



# Player Handbook

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# Welcome to the Juneau Symphony!

## Introduction

The Juneau Symphony was founded in 1962 by music teacher Cliff Berge to make great music and share the gift of music with our community. The Juneau Symphony is a community-based, volunteer, Symphony orchestra. The Symphony exists both for the musicians as well as our audiences. Our musicians share the joy of making music together and are dedicated to providing quality, affordable symphonic performances for residents of and visitors to Juneau, Alaska.

Playing orchestral music at a high level takes hard work, discipline, and commitment. In order to make this a rewarding experience for everyone, players need to know what is expected of them and what they can expect in return from the Symphony as an organization.

### Mission

The Juneau Symphony fosters and creates high-quality musical experiences that contribute to the cultural diversity and the vitality of Alaska's Capital City.

### Core Purpose

Provide symphonic music

### Core Values

- 1) Inclusive – music for all
- 2) Collaborative – community focused
- 3) Advocacy – growing the next generation of musicians
- 4) Respect – artistic and culturally
- 5) Excellence – high-quality music and education

## Season

The Juneau Symphony performs four (4) mainstage concerts each season. Concerts are typically held in late fall, mid-winter, spring and early June (Pops concert). Each mainstage concert has two performances, typically Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon. During most seasons, at least one mainstage concert includes the Juneau Symphony Chorus.

In addition to the four mainstage concerts, the Symphony offers opportunities for musicians to perform at fundraising events throughout the year. The Symphony presents a Symphony Showcase each year in which musicians from the Symphony, whether as individuals or in small groups, have the opportunity to perform for season ticket holders and other audience members in a small venue setting. The Symphony Showcase is not a required performance event. Musicians interested in the Symphony Showcase, fundraising performance opportunities, or participating in the Juneau Symphony Chorus should contact the Symphony's Executive Director.

## **Auditions**

Musicians interested in joining the Juneau Symphony should contact the Symphony office to arrange an audition. Auditions may be conducted via video and/or in-person.

## **Player Responsibilities**

The Symphony is comprised of both local and out-of-town musicians. Out-of-town musicians are used to fill parts that cannot be filled locally and are selected on a concert by concert basis. Travel and per diem are provided to out-of-town musicians.

Players must show up to rehearsals on time and be seated, warmed up, and tuned by the time the rehearsal is scheduled to begin. Players must also communicate with their section leaders about expected and unexpected absences or tardiness. To maximize the effectiveness of rehearsal time, musicians are expected to silence their phones, keep talking to a minimum during rehearsal, refrain from practicing their parts while other sections are being rehearsed, and return promptly after announced breaks.

Players are expected to learn their parts, to practice outside of rehearsals, and to participate in sectional rehearsals as necessary. Players may provide personnel recommendations or technical and interpretive suggestions to the principal or section leader, as appropriate.

Orchestra members are our representatives in the community and should be active in expanding our audience, contributing names to our mailing list, and putting the orchestra in contact with potential contributors. Audience surveys have shown that word-of-mouth from orchestra members is an effective way that people hear about our concerts. Social media in all forms also plays a crucial role.

## **Season and Concert Commitment**

Prior to each concert season, players are asked to commit to playing in the upcoming season's mainstage concerts. If there is more interest than seats available for a given concert, the Music Director and section leaders shall determine the players. You need to confirm your commitment within a week of being asked. Backing out less than six weeks before the concert creates a hardship for the Symphony, and the player may not be asked to play in the next performance. If there is more than one cancellation in a season, the Music Director, Executive Director, and section leader will confer with the Board President to consider circumstances and determine future participation.

If a player's decision to play in the concert hinges on whether he or she can handle the music, it is incumbent upon the individual player to research the part – via You Tube, International Music Score Library Project (IMSLP; on the Juneau Symphony website), or other resources.

In the event of a cancellation, the player needs to immediately contact their section leader and the Juneau Symphony office (by phone 907-586-4676 or email [info@juneausymphony.org](mailto:info@juneausymphony.org)) so that a replacement can be found. The player is encouraged to suggest the name of a substitute. If the cancellation is from an out-of-town musician, he or she will be responsible for reimbursing the cost of

the plane ticket change fee or the full cost of the ticket should the player pull out of the concert after tickets have already been purchased.

### **Music Director**

The Music Director is responsible for the musical leadership and artistic growth of the Juneau Symphony and is instrumental in achieving the stated mission of the group. The Music Director is responsible for artistic decisions of the Symphony, including planning the season's programs and identifying and engaging soloists. Additionally, the Music Director will determine the selection of section leaders and principals. For each concert, the Music Director will fill vacancies with out-of-town musicians and work with section leaders to determine seating. The Music Director often gives pre-concert talks typically an hour ahead of each mainstage concert. Players are invited and encouraged to attend.

### **Concertmaster**

The Concertmaster is the section leader for the 1<sup>st</sup> violin section and provides musical leadership on bowings and musicianship to all string players. The Concertmaster is hired by the Board in consultation with the Music Director. He or she also collaborates with the Music Director on musical interpretation and issues prior to each concert and contributes artistically in numerous other ways. The Concertmaster leads the tuning of the orchestra at the beginning of, and during, rehearsals and concerts.

### **Section Leaders**

Section leaders are identified at the start of each concert season for 2<sup>nd</sup> violin, viola, cello, bass, winds, brass, and percussion. Section leaders play important and influential roles in the Symphony. Section leaders communicate directly with the Music Director and Executive Director on matters concerning their sections, including recommended seating and part assignments. Section leaders are responsible for convening and leading sectional rehearsals as needed to work on difficult passages, intonation, fingerings, bowings, etc. They also lead each respective section on issues of phrasing, breathing, and balance and bring possible issues about these elements to the Music Director's attention.

Section leaders are also responsible for:

- assisting with recruiting players for each concert
- identifying vacancies to be filled by out-of-town musicians
- knowing specifically who is playing what part, and
- keeping track of attendance of section members and reasons for absences.

Section leaders may delegate some of their responsibilities to principals.

Section leaders in the string sections send bowings to section players prior to rehearsals and distribute them to the section. Section leaders coordinate on bowings with the Concertmaster, make changes as needed during rehearsals, and make sure all section players are informed.

Any player wishing to be considered for section leader should contact the Music Director immediately after the last mainstage concert for consideration in the subsequent concert season. In the event there is no Music Director, contact the Executive Director. (For additional information pertaining to section leaders, see “Personnel Selection within Sections,” below).

### **Principals**

Principals will be identified at the start of each season by the Music Director for the following sections: flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, trombone, tuba, harp, keyboard, and percussion.

Principals are leaders within the Symphony and have additional responsibilities as compared with other players. Principals may provide input to the section leaders on who plays on which part and where they should be seated, based on the player’s abilities and input from the Music Director. Principals may also assume roles or tasks delegated to them from the section leaders. Other responsibilities include:

Principals will:

- prepare solos within the repertoire of each concert program
- assist the Music Director with auditions, if so requested.
- inform section members and the Music Director of absences and suggest alternative seating arrangements, and
- model excellent communication.

Principals of individual wind and brass sections are encouraged to communicate between sections (flute principal with clarinet principal, for example) on issues of phrasing, breathing, and balance and are also encouraged to bring possible issues about these elements to the section leader’s attention.

Typically, principals commit to an entire season and play all concerts and rehearsals. Exceptions can be made in coordination with section leaders and the Music Director. Any player wishing to be considered for a principal position may audition with the Music Director prior to the start of each concert season.

### **Personnel Selection within Sections**

The Music Director will fill each section in the Juneau Symphony. He or she will advise section leaders and the Executive Director of player needs, number, specific skill levels, or exposed parts and solos. The Music Director may make special requests for players. Section leaders may request input from principals on player selections, and the section leader shall provide the Music Director, Executive Director, and Director of Operations recommendations for player seating and part assignment, if appropriate. The Executive Director can offer advice or otherwise assist the Music Director with logistical details in securing personnel for each season or as necessary for each performance. The Executive Director and Operations Director will execute direct communications and logistics with the selected players.

In the event there is no permanent Music Director, the Executive Director will work with the individual concert conductor and section leaders to fill personnel needs as follows:

- 1) Section leaders and principals selected by the outgoing Music Director shall maintain those positions until the next permanent Music Director begins his/her tenure.

- 2) In the event there is no identified section leader, the Executive Director will appoint a principal to serve as section leader for the rest of the season.
- 3) In the event there is no identified principal (whether at the start of the season or during the middle of the concert season), the position shall be filled by the last person to play principal, unless that person declines.
- 4) If the last principal declines, then the concert conductor and Executive Director will work with the remaining section members to temporarily fill the principal position until a new principal is appointed or until a new Music Director is selected.

Players will follow the above process and will defer to the Music Director and section leaders for decisions regarding section personnel, technique, and musical interpretation. A player may not be asked to return should he or she fail to abide by this process.

### **Music**

The Juneau Symphony performs a broad range of repertoire, from the early classical period to contemporary music. Sheet music is made available to musicians well in advance (with a goal of at least 6 weeks ahead) of the start of rehearsals. Folders may be checked out from the Juneau Symphony office. You may receive original or copied parts, and the music may have marks from other orchestras. Juneau Symphony musicians may mark music in pencil as you find necessary. Markings may need to be erased if so directed. Music is to be returned to the collection box immediately at the end of each Sunday concert. If music is lost, the musician will be responsible for covering any costs associated with replacing the lost part(s).

The Music Director may solicit suggestions from Symphony members regarding music selection and programming decisions for future concert seasons. Final programming decisions are at the discretion of the Music Director.

### **Rehearsals**

Rehearsals begin 2-3 weeks before mainstage concerts. Non-concert-week rehearsals are typically held from 7-9:30 pm on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

During concert week, all rehearsals are held on stage at the Juneau Douglas High School. Rehearsals are typically scheduled from 7-10 pm on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings and at 11 am on Saturday mornings. If non-local musicians will be participating in the concert, they will join the Symphony no later than the Thursday night rehearsal of concert week.

### **Attendance**

Players are expected to attend all rehearsals. When absences are unavoidable, players shall inform their section leader. In the event of a major illness, death in the family, or other urgent and unexpected situation that will affect the player's ability to perform in the concert, the player should immediately contact their section leader and call the Juneau Symphony Office so that a replacement can be found (for contact information, see "Season and Concert Commitment," above).

## **Concerts**

Performances are at the Juneau Douglas High School auditorium. Suggested call time is 45 minutes before the downbeat of each concert. Musicians may park on the north end of the school (next to Highland Drive) as space is available; you may enter the school through the stage door at the northeast corner of the school. Each player will receive one (1) complimentary ticket to share with family or friends. The ticket is good for either the Saturday or Sunday show (not both) or for any later concert during the same season.

Players should be on stage 10 minutes before the scheduled start time and have all music ready and placed on their stands. The only things that should be on the floor of the stage during a concert are instrument stands for wind and brass players, if needed. Instrument cases and personal items such as purses or wallets should be left backstage. It is advisable not to bring valuables; neither Juneau Douglas High School nor the Juneau Symphony can accept responsibility for lost or stolen items.

## **Dress Code**

Standard dress for all performances is “Concert Black” (see below). Please be aware of personal hygiene and do not wear perfumes or scented after-shave and deodorants.

### Men

Black tuxedo with white shirt, black bow tie, black socks, and black shoes

### Women

Full length black dress, skirt, or slacks. Black shoes with black hose or socks. Black shirts or dresses with sleeves. Jewelry or clothes that reflect light (e.g., sparkles, spangles, or rhinestones) should be minimal and not distracting to players or audience.

On some occasions, players may be asked to dress differently, such as for a pops concert or concert for local schools. In these cases, advanced notice of the dress code will be provided.

## **Governance**

The Juneau Symphony is run by a volunteer Symphony Board and paid Symphony staff who, along with our musicians, work together to achieve our mission. For a current list of Board and Staff members, visit the Juneau Symphony web page.

### Symphony Board

The Symphony Board provides administrative, logistical, and financial support for the Symphony’s continuing operations. Functions of the Board include: setting policy, approving the operating budget, keeping watch over the finances of the organization, strategic planning, holding fund raising events and any other business that requires Board involvement. The Player Relations and Development Committee (PRDC) can forward player suggestions to the Board.

### Juneau Symphony Membership Status

Members include players who have played in at least two full concert sets given by the Symphony during the preceding 24 months. Other members include the Concertmaster, members of the board of directors, and those individuals named as lifetime members of the Symphony by the Board. Each member is entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members, which includes the election of Board members and selection of the Music Director. Please refer to the current Juneau Symphony Bylaws for more details.

### Staff

The Executive Director is the primary administrator of the Juneau Symphony, reporting to the president and working closely with the Board. The Executive Director is responsible for the smooth operation of the office and of all Symphony events. Responsibilities include: general office administration and accounting, fundraising and grants, outreach and advocacy, concert preparation, marketing, and promotion.

The Director of Operations is a part-time position supporting event production, library oversight, and administrative functions of the Symphony.

The Production Coordinator is a part-time position responsible for logistics and set-up of rehearsal and performance facilities, including moving musical equipment as needed.

The Music Librarian is a volunteer position assisting the staff with organizing music folders, filing, and retrieving folders after each mainstage concert.

### Annual Meetings

The Annual Meeting of Symphony Members is typically held in conjunction with the fall rehearsal schedule. Attendance of 10% of total members constitutes a quorum. Election of directors to the Board takes place during the Annual Meeting, as well as information sharing about Symphony planning and programs. The JS Bylaws also specify provisions for special meetings and action by written consent.

### **Player Relations and Development Committee**

The Player Relations and Development Committee (committee; PRDC) addresses player-related issues and serves as liaison between players, principals, section leaders, the Music Director, and the Symphony Board. The committee ensures player concerns and issues are communicated to the appropriate level within the Symphony's organization. The committee is comprised of seven members representing each section of the Symphony: brass, winds, percussion (one representative each), and strings (two representatives). Additionally two members serve at-large.



In accordance with Board policy, no player may serve on both the PRDC and the Board of Directors of the Symphony. However, a non-voting board liaison selected by the Board is invited to attend all PRDC meetings.

The committee identifies and implements opportunities for player development, including master classes, workshops, and individual player development. The Board has given the PRDC a limited budget for such player development activities. Guidelines for submitting suggestions and applying for a portion of this funding will be available on the Symphony website.

Additionally, the PRDC plans and executes programs and social events for improving player morale. Events include: listening parties ahead of each concert, potlucks at the start of each rehearsal cycle, after rehearsal socials, a concert week hike, and a year-end picnic in June.

This is your orchestra, and you can have a voice in how we operate. The PRDC welcomes your comments and any concerns you may have. You may use the PRDC section of the Juneau Symphony website or you may reach out to any of the committee members listed on the website. This web page also includes helpful references and tools for player development.

### **Funding and Support**

The Juneau Symphony is generously funded by corporate sponsors, local and regional businesses, individual supporters, grants, ticket sales, and donations from the community. The Symphony is also reliant on numerous volunteers who give their time to help produce Symphony concerts and special events.

The Symphony does not assess dues. However, we encourage all musicians to contribute financially to the Symphony to the extent they are able. Asking players for their time and talent seems more than enough, but like any other non-profit organization, the financial support of its members is appreciated and benefits the Symphony's standing in applying for grant assistance.

We encourage our musicians to promote or otherwise contribute to the Symphony's annual auction and other fundraisers. Our annual raffle is a major fundraiser for the Symphony, and all musicians are asked to help by selling at least one book of raffle tickets.

### **Conflict Resolution**

Principal players are available to help resolve problems within their section. If a situation arises where a player does not feel comfortable approaching the principal or the issue is better addressed by someone other than the principal, we encourage you to contact a member of the PRDC. The PRDC will mediate or facilitate resolution of complaints or disputes as needed. Problems will be handled in a professional and confidential manner. The Juneau Symphony does not tolerate harassment or bullying in any form.

## **Aspiring Symphony Members**

The Juneau Symphony relies on the talents and skills of local musicians, and we encourage adult and youth students to audition for the Symphony as their abilities mature. To that end the Juneau Symphony is connected to and supports various community music groups and student performance and education opportunities, such as:

### Juneau Student Symphony (JSS)

JSS is a community Symphony comprised of youth and adults. It allows qualified musicians to play in a full orchestra. JSS rehearses regularly and performs two concerts each in the late fall and the early spring.

### Juneau String Ensemble (JSE)

JSE is a string ensemble of beginning string musicians. JSE rehearses regularly and performs two concerts each in the late fall and early spring.

### Youth Solo Competition

An annual youth solo competition is open to musicians of high school age or younger. The winner of the competition performs a memorized piece with the Juneau Symphony in the concert season following his or her win.

### Music in the Schools

The Juneau Symphony puts on a mainstage concert for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in conjunction with Carnegie Hall Link-Up and the Kennedy Center's Any Given Child programs. This concert is typically during the week of one of the mainstage concerts. Participation is optional for Symphony players, but the Symphony encourages all players to play in this important outreach performance.

There are opportunities for individual musicians to work with students in area schools. If interested, contact the Symphony office.