



*VicSuba*  
COMMUNITY THEATRE

## **VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

**THANK YOU FOR LENDING YOUR TIME TO SUPPORT THE ENDEAVORS OF THE VIC JUBA COMMUNITY THEATRE. WITHOUT ENTHUSIASTIC VOLUNTEERS SUCH AS YOU, WE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO RUN THE MULTITUDE OF EVENTS WE HOST EACH YEAR. THE OPERATIONS BOARD AND STAFF OF THE VIC JUBA COMMUNITY THEATRE HAVE WORKED TO DEVELOP THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES TO ENSURE THAT OUR VOLUNTEERS CONTINUE TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE FUTURE OF OUR THEATRE AND OF THE ARTS IN THE CITY OF LLOYDMINSTER.**

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## **A. VCJT VOLUNTEER POLICIES**

### THE PURPOSE OF OUR VOLUNTEERS

- All volunteers offering their services to the organization will have their offer to volunteer dealt with promptly and will be given a warm welcome, which reflects the value we give to volunteers.
- It is recognized that volunteers play a very important role and their efforts contribute highly to the overall success of the Vic Juba Community Theatre.
- The involvement of volunteers within the organization will be encouraged and supported whenever possible.
- To clearly define the role for a volunteer helps the volunteer to understand what is expected of him/her. As far as possible in advance, specific activities should be identified for which a volunteer can take responsibility.
- Training will be given to all volunteers and will be reviewed and updated regularly.
- A standard of conduct must be maintained to ensure the overall success of performances at the Vic Juba Community Theatre.

### OUR VOLUNTEERS' RIGHTS

- All volunteers have the right to be treated in a courteous and respectful manner.
- All volunteers have the right to work in a safe environment and to only accept work for which he/she feels trained and comfortable doing.
- All volunteers have the right to be kept informed of events and activities at the Vic Juba Community Theatre.
- All volunteers may work at the Vic Juba Community Theatre as long as they have received the required training and fulfill their commitment to their assignment.
- All volunteers have a right to be recognized for their efforts.

### OUR VOLUNTEERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

- To act in a manner befitting a representative of the Vic Juba Community Theatre and to sign and abide by the Code of Ethics.
- To ensure the safety and security of the public and any person directly or indirectly associated with the Theatre.
- To commit to a minimum 3 shifts per year.
- To contact the Box Office before an event or performance if they are unable to make their shift.

- To become knowledgeable about how our theatre operates with regard to seating rules, ticket policies, and programming.
- To stay abreast of events or activities at the Vic Juba Community Theatre by contacting the Box Office, checking our Upcoming Events list that is emailed or mailed to you, or by checking the website.
- To contact the Box Office to update their address, phone number, email, and emergency contact as necessary.

### OUR VOLUNTEERS UNDER THE AGE OF 18

- Due to the responsibilities of an usher to ensure the safety and security of the public in the event of a fire or other emergency evacuation, volunteers under the age of 18 may not volunteer as an usher. However, minors between the ages of 16 to 18 may volunteer for the coat check -- or for a position on the technical team, provided that they present proof of age and that the young person works with at least one adult.
- The following additional requirements for a young volunteer (between 16 to 18 years old) must be met for a position on the technical team:
  - As there is the potential for a member of the technical team to work after 12:01 a.m., the parent or guardian of the young person must give written consent prior to working as a volunteer at the Vic Juba Community Theatre.
  - A staff member, the young volunteer, and the parent or guardian must complete and sign the “Safety Checklist for Young Volunteers” prior to the commencement of the first volunteer assignment.
  - Young volunteers work in the continuous presence of an adult staff member who has an approved Criminal Record Check on file at the Vic Juba Community Theatre.

## **B. CODE OF ETHICS**

As a volunteer for the Vic Juba Community Theatre, I agree to adhere to this Code of Ethics at all times. I pledge to:

- Be on time for my volunteer shift, and to provide my supervisor with as much notice as possible if I am unable to attend a given shift;
- Abide by all written policies and guidelines provided to me – relevant to my volunteer work;
- Accept orientation and training in order to provide quality service;
- Accept supervision in the performance of my duties, and I will not present myself or comment to the media as an agent of Theatre unless approved to do so by my supervisor;
- Perform all assigned tasks to the best of my ability, and to not report to work while under the influence of alcohol or drugs; and I will not consume alcoholic beverages from the Bar and Concession during pre-show or intermission;
- Treat with courtesy each individual with whom I come into contact regardless of race, colour, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or national ancestry;
- Obey all laws and regulations while volunteering for the Theatre;
- Be positive about all performances and events while at the Theatre regardless of my personal opinion;
- Bring my best skills and abilities to my volunteer work to promote the Vic Juba Community Theatre.

## C. OUR VOLUNTEER TEAMS

Volunteers are the lifeblood of many an organization and it is no different here at the Vic Juba Community Theatre. Volunteers have built this Theatre, and as it continues to evolve we are pleased to continue to include our community in the endeavors of the Theatre as we welcome the world to our stage. Below is a brief description of the four volunteer area opportunities at the Vic Juba Community Theatre. We look forward to working with you as we enrich the lives of those in our community.

**Coat Check:** *One of the first stops at the Theatre is the coat check. As a volunteer in this area, you enjoy meeting new people and love the hustle and bustle of the coat check crunch-times. You are organized and love dealing with the public.*

**Bar & Concession:** *You will work with the Theatre's great concession team to fill the orders of our hungry and thirsty patrons at one of our two concession outlets. Volunteers must have completed a ProServe Course in order to assist in the concession. A copy of the certificate must be made available to the theatre and an updated copy will be kept on file.*

**Merchandise:** *If you don't mind working with cash and enjoy meeting and assisting the public (and on occasion meeting the artist), you may enjoy helping us with merchandise. Artists bring different things to sell either before, at intermission or after the show. You, the Front of House along with another volunteer would verify the merchandise prior to the event, track sales, collect payment and assist with the balancing at the close of the event.*

**Usher:** *As an usher, you are one of our front-line ambassadors to those who attend events at the Vic Juba Community Theatre. Your duties will include taking tickets, handing out programs and assisting patrons with finding their seats for the show. Due to safety issues, volunteers must be 18 or older to become an usher.*

## **D. VOLUNTEER BENEFITS**

The theatre tries to find different ways to show our appreciation to our volunteers. Whether it's having snacks available for you in the coat check, inviting you for a meal or presenting a season kick-off or wrap-up, we hope you'll know just how valuable you are to us.

In addition, once a volunteer has assisted for 15 or more functions; you are eligible for comp tickets. These comps work on a 'first come, first serve' basis. Since the theatre has four tickets available per event; we make them available for use by our volunteers, staff or community fund-raising events. Please note this benefit is only available for those shows with a ticket price of \$60.00 or less.

## **E. FAQ's**

The following is a list of answers to some frequently asked questions new volunteers have when they come to join our Theatre family:

### **GENERAL KNOWLEDGE**

#### ***I have a friend who wants to help out. Who should they call?***

- Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer should pick up a Volunteer Registration Form at the Box Office or download one off our website [www.vicjubatheatre.ca](http://www.vicjubatheatre.ca). Volunteer forms may also be obtained by calling our box office at (780) 872-7400.

#### ***How do I find out about what volunteer shifts are available?***

- There are three ways that you may access information regarding available volunteer shifts:
  1. After you complete the Volunteer Registration Form, you will receive regular mailings or emails with a listing of available volunteer shifts;
  2. The available volunteer shifts will be posted on our website at [www.vicjubatheatre.ca](http://www.vicjubatheatre.ca).
  3. When you are at the Theatre, ask the Box Office staff what volunteer shifts are available.

#### ***How do I sign up for a volunteer shift?***

- Once you determine for which shifts you would like to volunteer, please call the Box Office at (780) 872-7400 to sign up for a specific event or come see us in person Monday to Friday from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm. You may also email us with your shifts at [box.office@vicjubatheatre.ca](mailto:box.office@vicjubatheatre.ca).
- Should we require volunteers to fill vacant shifts, we may contact you to see if you would be available to sign up for open shifts.

#### ***What if I am unable to make it for my shift?***

- If for some reason, you are unable to make it for your shift, please call the Theatre at (780) 872-7400 as soon as possible. We would appreciate it you can give us a minimum of 48 hours notice whenever possible.

#### ***Who do I talk to when I get there?***

- Please meet the Front of House (FOH) Supervisor at the Coat Check at your check-in time. All volunteers will then receive instructions as to any special event

requirements and review their role in the event of an emergency evacuation. The Audience Chamber will open 30 minutes prior to performance.

***What do I do first?***

- For all volunteers, once you arrive you will be issued your volunteer identification and, for ushers, a small flashlight. The tags are magnetic: just put the magnet on one side of your clothing and the tag on the other. At the end of the night or before you leave, please ensure that you return both items to the FOH Supervisor.

## **F. USHER NOTES**

### *Where will I work?*

- There are three audience entrances to the Theatre: two main entrances on the second floor on either side of the donor wall, and one entrance on the main floor across from the College gymnasium. The downstairs door is primarily for audience members who have trouble with mobility; the wheelchair ramp is also located at this lower entrance.

## **BEFORE THE SHOW**

### *What will happen during my shift before the show starts?*

- Please keep in mind that we cannot open the doors to the Audience Chamber until the Front of House (FOH) Supervisor has been advised that all stage setup has been completed and emergency evacuation directions have been given to all volunteers.
- Once the FOH Supervisor unlocks and opens the doors, the public is allowed to enter the Audience Chamber. Both the interior and exterior doors to the light locks should be propped open with the use of the kick-down doorstops.
- Three ushers will serve as ticket-takers, one for each door. Three ushers will be positioned inside the light locks to assist patrons in finding their seats and distributing programs, if applicable.
- The ticket-taker on the main floor Theatre entrance will direct most people to the upper audience doors, even if they are arriving through the outside doors by the gym, as we wish to keep the passageway open to aid in traffic flow and available for those people truly needing it.
- If you are taking tickets, the FOH Supervisor will position a ticket collector nearby for you to deposit the stubs into. Please pay close attention to accurately taking a ticket or ticket stub from each audience member, as on occasion some patrons have shown up for the wrong performance. The ticket stubs are used by the Theatre for recording attendance statistics. Also please check to ensure that each patron possesses the proper ticket for their age category if it is not one price admission.
- Once the house is open, ticket-takers should remain at the door until the show has begun and all latecomers have been attended to. If the usher at the inside door is busy helping a patron find a seat, and someone else needs assistance, please have them wait until the inside usher returns, rather than take them to their seats yourself.
- If an audience member claims to have complimentary access, or if a patron has lost his/her ticket, please refer them to the FOH Supervisor for assistance.
- Once all the tickets have been taken and the performance has begun, the FOH Supervisor may ask for your assistance in counting the tickets.

### ***How can I assist the patrons in advance of the doors opening?***

- For festival seating events, audiences tend to line up at the Theatre entrance to the right of the donor wall, but ticket-takers should encourage the crowds to split up between the two upper entrances so they don't all crowd to one side of the Audience Chamber. For events with assigned seating, ushers should make note of the seat numbers posted above the entrance doors, and encourage people to enter at the appropriate door.

### ***Do I help people to their seats?***

- Ushers who are not taking tickets should be available to help people find their seats as necessary. Some people merely need to be pointed in the right direction while others, particularly the elderly and disabled, may need assistance to their seat. Remember that people with difficulty walking cannot go down steps easily may require a helping hand for support. If someone with mobility difficulties is planning to take a seat near the front of the Audience Chamber but enters through an upper door, you may wish to give them the option of taking the elevator downstairs and entering from the main floor. The elevator is located on the left hand side of the corridor towards the main College entrance.

## **DURING THE SHOW**

### ***What do I do once the show starts?***

- Before the show begins, the interior doors to each of the three light locks should be closed, as well as the exterior doors to the corridor. The main floor doors will be locked once the curtain goes up, and even disabled patrons should be directed to the upper entrances (via the elevator if necessary).
- At least one usher will remain outside the Theatre's main doors on the upper level. (This position will be rotated during the performance.) The other ushers will be assigned a station inside the Theatre in the event of an emergency evacuation.

### ***What about people who come late?***

- It is the rental group's decision how to handle latecomers, but generally they are let in at an appropriate part of the show (upper level only). Ordinarily, we will have the TV monitor outside the upper right door turned on, so you can see what is happening inside the Theatre. For musical performances, this is usually between numbers while the audience is applauding. For plays and other events, the groups should advise us as to when to let in latecomers.
- When admitting people once the show has started, bring them into the light lock first, and wait for the exterior door to fully close before bringing them into the Audience Chamber itself. This prevents outside light and sound from spilling into the house during a show.

- For the most part, you can expect latecomers to continue trickling in for 10-15 minutes after the house is closed, and at least one usher will remain outside throughout the show.
- Depending on circumstances, the house lights may be turned down during a show while latecomers are being seated. Ushers should point their flashlights on the floor where the patron is stepping to assist them to their seats.
- Even if patrons have tickets for further down in the Audience Chamber, latecomers should be seated near the back, behind the other audience members. They can take their assigned or preferred seats after the intermission if there is one. The same holds true for people who leave and come back while the show is taking place.

***What about people who leave during a performance?***

- Ushers inside the Audience Chamber should make themselves available to audience members leaving during the show. This includes people leaving to use the washrooms, settle a noisy child, people with coughing fits, etc. When you see somebody heading toward the exit, approach him or her with your flashlight to assist them to the door, holding the interior door open for them. As with people entering during a show, have them wait in the light lock until one set of doors has closed before opening the second set.
- Periodically, management or technical staff (sound and lighting operators, for instance) will need to move in and out of the Control Booth, which is accessed from the upper house entrance light lock.

**AT INTERMISSION**

***What do I do at intermission?***

- At intermission (if there is one), the house lights will be brought back up, and ushers should prop open interior and exterior doors to allow traffic to move freely out of the Theatre.
- Please offer to help out anyone needing physical assistance getting out of the Theatre.
- Washrooms are located across the hallway on the second floor of the Theatre, as well as on the main floor down the administration corridor past the Coat Check and Box Office.
- Once again, please be extra vigilant about audience members returning to the Theatre with food or drink from the Bar & Concession.
- When the show starts again, both the interior and exterior doors should again be closed.

## AFTER THE SHOW

### *What about after the show?*

- The houselights will come up and the ushers should open up the interior and exterior doors and provide assistance to those requiring it and please say “Good Night” to our patrons as they are leaving.
- Ushers on the lower level patrol in front of stage to ensure audience members do not try to access the stage to talk to the artists.
- **Once the audience has left and the house is empty**, the ushers should walk up and down the aisles and pick up any leftover programs or litter on the floors or in the seats. Any lost-and-found items should be given to the Front-Of-House Supervisor, who will put them away for safekeeping.
- Once the doors are locked up, the public is generally not allowed back into the Audience Chamber. However, sometimes people have forgotten an item in the seats, or a performer accidentally gets locked out. Please direct these individuals to the FOH Supervisor.

## OTHER INFO

### *What about food and drink in the Theatre?*

- There is no food allowed in the Audience Chamber.
- Should patrons attempt to bring food or drinks into the theatre, please politely ask them to put it away before taking their seat. If someone has a question or concern about this policy, as with other policies, please direct him or her to the FOH Supervisor or to Theatre management when possible.

### *Where is wheelchair seating located?*

- There is a space inside each of the upper audience entrances for wheelchairs. Each space is able to accommodate one person each. In addition, there are removable seats located in the front centre row of the Theatre to accommodate wheelchair users – these seats are usually and preferably arranged for ahead of time. Some patrons with limited mobility may choose to sit in a seat in the front row. In some cases, they may be able to leave their wheelchair, walker, canes, etc. in front of them as long as they do not obstruct any pathways and are acceptable to the performers. Should this not be possible, their wheelchair, etc. will be removed to the coatcheck on the main level or the technical office area on the upper level.
- On the main floor, there is a wheelchair ramp entrance that leads into the lower level of the Theatre. As with upstairs, these doors should be propped open while the house is being let in.

### ***Who else do I need to know?***

- Reporters, photographers, and other members of the news media frequently arrive to cover a show. Different rental groups have different policies regarding whether they allow photographs during a show; whether they allow flash photography; whether they can set up early; whether reporters are allowed backstage, etc. Unless you have been told otherwise, please refer these people to the FOH Supervisor.
- Performers who are unsure where to meet their group usually can be directed to use the Stage Door next to the Loading Dock overhead door (outside and around the building to the left).
- Performers who move between the Audience Chamber and the backstage area need to use the backstage door (Audience Left) rather than using the stage. It is requested that no persons be on stage during the 30 minutes prior to performance.
- Fans of a show that want to get backstage for an autograph or wish to see a performer can be advised that there may be an autograph session after the show. The backstage space is available to artists & performers, whether a professional act or community group, and is a private area where they can prepare for a show uninterrupted.
- If people connected with the organization of the show have any enquiries, please direct them to the FOH Supervisor.
- Sometimes people without tickets to a show will ask ushers if they can be let in “just to take a quick peak at the Theatre.” Unfortunately, during a booking the rental group has exclusive access to the space, and ushers should tell these people to contact Theatre management for an appointment.

### ***What do I do if someone is injured or ill?***

- In the event of an illness or injury, please advise the FOH Supervisor (who has been trained in First Aid). The FOH Supervisor is required to complete an Injury / Illness Incident Report Form.

## G. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

### Emergency Evacuation

1. In the event of an emergency evacuation, the Sound Technician powers down the main sound system and the Light Technician powers down the stage lighting and brings the house lights to full.
2. The Technical Director will announce that an evacuation will be necessary and that the Ushers and staff will take charge.
3. In the event of fire, the General Manager or designate will immediately call the Fire Department – phone number 911.
4. The Ushers will pin back all Audience Chamber doors with the use of the kick-down doorstops and lead the audience members to the exterior exits.
5. The Front of House Supervisor and Ushers will be stationed as follows:
  - The **Front of House Supervisor** proceeds to the bottom of the house to assist with the exiting of the audience members from the chamber. Patrons will be instructed by the FOH Supervisor to exit right and left through the exit doors starting at the first row, then the second row, etc. After ensuring that the chamber has been cleared, the FOH Supervisor will ensure that all patrons have safely exited from the main level.
  - 1 **Usher** Audience Right (lower level) to lead patrons to the door by the gymnasium. This Usher will remain at the gymnasium exit to prevent the re-entry of anyone. (An additional usher will assist if 6 ushers are on site – this usher will hold open the outside College door.)
  - 1 **Usher** Audience Left (lower level) to lead patrons to the Backstage Exit.
  - 1 **Usher** Audience Right (upper level) to lead patrons to exit through the emergency exit door by the washrooms and down the stairwell.
  - 1 **Usher** Audience Left (upper level) to direct patrons to join those audience members exiting through the house right doors and down the stairwell. (An additional usher will assist if 6 ushers are on site – this usher will hold open the outside College door.)
  - The **Technical Director** will proceed to the stage once all systems are powered down and ensure that the stage and all backstage areas are cleared. Exiting from the stage and loading dock shall occur through the stage door and exiting from the other backstage areas shall occur through the exit located by the Black Box.
  - The **Technical Director** will be stationed in the Upper Lobby to ensure that patrons do not use the elevator and that all patrons safely exit from that level.
6. Should the use of a particular emergency exit be inadvisable the Usher on duty will be instructed to block off the exit in question by standing in front of it and directing patrons to alternative exits.

7. Wheelchair patrons should wait until the house is cleared as they can block exit ways and slow down the flow of people exiting. If possible, all wheelchair patrons in the lower level should exit via the wheelchair ramp. Wheelchair patrons on the upper level should be moved inside the fire safe stairwell to allow for removal by firemen. A member of the evacuation team will remain with this patron until rescued.
8. In the event of a dance festival or dance performance when we have a significant number of dancers backstage, the usher assigned Audience Lower Left would NOT take the audience through the backstage exit. The usher will use the exit Audience Lower Right (Gym Doors).
9. Use common sense and discretion in the use of a fire extinguisher. Your safety and that of the occupants of the Theatre is first and foremost. Only attempt to extinguish or control the fire if minimal danger exists or unless it is absolutely necessary and safe to do so (e.g. to clear your escape route). See attachment for location of extinguishers and fire alarm stations.
10. After the Audience Chamber is cleared, the Ushers and Front of House Supervisor will close all Audience Chamber doors. The Technical Director shall check the upstairs washrooms. The General Manager/or designate shall check the main level washrooms.
11. Once all areas are secured, all staff and Ushers shall proceed to the marshalling area, which is the west parking lot. Their responsibility will be to ensure that no vehicles leave the area so that fire and police vehicles are not impeded in any way.
12. If necessary, vehicles could be moved south towards the College residences only if they do not interfere with emergency vehicles.
13. No one will be allowed to re-enter the facility until told to do so by the Lakeland College Fire Marshall or the local Fire Department.
14. The General Manager shall have the sole authority to delay evacuation if he/she feels that they are dealing with a false alarm.
15. The Technical Director will review the emergency exits and location of fire extinguishers with large dance groups and school concerts upon arrival. The Technical Director will ensure that the client assigns someone within the client's group to take responsibility for evacuating the backstage areas and this information shall be communicated to the FOH Supervisor.
16. A simple rule to follow is that those nearest the exit move out first.
17. Above all remain calm, and exude confidence in what you are doing.

## H. FIRE EXTINGUISHERS, EXITING & FIRST AID

### Fire Extinguishers – Lower Level Locations



- Backstage Janitorial Room
- Backstage between washroom and janitor's room
- Backstage Hallway
- Box Office
- Outside Coat Check (to left of monitor)

### Fire Extinguishers – Upper Level Locations



- Across from Donor Wall (Upper Level)
- Control Booth
- Dimmer Room
- Upper Level Lobby (below monitor)

### Operation of a Fire Extinguisher

Use this acronym as a quick reference in the operation of a fire extinguisher: **PASS**

1. **Pull the Pin** at the top of the extinguisher. The pin releases a locking mechanism and will allow you to discharge the extinguisher.
2. **Aim at the base of the fire**, not the flames. This is important - in order to put out the fire, you must extinguish the fuel.
3. **Squeeze the lever slowly**. This will release the extinguishing agent in the extinguisher. If the handle is released, the discharge will stop.
4. **Sweep from side to side**. Using a sweeping motion, move the fire extinguisher back and forth until the fire is completely out. Operate the extinguisher from a safe distance, several feet away, and then move towards the fire once it starts to diminish. Be sure to read the instructions on your fire extinguisher - different fire extinguishers recommend operating them from different distances. Remember: Aim at the base of the fire, not at the flames!!!!



## Fire Alarm Stations

**PS**

### **Lower Level**

- Entrance Next to Gym
- Loading Dock
- Backstage hallway near Emergency Exit
- Bottom of Audience Chamber Left
- Bottom of Audience Chamber Right

### **Upper Level**

- Emergency Exit (across from Donor Wall – next to washrooms)



Pull down the bar on the fire alarm station to activate the alarm.

## First Aid Kit Locations

**FA**

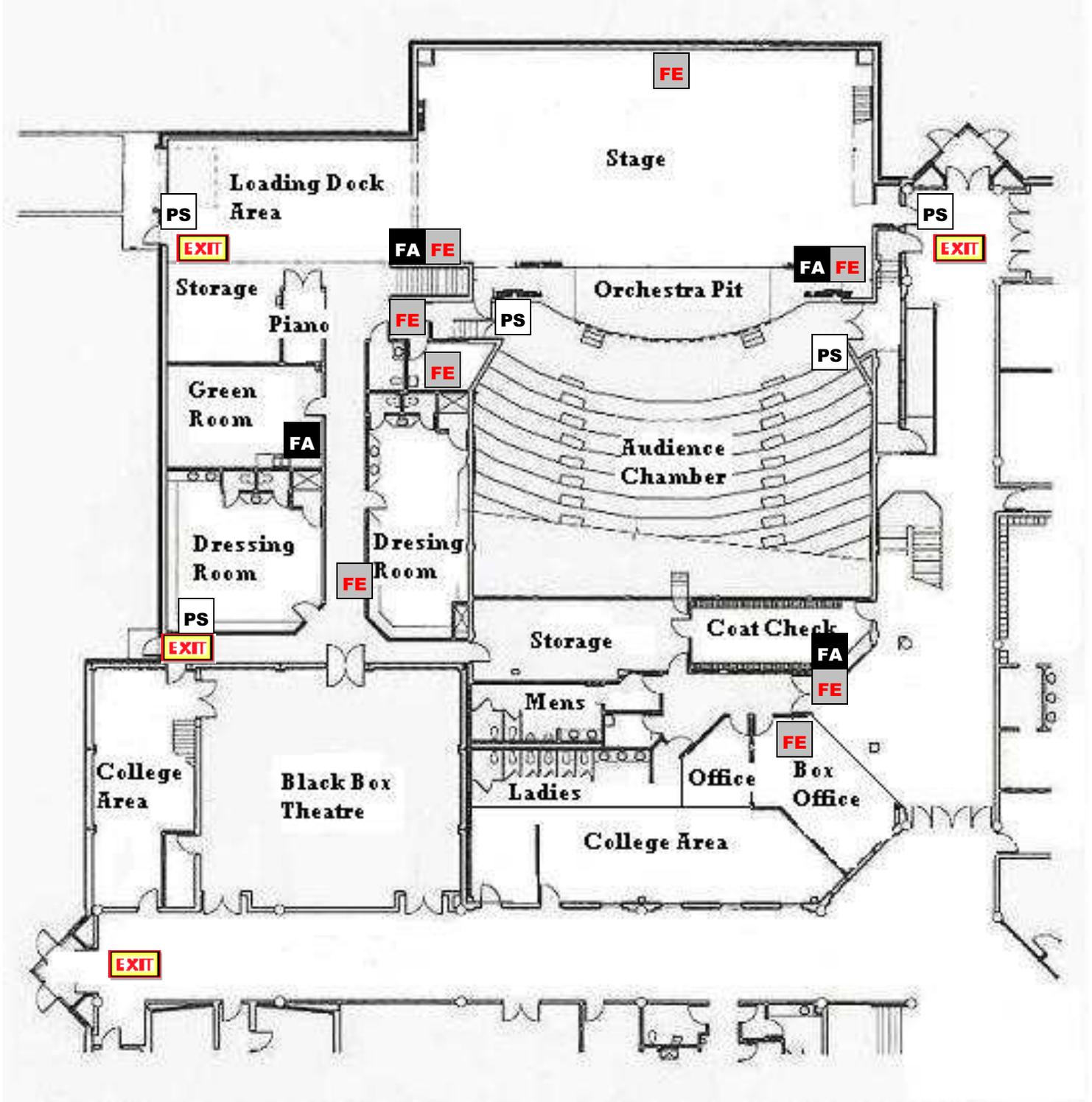
### **Upper Level**

- Light Lock (Audience Left)

### **Lower Level**

- Coat Check
- Green Room
- Stage Left
- Stage Right
- Orchestra Pit

# MAIN LEVEL



# UPPER LEVEL

