

VANCOUVER SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

VSO Volunteer Handbook

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Updated 9/2/2025

This document is updated as needed. Please be sure to check back.

About the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra USA

Our Mission

To enhance the quality of life in Southwest Washington by providing symphony music of the highest caliber in live performances and through music education in schools, concert halls and throughout the community.

Our Values

Quality — We are dedicated to the highest level of artistic expression and administrative integrity.

Relevance — We foster meaningful experiences that are relevant to our community.

Diversity and Inclusion — We are committed to seeking greater diversity and inclusivity in all aspects of the organization as well as engaging a multigenerational and diverse audience.

Education — We provide learning opportunities for listeners and students of all ages and backgrounds.

Financial — We ensure fiscal health in our present and for the future through responsible stewardship.

Brief VSO Overview

The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra season begins in September and ends in late May. During the season we offer a variety of concerts and events. We have symphonic and chamber series as well as a few special events. Along with our concerts the VSO is focused on our education initiative that the staff manages. In the summer the VSO partners with the City of Vancouver to have the three-day Vancouver Arts and Music Festival.

Volunteers mainly support the symphonic series, but VSO staff may reach out if they need help with other events during the season. This is a brief overview of all the VSO does throughout the year and if you want more information, please go to vancouversymphony.org.

About Volunteering with the VSO

What is a VSO Volunteer

Each volunteer is an ambassador and strives to uphold the mission of the VSO. Volunteers help serve community members in attendance by making all feel welcome, answering questions, and might aid in the case of emergency. Volunteers are an integral part of the concert experience.

Basic Requirements/Volunteer Policies

- Must be 18 years of age
- Agree/sign confidentiality agreement
- Wear appropriate attire at performances
 - Attire guidance: Musicians and staff wear black/neutral/colorful professional clothing
- Have a helpful and courteous attitude
- Fulfill expectations of assigned role/s

Safety Guidelines

- If you feel sick or unwell, please email or communicate with a VSO staff member and stay home to rest. We want all volunteers to put their health first.
- If you are working with a guest that needs more assistance on an issue, please have a VSO staff member help resolve it.

Volunteer Benefits

Complimentary Tickets for Volunteers

We hope you can attend any symphonic or chamber concert. When you volunteer you are welcome to sit in a volunteer seat in the hall to enjoy the music or use the volunteer code to book a seat(s) for you and friends or family. We do provide complimentary tickets for our volunteers and a few of their guests.

Volunteer Positions and Concert Responsibilities

VSO Volunteer Position Descriptions

Usher: Volunteers in this role are crucial as you will be the check point for tickets and helping guests get to their seats. Ideally, we have teams of four at the 2 entrances to the concert hall where guests give tickets. The entrance teams would have 2 volunteers to scan tickets and 2 volunteers to help people to their seats/give programs.

Skills: Good customer service skills, able to stand for extended periods of time, direct guests and answer questions, and guard specific areas to keep unauthorized people out.

Will Call Attendant: Guests that select will call for delivery go to the will call table to pick up tickets from the will call volunteers the day of the concert.

Skills: Good customer service skills, able to quickly and efficiently sort through catalogued tickets and give guests directions to seats.

Box Office: Volunteers process ticket sales transactions and answer questions.

Skills: Good customer service skills, experience with sales and handling cash, and open to learning to sales programs

Merchandise store attendant: Volunteers sell merch during intermission and possibly before the concert.

Skills: Good customer service skills, Comfortable using a point-of-sale system, and experience with sales and handling cash

Greeter/Information Help: Volunteers stand at the entrance of the concert hall and welcome guests in. They will also answer questions and direct people to help them get checked in quickly.

Skills: Good customer service skills, able to stand for extended periods of time, direct guests and answer questions, and guard specific areas to keep unauthorized people out.

Concessions: Volunteers serve concessions at intermission. VSO concession table is cash only.

Skills: Good customer service skills and experience with sales/handling cash

Digital support: Volunteers answer phones regarding technical support for the Virtual Concert Hall or helping people with check in.

Skills: Good customer service skills

Event Check In: Help with checking people in at special events or receptions for the VSO. This is for special events. If you are interested, please be sure to mark it when you sign up as a volunteer.

Volunteer Roles Responsibilities for Symphonic Concerts

Please carefully read over the information below as it will take you through the responsibilities for each volunteer role before, during/intermission, and after the concert.

Please read the email which will have information on which volunteer role you have and the time we request you arrive. In addition to your specific role there is information on the venue and parking in the email.

If guests, ask about other tables we have had in previous years please tell them we will be considering bringing them back once we return to Skyview.

Pre-Concert

- **Greeter/Information Help**
 - Welcome people into the hall at the entrance and answer questions and direct people to help them get checked in quickly.
- **Box Office**
 - Check in when you arrive and pick up name tag
 - Process ticket charges on the computer or with the cash box
- **Will Call**
 - Check in when you arrive and pick up name tag
 - Look over will call tickets to start familiarizing themselves with the names
 - Hand ticket to guests and answer questions
 - Will call will have two lines for the alphabetical split
- **Ushers**
 - Check in when you arrive and pick up name tag
 - Get to know the space and set out program guides
 - Be sure to note where the restroom is as guest often ask
 - Scan tickets and help direct guests
 - Check each ticket has the right date for the day of the performance
 - If the date doesn't match the performance of that day, they will need to go to the box office to exchange
 - Guests may only sit in their ticketed seats and must show their tickets when requested. If the guest does not have a ticket they will need to go to the box office.
 - Hand out program guides
 - Assist those who need it to a seat
 - We have assigned seating. All seats are assigned when purchased and will be listed on the tickets. The tickets may be on ticket paper, printed from home, or on their mobile phone.
 - Each door will ideally have a 4-person team. Two people to take tickets and two people to be at the top of the aisle to assist guests to seats.

- **Merchandise store attendant**
 - Sell merchandise before the concert begins
- **Digital support**
 - Answer phone calls and help people with ticket questions or virtual access questions

During the Concert

- **Ushers/All Volunteers:** Prior to the beginning of the concert, ushers remain at their posts until the conductor walks on stage. Please do not allow any food or drink into the auditorium except for bottled water with top that closes. Ushers will be seated along the back of the auditorium and stay alert for any guests who may be arriving late.
 - Late arrival policy: If the doors are closed when guests arrive, ushers will show them into the hall at the next suitable break in the program to not disrupt the performance. Depending on the concert program, this usually will be in between pieces or at intermission. Guests who leave the hall before or during a piece will be reseated after the completion of the work. We will have an usher inside the door on either side to let in late comers to sit along the back wall under the booth until they can get to their seat without disturbing the performance.
 - Cell phone/audio video recording: If you see a guest using a phone or audio device/receive a complaint please know our policy and approach appropriately - Use of audio and video recording devices is prohibited.

Intermission

- **Ushers**
 - Immediately following intermission ushers may stand on either side of the stage in front of the stairs that lead up to the stage to encourage people to exit through doors 1 and 2.
 - All ushers that are available at intermission will assist with wheelchairs/walkers.
 - All ushers to let people know that there is no food or drink in the concert hall and to dispose of trash in the waste bins.
- **Concessions**
 - Volunteers serve concessions at intermission.
- **Box Office**
 - At intermissions box office will be open to sell to upcoming events and concessions will be on sale for guests

- **Merchandise store attendant**
 - Sell merchandise before the concert begins

After the Concert

- **Ushers/All Volunteers:**
 - Immediately following the end of the concert ushers may stand on either side of the stage in front of the stairs that lead up to the stage to encourage people to exit through doors 1 and 2.
 - All ushers that are available at intermission will assist with wheelchairs/walkers.
 - After the performance to assist with wheelchairs/walkers, to thank guests for coming and to pick up remaining programs, flyers, lost & found items, etc.

Emergency Procedures

General Emergency Information

- In Case of Emergency:
 - Always take care of yourself first. Your safety is the most important thing to us.
 - Don't worry about money or other people the staff is in place to deal with those issues.
 - If someone is having a medical emergency, please alert the VSO staff immediately
 - If there is a medical or safety emergency that requires first responders, then alert VSO staff. If you can get to the lobby safely or without further issues with the person having a medical emergency, please do.

General Earthquake Procedure

- During an Earthquake:
 - Drop, Cover and Hold
 - If indoors, stay indoors; take cover if possible or stay in place until the shaking stops
 - Move away from windows; brace yourself; protect your head and neck
 - Do not use elevators
- After an Earthquake:
 - After shaking stops, all staff and guests should seek refuge which staff will direct where to go
 - Check for injuries. Do not use telephones or cell phones to keep lines open; avoid unstable areas
 - Be prepared for aftershocks; once again, drop, cover and hold

Incident Reporting/Prevention:

- Suspicious Behavior – Report to VSO Staff and Vancouver Public Schools Security any suspicious behavior and be prepared to give a detailed description

FAQs and Resource Information

FAQs for Symphonic Concerts

- Where are the restrooms at Skyview?
 - The main restroom is down the hallway on the right from the entrance and there is a second restroom down the hallway to the left.
- Where is the box office vs where is will call?
 - Box office is where guests purchase and exchange tickets. It is the office attached to the hall and on the right side of the lobby as guests come through the entrance doors.
 - Will call is where guests pick up tickets under the name of the person that purchased them. The will call table is across from the box office on the left side of the lobby as guests come through the entrance doors.
- What time do concerts begin?
 - Saturday at 7pm and Sunday at 3 pm
- How long is intermission?
 - Intermission is usually 15 minutes
- What is the preshow talk?
 - It is information about the concert program that a VSO musician or Maestro Brotons will host. It is at 6 pm on Saturday and 2 pm on Sunday for 30 minutes.
- When are concessions on sale?
 - Only at intermission. If there is no intermission, we will not sell concessions.

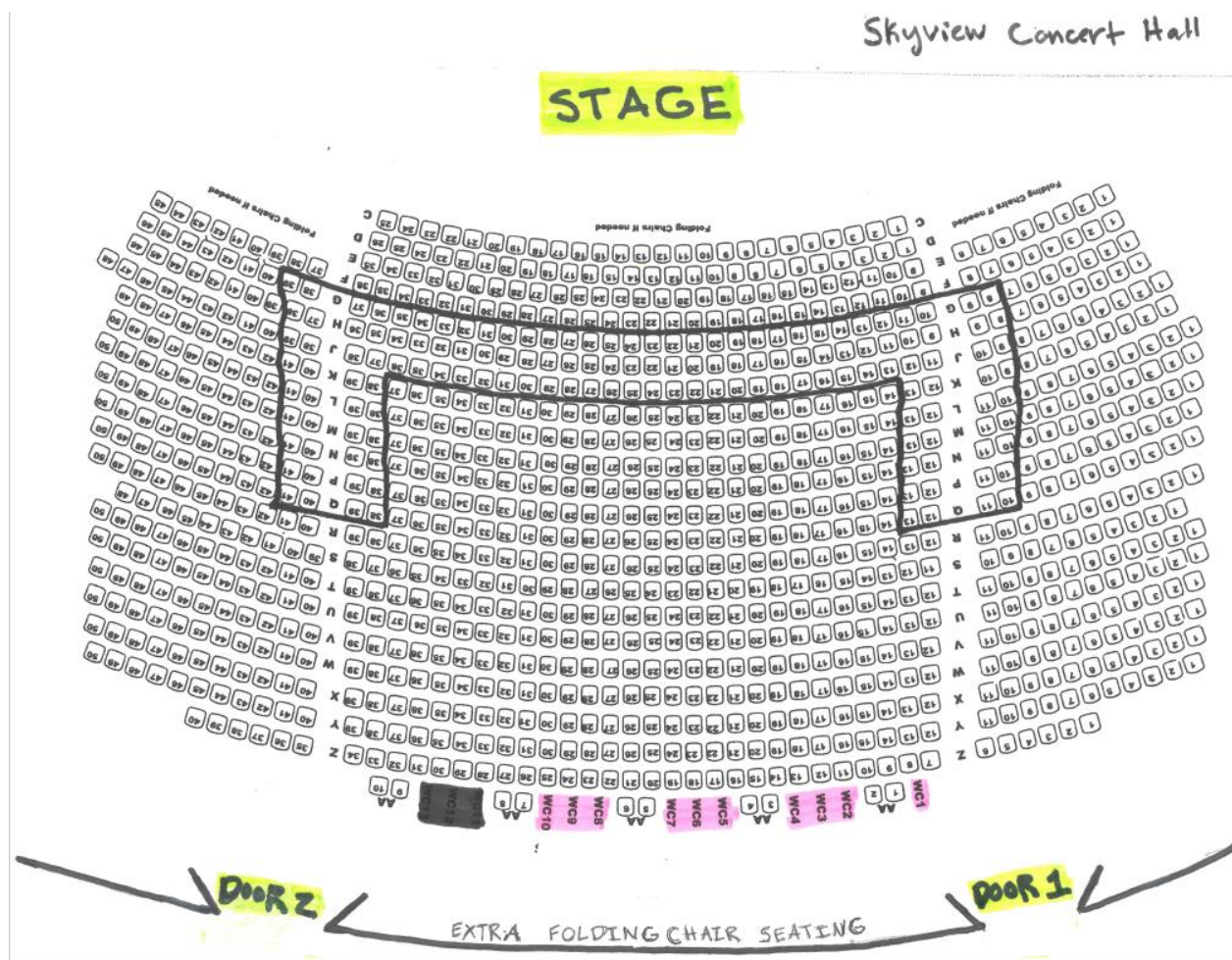
Resource Information:

- Lost and Found Items – Please give items to the VSO Staff

Skyview Concert Hall Information

Address 1300 NW 139th St, Vancouver, WA 98685

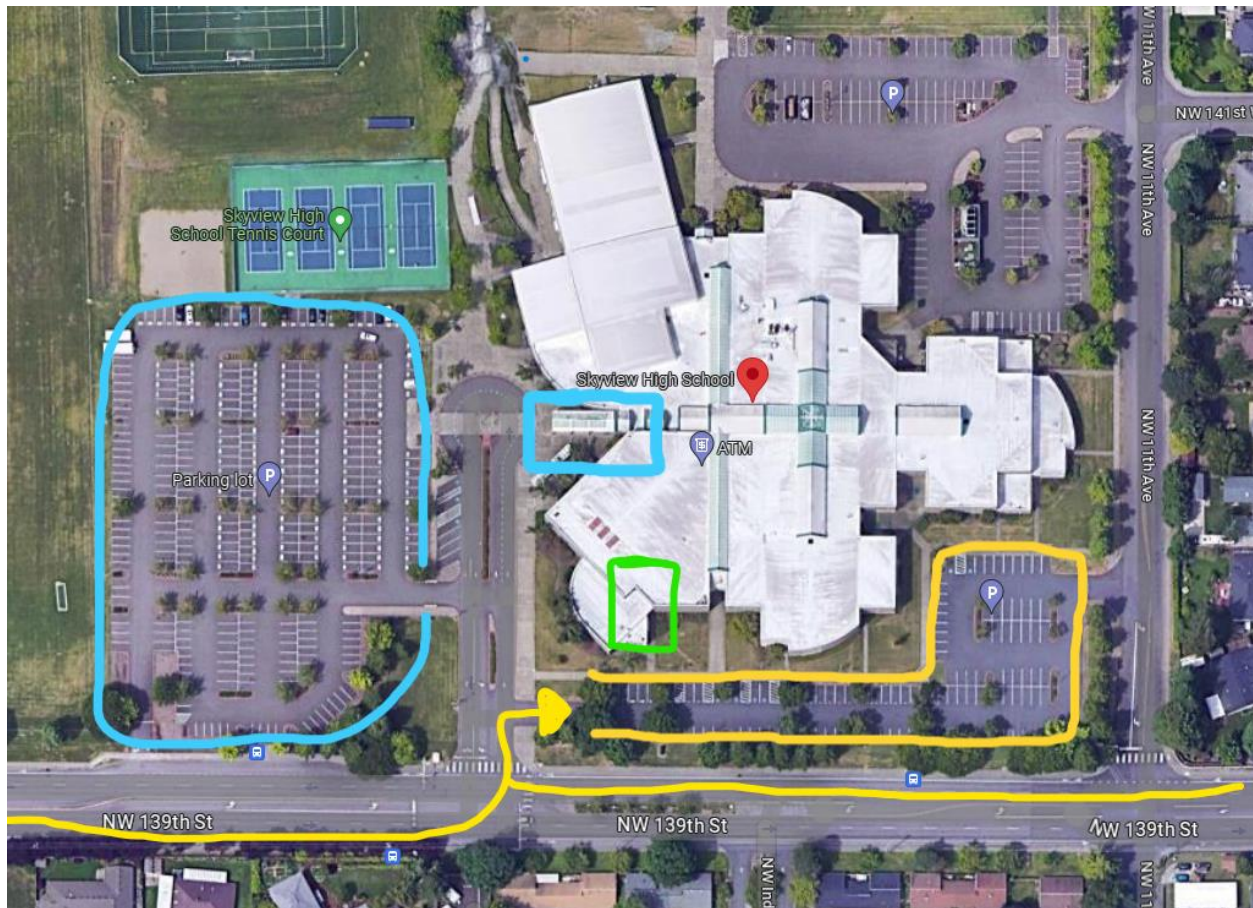
Skyview Concert Hall Layout



The map above is to help give an idea of the general layout inside the concert hall.

VSO Volunteer Parking

Parking is free at Skyview Concert Hall. Volunteers are welcome to park in the



Parking Map Key

Yellow- outlines where VSO personnel and VSO volunteers park. The yellow arrow indicates that there is an immediate right in the parking lot. If the yellow parking area is full then park in the blue parking area.

Blue- outlines where the audience parking and entrance are located.

Green-outlines where VSO personnel and VSO volunteers enter the building.

VSO Staff Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns before/during/after a performance, please feel free to speak with or contact Kyla or Kelsey.

Thank you for all your help and please let us know if you have any questions.

Kyla Morris – Director of Operations

kyla@vancouversymphony.org

Kelsey Puckett- Office Assistant

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