

MPA Cast & Crew Etiquette for Performance Programs & Main Stage Shows

Purpose

This is intended to promote a positive and respectful environment for all cast and crew members. MPA is a safe space for everyone, and we can only achieve that by working together! By auditioning or enrolling in a performance program, you are agreeing to these rules, expectations, and consequences.

At MPA we value:

- *Honesty and Integrity
- *Treating everyone with dignity and respect.
- *Avoiding conflicts of interest.
- *Professionalism
- *Positively encouraging others in their roles and being a team player.
- *Taking responsibility for our own success/failures and recognizing those who have helped us succeed.

If this is your first experience performing with MPA, you will find there is a high degree of excellence and dedication from everyone involved in our productions. We have high standards, but we also never forget that we also do community theater to have fun! This cast and crew are community theatre in every sense of the word. We have cast and crew members who have never been on stage before as well as those who have many years of skill and experience. Most are volunteers. We do this work because we love it. We work together to create the absolute best show possible. We are dedicated to helping each other grow, hone our craft and skills, and to enjoy the process of doing theatre together.

Here are guidelines that are consistent from show to show. These are designed to help facilitate the smooth functioning of rehearsal, performances, and other facets of the process to produce a show. Each director may have additional expectations or variations to the guidelines and will let you know what these are during your first read through, first class or at the audition.

ACCEPTANCE OF ROLE & AVAILABILITY

- When actors audition for a show, or enroll in a performance driven class, summer camp intensive or crew members commit to a production position, they are assumed to be available for normal rehearsal periods through the end of the run of the show / showcase AND striking of the set and location cleanup.
- Theatre is an ensemble art. When you agree to participate in a play, musical or performance driven class you become an important member of a team, a team who is relying upon you to make the production reality. Your commitment is an unwritten contract and a promise to all the other cast and crew that you will be there and *be prepared*. We ask that if you must drop out after you commit to your role as a team member that it be in case of emergency only. The actions of any individual have influence on the success or failure of a production that requires weeks and hundreds of people-hours to prepare.

BE THERE

1. **CONFLICTS.** Be sure to write down all the conflicts you are aware of on your audition form. If an emergency or serious conflict arises during the rehearsal process, notify your stage manager immediately, not another cast or crew member. The absence of any person can waste the time of many others. More than 2 unexcused absences may result in the dismissal from a production.
For performance driven classes and summer camp intensives, do not enroll if you will be gone any class day, showcase or performance without getting approval from the Education Director first.
2. **CALL.** This is the time that you are expected to be at rehearsal or at a performance, in your place ready to start. This should tell you that you should arrive in plenty of time to warm up, change into rehearsal clothing and organize yourself so you are ready to work at the time you are called. The daily schedule is published via the BAND app. Check the calendar for your call time each day and pay particular attention to your "first call" so that you arrive at your first call on time. If for any reason you do not receive the schedule, you are responsible for calling your stage manager.
For students enrolled in Broadway Jr, Off Broadway, a musical theater intensive or other performance driven class your call time is the start of class.
3. **PUNCTUALITY.** There is no excuse for being late. Make it your goal to arrive 15 minutes prior to your call time. If there is an emergency, call your stage manager immediately. If you are going to be late, it will be marked as unexcused. Excessive lateness may result in dismissal from the production or affect future participation in performances. Please let your stage manager know right away via email, text, or the BAND app for any lateness.
4. **SIGN IN SHEET.** Sign in at every rehearsal and performance at the stage door unless otherwise directed by the Stage Manager.

REHEARSAL

1. **REHEARSALS.** We spend more time in rehearsal than we do in performance. This is our process; you can learn a great deal by observing the director and other actors. Minimize talking or other noise in the rehearsal area when you are not involved in the scene. Take full advantage of your rehearsal time by being attentive and respectful. Rehearsals are for exploring the possibilities the text offers; commit to the process and your skills will be strengthened.
2. **REHEARSAL END TIME.** No one should leave a rehearsal until dismissed by the director or the stage manager. The absence of any one person can waste the time of many others. If an emergency requires leaving, it is the responsibility of the actor or crew member to notify the Director or Stage Manager, immediately and not another cast or crew member.
3. **PREPARE.** Come to rehearsal fully prepared to work. Engage your character research as soon as you are cast and develop the history and life of your character outside of rehearsal. Memorize your lines and review your lines and notes between the end of one rehearsal and the beginning of the next. For music rehearsals, bring an audio recording device. For all rehearsals bring your script, paper, a pencil and water bottle.
4. **WARM-UP.** Give yourself plenty of time to warm-up. You are responsible for ensuring that you are physically, vocally, and mentally ready to work at the scheduled call time. ***Broadway Jr, Off-Broadway and some other acting classes may warm-up together at the beginning of class.***
5. **USE OF TIME.** There certainly is a social aspect and great camaraderie that happens in participation in creating theatre. Remember, however, that the focus of being together during production, rehearsals, work-calls, and performance, is in creating an excellent and memorable performance. If your active participation is not required for a while, spend time for line study, observing and learning from other actors and the director or performing other production related activities as appropriate.
6. **NOTES.** When the director gives you notes, pay attention, and write them down. Respond to the note with a "thank you." If you need clarity, ask for greater detail, but do not argue with the note. Actors are responsible for taking the notes given to them and incorporating them into the work. Notes are not just for you; everyone gets them. You can strengthen your own work by listening carefully to the notes given to other actors. Continually review your notes and be sure to incorporate them into your work. If you need to discuss a note, talk with the director in private. The only person to give notes is the director, not the stage manager or other actors. Notes

are expected to be written down and reviewed before the next rehearsal.

7. SCRIPT. Memorize your lines verbatim. No more, no less. Do not paraphrase your lines. The playwright chose the words for a reason; work to discover the syntax, rhythms, and language that the playwright has given your character and no other. You have an ethical responsibility to perform the text as written.
8. BEING OFF BOOK/OTHER DEADLINES. When the cast is scheduled to be off-book (Not using the script or written notes for lines) it is expected that each cast member will know their lines. Remember, until your lines are memorized, you are just someone trying to remember something. When lines are memorized, actors can actually start acting and the rehearsal process can move forward. When lines are not memorized, not only does it hurt the development of your own character but also the show as a whole.
9. LINE NOTES. Actors are responsible for performing the work of the playwright verbatim. Stage Management will, on specified rehearsal dates, take note of which lines are dropped, paraphrased, added, skipped, and jumped. They will also note when you call for a line. These notes will either be posted or given to you after rehearsal. Make sure you review these notes and fix the problems they identify.
10. ACTOR NOTES. NEVER give notes to another actor. It is rude and not your job. How would you feel if someone else told you what to do? It is the director's job to direct and the actor's job to act. The stage manager's job is to stage manage, etc.
11. ALCOHOL, DRUGS, TOBACCO, VAPOR PRODUCTS AND GUM USE. No alcohol or drugs or tobacco, or vapor products are to be consumed on the premises before, and during any rehearsals and performances. No gum unless by instruction from your director as a part of your role. Smoking, vapor product and tobacco product use is allowed only outside the building away from any doors. Dispose of field stripped cigarette butts in trash only, this means not the street, courtyard grass, and sidewalk or flowerpots.
12. VISITORS AND GUESTS. Cast and crew members are discouraged from bringing visitors to rehearsal. Check with your Director to see what their policy is. Individuals not connected with the rehearsal should not attend rehearsals unless it is arranged through the director or stage manager. At the discretion of your director, rehearsals may be closed to the public, parents, family, or friends. ABSOLUTELY NO VISITORS IN THE GREEN ROOM, DRESSING ROOMS OR BACKSTAGE BEFORE OR AFTER PERFORMANCES! Most actors use the time before a performance to get into make-up, costume and concentrate on their character. People other than cast/crew are an unneeded and annoying distraction. If you feel you must give someone a "tour", please arrange it ahead of time, checking first with the Director, House Manager and Stage Manager.
13. FOOD. Because we all work jobs in "real life", or are sometimes coming straight from school, we sometimes rush directly from work to rehearsals or performances. Food in the house or backstage is permitted during rehearsal as long as the posted guidelines for disposing of food and food containers are followed. A recycle can is in the lobby. Concessions in the lobby are available to cast and crew at a reduced rate. If you must eat dinner at the theatre before a performance, take it to the stage door. Be sure all food and food containers are removed from the premises before you leave. If you bring it in, take it out. And never, ever, eat in costume!
14. CLEAN UP. The house, dressing rooms, green room, rehearsal space and auditorium are to be kept clean during rehearsals. Check your rehearsal environment (theater, lobby and backstage) before you leave each time. Please make sure costumes are hung up after each rehearsal and performance.
15. REHEARSAL REPORTS. Read them! Rehearsal reports will be posted in BAND. Administrators can see who reads them and who has not. Everything in the rehearsal report matters to you and your guardians. If you don't read it, it is disrespecting the time and energy of the person who wrote it. Almost all questions can be answered in a rehearsal report.
16. ASK FOR HELP. Help will always be available at MPA for those who ask for it. Speak up!

COSTUMES

1. HAIR. When you are cast your appearance becomes the basis of the costume designer's palette. You cannot change the cut, style, or color of your hair without first seeking the approval of the costume designer. Likewise, you cannot acquire additional piercings or tattoos without prior permission!
2. REHEARSAL COSTUMES. These are costumes you wear during rehearsal to help you discover the physicality and locomotion possibilities and constraints of the clothing. If you are wearing rehearsal costumes, make sure you

put them on at the beginning of rehearsal, and return them the way you found them after rehearsal. ***Off Broadway students will need to wear all black with no logos unless it's an MPA t-shirt. This includes shoes, which can be borrowed from the MPA stock of dance shoes if needed. It is encouraged that Off Broadway students treat themselves as a company and wear black to every class.***

3. **FITTINGS.** Do not be late. Do not tell the designer how to do their job. If you have a concern, voice it. If you have a preference, keep it to yourself.
4. **DRESSING ROOM.** Your station will be assigned. If there are classes scheduled in the dressing room, you must store your makeup kit and other supplies in the designated areas. Be respectful of your fellow actors and each person's individual needs when preparing for performance. After curtain call, return your costume pieces to the designated racks (notifying the wardrobe crew of anything of which they should be aware). Clean your station and push in your chair before leaving. There is no eating, drinking, chewing gum or smoking while in costume and no food and beverages are allowed in the dressing room. Water is the only exception to this rule. Wear your costume as prescribed for every performance. You are not allowed to make changes to your costume.
5. **PERSONAL HYGIENE***proper under clothes, deodorant, shower, personal hygiene
6. **MAKEUP.** Actors are responsible for their own makeup. During the dress rehearsal period, assistance in the design and technique for each character will be provided, but normally each actor should be able to apply their own makeup following the final dress rehearsal. Assistance will be provided for special makeup applications.

PROPERTIES

1. **PROPS.** Check your props before rehearsals and performances to ensure that they are where you need them. Use the prop during the rehearsal or performance only as it was designed to be used. Never touch any prop that is not assigned to you. Never sit on production furniture when it is backstage. Return your props to the prop table after rehearsals and performances. Check your pockets! Notify the backstage crew if any of your props need maintenance.

TECH REHEARSAL – techies are people too!

1. **DARK AND QUIET TIME.** This is the beginning of the technical rehearsal process when the lighting and sound designers build cues and set levels. This is not about you. Be attentive, patient and cooperative. You will be asked to stand onstage and move to different locations as the lighting designer creates looks and sets levels. Keep talking to a minimum. Feel free to bring something to read but be aware that you will be asked to keep your head up so your face can be fully seen. The stage manager will tell you what color clothing to wear. Make sure you wear the appropriate clothing—it's very important! While you can accomplish work during technical rehearsals, techs are primarily for the designers and technicians. Give them your full attention and patience.
2. **TECHIES ARE PEOPLE TOO!** You are all part of the same company whether you are an actor or a member of the crew. If you are disrespectful to others, they lose respect for you.

WORKING TOGETHER

1. **STAGE MANAGER.** When a member of the stage management staff tells you something, always reply with "thank you" so they know you have heard and understand the direction.
2. **RESPECT YOURSELF.** Respect yourself by eating properly and getting sleep during rehearsals and performances. Your health is critical to the rest of the cast. Wash your hands, avoid sharing food and avoid high-impact sports. Take extra care of your voice and avoid screaming or straining in any way during the rehearsal process.
3. **RESPECT OTHERS.** Respect others by treating everyone as you wish to be treated. You are all part of the same company whether you are an actor or a member of the crew. If you are disrespectful to others, they lose respect for you. It takes a lot of courage and vulnerability to get up and sing, dance, and act in front of peers. Always look for the good and offer encouragement to your classmates. *Remember that the staff can hire you again, the crew can hurt you, the director can make your life miserable, the designer can make you look stupid and your fellow cast members are your support system on and off the stage.*
4. **READ.** You are liable and responsible for anything you sign. Read the audition form and etiquette agreement carefully and ask your stage manager or director if you have any questions.

5. CELL PHONES, MP3 PLAYERS, IPADS, ETC. MPA adheres to a strict policy of no cell phone use in the building. You may use your cell phone on announced breaks, but only by stepping out of the rehearsal or performance area. Cell phones are to be turned off when not in use. If a family emergency requires you to have access to your cell phone, speak with the director for an exception to the policy. These devices can cause inattentiveness or unwanted distractions. No use of any kind including texting or games, in the theatre, backstage or in the lobby. Check with your Director on any exceptions.
6. DRAMA. Keep it on the stage. Just because we play dramatic characters onstage does not mean we must portray them off. If you have a personal problem with a fellow actor, please leave it at the door. If there is a problem with a fellow cast member that is seriously disrupting your ability to work, talk to the director, stage manager or Education Director.
7. GOSSIP. Just say no. It can be hurtful and destructive to the process. This includes anything that happened in rehearsals. Do not talk about your show with people outside of the show. Only if something is wrong, then talk about it with a director or stage manager. What happens in rehearsal, stays at rehearsal.
8. LANGUAGE. You may not be offended by particular use of words or consider something a “bad” word, but it may make others feel bad. To keep MPA a safe space for everyone, any derogatory or profane language is unacceptable and not permitted when there are cast or crew members under the age of 16 involved. Any use of profane language or conversation topics that are considered inappropriate (innuendos, etc.) regardless of language used, will result in an immediate dismissal from the production, and no refund if MTP or class. For community theater productions where everyone is over the age of 16, this rule is at the director’s discretion and will be discussed at the first read through.
9. OWN IT! If you are offended, immediately go to the stage manager so that it can be resolved. If you hear something that is offensive to you (*not what you think is offensive to someone else*) talk to the stage manager. If you need to have a private conversation with someone, go outside. We cannot be in all places at once, if something needs to be addressed, help us help you.
10. BULLYING. Treat everyone with dignity and respect, this includes online social media and in-person. At MPA we do not tolerate any types of bullying. Community theater brings all types of different people together. People who have different beliefs, ideologies, and ways of looking at the world. Theater is a way that we can all work together, regardless of belief to put on a great show.
11. PHOTOGRAPHY AND SOCIAL MEDIA. You may not publish in any format including social media, photographs of minor children who are in the production without the written permission of their parents. Social media is a wonderful tool for promoting a performance. Please use your own social media to promote the production. Please “like” our Metropolitan Performing Arts Facebook page daily and “share” our posts and information on your own page. We encourage you to forward any good photographs you might have to our marketing director who may use them on our webpage and in other promotions of the production or MPA.
12. ACTOR AND DIRECTOR. Actor’s act. Directors direct. Do not confuse the two. Please do not direct your fellow actors during rehearsal or performances. Most Directors are open to suggestions but clear any suggestions you may have with them first, in private. If you need to share an idea or do not feel good about some aspect of the show, including your character, blocking, etc., talk to your director privately. If you have needs, positive suggestions about the production or about the facility, or unresolvable issues with other cast members or crew, please discuss them one-on-one with the director or their designated person at an appropriate time. Do not expect the director to stop production or rehearsal to listen to your input or complaint. Do not expect an immediate response or change. The Director will respectfully consider your input but is under no obligation to integrate your suggestions into the performance. Never argue with the Director in front of other actors from the stage or any other place, during any part of the rehearsal process.
13. EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS. Educators can not be alone with a single child without another adult or student in the room. The only exception to this rule is private lessons. Educators, per their contract to work at MPA are not allowed to be friends with or follow any students via any social media platforms. The best way to communicate directly with an educator is through the BAND app.
14. DRESS CODE. Please do not wear clothing with offensive language, innuendos, or slang. Please refrain from wearing clothing that does not cover your midriff and/or rear end (even while dancing).

PERFORMANCES

1. PERFORMANCES. You must arrive at the theatre via the stage door. You must sign in at every performance and scan the callboard for any important announcements. Sign in for yourself, and only yourself. Stage Management needs to know that everyone is present; the sign-in sheet serves this purpose. Commit to your personal best for every performance. The people in a small audience paid the same ticket price as the people in a sold-out house. You worked hard during rehearsal so do not shortchange yourself, your cast or the audience. Challenge yourself to stay fresh.
2. SOUND CHECK & MICS. Please be quiet during the sound check. During sound check sing a portion of the show at the energy level appropriate for the performance. This is a time for the music and sound designer, if you goof off you won't sound pretty. Remember that your mic may be on after you leave the stage. (All the way to the dressing room and beyond).
3. POST-PERFORMANCE. Tend to your costumes and station before leaving the theatre. Please remove your makeup before leaving the theatre. To greet audience members in the lobby, exit through the stage door. 4. BACKSTAGE. Be quiet. Whispers can be heard in our intimate theatre. Be aware of what is going on onstage and be prepared for your entrances. If you do not have an entrance, stay out of the wings; your presence increases congestion in a very small space.
5. DRESSING ROOM. No singing in the dressing room once the house opens. Be quiet, listen to music played through earbuds or headphones. Be careful surfing on the Internet, reading, or any activity that distracts you from doing your job. Be courteous and conscientious of the other cast member's process.
6. BRUSH UP. Sometimes a production will schedule brush up rehearsals between the Sunday performance of the first week and the Thursday performance of the second. You are responsible for keeping your work vital and fresh in the interim. Remember, you are responsible for performing the work as it was directed for every performance of the run.

PARENTS / GUARDIANS

1. WELCOME! Participation in a play or musical is one of the most rewarding experiences a young person can have. Everyone working on this production cares about your child's future and wants to invest time and energy into their development. The journey they are about to take, with your help, could have a positive, long-lasting impact in their life and the community. In a production, everyone's contribution is important. Everyone must work together for the greater good, encouraging collaboration. Children learn the importance of listening to each other speak and waiting one's turn. They take positive risks and conquer fears while building self-confidence.
2. REHEARSING AT HOME. Being in MTP, Broadway Jr, Off Broadway or any performance driven class is a commitment of time and energy. With only up to 3 rehearsal days per week, it is imperative that students rehearse their lines, music and/or movement at home.
3. DON'T BE A MAMA ROSE. The partnership between parents, students and the artistic team are invaluable. We desire good lines of communication through the entire show process. Theater is collaborative effort, but it's important to remember that it's the director's role to see the big picture and guide every aspect of the production. There are many volunteers who are will be putting their "blood, sweat, and tears" to make it all happen. If the cast, crew and volunteers do their best to work within the limits of the director's vision, our production will be a rewarding, resounding success! If you have concerns for the safety of anyone, please bring these concerns to the Stage Manager immediately. However, we ask that you refrain from comments or feedback regarding the artistic direction of the show (blocking, costumes, casting, choreography, etc.) We have hired a team of professionals and need to trust their artistic judgment. Remember, having your child participate in theater has little to do with creating a "star." The objective of rehearsing and presenting a musical is to provide children with opportunities to develop life skills and have fun.
4. SHOW BOX. All cast members are responsible for bringing a show box/bag with supplies to the first day of tech rehearsal. This should be able to hold their shoes, make-up, water bottle, street clothes, etc. All students are required to provide their own performance shoes and base makeup. Be sure to label everything that belongs to

you!

5. **SICKNESS.** We understand that illness may occur during the week and we will try our best to accommodate a missed rehearsal due to illness. However, due to the short timeframe the cast has to prepare for performance, if your child is out for more than one day and to keep us on schedule, it may not be possible for them to still participate in the role they were cast in.
6. **WHERE DO FEES GO?** Tuition and production fees cover only a fraction of the costs to put on a show. Tuition is solely used to pay our studio building rent and teacher stipends. For example, a cast of 20 brings in \$3,000.00 in production fees which in most cases will not cover the cost of the rights and royalties. On top of that is facility rental, costumes, artistic team, sets, props, printing, marketing, tech designers, lighting equipment, sound equipment and more. Ongoing financial support is a great way to help us continue to provide this great performing arts experience in Vancouver. Many employers match your monthly giving or donate to nonprofits based on your volunteer hours. Check with your employer to see what options are available. If you know of an individual or company who would like to become a show sponsor, packets are available from the Stage Manager.
7. **VOLUNTEERING.** Main Stage parents are required to volunteer at least 8 hours towards the production. Off Broadway parents are required to volunteer at least 6 hours towards the production. If these hours are not possible, a buy out at \$150 is required.

SUMMER CAMP RULES

1. Listen to the staff.
2. Respect camp staff and other campers.
3. Respect camp property and facilities.
4. Keep hands, feet, and other objects to yourself.
5. Participate in camp activities.
6. Clean up after yourself.
7. Be positive and have fun!

CONSEQUENCES

Warnings are given in situations when these rules and expectations are not followed. Examples of actions that may result in a warning include; repeatedly ignoring directions or requests from staff/artistic team, purposeful disrespect (to environment, staff, and other cast/crew members), teasing/bullying, etc.

1. **1st Warning:** Conversation with actor/student/camper to reiterate expectations and ensure they know why they have received a warning. Parent/guardian alerted of warning.
2. **2nd Warning:** Removed from the rehearsal or activity for a break, and a phone call home to parent to discuss behavior.
3. **3rd Warning:** Immediate call home for the guardian to gather the student/camper. Return to production/camp will be discussed with campers, guardians, and staff.

If a student engages in behavior which poses a threat of bodily harm to themselves, others, or facility property, an immediate meeting with the parent or guardian may be called. If such behavior warrants it, an immediate suspension or expulsion from the production may result.

I have reviewed ALL these expectations with my child, and I understand that I may be called to come and pick up my child if the artistic team or staff deems it necessary (if the student is disruptive, disrespectful or a danger to themselves or others).

Student signed: _____ Date: _____

Guardian signed: _____ Date: _____

