



Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra

Policies and Procedures 2020-2021 Season

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Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra

Policies and Procedures

2020-2021 Season

This document has been produced for the reference and convenience of Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra members and their parents. The goal of the policies and procedures outlined herein is to facilitate the operation of an artistically sound and smoothly run orchestra.

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Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra

Policies and Procedures

The **Mission** of the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra is to teach and inspire musical excellence through orchestral training, to perform in premier venues, and to cultivate audiences for classical music

1. Membership

Membership in the orchestra is by invitation only, following highly competitive auditions. Maximum age for PYSO members is 20. If a student will be turning 21 during the first half of the season, s/he may no longer be eligible to participate in PYSO as a regular member. Renewal of the invitation each season *is not automatically guaranteed*, but is determined by the Music Director, sectional Coaches, and/or Executive Director. The musical progress of all members will be evaluated on a continuing basis throughout the season. This will be done by way of observation during rehearsals, sectionals, seating auditions and concerts.

2. Diversity Statement & Policy (Non-Discrimination, Equal Opportunity)

The Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra (PYSO) embraces diversity as a core aspect of the organization's mission. PYSO defines diversity as the inclusion of all groups and the exclusion of none. In building and serving the region's varied and vibrant cultural community, PYSO affirms and supports the diversity of persons and ideas both within the organization and among the artists, other organizations, and communities it serves. PYSO shall provide equal opportunity for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, physical characteristics and disabilities, or economic and social status.

3. COVID19

The safety and well-being of our students, faculty, staff, volunteers, guests, and the entire community are always our priority. As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, we continue to follow government agency recommendations that are posted on the [Centers for Disease Control website](#) to maintain this priority.

4. School Music Programs/Private Study

All members of the youth orchestra are strongly encouraged to participate in their school music programs, if and when they are available. Our program supports and cooperates with the music education community. We expect our members to be role models and musical emissaries in their school ensembles.

All members of the youth orchestra are expected to study privately. If help is needed, the youth orchestra can offer suggestions for choosing a private teacher. Suggestions are not necessarily endorsements. *This season PYSO will also be offering scholarship assistance for Coaching/Private Study.* The applications may be found at [Scholarships and Competitions](#) on the PYSO website.

5. Artistic Standards

The Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra is dedicated to promoting and striving to maintain the highest artistic standards. It is our expectation that all members endeavor to attain their full musical

potential. The Music Director, Executive Director, and/or members of the Coaching Staff may notify youth orchestra members of musical deficiencies that require improvement, particularly when it is perceived that improvement is possible. Orchestra members so notified must show improvement within these deficient areas within a reasonable time frame, as determined by the Music Director, Executive Director, and/or members of the Coaching Staff. Failure to demonstrate improvement in deficient areas within a designated time frame may result in dismissal from the orchestra, at the discretion of the Conductors.

6. Facilities (COVID19 Safety protocols)

Youth orchestra members will respect the rules, premises, and the property of Heinz Hall or any other facility where rehearsals, concerts, or other activities take place.

Please observe:

- Arrive no earlier than ½ hour to PYSO rehearsals at Heinz Hall unless otherwise scheduled to do so. The backstage area (4th floor rehearsal rooms, green room) is used by the PSO during their Sunday matinees and PYSO is not permitted in those areas until the PSO is finished.
- No food or beverages are permitted on stage, backstage behind the acoustical shell, or in the auditorium of performance facilities.
- The tables with red felt tops behind the acoustical shell at Heinz Hall are for instruments only. Absolutely no food or beverages should ever be placed on them.
- Do not disturb the stage or rehearsal room set-up. If assistance is needed, inform a youth orchestra staff member.
- Students, parents and their guests must wear masks at all times. Wind players must wear masks when not rehearsing.

7. Attendance

A guiding philosophy of the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra is that professional responsibility is critical to musical excellence. Absences are detrimental to the orchestra's progress and counterproductive to your own personal growth. However, we understand that absences may be unavoidable and have developed the following attendance policy.

Normally, students are permitted a total of 5 absences per season, not to exceed more than 3 in any one rehearsal cycle leading up to a major concert. However, flexibility must be allowed for the current season:

- If PYSO members or anyone in their immediate living situation have tested positive for COVID19 or present with any symptoms, you cannot attend in-person rehearsals. COVID19 has a wide range of symptoms from mild to severe, such as: Fever or chills/cough/shortness of breath or difficulty breathing/fatigue/muscle or body aches/headache/new loss of taste or smell/sore throat/congestion or runny nose/nausea or vomiting/diarrhea. Please consult your physician for question or concerns.
- If any PYSO member is in an at-risk population for COVID19 (as listed on the [CDC website](#)) you are not required to attend in-person rehearsals. However, we do request medical documentation to be excused.
- All members are expected to attend all scheduled activities, whether virtual or in-person when such activities resume.
- [Absence Forms](#) are located on the “[For Members](#)” page of the website and need to be filled out and submitted **online** no less than two weeks before the scheduled activity. The PYSO office Staff evaluates absence requests/notifications on an individual basis.
- Reasons for absence will be treated on a case by case basis.
- Conflicts with religious holidays and/or mandatory school activities would not be counted as an absence if we are made aware of conflicts in advance.

PYSO Policies and Procedures 2020-2021 Season

- The [PYSO Calendar](#) located under the “What’s Happening” tab on PYSO’s website includes the 2020-21 season schedule and has the most up-to-date information for programs and activities.
- Weekly reminders as well as notices of last-minute changes or cancellations will be sent out via *text message* or email to students and parents via “remind.com”.

TARDINESS & LEAVING EARLY:

Late arrival to a rehearsal is not acceptable. It is unprofessional, irresponsible, and extremely disrespectful to your colleagues. Significant tardiness or leaving early, or regular such occurrences, may count as an absence or partial absence.

SUBSTITUTES (for in-person rehearsals) for Woodwind, Brass & Percussion Players:

If you will be absent from a rehearsal, ASK your section mates to cover your part in your absence. Get their contact information at the first rehearsal so you can set this up BEFORE the rehearsal date you will be absent.

8. Deportment & Behavior

Youth orchestra members should always conduct themselves in a professional manner during rehearsals, sectionals, performances, and other youth orchestra functions. This means alert, observant, and courteous attention; enthusiasm for activities; cooperation; respectful good manners; punctuality and dedication; attention to all directions given by the Music Director, Coaches, and Orchestra Staff. Failure on the part of any student to behave in an appropriate manner may result in that student’s dismissal from the PYSO organization. Behavior, which may result in dismissal include, but are not limited to the following:

- No use of cell phones on stage (or rehearsal room) during rehearsal. If you are seen using one during rehearsal, it will be held until the end of rehearsal.
- Excessive absenteeism especially in the weeks prior to the concert. Students should discuss any anticipated absence with Mr. Johnson and Ms. Goodman.
- Repeated failure to comply with concert dress policy.
- Failure to comply with PYSO volunteers, instruction of conductors, orchestra staff, or staff of rehearsal facility.
- Physical violence or threats of physical violence towards any conductor or orchestra member.
- Acts of vandalism or theft from rehearsal or concert facilities.
- Repeated acts of disruption during rehearsals. Disruption to be determined by the conductors.
- Verbal, sexual, or any other form of harassment.
- Use of alcohol, tobacco, or un-prescribed drugs.

In the case of dismissal, no refund of tuition will be made.
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9. Instruments, Music, Personal Belongings

Instruments

Instruments belonging to PYSO must be handled with care. If any damage occurs to a PYSO-owned instrument while in the possession of an orchestra member, he or she will be responsible for the repair. Members are responsible for their own instruments. Do not leave instruments or bows unattended where they might be accidentally damaged. Do not leave your instrument on your chair during breaks or leave it on the floor. Instruments should be safely put into cases when not being needed or not being played. All instruments should be insured. Most homeowner policies can include an inexpensive rider to cover instrument insurance.

Music

It is the responsibility of each musician to have his/her music at every rehearsal. If you are a member of the wind, brass, percussion, harp or keyboard section and will be absent from a rehearsal you are expected to notify your section mates and be sure your part is covered for rehearsal.

Markings to your music should be made neatly and legibly in **No. 2 pencil only**. Please bring pencils and an eraser to every rehearsal. Leave music **on your music stand** after the last concert that it is needed, unless instructed otherwise.

Personal Belongings

Please do not leave personal belongings or items of value unattended, particularly in public areas or at concerts. PYSO and/or Heinz Hall are not responsible for stolen or lost articles.

10. Arrival Procedure/Rehearsals

It is the responsibility of all PYSO members to be aware of all rehearsals, concert dates and times. Members should **arrive approximately 15 to 30 minutes early** to allow time to unpack and warm up. Five minutes prior to the start of rehearsal, each member must be seated, ready to tune.

Please check the PYSO Calendar under the “What’s Happening” tab of the website each week for up-to-date schedule changes, rehearsal order, announcements, etc. Information should be posted by noon on Friday. **It is your responsibility to check the [“For Members”](#) page of PYSO’s website each week.** Additional announcements may be made at rehearsal.

At each full orchestra rehearsal, there will be at least one substantial break. Feel free to bring or purchase a snack or beverage, but please keep all food and drinks away from the facility stage, backstage and auditorium. Do not be late to rehearsal after break. You should be in your seats and tuned a few minutes before rehearsal begins again.

11. Concert Attire

Gentlemen: All black. Black suit – or black trousers and black sports coat – or tuxedo pants/jacket.

Black long sleeve button down shirt, black leather dress shoes and solid black socks. Open collar, no tie.

Ladies: All black. Black dress with sleeves or long black slacks or black skirt and solid black blouse with sleeves. Nothing strapless, nothing low cut.

Skirt and dress must cover the knees when seated. Black shoes with closed toe & heel, no sandals. Jewelry must be minimal.

PLEASE NOTE:

- No cologne or perfume.

12. Weather Emergency Cancellations/Schedule Changes

In the event of a weather emergency, which necessitates the last-minute cancellation of a rehearsal, PYSO will email as well as text message members about the cancellation. Members may also **call the PYSO office 412-392-4872** to check for an announcement. Every effort will be made to record an announcement as far in advance of the rehearsal as possible.

DO NOT ASSUME rehearsal cancellation based on Pittsburgh city schools or other area schools being closed.

A full calendar is posted on our website, but please note that it is subject to change. Throughout the season changes and updates to the PYSO schedule should be posted every Friday by noon on the PYSO Calendar located under the “What’s Happening” tab of the website. Throughout the year we send out announcements, messages, reminders and updates to all orchestra members and parents via email. Last minute notifications and reminders are sent via text messaging to your cell phone.

13. Membership Dues

Membership dues for the 2020-2021 season are \$500 that may be paid in one installment; two installments or eight equal installments. *If you would like to propose/discuss an alternate payment plan, please do not hesitate to contact the office.*

Any student may apply for scholarship (financial) assistance for membership dues by submitting the online scholarship application form. Scholarships for membership dues are available based on financial need or merit. Applications are located on the [Scholarships and Competitions](#) page of the PYSO website.

14. Travel & Parking

Members are generally expected to provide their own transportation to rehearsals and concerts, including outreach concerts, unless otherwise notified.

In general, be prepared to pay to park in downtown Pittsburgh and in Oakland. Free street parking may be available on weekends in designated areas, such as meters. Carpooling and/or public transportation is recommended. The PYSO office is happy to provide you with names and contact information of members who may live near you who may wish to carpool, too.

Please allow for additional travel time for such things as:

- Sports and other stadium events
- Parades
- Races, Walks
- Construction and Detours
- Inclement weather

For traffic conditions, you may want to check with google maps or other map/navigation system.

We will try to warn everyone in advance of unusual or special events that will impact travel and parking (home Steeler games, parades, marathon, etc.).

For real time parking conditions (space availability) for downtown Pittsburgh parking garages (Pittsburgh Parking Authority) go to <http://parkpgh.org/>. You’ll also find information on rates that will vary from garage to garage.