THE
SHELDON
CONCERT HALL & GALLERIES

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

- Revised August 2025 -

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Welcome!

Welcome to The Sheldon! The Sheldon Volunteers provide a welcoming, hospitable environment for all visitors and guests. Our team of volunteers are enthusiastic, passionate, and have strong communication skills. These devotees are great lovers of art, music, and have a commitment to sharing that passion with our community.

Volunteer Center

The Sheldon has created a Volunteer Center on our website. Here you will find all the information you need to know about volunteering, including how to use VolunteerMark, signing up for shows, FAQs, this handbook and more.

This is also where you can find quick links to ***check your hours*** and ***fill out ticket redemption requests.***

Visit the Volunteer Center → on the website.
thesheldon.org/join-support/volunteer-opportunities/volunteer-center

Section 1: Program Staff

Facilities Manager (FM)

The Facilities Manager is a Sheldon employee and oversees the entire building and all staff during events. The FM runs the pre-event usher meeting and should have the most recent details for that day/night's event. If issues arise, Volunteers are expected to go to the FM if the Lead Usher is unavailable.

Volunteer Coordinator

Throughout the season, the Volunteer Coordinator is the point of contact for the Volunteers. Should you have any questions, concerns or need to make changes to your volunteering assignments please contact the volunteer coordinator directly via email or phone.

Lead Usher

During events, the Lead Usher becomes a point of contact for all volunteers. Volunteers are expected to report any issues that arise to the Lead Usher first. If the issue is with the Lead Usher or the Lead Usher is not available, then the next point of contact is The Facilities Manager. If FM is not nearby, please ask the Box office Security Guard to radio FM.

Day of Concert
Facilities Manager → Lead Usher → Volunteers

Day of Other Event (non-concert)
Facilities Manager → Volunteers

**If any need to report issues, please contact the Director of Events or Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible. We will address each incident as soon as we can.*

Section 2: Volunteer Opportunities

There are many ways to get involved with The Sheldon community throughout the season. While there is a lot of overlap each event is unique and a variety of roles are available to fill.

There are four **(4) different types** of shows within the concerts program: **Sheldon Concerts**, **Coffee Concerts (daytime)**, **Education Concerts (daytime)** and **Rental Concerts.** Events can vary slightly in their needs, but the following roles are usually available to volunteers:

Volunteer Roles

1. **TICKET TAKER** – Ticket takers are stationed in the front lobby at the concert hall doors or on the balcony and are ready to scan/collect tickets when the concert hall doors open.
2. **2nd FLOOR LOBBY ATTENDANT** – 2nd Floor Lobby attendants are stationed in multiple places depending on the event's needs. Bridge Attendants work the bridge between the old building and the new building, Elevator Attendants work the elevators and Lobby Attendants have multiple stations (including the box office lobby). In this role you will greet patrons, answer questions and direct guests to these spaces around the Sheldon.

3. **USHER** – Ushers are stationed throughout the Concert Hall, both on the floor and on the balcony. Ushers greet and guide guests to their seats, monitor behavior during the concert, pass out programs (stuff programs with inserts if needed), help guests in case of an emergency, keep guests from going backstage and clean up and reset the hall after the show.

4. **LEAD USHER** – As mentioned previously, the Lead Usher is the head usher for the evening and is the point person for the volunteer team on the night of the show. Becoming a Lead Usher requires additional training. Please let the Volunteer Coordinator know if you are interested in this role.

5. **MERCHANDISE SELLER** – Merch Sellers sell merchandise for artists if the position is required by the artist team. Merch Sellers require extra training and must know how to operate portable credit card readers. Please let the Volunteer Coordinator know if you are interested in learning how to sell Merchandise. *This is a paid position.*

6. **GALLERY ATTENDANT** – Gallery attendants guide and assist individuals/groups in the art galleries. Attendants monitor the space and make sure no food enters the gallery (there are some exceptions to this) and that artwork remains safe and unharmed.

7. **COAT CHECK** – The coat checker checks coats for guests if required for the event. Coats are checked in the Coat Room located behind the Welcome Desk. *This is a paid position.*

8. **STAFF ASSISTANT** – The Sheldon Staff will occasionally need extra hands for various projects. This could be anything from checking people in at our Gala, to stuffing envelopes to working an information table.

9. **BUS GUIDE** – The bus guide assists the education and operations departments with showing buses where to park during school events. This position requires additional training.

Section 3: Signing Up for an Opportunity

Once you complete training you are welcome to sign up for opportunities. Opportunities are released every six months - in August after the training session and in December before the start of the new year.

An email is sent out with a link to VolunteerMark where the available opportunities are posted. (Tutorial videos for signing up and using VolunteerMark are in the Volunteer Center.) After the initial releases, sign-ups are available on a first come, first served basis.

WAITLIST
If an opportunity you want to work is full you may request to be put on the waitlist. Email the Volunteer Coordinator to be put on the waitlist.

Please do not show up to an event without first signing up. We rely on the VolunteerMark sign up list, and it is disrespectful to fellow volunteers who may be on the waitlist.

Section 4: General Guidelines

a. Code of Conduct

As a volunteer, you are a public representative of The Sheldon and as such are expected to exhibit professional standards of behavior. Sheldon guests must always be warmly welcomed into the building and treated with the utmost respect of their minds and bodies.

We ask that if you experience any behavior from fellow volunteers that does not reflect The Sheldon's values, please make sure to tell the Lead Usher or/and Facilities Manager on duty. If there are continued complaints, tardiness, absenteeism, issues in conduct/attitude or any other circumstances in which a volunteer's services may no longer be needed or desired, the volunteer may be dismissed at the discretion of the FM that day at another time.

1. Implementation of Sheldon Policies

Failure to adhere to The Sheldon's policies or unsatisfactory job performance, including excessive absenteeism, habitual tardiness, insubordination, or failure to complete reasonable tasks assigned by a supervisor, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

It is expected that communication between you and your supervisor will remain clear and straightforward to address any issues before formal disciplinary action becomes necessary.

Certain behaviors are considered detrimental to The Sheldon's interests, its guests, and fellow employees, and may lead to immediate suspension or termination. These behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Use or possession of illegal or recreational drugs or drug paraphernalia on The Sheldon's property,
- Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription drugs, or becoming intoxicated during work hours,
- Fighting or disorderly conduct on The Sheldon's premises,
- Willful destruction of Sheldon property or neglect resulting in damage or injury,
- Felony conviction,
- Possession or use of a weapon, except when authorized as part of job duties,
- Theft or dishonesty,
- Divulging confidential information about The Sheldon's business or operations without authorization,
- Willful neglect of job responsibilities,
- Use of abusive, insulting, or profane language toward employees or guests.

This list is not exhaustive but serves as a guide to unacceptable conduct. Compliance with these policies is expected from all employees.

If you believe you were wrongfully discharged, you may appeal directly to the Executive Director.

2. Sexual Harassment Policy

The Sheldon is committed to maintaining a workplace free from all forms of sexual harassment or intimidation. Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and any verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances or jokes,
- Propositions,
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature,
- Comments about an individual's body, sexual abilities, or deficiencies,
- Unwanted touching, pinching, or physical assault,
- Obscene comments, gestures, or sexually suggestive displays in the workplace.

If you believe you have experienced sexual harassment, immediately contact your supervisor, the Executive Director, or the Director of Finance with your complaint.

All reports of sexual harassment will be promptly investigated, and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted. While The Sheldon will maintain confidentiality to the fullest extent possible, some situations may require limited disclosure to take proper action. There will be no retaliation against employees who make honest complaints of sexual harassment. Any employee found to have engaged in sexual harassment will face disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

a. Attendance

The Sheldon Concert Hall and Galleries require regular attendance for the volunteer program to work successfully. **All Sheldon volunteers will be required to work a minimum of eight (8) shows each season (July 1st - June 30th) to remain in active status.**

ALL Volunteers are required to attend the annual training session to continue participating in the program. You will not be able to sign up for concerts and events until you meet this requirement. If you are out of town for the orientation and training sessions, contact the Volunteer Coordinator to see how you can meet this requirement.

Volunteers from a previous season who work no hours during the current season are moved to inactive status and must re-apply to the program if they want to volunteer in the future.

If you need a leave of absence, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator to discuss.

b. Dress Code

It is important for the experience of our guests that they are easily able to find you for help or any questions they might have. We require all volunteers to wear the following uniform:

- **White Button Down Shirt**
- **Black Bottoms (Pants/Skirt)**
- **Black Closed-Toe Shoes**
- **Name Badge (Provided by The Sheldon)**
- **A Black Sweater or Vest may also be worn in cool weather**

Opened-toe shoes are not permitted. The dress code for ***The Sheldon will be always enforced. Your Facility Manager and/or Lead Usher have the right to prohibit you from duty if your uniform is unsuitable.***

c. Parking and Arrival

Free parking is provided for volunteers **ONLY** during events you are working. Volunteer parking is usually available directly behind the concert hall building, also known as the South Lot.

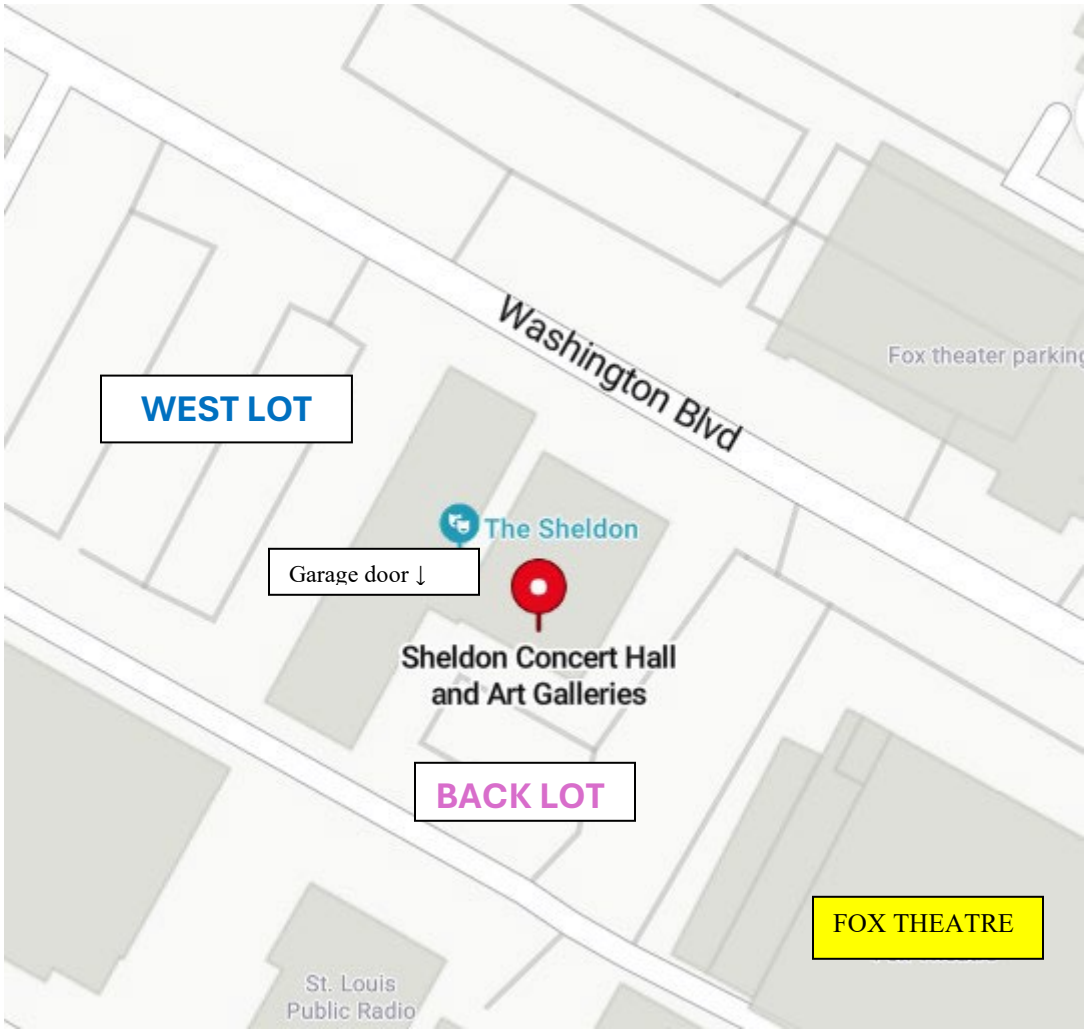
Should the parking be full on the Back/South Lot, please park in the West Lot (on the side of the Contemporary Arts Museum).

PLEASE DO NOT ENTER AT THE STAGE DOOR ENTRANCE THAT FACES THE BACK OF THE FOX!

IF YOU HAVE PARKED IN THE SOUTH LOT, PLEASE ENTER THROUGH THE GARAGE DOOR IN THE BACK LOT. Ring the doorbell to the right of the garage door a staff member or Security guard will open the door for you.

IF YOU HAVE PARKED IN THE WEST LOT, let the lot attendant know you are a volunteer for the event.

Upon arrival, please proceed directly to the Usher Room located to the left of the loading dock for the pre-show event meeting and sign in. Backstage, including the Green Room and kitchen areas, is off limits.



d. Report to the Volunteer Room

The Volunteer Room is located to the left of the loading dock when coming in from the garage door. It is the perfect space for coats, purses, hats, etc. We ask that you do not bring these items with you to your workstation. Refreshments are also available in the refrigerator, and we ask all refreshments remain in this space. *Please do not go to the 2nd Floor Lobby Bar for beverages, as alcohol is never to be consumed while volunteering at The Sheldon.*

e. Shift Start and End Time

When you sign up for an event, you will see a shift start and end time. The start time is also called **CALL TIME**. **Call Time** is the time you are required to be at The Sheldon. Volunteer call times depend on the starting time of each event.

For Concerts, volunteers are generally required to be ready in the Volunteer Room 30 minutes (1/2 hour) before the doors to the Sheldon open to the general public. For example, for an 8:00pm show, the doors will open at 7:00pm for the public. That requires volunteers to be ready in the volunteer room at 6:30pm.

Facilities Manager will hold a mandatory volunteer meeting for the evening's event. It is absolutely critical that you are on time and ready for this meeting. All volunteers MUST attend this meeting, which will cover information concerning that day/evening's event. The Lead Usher will assign roles before or after this meeting, whichever works best for the FM timeline.

f. Signing In and Out for a Shift

When you enter the room, please sign in using the sign-in sheet. Please write clearly and make sure to sign in and out with every shift. We use this sign in sheet to tract your hours.

Signing up for roles

If there is a Lead Usher for the event, they will assign you a role. Feel free to share your preferred role with them ahead of time. If you have any special accommodation, please let the Lead Usher know as soon as possible.

Usher Meeting

Every show will have an Usher Meeting prior to doors opening to the public. This will be led by the Facilities manager (FM). When the meeting(s) concludes, please proceed to your assigned area before the doors open to the public.

Some shows do not require a Lead Usher or a formal meeting. In this case you can refer to the Event Notes on the Volunteer Board. Specific instructions for all performances will be included in these notes.

g. Sheldon Hall Policies

The Sheldon Sound

The Sheldon's perfect acoustics work in two ways – transmitting sound from the stage to the audience, but also within the audience seats themselves. Please try to maintain silence. This also applies to the outside lobby during a performance.

Cell Phone Policy
Cell phones should be silenced by guests for all events. Many artists approve of quick photos and videos. If patrons are behaving in an unobtrusive manner, no enforcement is necessary. If it should become a distraction, please ask the guest to put their phone away.

There are some instances where an artist will ask explicitly for no photography or recording. In this case, signs and verbiage will be placed in and outside of the hall. If you see a guest disregarding the artist's policy, please ask them to put their device away. Hired photographers will have a photo pass on them. Please monitor the hall to make sure this policy is carried out. If a situation arises that you do not feel you can resolve, please ask the Lead Usher for help. If you cannot find the Lead Usher, please ask the Box Office Security Guard to radio the Facilities Manager.

Sound Check
Sounds checks are private and closed to everyone, including non-essential staff and all volunteers. When the sound check is finished and production has been given approval, the Facility Manager and/or Lead Usher will give volunteers the cue to open the Concert Hall doors.

Section 5: Seating Procedures

Once a patron's ticket is scanned, the seating process begins. Unless the show is general seating, ALWAYS escort patrons to their seats. **The safety of our guests is your most important responsibility as an usher.** The steps in the hall are unevenly spaced. Use your flashlight and remind everyone to watch their step.

Row letters are on **aisle seats**. **Seat numbers** are on the **RIGHT chair arm**. The first seat of a row begins on the far-right hand side and continues across the row to the left. This will help you send patrons to the best aisle for seating. **See the seating chart at the end of this book for reference.**

NEVER walk through or send patrons through the sound and lighting board area behind the back row. If a guest sits in a volunteer chair at the back, please wait until the current song or speaker has finished before escorting them to their seat. **NEVER walk a patron front and center during the performance of a song.**

Accessible Seating
The Sheldon has an accessible seating area located at the rear of the orchestra section. This area is large enough to accommodate patrons with wheelchairs and their guests.

THE BALCONY IS NOT WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE. If a patron in a wheelchair arrives with a balcony ticket, please direct them to the box office for reassignment on the Orchestra level based on availability.

The Sheldon has two (2) wheelchairs onsite. Please see the Lead Usher or Facility Manager for assistance.

THE
SHELDON
SEATING CHART

Total Seating Capacity

712 Seats

732 Seats Total (including accessible/temporary seating)

[1] **Standard Seat**

(1) **Temporary Seat** (20)

Balcony Capacity

236 Seats

Balc A = 194

Balc B= 42

Orchestra Level Capacity

476 Seats

496 Seats Total (including accessible/temporary seating)

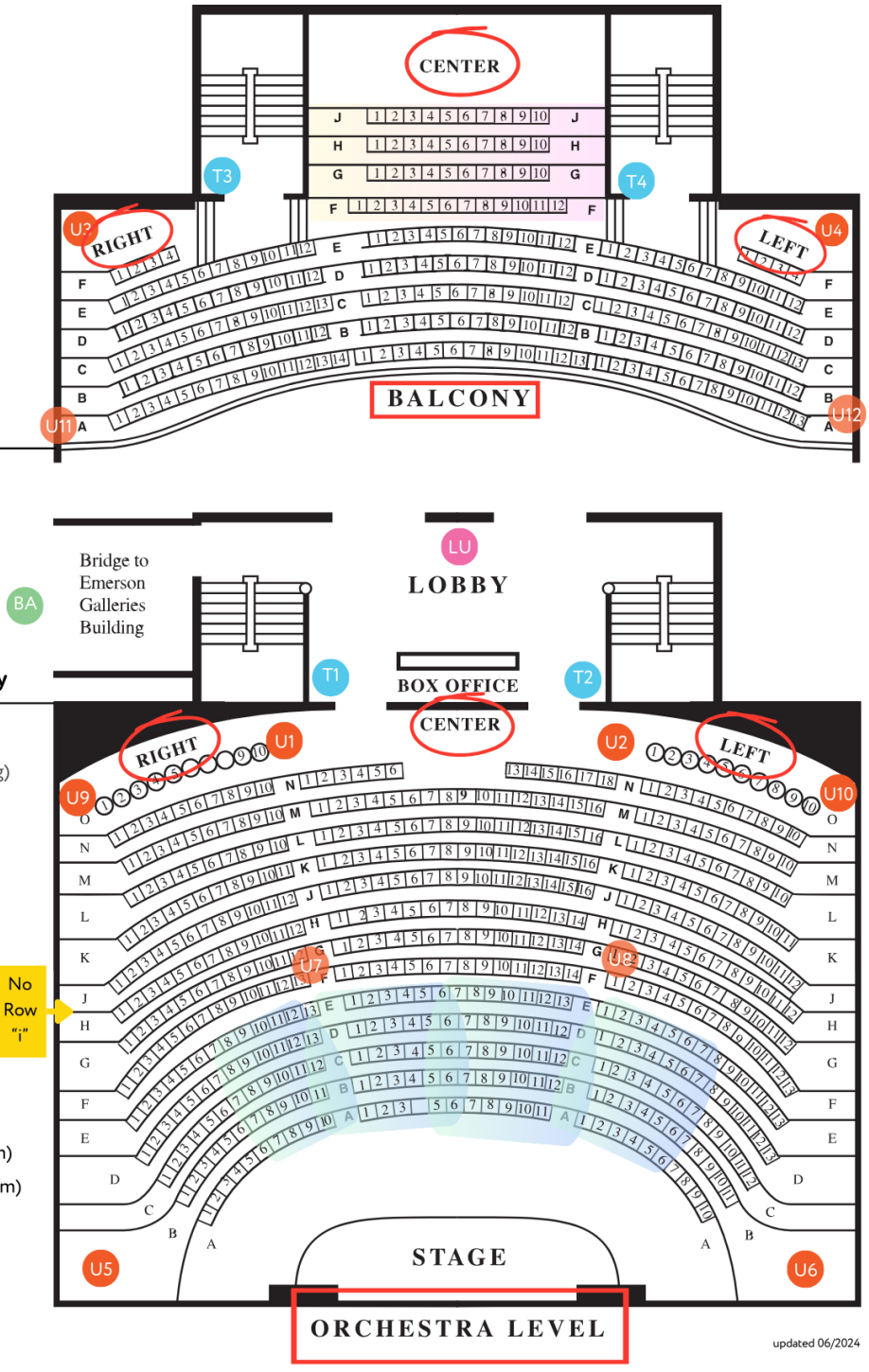
Orch A = 120

Orch B = 356

ADA/Temp = 20

Volunteer Positions

- LU = Lead Usher (roaming)
- U = Usher
- T = Ticket Taker
- BA = Bridge Attendant
  - Gallery Attendant (Atrium)
  - Elevator Attendant (Atrium)
  - Merch Seller (Booth)
  - Coat Checker (Emerson)
  - Bus Guide (Emerson)



updated 06/2024

Subscribers

These patrons have purchased tickets for an entire series. An example of our subscriber ticket can be found on our ticket page in the handbook. Our subscription series are the following:

- Fantastic Folk
- Rhythm & Jazz
- Classical
- Coffee Concert

They have the same seats for the entire series of shows. They know where they are going and may not need assistance.

Sometimes a regular ticket shows up for the same seat as the subscriber. If this should occur, please recheck the date and bring **both** sets of tickets to the box office or Lead Usher.

WHERE SHOULD AN USHER SIT?

There are designated seats inside each orchestra door at the back or sides of the hall. Never sit in front of or directly next to a patron.

- If a show is sold out, seating will be limited. The Sheldon will do their best to provide seating where possible.
- At no time should an usher ask a patron to move from the usher seat. If a patron sits in an usher seat, please ask the patron for their ticket information. After the song is finished, you may escort the patron to their seat or, for General Admission shows, you may explain to the patron that they need to find a proper seat in the hall.

Latecomers

The Lead Usher will assign ticket takers to remain in the lobby for latecomers. Please hold late patrons in the lobby until the end of a song. If someone leaves the hall during the performance, do not allow them to re-enter until a song or musical number has ended.

Section 6: Showtime Duties

a. During a Performance

Enjoying the Concert: All Sheldon volunteers are invited to stay and watch the show after you have finished your pre-show assignments. The Lead Usher will release ushers from their posts to watch the show.

Disturbances during show: Ushers should be aware and ready to assist guests during the show, this includes inappropriate behavior from patrons. If there is a situation you do not feel you can handle, please communicate with the Lead Usher for resolution. If the Lead Usher is unavailable, please contact the Facilities Manager. If they are not visible, ask security to radio them. Please avoid distracting the technicians from the sound/light boards unless it is an emergency.

Intermission: Once house lights are up for intermission, ushers should once again be on duty at their stations through intermission until dismissed.

b. End of the Night

Volunteers are required to stay and clean up the hall once the concert ends. Gloves are available in the usher room and box office. The trash cans, recycling bins, and dump buckets are available in backstage elevator lobby. Once the hall is clean, the Lead Usher will release ushers.

REMEMBER TO DO THE FOLLOWING BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

- Return flashlight and name tag to Usher Room.
- Sign out.

Section 7: Appreciation Program

There are many benefits to volunteering with The Sheldon including getting to see shows for free.

Ticket Redemption

We appreciate you! For each event that you work, you will record your hours in VolunteerMark. Once you have worked 40 hours, you can request 2 free tickets to one of our Sheldon Presents shows, as listed on our website. Use this Microsoft Form to make an official comp ticket request: Volunteer Comp Ticket Request Hub – Fill out form

Please note that VolunteerMark will continue to show you the total number of hours you have worked for the season (regardless of hours already redeemed). Sheldon staff keeps an internal record of ticket redemptions and hours used. **Rewards from previous seasons will roll over into the first half of the next season (September – December). Hours restart every active season.**

Volunteer Party

We are extremely grateful to you for your time and help creating a wonderful experience for Sheldon guests. At the end of each season the Sheldon Staff hosts a private party for all active volunteers with dinner, live music, gifts and more!