production should be returned as soon as possible after the production is completed. Keys may not be loaned to anyone. In the event the key is lost, the deposit check will be cashed.

People needing access to the building are encouraged to try to coordinate with people who have keys and are already in the building, or to make special arrangements.

Access to the Theatre Office should be limited to those having business there. The office should remain locked during rehearsals. Office phones should not be used; a phone is available in the kitchen

At the conclusion of rehearsals and/or performances, it is the responsibility of the director or assistant director to see that all lights are turned off and all doors are locked and secure. A walk-through should be conducted to check the doors and the settings on the thermostats.

RISERS AND AUDIENCE SAFETY/SEATING

Maximum theatre capacity is 250. Tickets are sold and royalties paid on the basis of this seating capacity. Risers can be arranged to accommodate in-the-round, three-quarter-thrust and proscenium-style staging. Since moving risers is time-consuming and labor-intensive, it has been ICCT's custom to change the seating performance no more than once per season, to be determined by the Play and Director Selection Committee when the season is chosen. The House and Risers Coordinator plans seating to accommodate needs of the handicapped, allowing spaces for wheelchairs. Under no circumstances are additional chairs to be added in aisles or exits or in areas reserved for handicapped seating.

The director and the house manager should be aware that steps leading to the loft should be raised during performances so that the fire exit in the southeast corner of the lobby is not blocked. Exceptions may be made in those instances in which the loft steps are required for exits/entrances or for orchestra/chorus space.

Properties, furniture and/or set pieces may not block any fire exits at any time during a performance. An emergency exit lane spanning the width of the north and south exit

doors shall be planned into the set design, to accommodate the efficient evacuation of all occupants, including those with limited mobility, in the event of an emergency.

DURING PERFORMANCES

No one shall be allowed backstage just before or during the performance of a production except the cast, production staff and crew for that performance. The House Manager and Assistant Director/Stage Manager shall handle delivery of flowers or refreshments and requests to visit actors.

Access to the light/sound booth shall be restricted to those having business there, e.g., the Director, crew, Stage Manager, and the Technical Director of the current production.

Since ICCT has restroom facilities only in the lobby, a final bathroom call should be given to the cast about 45 minutes before curtain. The house is open half an hour before curtain time and audiences begin arriving about an hour before curtain. Once the performance begins, cast members can quietly use the restrooms while the audience is in the theatre.

MONEY MATTERS

Budget Adherence / Reimbursement

The budget for your production is meant to cover the technical expenses to mount the production. Since ICCT is an all-volunteer organization, no money is allocated to pay for services of performers, musicians, technicians, or designers. Royalties, scripts, publicity, etc. are not covered by the production budget; however, any fines for late or non-return of rented scripts, music, etc. will be assessed against the production budget.

It will be the responsibility of the director (or designee) to keep a close watch on the budget for the show and to plan expenditures to ensure that the approved and assigned budget figure will not be exceeded. If it becomes likely that the production may go over budget, it is your responsibility to contact the President in a timely manner. A special meeting shall be called to discuss the budget and any appeal for authorization to exceed the original budget. The appeal does not automatically guarantee that the request will be granted, but perhaps that other sources be sought (borrowing, etc.) Past adherence to your approved budget may be a factor considered by the Play & Director Selection Committee and the Board in your selection as a director for future productions.

The cost of cleaning/dry-cleaning of costumes shall be included in the show's technical budget and paid from that figure. "Costumes" shall include all clothing pieces used in the show, either owned by ICCT, by the actors, or borrowed or rented. Costumes shall not be stored, or returned, without having first been cleaned.

Any materials or equipment (properties, costumes, etc.) purchased for a specific production or previously owned by ICCT, shall remain the property of ICCT and no

arrangements shall be made with any cast or crew member to give, sell, take, or otherwise dispose of, destroy, alter, or reduce to salvage such items, without first obtaining the permission of the appropriate tech consultant.

In order to receive reimbursement for show-related expenses, a Reimbursement Request form must be obtained from the Theatre Office or assistant director, who will be given a supply of the forms at the beginning of rehearsals. The form must include all requested information, including which technical area of the show the expenses were incurred for, broken into subtotals, if necessary, with all receipts attached to the form, and returned to the assistant director to be given to the show's director or financial coordinator for review and approval. Approved forms are given to the office manager who will submit them to the Treasurer for payment processing. Any items purchased from a business which bills ICCT directly should also be noted on a form with the invoice copy and clear notation of what was purchased. To be considered for payment, all requests for reimbursement must be submitted to the office within two weeks after the strike of the show.

Any expenditure of \$200 to \$499 for a single item must be approved by the Production Coordinator or the Treasurer before the expenditure is made, even if the total expense falls within the approved budget for your production. Any expenditure of \$500 or more for a single item must be approved by the Executive Committee before the expenditure is made.

COMPLIMENTARY SEASON TICKETS

Some complimentary tickets for the season are given in return for services or large gifts. The list of organizations and individuals receiving complimentary season tickets shall be reviewed by the Board of directors as soon as practical before distribution at the beginning of each season.

COMPLIMENTARY SHOW TICKETS

Complimentary tickets and/or program credits and/or advertising recognition may be offered in return for loan of furnishings, costumes or other special favors. Those tickets should be offered sparingly and only with the specific approval and knowledge of the show director and the President. Confirmation of promised complimentary tickets must be made to the Theatre Office and/or Box Office as soon as practical.

Complimentary show tickets are offered to the cast and crew as follows:

Director	2 tickets
Assistant Director	2 tickets
Stage Manager (if different than Asst. Director)	2 tickets
Music/Orchestra Director	2 tickets
Technical crews/ designers	1 ticket per crew member
Cast	1 ticket per cast member
Orchestra	1 ticket per orchestra member

An individual who fills more than one role for a given production, or works on more than one crew, does not earn additional comp tickets.

Information on Box Office procedures and request forms for complimentary tickets for cast and crew will be distributed approximately 3 weeks prior to Opening Night. After the forms are completed with the correct comp ticket request and requested purchase of additional tickets, including money for the same, they shall be given to the Assistant Director, who shall collect them and deliver them to the Theatre Office / Box Office for action.

UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

ICCT expects that directors chosen at the time the season is approved and announced by the Board will complete their assignments; however, illness, unexpected moves, or other circumstances can interfere. If you find yourself unable to perform or complete a directing assignment, you should notify the President of the ICCT Board as soon as possible. If the play is scheduled at a relatively distant time, this notice should be in writing. You may suggest a replacement director for the Board's consideration. For a production in progress, notice should be as timely as possible so that the President or other Board members can promptly negotiate responsibilities with your replacement.

CANCELLATION OF SCHEDULED PERFORMANCE

Under certain conditions, you may recommend, or the President or Vice-President of ICCT may decide that a performance should be cancelled. For example, extremely inclement weather, unforeseen illness or injury, a catastrophic event either to the Theatre or the community, or other circumstance might suggest the wisdom of canceling a performance. Final responsibility for a cancellation shall lie with the President or Vice-President. Once it has been determined that a performance will be cancelled, it will be your responsibility to contact all cast and crew members. It will be the responsibility of the President, Vice- President, or office manager to notify all other personnel scheduled to work the performance and to get the word out to the public.

STRIKE

Complete strike of the set, clean-up of the theatre and costume/makeup areas, and return of ICCT costumes and properties to their proper places are the responsibilities of each production at its closing performance. The departing cast and crew are responsible for having the dressing rooms and costume/properties cleared and clean.

The director, cast and crew of the incoming production, who benefit from a clean and complete strike, are expected to help strike the production before theirs. Coordination is encouraged between directors, assistant directors, and production council staff.

SAMPLE
PROGRAM BIOGRAPHY FORM
Name of Play

Name as you want it printed in the program:

Role(s) in production:

Biography (100 words maximum). Use third person, be honest and straightforward. May be edited for length and content.

Turn this form in to _____ by _____
(date)

or

E-mail to program editor (get address from assistant director)