



**ANTELOPE
VALLEY
COLLEGE**

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Rev. 9/9/11

Antelope Valley College Volunteer Handbook

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Welcome to the Antelope Valley College Volunteer Program!

Thank you for giving us your gift of time. We are excited that you want to join our team as a volunteer to help the college serve our community.

Your participation will help ensure the Antelope Valley College campus offers an enjoyable experience for students, teachers and visitors alike. You will make a difference by being a friendly and knowledgeable guide for our campus guests. Whether you are an usher in a performing arts event or volunteer to help students find their way around campus during the start of a new semester, your contribution of time will make people more comfortable and their experience at Antelope Valley College more memorable.

The contents of this guidebook explain your duties and responsibilities as an AVC volunteer. Please read it thoroughly and refer to it as necessary. Remember, your actions reflect upon our ability to maintain the highest standard of operations.

The entire staff of Antelope Valley College appreciates your decision to volunteer your time and effort to serve our students and patrons!

INTRODUCTION

The first responsibility of anyone interested in serving as a volunteer will be to attend an orientation session. During orientation, you will be given a tour of the campus to familiarize you with key amenities and landmarks. You will learn answers to frequently asked questions. You will receive information about specific volunteer opportunities and their job descriptions and have the opportunity to sign up for additional training (if needed) to further prepare you for service in your area of interest. At the conclusion of orientation, a temporary name badge will be provided to identify you as a volunteer in training. You will officially be recognized as a campus volunteer after your fingerprint background check (Live Scan), tuberculosis (TB) test and approval by the AVC Board of Trustees are completed. A follow up tuberculosis test will be required every two years.

Antelope Valley College offers volunteer opportunities across campus including:

- AVC Performing Arts Theatre – Ushers and Ticket Takers
- AVC Art Gallery
- AVC Foundation – Greeters & Registrars for check in at special events
- AVC Outreach Program – Campus Guides to provide direction for new students during the first weeks of each semester.
- Brent Carder Marauder Stadium – Hosts for athletic events.
- Plus many other opportunities in development!

As a valuable member of our team, you play a vital role in maintaining our high standards of customer service and program quality along with the opportunity to make new friends who share your passion for the educational environment.

Goals and Objectives of the Volunteer Program

The ultimate goal of the AVC Volunteer Program is to recognize and utilize the talents of local community members to assist in expanding the services of Antelope Valley College to the public while economizing staff time and to provide the best possible service to the public. The AVC Volunteer Program supports this through:

- Ensuring that all volunteers are appropriately recognized, trained and supervised while working at Antelope Valley College.
- Enhancing volunteer jobs that already exist and establish new tasks for volunteers as needed.
- Working with volunteers by recognizing their interests and talents and matching them with the needs of the college.

We want to help you get off to a good start. Please do not hesitate to ask for help with anything that you do not understand. The atmosphere of professionalism includes a free and open exchange of ideas and observations between staff and volunteers. Please do not hesitate to make suggestions or express concerns.

Customer Experience

Our goal is to assure that everyone being served has their expectations met or exceeded by our staff and volunteers. This includes interacting in a friendly, concerned and helpful manner. Our programs and activities are offered to meet the diverse needs of our community. We all work together to provide a superior level of customer service.

Customer Experience Standards

- Volunteers are expected to act in a mature and responsible way at all times.
- We will create an experience for everyone being served – always finding amenities to augment the services we provide.
- We will deliver consistently excellent service.
- We will consistently exceed the expectations of those we serve.
- We will take ownership and immediately report suspicious circumstances, activities or potentially hazardous situations to staff.
- We will ensure that inquiries are resolved in a timely manner.
- We will remember to say “thank you” to those we serve.
- Whenever appropriate, we will greet our customers by name.
- We will smile and acknowledge our customers.
- We will be conscious of those with special needs and offer immediate assistance.

We will bring closure to patron interaction by encouraging them to patronize the campus in the near future.

We will show compassion in interactions with our customers.

Job Description, House Rules and Emergency Information

Absence and Tardiness

Volunteers are expected to be reliable in the performance of their duties. We count on your attendance and punctuality. Please call if you are unable to fulfill a commitment.

Sign-in Book:

- Please use the sign-in sheets at each event to record hours of service. Keeping track of volunteer time is important for providing recognition of the contributions of each volunteer.
- The sign-up book is available with a three-month view of events. You may sign up in person, by e-mail or by phone. Please make careful note of the days and times, as some events will have multiple days and times, two events the same day, or multiple events the same day.
- If the sign-up sheet for a particular event is full, you may sign up on the Alternate List.
- If you sign up as an alternate, it means that you plan to be available to work that event should another usher need a replacement. **DO NOT SIGN UP AS AN ALTERNATE IF THERE ARE STILL POSITIONS AVAILABLE FOR AN EVENT.**
- Do not sign up for an event unless you are sure you can work and will be able to work the entire shift.

- If you cannot work an event you signed up for, please give a minimum of 24 hours notice.
- Please be sure that all of your contact information is current in case we need to notify you of a change or cancellation of an event.

Usher Functions:

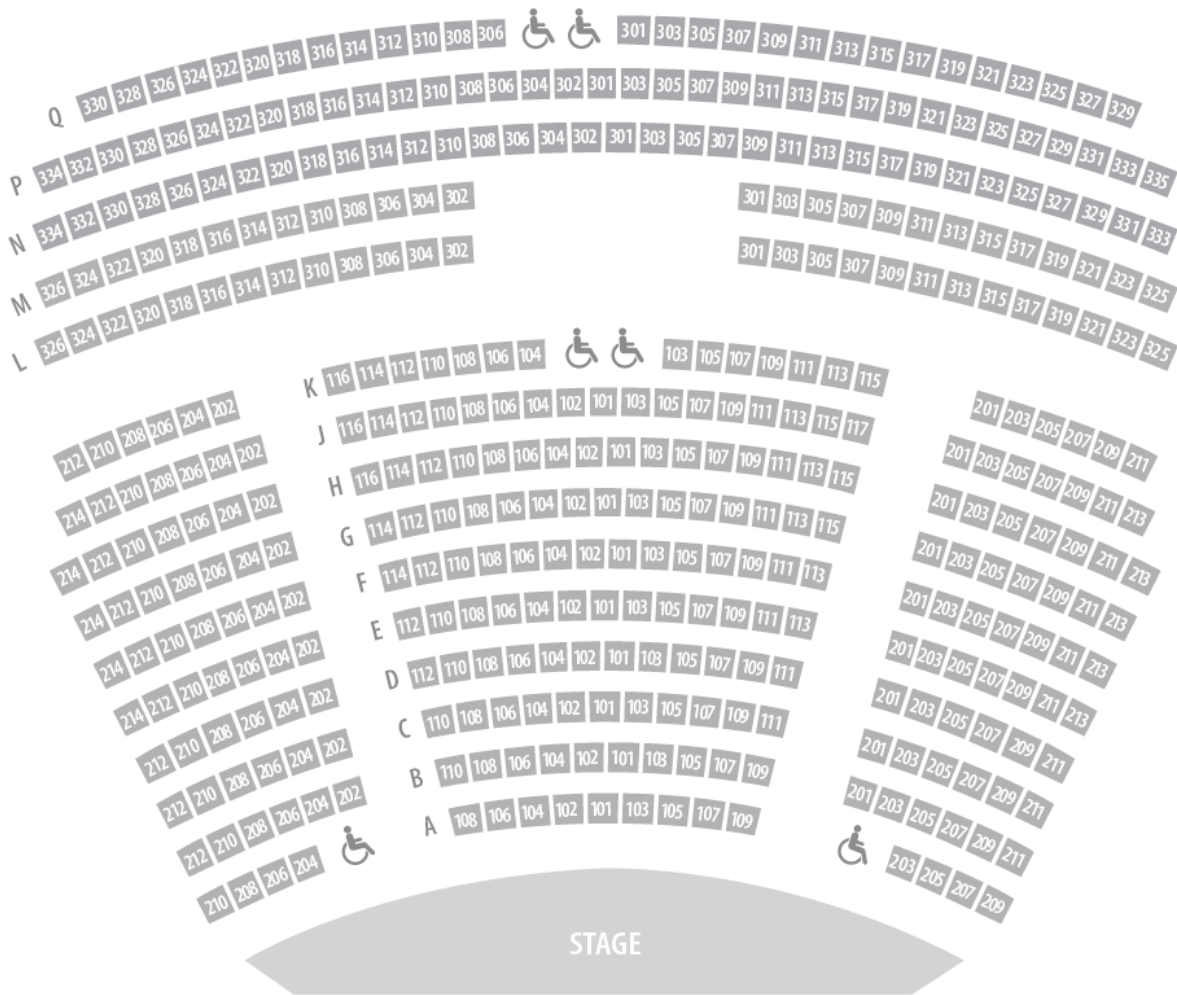
- Know the evening's program and some of the upcoming events.
- Know the location of:
 - Restrooms
 - Drinking fountains
 - Fire alarms
 - All exit doors
 - Wheelchair access
 - First aid kit
 - Automated external defibrillator (AED)

Attitude:

- Our goal is to make our customers feel welcome. Please be friendly and don't be afraid to chat with our customers.
- Give the customer a service-oriented experience – be polite and courteous at all times.
- Be sensitive to customers with any special needs.
- Occasionally a customer will be unpleasant to you, usually for no fault of your own. If you receive or have a complaint and need to air it, contact your supervisor immediately.

General Information for Theatre Performances:

- The box office is open two hours prior to show time.
- The lobby is open one hour prior to show time.
- The house (inside of the theatre) is open 30 minutes prior to show time.
- Each volunteer should be at the theatre a minimum of 1 hour 15 minutes prior to show time. This will ensure that ushers receive any information necessary to that performance (i.e. wheelchair patrons, run time of the performance, intermission times, etc.).
- Volunteers are invited to watch the show at no cost (end seats are not always available, so there is the possibility that you may have to stand).
- Be sure to sign in when you arrive and check out a flashlight.
- Volunteer ushers are not to smoke, consume alcoholic beverages or be under the influence of drugs while on duty.



Usher Duties:

- Two ushers will be positioned just inside each of the three main exterior theatre entryways to take tickets. Two ushers will be positioned at each interior doorway to the house to guide patrons and distribute programs. Additional ushers will be assigned depending upon the need for a particular event.
- FM headsets are available at no cost to the hearing impaired. Individuals wishing to obtain a headset may do so at the box office window. A valid driver’s license/ID card is required to check out a headset and will be returned upon return of the headset.
- The House Manager will advise when to open and close the doors.
- When the house doors have opened, ushers will check tickets for seat numbers and row (i.e. C103), escorting patrons to their seats if necessary. Please remind patrons to watch their step.
- Ushers will remove strollers, walkers, etc. to the lobby for storage during the performance and return to the patron at intermission and/or end of the show (canes are allowed if they do not cause a safety hazard).
- When doors are closed for the start of a performance, ushers are to stand at their door positions (inside) to seat any latecomers. Depending on the performance and the

- Ushers will continually monitor the audience for any problems.
- Ushers will be near doors so they may open /close them should a patron need to leave for any reason, (restroom, coughing, etc.) and remain outside the doors for their return in order to open them again. **ALWAYS ESCORT WITH A FLASHLIGHT DURING PERFORMANCE.**
- At the start of intermission, ushers will open the doors for patrons and position themselves at the doors inside the lobby. Two ushers will stay at position to prevent anyone from approaching stage area from the side stages.
- At the end of the performance, ushers will open the doors for patrons to leave, please wish patrons, “Hope you enjoyed the show” etc., and stay at their positions until the house is clear.
- Once theater is cleared, **ALL** ushers will re-enter the theater for a final clean sweep. Check for any items that might have inadvertently been left (make a note of seat area item was found), pick up all lost and found items and water bottles. Be sure all seats are in up position. Check in front of and behind seats. ***No one may leave until everyone is finished.***
- If there is a spill or mess, notify house manager of location.
- Please turn in all lost and found items to house manager, making a note of where they were found.
- Return flashlights to the house manager after the performance and be sure to sign out.
- If an usher needs to leave their post to use the restroom or becomes ill, please notify the house manager.

When Seating Patrons

- If escorting a patron, walk them all the way to their seat, do not pass them off to the next usher.
- Do NOT shine your flashlight up the steps towards descending patrons. The light shines in their eyes.
- Keep your flashlight turned off once the performance begins, unless you are assisting a patron.
- When the house is dark, do not shine the flashlight down the stairs at an angle as it “flashes” the performers.

Patrons with Disabilities

- Be sensitive to the needs of wheelchair patrons or those with other disabilities.
- If they appear to need assistance, offer it, but do not do anything before asking first.
- If a wheelchair bound patron is transferable to a seat, **VOLUNTEERS MAY NOT ASSIST** in the transfer. This must be done by companion or caregiver.
- Talk to the person with the disability. Don’t ignore him or her by speaking to their companion.

Attire

The following are dress requirements that should be followed with a minimum of creativity and self-expressions. No substitutions please.

Women:

- Black skirt or black dress trousers or slacks for evening performances. Black trousers or slacks (please, no jeans, casual pants or tight pants) will be permitted for weekday and afternoon performances.
- White blouse, dress shirt or dressy plain sweater (no T-shirts, sloppy or un-tucked shirts).
- Dark comfortable shoes with low heels (no casual sandals, open toes/back or tennis shoes).
- Black sweater or jacket if needed for warmth (no sweatshirts).
- Please remember black means black. No checks, stripes, or designs.

Men:

- Black dress slacks (please, no jeans, casual pants or tight pants).
- Black sport coat/suit jacket (omit if weekday or afternoon performance).
- White shirt (no T-shirts, sloppy or un-tucked shirts).
- Dark comfortable shoes with low heels (no casual sandals, open toes/back or tennis shoes).
- Dark tie.
- Please remember black means black. No checks, stripes, or designs.

PERFORMING ARTS THEATRE RULES:

- Should there be a “Reception”, volunteers DO NOT eat or drink
- NO FOOD OR DRINKS are allowed inside the theatre except for bottled water.
- As a courtesy to performers and patrons, if you notice a patron with a cell phone or pager, please remind them to turn it to the silent or off position during the entire performance. Please also remind them that texting is also not allowed during a performance.
- No cameras or recording equipment are allowed inside the theatre. This also includes cell phone recording.
- No access to the stage. One usher will be assigned to each of the side stage paths at all times when the house is open.
- Doors are to remain closed throughout the performance until the house lights are up (patrons may leave before doors open). Please do not anticipate this, as encores have been known to happen. The house manager will inquire as to whether or not to anticipate this possibility and inform the ushers during the briefing session.
- Notify house manager IMMEDIATELY of any problems, complaints, seating errors disturbances, etc.

SAFETY:

Be observant at all times

You are the eyes and ears of the facility. It is your basic responsibility to get people safely in and out of the facility and to make sure that they have a good time while they are our guests. Be on the lookout for any unusual situations, particularly a situation that may pose a danger to you and to others.

Don't Panic:

Procedures for the most common emergency situations will be covered during your orientation training. Copies of these emergency procedures will be on the house manager's desk for reference and posted in the building.

Falls:

Falls are one of the primary causes of injuries. Most falls occur when people are moving downward through the aisles to their seats or returning to the lobby from the upper level seats. Walking in a dimly lit auditorium can be especially difficult for guests who are not used to dim lighting.

ALWAYS encourage patrons to watch their step.

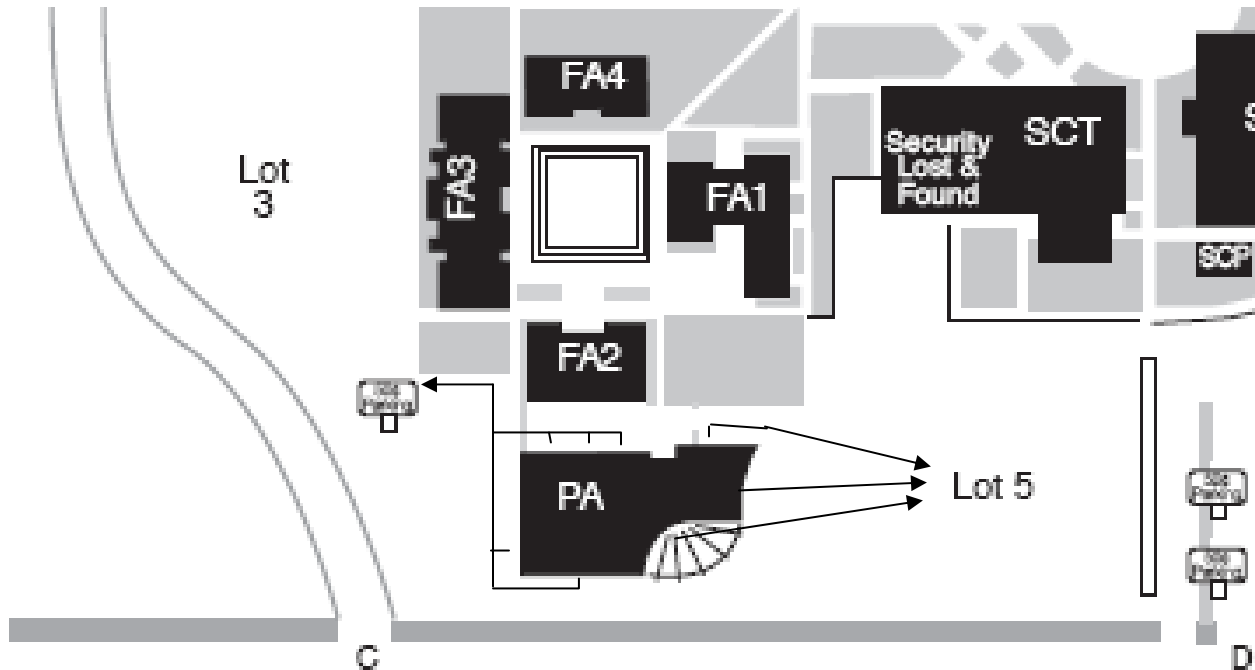
- Evaluate the patron's ability to get around.
- Be especially alert when the lights are dim. You may be accustomed to the dim lighting in the theatre, but the patrons will most likely not.
- If the theatre is dark, you should escort patrons directly to the aisle their seats are located in with a flashlight.
- Be especially sensitive to elderly patrons who may have trouble with stairs, steps, or steep inclines.
- If there is an accident involving blood or other body fluids, **DO NOT** attempt to clean it yourself. Report the incident to the house manager **IMMEDIATELY**.
- **ALWAYS** notify the house manager of any emergencies, illness, problems, falls (no matter how small or insignificant), etc. **ALL incidents, no matter how minor, should be reported to the house manager.**

BUILDING EVACUATION

Remain calm – Try not to panic. Know the location of all exits. Walk rapidly but **DO NOT RUN**. Exits are from the two side entrances and the upper level stairways leading to the lobby. Rows A-K will exit through the side doors, Rows L-Q will exit through the upper level stairways. Help ensure that all patrons are led out. Assist patrons with disabilities. Everyone in the house should exit to parking lot 5 (please see map on page 10).

EARTHQUAKES

Earthquakes strike without warning. Be prepared for aftershocks following the initial quake. The relocation areas for the theatre are parking lot 5 from the house and lot 3 for all backstage personnel if the building is to be evacuated (please see map on page 10).



Know the emergency procedures – **DO NOT PANIC**

- If evacuation is needed, proceed as listed above.
- Once outside, stay away from utility poles, overhead wires or anything that can break loose and fall.

POWER FAILURE

- Remain calm until power is either restored or further advised – remember, YOU have the flashlights.
- If the power failure is prolonged, the battery back up system will turn on the emergency lights. Once those lights are on, please evacuate the building.
- An announcement regarding evacuation of the building will be made from the audio engineer position.
- Do not move about the area. Listen for information from theatre personnel.

ALWAYS notify house manager of any emergencies, illness, problems, falls (no matter how small or insignificant) and ALL incidents no matter how minor.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION REWARDS STRUCTURE

In recognition of service as Front of House Volunteers, a structure of rewards for varying levels of service has been established. In addition to the awards, volunteers receive additional responsibility and the opportunity to support more senior level events (such as meet and greets with artists). As the volunteers do receive a service pin and free ticket to any event for each 50 hours worked, there are consistent rewards for additional service.

50 Hours

Special name badge that includes the name of the volunteer (*introductory badges are generic – i.e. “Usher”*)

Service pin and free show ticket (every 50 hours)

250 Hours

Personal thank you letter and certificate signed by the college president

500 Hours

Thank you letter from the college president

Certificate signed by the college president and the president of the Board of Trustees

1000 Hours

“Thank you” plaque

Special name badge with diamond chip pin

All will participate in a special recognition at the Post Season Dinner

PARKING

Parking will be by permit (provided) for parking lot 5 adjacent to the facility.