



MICHIGAN THEATER VOLUNTEER USHER PROGRAM

WELCOME

Welcome to the Michigan Theater – Ann Arbor’s historic specialty film and performing arts theater! The mission of the Michigan Theater Foundation, Inc., a not-for-profit organization, is to operate and restore the Michigan Theater to benefit the community and the arts.

The Michigan Theater is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It opened in 1928 as a silent/vaudeville theater. Such stars as Jack Benny and Louis Armstrong have appeared on the Michigan’s stage. In 1979, with television out gaining the movie industry, the theater was abandoned as an unprofitable venue by its operators.

A group of volunteers formed the Michigan Theater Foundation, Inc., to preserve and operate the theater. Volunteer efforts have played in integral part in maintaining the Michigan Theater throughout the years and have greatly contributed to its success. As a volunteer usher, you will continue this tradition.

Welcome to the Michigan Theater volunteer usher crew! Your efforts and dedication are truly appreciated.

THE MICHIGAN THEATER USHER

Volunteer ushers are very important to the Michigan Theater. Ushers are ambassadors for the theater and may be the first contact our patrons have with the theater. We want our patrons to have a wonderful experience every time they enter the facility. As an usher, you can make the difference. Ushers must be professional, attentive, and must listen and communicate well.

We ask that all volunteer ushers remember and honor Michigan Theater policies. These policies are set forth to insure the proud reputation of the theater. Each usher is personally responsible for upholding this reputation and for seeing that our patrons’ experience is one that will bring them back again and again.

RESPONSIBILITIES

ATTIRE

Our patrons must be able to easily identify someone who can assist them. To this end, we require ushers to wear the following:

- Nice black pants (no jeans) or skirt
- White shirt or blouse (polo shirt is acceptable for rock/blues concerts)
- Tie preferred for Symphony ushers
- All black shoes (comfortable, but not athletic shoes)

Please bring and carry a small flashlight for every performance. If you don't have one, we have a limited supply of loaners.

PROMPTNESS

Please arrive no later than the time you are told by the volunteer coordinator (usually 1.5 hours prior to curtain time). It is critical that you arrive on time and ready to go. Otherwise you may not be allowed to usher for the event (this is at the discretion of the Head Usher).

Those who are on time will have first pick of ushering locations. Those who are late will be assigned to their location by the Head Usher. The head usher may also reassign you to a different aisle to better serve our patrons.

If you are unable to usher for a performance please inform **Volunteer Services** at **734-668-8397 extension 39** or e-mail **volunteers@michtheater.org**. We will find a substitute for you.

MICHIGAN THEATER USHER POLICIES

There are a few very important policies at the Theater that you should be familiar with:

- It is Michigan Theater usher policy that after 3 no-call, no-shows you are dismissed as an usher.
- There is absolutely no drinking alcohol while volunteering as an usher
- Please treat the customers, house staff, ushers and head ushers with respect. The Head Usher has the right to dismiss you from an event if they feel you not cooperating or neglecting your duties. They will report this to the volunteer coordinator for further evaluation.
- During "popcorn time" you are allowed a free **small popcorn and fountain drink** (other concession items are available for purchase). You will be informed at each usher briefing when you may go get your refreshments. **Make sure that there is always an usher at your station before you leave.** Refreshments are not to be consumed while on duty or during intermission so please do not eat inside the Theater. Popcorn is not to be eaten before the show and please allow customers to order at the concession stand ahead of you.

USHERING DUTIES

ARRIVAL

1. Report to the Head Usher and **sign in!** (If you do not sign in you will be marked as a no-show and we must record all volunteer hours). Take a nametag and a flashlight.
2. Personal belongings may be placed in the usher coatroom on the upstairs mezzanine. This area will be locked during the performance; however, the theater is not responsible for lost or stolen articles, so please leave valuables at home. The Head Usher or House Manager will have a key
3. Attend the usher meeting approximately an hour before curtain time. The Head Usher will be leading this meeting.
4. Stuff inserts into programs if required.
5. Be at your station when the lobby doors open (the Head Usher will inform you when).
6. Open doors to the auditorium when signaled by the Head Usher (usually a half hour before curtain).

PRIOR TO CURTAIN

1. Escort patrons to their seats.
2. Distribute programs.
3. Offer assistance to anyone asking for help.
4. Refer any seating disputes to the Head Usher or House Manager.
5. Close the auditorium doors when signaled.
6. An usher will remain outside the doors as the performance begins.
7. Seat late-comers at the appropriate time (the Head Usher or House Manager will advise).

DURING THE PERFORMANCE

1. Ushers may be seated in empty seats, preferably near an aisle and in the last six rows. Please wait until 20 minutes (after late seating) into the performance before being seated.
2. Be available in case of an emergency. Please know location of all emergency exits.
3. If you notice cameras or recording equipment being used (when they are not allowed), please inform security personnel, the Head Usher, or the House Manager.
4. Make sure at least one person remains at the aisle door to help patrons. If there are seats available you may sit **behind the cross-aisle** or in the back of the balcony so you'll be available if needed.

DURING INTERMISSION

1. Please return to your station during intermission to offer assistance as needed.
2. Ensure that alcohol is not brought into the auditorium and that there is no smoking in the building.

DEPARTURE

1. You are expected to remain on duty until after the last intermission. Some ushers may be asked to stay until the end of the performance.
2. Please inform the Head Usher of your departure. Return your name tag and flashlight to the appropriate boxes.

GENERAL INFORMATION

EMERGENCY EXITS

Emergency exits are marked by illuminated neon “EXIT” signs. Please familiarize yourself with all exit locations. In the event of an emergency, you must direct patrons to the closest accessible exits.

ACCIDENTS/PROBLEMS

In the case of an accident suffered by a patron or an usher or any problem you cannot resolve, please contact the House Manager or Head Usher immediately. Never argue with a patron; always be polite and refer the dispute to the proper person.

RESTROOMS

Restrooms are located upstairs on the mezzanine level between aisles 6 and 7 and on the main floor by the screening room (through the main lobby and to the left down the long hallway. The main floor restrooms are mobility-impaired accessible.

MOBILITY-IMPAIRED SEATING

Seating for mobility-impaired patrons is located on the main floor in the cross aisles in rows FFF and GGG. You will be informed if seats have been sold in this section. Chairs may be placed in this section to accommodate patrons accompanying mobility-impaired patrons. If chairs are needed, contact the Head Usher or the House Manager. Please do not let anyone without permission sit in this area.

LATE SEATING

It is the policy of the Michigan Theater to seat latecomers at an appropriate break in the performance. This break will be predetermined by the producers of the event and announced at the event briefing. Ideally, there should be only one late seating approximately 10 to 20 minutes into the show. Politely hold patrons outside the auditorium until this time. You will be informed of any changes in this policy.

REFRESHMENTS

Refreshments are available for purchase at the concession stand. You will find out at the usher meeting if snacks are allowed inside the Theater for that particular show (there is no food allowed inside the Theater during Symphony Concerts)

DRINKING FOUNTAIN

The drinking fountain is located on the main floor between the men’s and women’s restroom. Go through the main lobby, to the left, and down the long hallway.

TELEPHONE

We do not have a public telephone. If a patron needs to place a call, have them talk to the House Manager (who has a house phone).

SMOKING

Smoking is not allowed anywhere in the Michigan Theater. Patrons may smoke outside the building as long as they retain their ticket stubs.

**Make sure to ask the Head Usher or House Manager if you have any questions or concerns! And, you can always contact the volunteer coordinator by email at volunteers@michtheater.org or if you do not have email by phone at 734-668-8397 ext. 39

Thanks for volunteering!

MICHIGAN THEATER SEATING INFORMATION

The following is a brief description that will help you when reading tickets and seating patrons:

AISLES

- MAIN FLOOR aisles are 1, 2, 3, and 4.
- BALCONY aisles are 5, 6, 7, and 8.

ROWS

- MAIN FLOOR begins at row A and ends at TT, with no I, O, or Q.
- Rows FFF and GGG are the mobility-impaired accessible seats.
- BALCONY begins at row A and ends at row S, the back corner wedges being MM, NN, PP, and SS.

SECTIONS

Each floor has three sections:

- RIGHT SECTION seats are all even numbers (2, 4, 6, etc.).
- CENTER SECTION seats are all 3-digit numbers (101, 102, 103, etc.).
- LEFT SECTION SEATS are all odd numbers (1, 3, 5, etc.).