

# COTTON HALL THEATER

## CAST AND CREW CODE OF CONDUCT

**PUNCTUALITY**— You’ve heard it your whole life. There are moments when a crisis may disrupt your arrival time, so PLAN for those moments by arriving early. Those extra minutes will allow you to warm up, build an ensemble with your fellow cast members, or get you in the right frame of mind for rehearsal. If lateness truly is unavoidable, you must let your Director know your expected arrival time. If you are running late, please text Will at 1-229-376-0871 or call the office at 1-229-758-5450.

**ABSENCES**— We are juggling a lot of schedules on this show, we understand that there will be some absences. However, every time that you miss a rehearsal, your fellow cast members aren’t able to get the work done to the best of their ability. Whether that means they are unable to learn the rhythm of your lines to help get a punchline just right or you are missing from a dance number and they don’t have a partner to play off of—do not think your absence is unnoticed or unimportant. It is.

**NOTES**— Throughout rehearsals you will receive verbal directions and typewritten notes with instructions to tweak your performance. Notes are intended to strengthen your performance, not to tear you down. If you don’t understand or disagree with a note, it’s perfectly acceptable to pull the director aside and ask what it means. Please be mindful of what’s going on around you and try to choose an appropriate time to ask questions. In rehearsal, we will often give notes during circle, please let the Director give notes. Do not piggy back on what they are saying. If you have something to add, please approach the director separately and let them give that.

**GOSSIP & SASSINESS**— You know it’s wrong. Leave the drama at home. Just because we play dramatic characters onstage does NOT mean we must portray them off. This is becoming a major problem at Cotton Hall, and this includes sassing your friends. You say something snarky to them, and then they snark back, and the next thing you know, someone has their feelings hurt. There will be none of that. Our Mission Statement reads: “To involve as many people as possible in a theatrical experience that EMPOWERS individuals, BONDS the community and STRENGTHENS the local economy while crossing the boundaries of race, social class, age and gender.” Talking down to someone does not empower them. Talking about someone behind their back does not create those BONDS. If you catch yourself talking negatively about another cast member, you are part of this problem. If you hear someone else doing it, try to point out the positive contributions of that person or the situation.

**ALCOHOL**— There is no alcohol allowed on the premises of Cotton Hall Theater or any other Arts Council properties including the parking lot or courtyard areas.

**TOBACCO and ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES**— The use of tobacco products, including all brands of electronic cigarettes is strictly prohibited in any CMAC facility. The use of these products by persons of legal age must happen outside 25 feet from any exterior exit.

**QUIET**— Keep the noise level at a minimum when backstage and in rehearsals. The acoustics of our dressing room push your voices right onto the stage, and there will be a lot of you moving from the back dressing room to the theater. The commons area then becomes backstage for you, which means you have to be completely silent.

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**PROPS**— Three major rules here: 1. Never play with a prop, even if it's yours. 2. Do not touch or move a prop that isn't yours. 3. Always check your props before each show. Follow these three rules. The first night you discover that your beach chair is missing before your entrance, you'll understand why they are so important.

**WEAPONS**— Firearms are not permitted in any CMAC facilities even if you have a conceal carry permit. The only exception is if you are active duty law enforcement.

**COSTUMES**— Costumes must be treated with respect. Please hang them up or put them away accordingly as they come off of your body. There are too many people for things to get as out of hand as they have been. If you have a quick change, it is your responsibility to find someone to help hang your clothes. You will look better on stage, and not have to search for your items. If you need a repair done, please let the costume crew know as soon as you can. If it rips on Friday, five minutes before the Saturday show is not the right time. They are miracle workers, but need to save up their miracles for when absolutely necessary.

**DIRECTING OTHERS**— Please do not direct others. For any reason. If you have an idea of something someone should try, please let the Director know, and if they deem it useful, they will implement it accordingly.

**AD LIBS and CHANGES TO THE SCRIPT**— As rehearsals and performances wear on you may feel that you understand the character better than the playwright and director, but you cannot make up your own lines. Our performance license requires that we perform the show as written.

**REHEARSING FULL OUT**— Rehearsals are the time to try out different moments for your character and to learn what they are all about. Sometimes you will be tired, sometimes you will be hungry—but you still have to perform full-out to the best of your ability. Don't just go through the motions. This is the time to show what you've got so we can fine tune your performance!

**READING IN**— Sometimes in the event of someone's absence you may be asked to read-in a part or stand-in for an actor. This is not a time to act goofy and try to throw off the other actors. This is your chance to help your fellow cast mates by being fully present and trying your best to momentarily embody a role that's not yours. Making a joke of that is not helpful to anyone.

**MAINTAINING A PERFORMANCE**— Don't get too comfortable or complacent in your roles. We have to perform this show for many completely different audiences. You must always be on your toes to show each one your best work.

**CELL PHONES**— We will have a cellphone box in rehearsals to hold all cellphones. Cellphones should be turned to silent and will remain in the box throughout rehearsals. During breaks, cast members are welcome to check their phones, but not during rehearsals. If there is an emergency, please call Will Murdock (1-229-376-087) and I will pull the cast member aside.

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**PERSONAL ITEMS**— We ask that all personal items remain in your vehicles for safe keeping. Cotton Hall is a large place with lots of nooks and crannies and a ton of traffic. If you must bring them in, we ask that you place them IN your assigned cubby or on the concession stand, so that keys, wallets, phones, etc. do not go missing in the theater.

**NO CANOODLING**— Cotton Hall is not a dating service. No public displays of affection.

**PATIENCE**— There can sometimes be a lot of waiting in rehearsals. Please be patient, and wait quietly for your turn. This will speed along the process and help us get to your scene faster. We will try to be as respectful of your time as possible, but please know that sometimes waiting just happens.

**PREPAREDNESS**— While you are waiting, why not run your lines in your head? Or silently review choreography? Do your best to be prepared when you are needed. Try to know your lines for each scene or song by the second time we visit that scene in rehearsal.

**REHEARSAL'S END**— We are often pressed for time at the end of rehearsals, and it's often not a great time to ask questions. To help with this, we will have a large notepad hung by the back door where you can write all your questions. I will check them each morning and respond, or—if they apply to more than one person, will give the entire group a note. After rehearsal is over, please be efficient in packing up your stuff and heading out. We have all had a long day, and want to head out as quickly and safely as possible.

## **RESPECT**

For Staff— They can cast you again.

For Crew— They can leave you standing in the dark.

For Designers— They can make you look crazy.

For Your Costumes— In order to look your best on stage, you must take responsibility for hanging up your costume.

For Other Actors— They are your teammates.

For Yourself— Value your contribution to the show by following the above guidelines and taking care of yourself. Keep healthy and be safe.