



COLUMBIA

THEATER ARTS FOUNDATION

www.columbiatheater.org

Policies and Procedures Manual

Section 1: Organizational Identity

1.1 Mission Statement

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation exists to: provide accessible, high-quality theatrical experiences that welcome people from all walks of life to engage in live productions from the audience and the stage; create inclusive spaces for artists and audiences of all abilities and backgrounds; and foster growth and transformation within our community through stories that challenge, uplift, and inspire.

1.2 Core Values

1. Make Theater Accessible to All

We believe that art belongs to the entire community. That's why we open our doors to everyone, regardless of financial means or background. By offering pay-what-you-will ticketing and prioritizing access over profits, we ensure that everyone can experience the magic of live theater.

2. Put People Center Stage

We love the arts — but we love people more. Our company is a place where people are treated with love, respect, and compassion. Every decision we make—onstage and off—is centered on the people we serve, from our performers and volunteers to our audiences and community partners.

3. Champion the Economy of Good Will

We relentlessly pursue our purpose of making theater accessible to all and trust in the generosity of the community to fuel our mission. We embrace a give-and-receive model, joyfully providing a service to the community while inviting contributions and partnerships to support affordable, impactful theater.

4. Inspire Through Storytelling

Through a carefully selected repertoire of productions, we tell stories that spark meaningful conversations, foster fresh perspectives, and ponder the shared human experience. We want to challenge audiences to reflect on real and practical issues we all face—both within ourselves and in the world around us.

5. Pursue Excellence, Always

Every production is an opportunity to craft something extraordinary and unique. From the big picture down to the smallest detail, we approach each show with passion, precision, and a relentless commitment to artistry. Every curtain is a chance to exceed expectations and leave a lasting impression.

1.3 Vision for Impact

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation envisions a thriving cultural hub where anyone can participate in transformative theatrical experiences—whether by stepping on stage, sitting in the audience, or volunteering behind the scenes. We believe live theater is a powerful tool for empathy, connection, and community-building, and we strive to foster a deeper understanding of the human experience through the stories we tell.

1.4 Statement on Inclusion and Accessibility

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation is committed to creating a welcoming environment where all people are treated with respect and kindness. We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to experience and participate in live theater.

We seek to remove unnecessary barriers to participation and provide accommodations whenever reasonably possible. Through thoughtful casting, accessible pricing, and a culture of mutual respect, we aim to build a space where individuals can come together around a shared appreciation for the performing arts.

Section 2: Staff, Volunteers, and Personnel

2.1 General Expectations

All individuals working with Columbia Theater Arts Foundation—whether as staff, independent contractors, paid performers, or volunteers—are expected to uphold the values of the organization in their conduct and communication. These expectations apply in rehearsal spaces, backstage areas, administrative settings, and public-facing events.

All participants are expected to:

- Treat others with respect, kindness, and professionalism
- Communicate clearly and courteously

- Be on time and prepared for scheduled commitments
- Notify supervisors of absences or conflicts in advance
- Support a collaborative and encouraging environment
- Represent the theater in a way that reflects our mission and values

Participation in any program is not contingent upon the involvement of any other individual (e.g., a parent, guardian, or family member).

2.2 Volunteer Involvement

Volunteers are essential to the mission of Columbia Theater and may serve in front-of-house, backstage, production, outreach, or administrative roles.

All volunteers must complete an **onboarding process** and sign the organization's Code of Conduct and Acknowledgment of Policies.

Background Checks

To ensure a safe and trustworthy environment, **background checks are required for all adult performers and volunteers.**

Background checks will be conducted by a third-party service approved by the Executive Business Director. Records will be stored securely and confidentially.

2.3 Staff and Volunteer Conduct

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation maintains a **zero tolerance policy** for:

- Harassment
- Bullying
- Inappropriate behavior
- Gossip or divisive language

Confirmed violations supported by explicit evidence may result in immediate removal from the program or position, without warning.

All participants must help maintain a safe and welcoming environment by upholding high standards of respect, discretion, and integrity.

2.4 Compensation and Stipends

CTAF provides compensation for select positions based on role, scope of work, and budget availability. All compensation is subject to approval by the Executive Business Director.

Paid Roles May Include:

- Director
- Vocal Director
- Orchestra Director
- Choreographer
- Accompanist
- Designers (Costume, Scenic, Lighting, Sound)
- Technical Leads (Stage Manager, Lighting, Sound, Props, etc.)
- Show Coordinator / Production Administrator
- House Manager or Box Office Lead

Cast Compensation

In some productions, actors may receive stipends for principal or secondary roles. This will be determined by the Executive Business Director on a case-by-case basis.

Anyone receiving compensation will be required to fill out all applicable IRS documents for tax reporting purposes.

Volunteers

Many participants, including ensemble performers and crew, may serve on a volunteer basis. Volunteers are never obligated to participate without clear expectations and mutual agreement.

2.5 Attendance and Communication

Attendance and Conflict Policy

At the start of each production or assignment, participants must disclose any known conflicts with scheduled dates. These conflicts must be submitted in writing and approved in advance.

There is a zero tolerance policy for unexcused absences.

Acceptable last-minute absences include:

- Verified illness
- Family emergency
- Unavoidable travel delay

All other absences must have been communicated as a conflict at the time of onboarding or casting. Unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the production or position.

Communication Standards

All internal and external communication must reflect the values and professionalism of the organization. Specifically, participants must:

- Respond to emails, texts, and calls in a timely manner
- Use respectful and constructive language
- Avoid gossip, inflammatory language, or passive-aggressive messaging
- Direct concerns only to appropriate team leads or supervisors
- Refrain from using public forums (including social media) to criticize or undermine other persons and/or parties (including but not limited to fellow participants, staff members, and/or CTAF as a whole)

2.6 Grievance and Conflict Resolution

CTAF encourages a culture of **direct, respectful resolution** and private accountability.

When a conflict or concern arises:

1. **Direct Resolution (Recommended First Step)**

If appropriate and safe to do so, the individual should address the concern directly with

the other party in a respectful and private manner.

2. Report to a Direct Supervisor

If direct resolution is not possible—or if it would cause undue stress or embarrassment—the concern should be brought to the individual's **immediate superior**, such as:

- Director (for cast or production teams)
- Committee Chair (for committee volunteers)
- Executive Artistic or Business Director (for paid staff or administrative volunteers)

3. Escalation (When Necessary)

If the issue is serious, involves policy violations, or cannot be resolved at the supervisor level, it may be brought to the Executive Directors or Board for formal review.

“Up, Not Out” Policy

Conflicts should not be discussed laterally among peers or with individuals not involved in resolution. All concerns should be taken *up the chain of responsibility* and kept private to protect the dignity of all involved and preserve a positive community environment.

Section 3: Artistic Policies

3.1 Production Selection

Selection Process

Productions are selected by the Executive Artistic Director with input from key creative team members and, when applicable, the Board of Directors. Show selections are evaluated based on:

- Alignment with the organization's mission and values
- Artistic merit and storytelling impact
- Opportunities for community engagement and cast diversity
- Feasibility of production within budget, space, and timeline constraints

Season Planning

Productions are planned on a rolling or seasonal basis, with a goal of balancing classics, contemporary works, and lesser-known pieces that offer strong artistic and moral themes.

3.2 Casting Policy

Open Auditions

Roles are generally not pre-cast. However, exceptions may be made in rare cases when:

- A specific role requires a unique or highly specialized skill set
- A particular performer is invited whose involvement meaningfully strengthens the production or draws unique community interest

These exceptions are used sparingly and must be approved by the Executive Artistic Director.

Unless an exception applies, roles are considered open. Any individual may request to be considered for a specific role, and audition forms will include:

- Roles the individual would like to be considered for
- Whether the individual is willing to accept a different role
- Whether the individual expects compensation (if any), and on what terms

Performer Choice and Flexibility

Participants may choose to be considered only for certain roles. Declining to accept other roles will not negatively affect casting decisions.

Casting Authority and Oversight

- The **Director alone** has final authority over casting, including decisions that differ from recommendations by other artistic team members.
- If a member of the artistic team (e.g., vocal director, choreographer) has a **direct relative** auditioning, they must **recuse themselves from all casting deliberations** involving that individual.
- If the **Director** casts a direct relative in a principal or secondary role, the decision must be reviewed and **approved by the Executive Artistic Director**.

Dual Participation Restriction

To ensure fairness and clarity of roles, **no individual may serve on the artistic team and perform as a cast member in the same production.**

This applies to all positions with casting influence or artistic responsibility, including:

- Director
- Vocal Director
- Orchestra Director
- Choreographer
- Designers
- Other artistic roles involved in performance oversight

Communication of Casting Decisions

- Individuals who are **not cast** must be notified by a **personal phone call (or an attempt to be reached by phone) from the Director** before the cast list is released publicly.
- All **paid principal roles** must be confirmed by phone with the Director, including any contract negotiations or compensation agreements.

3.3 Rehearsal and Production Expectations

Rehearsal Conduct

- Participants must come prepared, focused, and respectful.
- Rehearsal spaces must be kept clean and organized.
- No unauthorized visitors are allowed during rehearsal or backstage.

Attendance Requirements

Rehearsal attendance is governed by the conflict policy (see Section 3.5). Unexcused absences or repeated tardiness may result in removal from the production.

Call Times and Punctuality

Call times will be clearly communicated. Performers and crew are expected to arrive early enough to begin work at the designated time.

3.4 Director and Creative Team Authority

Production Hierarchy

The following reporting structure guides each production:

I. Executive Artistic Director

A. Director

1. Vocal Director
2. Orchestra Director
3. Choreographer
4. Production Designers (Costume, Scenic, Lighting, Sound)
5. **Show Coordinator / Production Administrator**

- a) Stage Manager
 - (1) Backstage Crew
 - (2) Tech Crew
 - (3) Lighting Crew
- b) Production Committee Leads

Director Role and Leadership Style

The Director is the artistic leader of the production and holds final authority on:

- Interpretation of the script
- Blocking, pacing, and character direction
- Casting decisions and performance standards
- Rehearsal schedule and process

However, the Director is also expected to:

- Foster a **collaborative and inclusive working environment**
- **Respect the contributions and expertise** of other artistic and technical team members
- Encourage a culture of **mutual support and shared ownership** of the creative process

- Defer to the Executive Artistic Director on matters of **documented policy and procedure**

3.5 Artistic Feedback and Growth

CTAF values both artistic excellence and personal growth. Directors are encouraged to create an environment that supports development and skill-building.

Performer Feedback

- Directors and team leads are encouraged to offer clear, constructive feedback.
- Cast members are welcome to request coaching or clarification on performance, music, or movement as appropriate.

Director Evaluation

- At the conclusion of each production, the Executive Artistic Director may conduct a confidential review of the Director and other key team members. The purpose of which is to promote growth, uphold artistic standards, and ensure the continued alignment of leadership with CTAF's mission and values.

Section 4: Programming and Community Engagement

4.1 Pay-What-You-Will Ticketing

Philosophy

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation believes that live theater should be accessible to everyone, regardless of financial status. Our pay-what-you-will ticketing model ensures that no one is turned away due to cost while still allowing patrons to support the work we do.

Policy and Procedures

- Patrons may choose any price for their ticket, including \$0, when reserving online or in person.

- It is against company policy to request or promote a “suggested donation.”
- The Executive Business Director may assign a **fair market value** to tickets for tax-deductible donation purposes and donor acknowledgment letters.
- Every ticketed patron, regardless of price paid, must be counted in attendance records.
- **All patrons must have a valid ticket—whether paid or unpaid—to enter the venue.**
- Box office staff and volunteers will be trained to explain the system with clarity and hospitality, without applying pressure.

4.2 Education and Youth Programs

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation offers **year-round, all-ages productions**. While we do not maintain a separate youth theater program, we are committed to offering learning opportunities specifically designed for performers of all ages; and especially young people.

Potential Offerings May Include:

- Summer camps or youth intensives focused on acting, vocal performance, dance, or technical theater
- Workshops or masterclasses led by local or visiting professionals
- Other youth-focused programs intended to develop and invest in the talents of young performers.

All youth programs must be supervised by qualified adults and follow the background check requirements detailed in Section 3.2.

4.3 Community Partnerships

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation values collaboration and welcomes opportunities to work with community partners in ways that extend the reach and relevance of our mission.

Potential Partners May Include:

- Faith communities
- Schools and homeschool co-ops
- Civic organizations and nonprofits
- Local small businesses and sponsors
- Other arts or performance organizations

Guidelines for Partnership

- Partnerships must align with the mission and values of CTAF
- All official partnerships must be approved by the Executive Directors
- Any shared event, sponsorship, or co-branded initiative must include a written agreement outlining roles, promotional guidelines, and expectations

4.4 Accessibility Accommodations

CTAF is committed to making our programming as accessible as possible for both participants and audience members.

Audience Accommodations May Include:

- ADA-accessible seating
- Early entry or reserved seating for patrons with sensory or mobility needs
- Sign language interpretation
- Sensory-friendly performance options

Performer & Volunteer Accommodations

- **Reasonable accommodations** will be made to support cast and crew members with physical or sensory challenges

- All requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Artistic and Business Directors

4.5 Outreach and Inclusion

Outreach efforts are designed to introduce new individuals and groups to the Columbia Theater experience—especially those who may not traditionally attend or participate in live theater.

Outreach Strategies May Include:

- Direct invitations and mailers to schools, churches, and community centers
- Participation in local parades, farmers markets, or cultural festivals
- Hosting community appreciation nights or local sponsorship showcases
- Donation-based fundraisers or service-driven events in support of local causes

All outreach efforts must be approved by the Executive Directors and align with the organization's community standards.

Section 5: Safety, Risk, and Facility Use

5.1 General Safety Expectations

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and hazard-free environment for all cast, crew, volunteers, staff, and patrons. All participants are expected to:

- Follow all posted signage and staff instructions regarding safety
- Avoid behaviors that put themselves or others at risk
- Report any unsafe conditions, injuries, or incidents immediately to a supervising adult or Executive Director

In case of an emergency, emergency contact information must be readily available for all cast, crew, and program participants.

5.2 Supervision and Adult Conduct

All adults in positions of authority—including directors, designers, technicians, and committee leads—are expected to model appropriate behavior, use good judgment, and maintain professional boundaries at all times.

Requirements for Adult Supervision Include:

- A background check for all employees, contractors, and adult participants in the program.
- At least two adults present during all rehearsals or activities involving minors whenever possible
- **No adult may ever be alone in a room with a minor other than a member of their immediate family under any circumstances**—this includes rehearsals, costume fittings, backstage supervision, transportation, and any official company event or activity.
- **No employee of Columbia Theater Arts Foundation may provide transportation to a minor without written consent of a parent or guardian.**

This policy exists to protect both the minor and the adult and applies to all volunteers, employees, contractors, and artistic team members.

5.3 Harassment, Bullying, and Gossip

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation maintains a **zero-tolerance policy** for harassment, bullying, inappropriate conduct, or gossip that damages morale, trust, or relationships.

Prohibited Behavior Includes but Is Not Limited To:

- Verbal abuse, slurs, or offensive comments
- Intimidation, exclusion, or malicious teasing
- Sexual harassment or unwanted attention
- Gossip, rumor-spreading, or undermining others in person or online

Consequences:

- Confirmed violations **with explicit evidence** may result in immediate removal from the program or production, without prior warning.
- All concerns will be reviewed by the Executive Directors, and if necessary, the Board of Directors.

5.4 Accident and Injury Reporting

All accidents, injuries, or near-miss incidents must be reported to a supervising adult or Executive Director immediately. A written incident report will be required for:

- Any injury requiring first aid or medical attention
- Any accident involving damage to property or equipment
- Any situation that poses an ongoing safety risk

All incident reports must be submitted within 24 hours and kept on file.

5.5 Facility Use and Security

Facilities used by Columbia Theater Arts Foundation—including rehearsal spaces, performance venues, and storage areas—must be treated with respect and care.

Facility Use Rules:

- Only authorized personnel may unlock or access secured areas
- All areas must be left clean, organized, and free of safety hazards
- No personal items may be stored in shared spaces without prior approval
- All equipment must be used properly and returned to its designated location
- Use of the facility for non-theater purposes requires approval from the Executive Business Director

Security Measures:

- The Executive Business Director is responsible for establishing check-in/check-out procedures and ensuring access is controlled
- Facility access may be revoked for any individual who disregards safety, damages property, or violates organizational policy

5.6 Insurance and Risk Mitigation

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation maintains general liability insurance and property insurance to protect the organization and its participants.

Additional Risk Policies Include:

- All rented or borrowed equipment must be logged and inspected prior to use
- Participants may be asked to sign liability waivers or hold harmless agreements for physical or off-site activities
- The Executive Business Director is responsible for evaluating and mitigating financial and operational risk in collaboration with the Board of Directors

Section 6: Production Standards and Technical Operations

6.1 Production Standards

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation is committed to producing work that upholds the highest standards of artistic and technical excellence, regardless of cast experience level. The following standards apply to all productions and must be actively upheld by directors, designers, cast, crew, and coordinators:

- **Rehearsal Documentation:** All blocking, choreography, and music cues must be documented (written or video) and distributed to cast members within 48 hours of being taught.

- **Rehearsal Scheduling:** Rehearsal schedules must be published before the first rehearsal and kept updated. Any changes must be communicated in writing no less than 24 hours in advance.
- **Design Quality:** Set, costume, lighting, and sound designs must be intentionally crafted to serve the story and must align with the vision of the Director. Designs must be approved by the Director before construction or purchase begins.
- **Backstage Operations:** Backstage areas must be kept organized and free of hazards. A designated Stage Manager must oversee backstage logistics to ensure safety and efficiency.
- **Technical Preparation:** All lighting, sound, and scene transitions must be fully integrated and rehearsed in at least two full tech rehearsals prior to public performance.
- **Cross-Department Coordination:** All production departments must meet established deadlines and communicate any delays in advance or as soon as reasonably possible. Collaboration should be proactive and solution-oriented to maintain overall production integrity.
- **Storytelling Cohesion:** Each department must ensure that its work directly supports the production's narrative, tone, and pacing.

6.2 Rehearsal Environment

Rehearsals must be conducted professionally, inclusively, and with respect for all participants' time, energy, and contributions. The following guidelines apply to all rehearsal settings:

- **Punctuality and Preparedness:** All participants must arrive on time and come prepared with scripts, music, choreography notes, appropriate attire, food/water, and any assigned materials.
- **Breaks:** A minimum 15-minute break must be scheduled for every 3 hours of rehearsal. Longer rehearsals must include meal breaks when appropriate.
- **Clean and Safe Space:** Rehearsal spaces must be kept clean, organized, and free from hazards. Cast and crew are responsible for cleaning up after themselves.
- **Scheduling and Communication:** A full rehearsal schedule must be distributed in writing at or before the first rehearsal. Any changes must be communicated in writing

with at least 14 days' notice unless due to an emergency.

- **Attendance Boundaries:** Only cast, crew, and approved staff may attend rehearsals. Visitors (including family or friends) must receive prior approval from the Director or either Executive Director. Program participants are not permitted to leave the rehearsal premises during their scheduled rehearsal time without the Director's permission.

6.3 Tech Rehearsals and Backstage Protocol

Tech week requires heightened discipline, preparation, and professional behavior. All cast and crew are expected to treat tech rehearsals with the same seriousness as public performances. The following standards apply:

Tech Rehearsals Must Include:

- **Integrating Cues:** Lighting, sound, projections, and scene transitions must be integrated into the show and cued in sequence during all tech run-throughs.
- **Full Costuming:** All cast must rehearse in full costume, with hair and makeup completed unless otherwise instructed by the Director or relevant production staff.
- **Minimal Interruptions:** Crew may only interrupt a run-through for safety reasons or major technical malfunctions. The Director may stop and start a tech rehearsal as needed.
- **Crew Readiness:** Backstage crew must be fully trained on cue sheets, prop handoffs, scene transitions, and safety procedures before the first integrated tech rehearsal.

Backstage Behavior Standards:

- **Professional Conduct:** Quiet, focused, and respectful behavior is required backstage at all times. Cast and crew must stay in assigned areas unless performing duties.
- **No Unauthorized Items:** Food, beverages (except water in closed containers), and unauthorized visitors are not allowed backstage.
- **Device Use:** Personal devices may not be used backstage during rehearsals or performances unless explicitly approved by the Director or required for accessibility. **There shall be absolutely no photos or videos taken in areas where cast members may be changing costumes.**

- **Emergency Protocols:** Any emergency or safety concern must be reported immediately to the Stage Manager or Show Coordinator.

6.4 Equipment and Inventory

All production equipment, whether owned by Columbia Theater Arts Foundation or borrowed from another source, must be treated with respect and used responsibly. The following guidelines apply to all tools, technical equipment, and production materials:

Equipment Use Guidelines:

- **Training Requirement:** No one may operate technical equipment (including but not limited to: tools, lifts, soundboards, lighting consoles, spotlights, etc.) without prior approval and documented training from the Technical Director or Show Coordinator.
- **Microphone Use:** Only trained individuals assigned to the tech crew may prepare, apply, or remove microphones for performers. Microphones may not be handled by anyone who has not been trained and approved for that specific production. For underage performers, microphones may only be applied or removed by technicians of the same sex or by a direct relative. Performers may handle their own microphones only if they have received training and explicit permission from the Director or Sound Chair.
- **Removal from Premises:** Equipment or materials may not be removed from rehearsal or performance sites without prior approval from the appropriate Committee Lead. Unauthorized removal may result in disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from the production.
- **Reporting Issues:** Any damaged, malfunctioning, or unsafe equipment must be reported immediately to the Technical Director, Show Coordinator, or Executive Staff. Continued use of faulty equipment is prohibited.

Costume, Prop, and Set Inventory:

- **Check-In/Check-Out:** Items rented or borrowed from the theater's inventory must be signed out using the approved inventory log and returned in good condition within 21 days of the specified date of use unless otherwise approved.
- **Responsibility for Damage:** Individuals may be held responsible for damage resulting from misuse, neglect, or unauthorized alterations to borrowed items. Participants will not be held responsible for damage that results from normal wear and tear or appropriate and careful use during production.

- **Inventory Oversight:** CTAF shall maintain records of all inventory usage and ensure the timely return of all borrowed items. For any external use, a written agreement must be established and remain on file for the entire duration of the loan period. All items must be inspected by designated CTAF personnel before being returned to inventory.

6.5 Strike and Post-Production

Strike is a required part of the production process and includes the safe dismantling, cleanup, and inventory return of all show materials.

Strike Expectations:

- All cast and crew are required to participate unless given prior approval to be excused
- Tasks will be assigned by Committee Leads or the Show Coordinator
- The space must be left in equal or better condition than it was found according to venue specifications/standards.
- Equipment must be cleaned, stored properly, and recorded in inventory logs

Failure to participate in strike without an excused absence may impact eligibility for future casting or volunteer roles.

Section 7: Human Resources and Personnel Policies

7.1 Employment Classifications

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation may engage individuals in the following roles:

Employees

Staff hired by the organization to fulfill ongoing administrative or operational responsibilities. Employees may be full-time or part-time and are subject to state and federal employment laws.

Contractors

Independent professionals or artists contracted for specific roles or productions. Contractors are not eligible for employee benefits and must submit a W-9 for tax reporting purposes.

Volunteers

Unpaid individuals contributing time to productions, events, or organizational needs. Volunteers must adhere to all safety and conduct policies.

All individuals working in any capacity are expected to uphold CTAF's mission, values, and code of conduct.

7.2 Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation provides equal opportunity for all applicants, employees, and contractors. Employment decisions are based on organizational need, merit, and qualifications, not on personal status, beliefs, or identity.

We do not tolerate discrimination in any form.

7.3 Hiring and Onboarding

All employed and contracted positions must be approved by the Executive Business Director and coordinated with the Executive Artistic Director when applicable.

Hiring Process Includes:

- A defined job description or contract agreement signed by the hired individual and the Executive Business Director
- Completion of required forms (W-4/W-9, emergency contact info, etc.)
- Review of this policy book and written agreement to the Code of Conduct
- A background check

No one may begin work, paid or volunteer, until their role has been officially approved and all onboarding steps completed.

7.4 Pay, Stipends, and Compensation

CTAF compensates employees and contractors fairly within the limits of the board-approved annual budget. Payment rates will be determined by role, experience, scope of responsibility, and available funding.

Compensation Notes:

- Contractors must submit invoices for services rendered
- Employees are paid according to a schedule determined at the time of hire or last employment review
- Some actors may receive stipends for principal or secondary roles, at the discretion of the Executive Business Director
- All compensation must be approved by the Executive Business Director prior to any financial commitment

Participation in any CTAF program or production is not contingent upon the involvement of another individual (e.g., parent, guardian, spouse). No participant is required to provide a production partner, committee member, or affiliated volunteer in order to take part.

7.5 Attendance, Conflicts, and Scheduling

While CTAF recognizes that each individual involved in a production balances many personal responsibilities, the success of our programs depends on the generosity, time, and commitment of our volunteers and participants. We deeply value the contributions of those who make our work possible. In return, we ask that all personnel communicate scheduling needs and potential conflicts clearly and as far in advance as possible to support reliable planning and a smooth production process.

Production Conflicts and Absences:

- All known scheduling conflicts must be disclosed prior to casting or volunteer role assignment.
- Participants are expected to be available for all rehearsal dates unless they are specifically listed as excused on the schedule. If a date is marked as “TBD” or “subject to change,” participants should still plan to be available unless officially released by the Director or Stage Manager.
- Unexcused absences are not permitted and may result in dismissal from the production or forfeiture of compensation. Permissible last-minute absences include illness, emergencies, or unavoidable travel delays.

- Habitual tardiness or unreliability may affect future casting or employment consideration

7.6 Workplace Conduct

All personnel are expected to maintain a professional, respectful, and collaborative workplace atmosphere.

Expected Behavior Includes:

- Clear, honest, and constructive communication
(T.H.I.N.K. before you speak: is it True, Helpful, Informative, Necessary, and Kind?)
- Timely completion of responsibilities
- Respect for differing opinions and artistic perspectives
- Adherence to all safety, conduct, and privacy policies

7.7 Discipline and Dismissal

Personnel may be dismissed from a production or position for any of the following reasons:

- Violation of CTAF's policies, including safety or conduct rules
- Repeated failure to fulfill assigned responsibilities
- Disrespect toward team members, leadership, or the mission of the organization
- Inappropriate behavior or confirmed misconduct

Dismissal decisions are made by the Executive Directors. In cases involving employees, additional documentation or formal HR procedures may apply in accordance with labor laws.

Section 8: Code of Conduct

8.1 Purpose

The Code of Conduct outlines the behavioral standards expected of everyone involved with Columbia Theater Arts Foundation. These guidelines are designed to foster a safe, respectful, and collaborative environment where people of all backgrounds can thrive artistically and individually.

This code applies to all cast members, crew, staff, volunteers, contractors, board members, and program participants.

8.2 Core Conduct Expectations

All participants are expected to:

- **Treat others with respect and kindness** at all times
- **Follow directions from production staff and supervisors** promptly and respectfully
- **Communicate clearly and directly**, avoiding passive-aggressive, sarcastic, or inflammatory behavior
- **Come prepared and on time** to all commitments, rehearsals, meetings, and assignments
- **Maintain a clean and safe environment** in all rehearsal, performance, and backstage spaces
- **Uphold confidentiality and professionalism** in matters involving personal or sensitive information
- **Avoid gossip, slander, or divisive speech** that could damage the trust or cohesion of the team

Participants should strive to be both **collaborative and accountable**, recognizing that artistic work is built on trust and shared responsibility.

8.3 Social Media and Public Representation

Individuals involved with Columbia Theater Arts Foundation are representatives of the organization both in person and online.

Social Media Guidelines:

- Do not post private rehearsal or backstage content without permission
- Refrain from airing grievances about the organization, cast, crew, or staff on public platforms
- Avoid language or images that could reflect poorly on the professionalism or values of CTAF
- Tagging the organization in public posts should reflect positively and be appropriate in tone

Violation of these guidelines may result in restricted online participation or removal from CTAF programming.

8.4 Conflict Resolution Protocol

Direct Resolution Encouraged

If a personal conflict arises, individuals are encouraged to **resolve the issue directly and respectfully with the other party** when it is safe and reasonable to do so.

Escalation Process

If direct resolution is not possible—or would cause undue stress or discomfort—the concern should be brought to the individual's direct supervisor.

- For cast members: bring the concern to the Director or Show Coordinator
- For production volunteers: bring the concern to the Committee Chair or Show Coordinator
- For staff or team leads: bring the concern to the Executive Directors

"Up, Not Out" Policy

Conflicts must be brought to your direct supervisor and not discussed laterally among peers or shared outside the relevant leadership structure. For conflict between a supervisor and their subordinate, the issue should be brought to the next highest level of supervision. This preserves unity and ensures fairness. All conflicts should be handled **privately, respectfully, and promptly**.

8.5 Violations and Accountability

Confirmed violations of this Code of Conduct—including harassment, bullying, gossip, repeated tardiness, or insubordination—will result in the following, depending on severity:

- Verbal or written warning
- Loss of specific responsibilities or privileges
- Removal from a current production or leadership role
- Ineligibility for future participation
- In severe cases, permanent dismissal from the organization

No warnings will be issued for confirmed violations involving harassment, bullying, or inappropriate conduct when supported by credible and corroborated evidence. Such violations will result in immediate removal from the program or production.

8.6 Gender and Pronoun Use

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation welcomes participants from all backgrounds and belief systems. As part of our commitment to fostering a respectful and collaborative community, we recognize that individuals may hold differing perspectives on matters of gender identity, language, and personal expression.

To that end, our policy is as follows:

- Participants are welcome to share their preferred names and pronouns if they wish.
- While we require consideration and kindness in language at all times, **no individual is required to use specific language that conflicts with their personal convictions.**
- Likewise, **intentional use of language meant to belittle or cause harm** is not acceptable and may be treated as a conduct violation.
- In situations where perspectives differ, we ask participants to exercise **mutual respect, patience, and care**—using names or neutral language when needed to preserve the dignity of all involved.

This policy does not require ideological agreement, but it does require that every person be treated with compassion and good faith. Our shared goal is to build a welcoming and creative environment where people of diverse convictions can work together in community.

8.7 Dress Code

Columbia Theater Arts Foundation expects all participants to dress in a manner that is **respectful, safe, and appropriate to the setting and nature of their involvement**. While these guidelines provide a basic framework, **participants are encouraged to use good judgment** and consider the comfort and expectations of a shared, multi-generational environment.

General Standards for All Participants:

- Clothing must allow for safe movement, especially during rehearsals, technical work, and backstage activity.
- Attire must fully cover the front and back of the torso, midsection, and upper legs at all times—whether standing, bending, sitting, or moving. Clothing made of sheer or see-through material is not permitted unless layered over fully opaque garments that meet coverage requirements. Excessively form-fitting clothing should be accompanied by garments meeting coverage requirements.
- Footwear must be suitable for the activity—closed-toe shoes are required in all technical, backstage, or construction areas.
- Graphics or messages on clothing must be G-rated (should not include profanity, sexual content, violent imagery, political slogans, or language/images that could reasonably be considered disrespectful or inflammatory within a diverse community setting.)

Participants should approach these guidelines with reason, respect, and an understanding of the production setting. When in doubt, err on the side of discretion or consult a production leader for clarification.

Rehearsals and Tech

- Performers should wear rehearsal clothing that allows for unrestricted physical movement.
- Long hair must be tied back when operating on or near technical equipment.
- Crew members are required to wear all-black clothing and footwear suitable for their assigned duties. Attire should allow for safe movement and remain inconspicuous during performances.

Costume and Performance Settings

- Costume assignments must not be altered without approval from the Costume Designer or Director.
- **All cast members are required to wear base layers under costumes and rehearsal attire.** At a minimum, this includes a fitted tank top or undershirt and athletic or bike shorts. These base layers support quick changes, ensure appropriate coverage in shared spaces, and help maintain hygiene during costume use.
- Any concerns about costume fit, modesty, or personal comfort should be directed respectfully to the Costume Lead, Director, or Show Coordinator.

Grooming and Personal Hygiene

- Participants are expected to maintain **basic hygiene** appropriate for close physical and collaborative work. This includes regular bathing, use of deodorant, and clean clothing.
- Hair (including facial hair) should be **clean and reasonably styled** to allow for wig or mic placement when applicable.
- Fingernails should be **clean, neatly maintained, and neutral in color** unless a specific look is required for a role. While nails do not need to be short, they should not interfere with safety, performance, costuming, or instrument use.
- Certain roles may require specific hairstyles or haircuts to align with the character's appearance. Cast members who do not wish to make changes to their hair or wear a wig may indicate this preference on their audition form.

Enforcement

Violations of the dress code or hygiene expectations will be addressed with discretion and kindness. Persistent refusal to comply may result in removal from rehearsal, reassignment, or restricted participation.

Section 9: Amendments and Policy Review

9.1 Policy Book Status

This Policy and Conduct Manual is a living document created to safeguard the operational guidelines, community standards, and leadership of Columbia Theater Arts Foundation. While not a legal instrument in itself, its authority is derived from and governed by the Foundation's bylaws and board actions.

In the case of a conflict between this manual and the bylaws, the bylaws shall take precedence. Any conflict found between the policy book and the bylaws should be resolved immediately by board or executive action.

9.2 Review and Revision Schedule

To ensure continued relevance and legal compliance, this policy manual shall be reviewed and revised on a regular basis.

- A full organizational policy review shall be conducted **at least once every three years**, or more frequently as needed
- Reviews may be initiated by the Executive Directors or by a majority vote of the Board of Directors
- Minor clarifications or non-substantive updates may be approved by the Executive Directors, with notice given to the board

9.3 Amendment Procedure

Formal amendments to this policy book must be approved by the Executive Directors and follow the same procedures as other organizational policy changes.

Upon approval, all revised policies will be dated and published in the official policy archive. Executive Directors are responsible for ensuring the updated version is distributed to all relevant staff, volunteers, and contractors.

9.4 Staff and Volunteer Acknowledgment

All personnel—including staff, production team members, contractors, and volunteers—must acknowledge receipt and review of all codes and policies relevant to their role prior to participating in any production or program.

A signed acknowledgment form shall be kept on file for all participants in leadership or supervisory positions.

9.5 Staff and Volunteer Acknowledgment Form

I _____ hereby acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to abide by all policies and applicable procedures within this document for the duration of my time with Columbia Theater Arts Foundation. I agree to abide by the core values and bylaws of Columbia Theater and accept all necessary discipline incurred by any violations of the policies above.

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Signature of Individual

Date

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Signature of CTAF Supervisor

Date