



# **MUSICIANS' HANDBOOK**

**Penfield Symphony Orchestra  
1587 Jackson Road  
Penfield, NY 14526  
585-872-0774  
[www.PenfieldSymphony.org](http://www.PenfieldSymphony.org)  
[absent@penfieldsymphony.org](mailto:absent@penfieldsymphony.org)**

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## **Our Mission**

The mission of the Penfield Symphony Orchestra is to perform and promote live symphonic music for Penfield and the Greater Rochester community and to provide an opportunity for highly-qualified dedicated musicians to perform in a community orchestra of the highest quality.

## **PSO Attendance Policy**

High performance standards can best be reached if every member of the orchestra attends every rehearsal. Occasional absence may be necessary because of illness, professional obligations, or family emergencies. If a rehearsal or concert must be missed, or if the musician will be late to rehearsal, it is the responsibility of every musician to send an email to [\*\*absent@penfieldsymphony.org\*\*](mailto:absent@penfieldsymphony.org)

If a musician cannot send an email, the musician should contact another orchestra member to ask them to send an email to [absent@penfieldsymphony.org](mailto:absent@penfieldsymphony.org).

If unable to attend a rehearsal, every player has the responsibility to make certain that music is at the rehearsal so that parts are covered.

Musicians who have missed more than two rehearsals for any concert may be asked to sit out that concert, at the discretion of the Music Director. Furthermore, musicians who miss several rehearsals without providing reasonable explanation to the Personnel Manager or Music Director may be asked to relinquish their seats in the orchestra, at the discretion of the Music Director, to allow room for new musicians.

In bad weather, the PSO follows the Penfield School schedule. If after-school activities are cancelled due to weather conditions or for any other reason, the PSO rehearsal is also cancelled.

## **Concert Dress**

We wear “concert black.”

- Men: black suit, white shirt, black bow tie, and black shoes and socks.
- Women: long black dress, or long black skirt and top, or black pants and top. Skirts should be mid-calf or longer. Tops should have  $\frac{3}{4}$  or long sleeves and modest necklines. Shoes should be black pumps or closed-toe.

## **PSO Players’ Participation**

### **Substitute Policy**

Occasionally it becomes necessary for substitute musicians to play rehearsals and concert(s).

- If there is a player for your instrument who is already on the PSO list of substitute musicians, the Personnel Manager will contact that person to check his or her availability.
- In all cases, the invitation to substitute another player as a guest for a current member of the orchestra is at the discretion of the Music Director. The Personnel Manager will usually be asked to make contact with the proposed substitute and invite him or her to play as a guest for rehearsals and/or a given concert.
- In certain cases, at the Music Director’s discretion, and after discussion with the principal of the section in question, the Personnel Manager may invite guest musicians to have his/her name added to the PSO list of substitute players.
- It is always appropriate to make recommendations to the Personnel Manager of musicians whom you know and whom you consider to have the necessary musical experience as well as a desire to be called upon occasionally to play. Recommendations, together with a description of the musician’s background and availability, will be reviewed by the Music Director and the appropriate section leader, to assure a “good fit” with the ensemble before a formal invitation is given and before the guest musician’s name is added to the PSO substitute list. An audition may be required of musicians who are referred by orchestra members and who wish to be added to the PSO list of substitute players.

These guidelines are intended to help ensure that all guest and substitute players are known to the section leaders, Music Director, and Personnel Manager before being called upon to play a rehearsal or a concert as a guest with the PSO. In this way, the quality of our orchestra's music making is not compromised and a guest player can feel comfortable knowing that his or her appearance with the PSO is anticipated and welcome.

### **New Members**

The Music Director is responsible for making all decisions regarding the addition of new members. When a new member is needed, the Music Director will use the PSO's list of available players to determine which musician(s) should be invited to play with the orchestra. The Music Director and/or Personnel Manager will be responsible for extending any such invitation to the musician(s).

Musicians who have not previously played with the PSO may be asked for a musical resume (list of performance experience and education) and they may also be asked to prepare a brief audition. Auditions will be held in January and September each year and at other times as needed. The Music Director and an applicable section leader will hold the auditions.

Auditions involve the following:

- 1) A 4-5 minute performance of a selection of the musician's choice from the standard solo repertoire (concerto, sonata, or similar) and
- 2) Sight reading of a brief excerpt from the standard repertoire provided by the Music Director.

### **Concert Protocol**

- Adhere to dress code standards (see above).
- During a performance, freeze in position when not playing, especially when a soloist is performing.
- Turn pages quietly.
- At the end of a concert, put your music in the place designated by the Librarian. **Music and folders returned late may incur a fine. The fine will be the responsibility of the person who signed out the music.**

### **Rehearsal Protocol**

- Be well prepared. Parts are available before the first rehearsal. Email the librarian at [lib@penfieldsymphony.org](mailto:lib@penfieldsymphony.org) to arrange to sign out and pick up your parts.
- Come to rehearsals on time. Be warmed up and in your place by 7:30.
- If you can come early, help set up the chairs and stands. At the end of rehearsal, follow the directions given to assist in restoring the rehearsal space to its original state. Everyone's help is needed!
- Respect the Music Director and your fellow musicians. **Refrain from unnecessary talking during rehearsal.**
- Listen to the conductor and find your place in the music even if it does not involve you.
- Have a pencil with you to note special markings.
- Refrain from wearing strong fragrances (i.e., perfume, cologne, aftershave, shampoo, etc.).

### **Maintain the orchestra's standard of excellence by:**

- Playing in all scheduled rehearsals and concerts.
- Making a tax-deductible donation. Ticket sales provide only a small part of our annual budget. The orchestra relies on the generosity of members and friends.
- Attending Musicians' Advisory Committee meetings. All orchestra members are invited to attend to help choose music and to keep the orchestra running smoothly.
- Volunteering to be one of the two Orchestra Representatives on the Board. This elected position includes co-chairing the meetings of the Musicians' Advisory Committee, and overseeing the Music Fund, in addition to attending monthly Board meetings.
- Writing program notes and helping with other PSO projects and fundraisers.
- Letting the PSO Board members in the orchestra know how they can help you, and letting them know how you can help the orchestra.

- Volunteering to join the PSO Board. This is a decision-making board, setting policy and making financial decisions. Board members actively support the orchestra throughout the year by attending monthly meetings, working on public relations, promotion, fund raising, and behind-the-scenes concert support. New board members with experience and expertise in these areas are needed. If you know someone who could contribute these skills, please submit his or her name to any board member in the orchestra. All nominees are subject to board approval.

### **Music Fund Policy**

**Purpose:** To provide supplemental funds to permit additional variety of music and to challenge the orchestra and audience.

**Oversight:** The Orchestra Reps will be responsible for maintaining the integrity of the Music Fund. The Orchestra Reps will insure accurate records are kept and will report the current fund balance and expenditures to the orchestra.

**Contributions:** The Musicians' Advisory Committee encourages each member to contribute \$5 per concert or \$20 per year (tax-deductible) to the Music Fund in order for the PSO to continue to grow artistically. Musicians are welcome to purchase and donate music to the PSO.

Payments may be made during the second and third rehearsals of each concert cycle. Members who already contribute generously to the PSO should not feel that they need to contribute to the Music Fund. However, any additional tax-deductible contributions will be appreciated.

**Restrictions:** Expenditures from the Music Fund will be used to purchase music, to pay for the increment of purchase price over rental cost, or to rent music not normally affordable. In certain instances the Musicians' Advisory Committee may propose to pay for other items such as instruments or commissioned pieces. A majority vote by the orchestra is needed for such an exception.

**Expenditures:** The Music Director or Musicians' Advisory Committee will recommend that a specific piece of music should be purchased or rented. All recommendations should be brought to the Musicians' Advisory Committee for discussion and approval. Approvals will be forwarded to the Treasurer and Operations Manager by the Orchestra Reps.

**Relation to Operating Budget:** The Operating Budget's current funding level for music rental and purchase will remain the same or will increase.

**Confidentiality:** Names of Music Fund donors, but not dollar amounts, will be listed in the program book unless an orchestra member requests anonymity. To respect the privacy of members, access to donor data will be limited to the two Orchestra Representatives (collecting donations and keeping accurate records), Operations Manager (tracking cash/check donations), and Treasurer (accounting for other donations separately from Music Fund contributions).

### **Percussion Equipment Use Policy**

The PSO Board recognizes that some percussion instruments owned by PSO are portable and best kept at a percussionist's home; cymbals would be one example. The Board expects that PSO percussionists will possess and use their own sticks, mallets, etc., and thus will use their own equipment at other venues.

The Board recognizes that PSO musicians also play with other musical groups and, in the past, PSO percussionists have used PSO equipment with those groups.

The PSO Board is not against this practice. However, we have adopted the following policy:

If PSO equipment is used at other venues, the borrower must obtain the written permission of the PSO president. The equipment may then be loaned at the liability of its user. If equipment is damaged in any way, it will be the responsibility of the permitted user to replace or repair the equipment to its original condition.