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# PARTICIPANT POLICY HANDBOOK

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*The Great Dickens Christmas Fair*



**2016**



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# ***Introduction***

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## **Statement of Principles**

Red Barn Productions (“RBP” or “the Company”) is committed to fairness and openness in all our dealings, as well as to providing a safe and healthy environment for workers, performers, and visitors. To facilitate the enactment of those principles, we have designed this Handbook to acquaint you with our general policies/practices for Participants of the *Great Dickens Christmas Fair* (“the Dickens Christmas Fair”).

We wish to thank you for your involvement and the contributions you make to this evolving art form. The Dickens Christmas Fair is unique in the world, largely because of the way so many talented individuals come together to present this deeply immersive theatrical and artistic experience.

Please take the time to read through this Handbook carefully so that you may better understand your obligations as a Participant.

## **Mission Statement**

- **To present Theatrical Living History in a deeply immersive, engaging, and celebratory environment.**
- **To encourage excellence in traditional hand-crafts, music, dance, and other performing arts.**
- **To produce events that educate and entertain: “We trick into learning with a laugh.”**

As used in this Handbook, the term “Participant” refers to those persons listed under the ***Classifications*** on page 4, none of whom are employees of RBP.

## **Disclaimer**

This Handbook is not intended to create (and should not be construed as creating) an express or implied employment or contractual relationship of any kind, nor does it alter the “at will” nature of your working relationship with RBP. Additionally, it is not intended to be an all-inclusive source of information, nor do we intend to restrict the free exercise of management’s judgment and discretion.

Therefore, the Handbook is viewed as an evolving document, and consequently, RBP reserves the right to modify or rescind any policies, procedures or guidelines at any time without prior notice. Unless otherwise indicated, this Handbook supersedes all previous written or verbal policies. There may be circumstances when regulations, laws, or changes in RBP policy, practices or benefits may significantly modify provisions of this Handbook, or affect its specific or general application.

# ***All Participants***

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## **At-Will Participation**

Neither this Handbook nor any of its provisions creates an expressed or implied contract of employment nor does it alter the terms of any written agreement between RBP and its Participants. The working relationship between RBP and its Participants exists because of the consent of both parties. Unless otherwise described in a written Independent Contractor Agreement, participation is not guaranteed for any definite period of time. A Participant may terminate this relationship at any time, with or without advance notice, for any reason. Additionally, RBP may terminate this relationship at any time, with or without cause or advance notice.

## **Equal Opportunity**

In order to provide equal opportunities to all individuals, decisions at RBP will be based on merit, qualifications, and abilities. RBP does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation or gender identity, marital status, national origin, ancestry, age, veteran or military status, disability (except where related to ability to perform the essential functions of the job, in accordance with applicable laws), genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law. This policy governs all aspects of the relationship between RBP and its Participants, including selection, task assignment, compensation, discipline, termination, and access to benefits and training. (See also, ***Casting*** below)

Any Participants having questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of the Production Manager, Operations Manager or General Manager. Participants can and should raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of prohibited discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of engagement.

## **Business Ethics & Conduct**

RBP will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects all of its Participants to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide a participant with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, the matter should be discussed openly and immediately with a Manager.

**It is the responsibility of every RBP participant to act in compliance with this policy of business ethics and conduct.** Disregarding or failing to comply with this standard of business ethics and conduct could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of engagement.

## **Immigration Law Compliance – Independent Contractors**

It is the Company's intention to allow only individuals authorized to work in the United States to provide labor, tools or equipment to the Dickens Christmas Fair. Accordingly, during the performance of work for the Dickens Christmas Fair, the Participant agrees to comply with all provisions of all local, state and federal immigration laws, statutes, rules, codes, orders and regulations, including, without limitation, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (as amended), the Immigration and Nationality Act (as amended), and the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (as amended), as well as any and all successor statutes, laws, rules and regulations thereto (collectively, the "Immigration Laws").

# *Participant Status*

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## **Classification of Participants**

**Performer:** Actors, dancers, singers or musicians who perform and or portray a character during the Dickens Christmas Fair.

**Production:** All independent workers involved in the setup and breakdown of the Dickens Christmas Fair.

**Vendors:** Crafts persons (and their booth workers) who have been approved and have signed a contract allowing them to sell their wares in a booth or as a wandering peddler during the Fair.

**Volunteer (Performer):** Most Participants of the Dickens Christmas Fair are volunteers who perform as characters from Charles Dicken’s stories and the Victorian era. These performers offer their time and energy voluntarily to RBP and its Dickens Christmas Fair, and are also not considered employees under any employment laws or regulations, state or federal.

**Independent Contractor (Performing Arts and Production):** While volunteers fill most on- and off-stage roles during the Dickens Christmas Fair, some roles and positions are contracted for pay. These positions are considered independent contractors and the persons in these positions must have had experience which qualifies them for consideration. An Independent Contractor agrees to do work for RBP according to his or her own processes and methods; the contractor is not subject to RBP’s control except for what is specified in a mutually binding agreement for the specific task to be completed, and the contractor is not considered an employee under any employment laws or regulations. Compensation paid to independent contractors is budgeted for each season and varies depending on the commitment of time involved and service provided.

**Leased/Contract Employee (Production):** During pre-production, weekend operations, and post-production of the Dickens Christmas Fair, RBP contracts with an outside staffing company to supply their employees to assist with the “load-in,” maintenance, the “load-out” and the clean-up of the Dickens Christmas Fair. These outside employees are employed and paid by the staffing company, but are managed and directed on a day-to-day basis by RBP staff or supervising Independent Contractors. All issues involving these outside employees will be handled directly by the staffing company. All outside employees (whether leased, contracted or otherwise engaged) are expected to follow all RBP guidelines and policies outlined in this Handbook.

## **Registration**

All performers are required to complete an online registration form in order to be considered for participation in the Dickens Christmas Fair.

## **Casting**

The Dickens Fair is a community theater-type production. Independent theatrical groups do their casting for the Fair based on the design of their show, as well as on desired ensemble and performance requirements. Although laws governing non-discrimination based on race, creed, color, and religion are adhered to, casting decisions for theatrical productions are the same nation-wide: Directors select performers with the physical as well as talent requirements for a given role.

## **Independent Contractor Agreements**

All Performer and Production workers who will be compensated for their work must complete an **Independent Contractor Agreement**, which outlines the responsibilities of the worker and RBP in terms of expected work product, time commitment, and compensation.

## **Task Quality Expectations**

All Participants are expected to maintain a high quality of presentation or work during their time with RBP and the Dickens Christmas Fair. Supervisors and Managers will immediately address work product or performance issues as such issues may arise. Performers or production workers who are not meeting the expectations of his or her Director, Supervisor, or RBP management may be asked to not return to the Dickens Christmas Fair.



## ***Payment for Services***

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### **Independent Contractors – Production**

Independent Contractors who are working on the pre-, op-, and post-production of the Dickens Christmas Fair will be responsible for supplying RBP with an invoice for services based upon the terms of their Independent Contractor Agreement.

### **Leased/Contract Employees**

Leased/Contract employees will be paid weekly by their staffing company directly. All inquiries regarding their compensation should be directed to the staffing company.

### **Performers**

Performers who are receiving a stipend or expense reimbursement will be paid on the following schedule:

<i>Weekends Worked</i>	<i>Pay Date</i>
1 <sup>st</sup> Weekend	Paid on 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday
2 <sup>nd</sup> Weekend 3 <sup>rd</sup> Weekend	Paid on 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday
4 <sup>th</sup> Weekend 5 <sup>th</sup> Weekend	Paid on 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday

# ***Health & Safety***

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## **General Health & Safety**

RBP is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for workers, performers, and visitors. And RBP, recognizing that safety is everyone's responsibility, fully expects everyone on-site at the Dickens Christmas Fair during all phases of operations to take responsibility for working together to prevent accidents. Participants are encouraged to discuss safety concerns with a Manager at any time.

RBP provides information to Participants about workplace safety and health issues through regular internal communication channels such as weekly safety meetings, weekly "notes" meetings, bulletin board postings, memos, the official Missives, and other written communications.

Some of the best safety improvement ideas have come from our fellow Participants. Those persons having ideas, concerns, or suggestions for improved safety in the workplace are encouraged to raise them with their Supervisor, Director, or with another Supervisor or Manager. Reports and concerns about workplace safety issues may be made anonymously, and all reports can be made without fear of reprisal.

Supervisors will ensure that people work only when they are fit for duty and have the appropriate skills necessary to perform their assigned tasks. All safety apparel and equipment must be used appropriately in designated work areas. Appropriate clothing and shoes should be worn as required for the tasks that are required.

## **Participant Injuries**

In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, Participants should immediately notify the appropriate Supervisor to determine what actions should be taken. Such reports are necessary to comply with laws and to initiate insurance and workers' compensation benefits procedures if applicable.

**A Leased/Contract Employee** who is injured while working will be covered under his/her staffing company's Worker's Compensation policy. RBP will work with the staffing company to ensure the employee receives the care required.

**Volunteers** who are injured while performing at the Dickens Christmas Fair are responsible for their own medical care, but may be covered under the RBP General Liability coverage for up to \$10,000 in medical costs.

**Independent Contractors** are responsible for their own medical care in the case of an injury while working or performing at the Dickens Christmas Fair venue.

## **Drug-Free Workplace**

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of any controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace. Any persons found in noncompliance will be subject to strict disciplinary actions and/or immediate dismissal.

## **Personal Safety**

The Dickens Christmas Fair is a highly engaging and intense theatrical environment, which involves close contact and personal interaction with many individuals. If you find yourself in an interaction with the public or a Participant, where you are uncomfortable, feel trapped or restrained, or feel that physical contact is unwanted or inappropriate, remove yourself from that situation immediately, and re-establish your personal boundary. In most situations, dropping out of character, and speaking loudly and forcibly, should suffice. If the situation involves a Participant, then make sure they understand that the contact they are initiating is unwanted. If a customer is involved, then make your way to the nearest radio (Ale Stand Managers, Stage Managers and Event Security all have radios) and ask for help.

Always call Event Security for help – DO NOT get involved physically. By involving Security, you allow appropriate Event Staff to take immediate action. RBP Staff can make contact with the person, find out what the intent was, remove them from the venue, or even bring legal resolution, if warranted. Event Security is there to protect you, but must be brought in *quickly* in order to help. You are encouraged to file an Incident Report with Operations. If you are female, you may request a female staff or Security person to talk with you at ANY time. Don't ever hesitate or feel embarrassed to report a dangerous or uncomfortable situation. We hold all Incident Reports in the strictest confidence.

## **Sexual & Other Unlawful Harassment**

Again, because the Dickens Christmas Fair is a highly engaging and intense theatrical environment, some of these interactions, by design, may be bawdy or risqué in nature. However, outside of these "in character" improvisational or scripted interactions, RBP will not tolerate harassment, sexual or otherwise, in the workplace. It is RBP's policy that ALL Participants are responsible for assuring that the workplace is free from sexual and other harassment. No Participant, regardless of gender, should be subject to unwelcome verbal, physical, or visual conduct that is sexual in nature or that shows hostility to others because of gender. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that reasonably may be construed as unwelcome, that is personally offensive, and/or that debilitates morale. Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when the submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of participation in the Dickens Fair; or such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

RBP also prohibits harassment based on a person's race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, ancestry, disability or any other legally protected characteristic and will not tolerate any form of harassment, including sexual harassment, against any Participant by anyone, including co-workers, Supervisors, partners, vendors, clients or any third party. Everyone at RBP events is responsible for assuring that our workplace and our event is free from prohibited harassment, and all persons are expected to avoid any behavior or conduct that could reasonably be interpreted as prohibited harassment.

**Reporting:** Everyone at RBP is responsible for assuring that our event space is free from all forms of prohibited harassment. RBP encourages Participants who believe they are being harassed to firmly and promptly notify the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome. However, RBP recognizes that in some instances, confrontation may not be safe or feasible. Any Participant who experiences or witnesses any conduct that may be a violation of this policy is expected to immediately bring the problem to the attention of the Operations Manager or the General Manager.

### **Interaction with Minors**

The Dickens Christmas Fair is a family event and there are many children in attendance. While it is desirable to include children in performances, activities, or interactions, it is important to guard against any behavior or communication that could be misunderstood or perceived as inappropriate, offensive, or dangerous.

## ***General Policies & Practices***

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### **Open Door Policy**

Suggestions for improving any aspect of RBP events are always welcome. At some time, you may have a complaint, suggestion, or question about your tasks, your working conditions, or the treatment you or others are receiving. Your good-faith complaints, questions, and suggestions also are of concern to and welcome by the Company. We ask you to discuss your concerns with your supervisor.

The Company cannot guarantee that every problem will be resolved to your satisfaction. However, RBP values your observations and you should and can feel free to raise issues of concern, in good faith, without the fear of retaliation.

### **Work Schedules**

**Production Workers** will be assigned to teams based upon their availability and skills. The Production Manager will determine the daily open and close times of the venue and the Team Supervisors will assign work schedules to their production team based upon the work that needs to be completed.

**Performers** are required to be available during the regular hours of the event, and specifically as assigned for shows, environmental areas and group schedules. For specific information, performers should speak with their group director.

### **Rest & Meal Periods**

**Leased/Contract Employees** will have pre-set rest and meal breaks scheduled. The Production Manager will announce the beginning and end of each rest and meal break over the radio during each work day.

**Other Production Workers** are encouraged to take rest and meal breaks as necessary so as not to over-exert or injure themselves.

**Performers** are encouraged to take rest and meal breaks as necessary so as not to over exert or injure themselves.

## **Participant Conduct & Work Rules**

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, RBP expects Participants to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all Participants, guests, and the organization.

The reputation of RBP can be greatly enhanced or compromised by the standards of work maintained in all aspects of its operation. This includes the cohesiveness and professionalism of all work turned out, as well as the appearance of the venue and the attitude in which the business is handled. Orderliness and cleanliness should be valued, particularly in consideration of guests to the Dickens Christmas Fair venue.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including ending the working relationship:

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property belonging to RBP or other Participants
- Falsification of timekeeping or other records
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating company-owned vehicles or heavy equipment
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of property owned by RBP, any guest or audience member, the Cow Palace, or other venue in which we may be operating, or other Participants
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct
- Violation of safety or health rules
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, on-site or in any company vehicle
- Excessive absenteeism or absences without proper notice
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, computers, or other company-owned equipment
- Unauthorized disclosure of “business or trade secrets” or other confidential information

Participation in the Dickens Christmas Fair is at the mutual consent of RBP and the Participant, and either party may terminate that relationship at any time, with or without cause, and with or without advance notice.

## **Attendance**

If it is necessary for you to be absent or late, please contact your Supervisor or group director as soon as possible so that other arrangements can be made.

For **Leased/Contract Employees**, please contact your staffing company directly to inform them you will be absent or late.

## **Personal Appearance**

**Production Workers** should dress in comfortable work attire that is appropriate for the work they will be doing. Shoes should be work boots, sport shoes, or other closed-toe shoes. Clothing should be clean and modest.

**Performers** are required to provide and wear an approved costume which is reflective of the theatrical environment of the Fair, such as Victorian London or as specified by management. Costume approval will occur during the pre-event workshops. Anachronistic fashions should not be visible during the festival hours. This includes, but is not limited to, unnatural hair color, body piercings, tattoos, digital watches, cell phones, Bluetooth devices, etc.

## **Required Meetings**

**Production Workers** are required to attend a weekly meeting to review safety procedures and scheduling.

**Performers** are required to attend workshops and rehearsals on the three weekends prior to the start of the festival, as well as daily notes meetings with their performance group.

## **Parking**

**Production Workers** will be provided with parking at the venue during the pre- and post-event work.

**Performers** can purchase a season parking pass from the Operations Department that allows parking in regular parking areas designated and provided by the venue.

## **Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited inside the venue or within 25 feet of any doorway. All Production and Performers should smoke outside of the view of any guests.

## **News Media Contact**

Participants may be approached for interviews or comments by the news media. Only designated contact people appointed by the General Manager may give interviews to news reporters on events relevant to RBP and the Dickens Christmas Fair. Requests from all media outlets for interviews or comments should be referred to the Production Manager, the Operations Manager, or the General Manager.

## **Complimentary & Discount Ticket Policy**

Participants are encouraged to invite friends and family to attend the Dickens Christmas Fair. RBP offers a limited number of complimentary tickets to Participants during the opening weekend of the Fair. Discounted tickets are available to Participants for all other Fair dates.

# ***Equipment & Technology***

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## **Use of Technology**

**Performers** should not use any anachronistic technology during the event or in view of guests. During the hours of the event no Performer may use within sight of the public any digital watches, cell phones, tablets, Bluetooth devices, etc.

## **Social Media Policy**

Given the ubiquitous and very public nature of social networking, RBP has developed the following policy for all RBP Participants to use when engaging in social media and social networking activities in order to protect the reputation of RBP and the Dickens Christmas Fair.

This policy applies to web applications that facilitate information sharing and collaboration, including but not limited to web-based communities, social-networking sites, video sharing sites, blogs and micro-blogs, and all other sites or venues (the absence or lack of explicit reference to a specific site or medium does not make that site or medium exempt). This policy applies without regard to whether the conduct occurs during working/event or non-working/event hours, and regardless of whether RBP equipment is used. Information becomes public the moment it is published on the Internet. RBP Participants should be mindful of the public nature of the Internet when engaging in conduct online.

Social media is in a state of constant change, and RBP recognizes that there will likely be events or issues that are not addressed in this policy. Therefore, the responsibility falls to each individual to use professional and reasonable judgment. When in doubt or where no guidelines may exist, Participants should seek clarification or authorization from a department head before engaging in any such questionable conduct online.

- Personal blogs should have clear disclaimers, when referencing RBP or the Dickens Christmas Fair, that the views expressed by the author in the blog are the author's alone and do not represent the views of RBP. Make clear in your writing that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of RBP.
- Be respectful of RBP, other Participants, and guests.
- Video, photographs, pictures and recordings of any part of a RBP production may not be posted on any social networking site without prior authorization from RBP.
- Social media activities should not interfere with work commitments or take place during regular working hours.
- A Participant's online presence reflects RBP. Be aware that actions captured via images, posts, or comments can and will reflect that of RBP.
- Never reference RBP's Participants without their written consent.
- All RBP images have restricted use. RBP logos, production shots, signature images and logos, press and/or marketing images cannot be used for personal social networking purposes without the prior written approval of the General Manager.

If you have questions about any of the above information, please contact the General Manager.



## **Personal Use of Company Equipment**

Equipment and vehicles essential in accomplishing job duties are expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using RBP property, Participants are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines.

Please notify the Supervisor if any equipment, machines, tools, or vehicles appear to be damaged, defective, or are in need of repair. Prompt reports of damages, defects, and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to Participants or others. The Supervisor can answer any questions about a Participant's responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment or vehicles used on the job.

Please return any equipment loaned to you at the end of each work day.

## ***Participant Gratitude***

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Please remember that we are all engaged in creating a celebration for each other as well as for our guests. We come together to provide a safe and enjoyable environment in which to work, perform and socialize. This begins and ends with how we treat one another.

Please be gracious, courteous and grateful and expect the same from others.

THANK YOU!