



Dear Friend,

Thank you for being a member of the Fifth Annual Reading Blues Fest Volunteer team!

Without your time, talent, and generosity, our festival would be possible! You are the welcoming face of the Reading Blues Fest and the reason why so many patrons return year after year.

Please know that we are deeply grateful for every minute you share with us, and we can't thank you enough for all that you do.

The Volunteer Handbook details the expectations we have for our volunteers. Every role is vitally important to keep the Reading Blues Fest running safely and smoothly for all involved.

Whether you have volunteered for many years or are joining us for the first time, please take some time to thoroughly review the enclosed information.

Once again, we thank you - let's present an excellent festival and have fun!

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin Heimbecker', written in a cursive style.

Justin Heimbecker

Executive Director, Berks Arts

Thank you for joining the Berks Arts Volunteer Team!

Your time and talents will contribute greatly to the success of our many events throughout the year. The following information is provided to orient you to your upcoming volunteer experience. In addition, you will have an opportunity to ask questions during volunteer meetings and to speak individually with members of the leadership team.

Getting Started

Signing Up

Once you indicate a willingness to volunteer for a Berks Arts event, you will be added to the volunteer list. As a member of this list, you will receive email notices providing information about signing up for specific volunteer shifts during the event.

When signing up for events, please consider:

- Your personal schedule and life demands. We count on you keeping the shifts for which you volunteer, so please consider possible conflicts and competing life demands that might interfere before signing up for a specific shift.
- Your stamina. The festivals are exciting, but don't overdo it! Think about how many hours and days you can reasonably volunteer without burning out. At minimum, we ask that you volunteer for **three shifts**.
- Your physical capabilities. Some venues have multiple floors and stairs. Speak with the Volunteer Coordinator if you have any limitations that may require consideration. Some accommodations may be available so that you can still participate.
- Your skills and interests. Explore the volunteer departments and opportunities to decide what fits for you!

Pre-Festival Volunteer Meetings

For new and experienced volunteers, meetings will be held prior to the start of each festival/event to go over key information (e.g. parking procedures, safety protocols) and updates on expectations, policies, procedures, etc.

A pre-festival meeting will include a brief, focused general meeting for volunteers followed by break-out sessions with information specific to your volunteer department (i.e., Front of House, Merchandise, Production, Hospitality, Transportation).

Typically during this meeting your **credential** and **volunteer t-shirt** will be distributed.

Your volunteer schedule will be distributed at or prior to the pre-festival volunteer meeting.

Note: If you are volunteering with multiple departments, please speak with the managers/coordinator of your volunteer departments to determine which break-out meeting is most appropriate for you to attend.

When The Festival Begins

General Expectations

- Fulfill your agreed upon volunteer schedule
- Arrive on time & stay until released by your supervisor
- Follow all health and safety protocols
- Be a positive ambassador for Berks Arts and Berks County
- Have fun and enjoy the experience!

Specific Expectations

Your duties vary by department and the position you are assigned to for an event. Your specific duties will be determined by the manager/coordinator when you arrive based on event needs and your interests. Please see descriptions of the various tasks available in each department later in this manual.

Alcohol Consumption and Other Drug Use: All volunteers must be sober and drug free when reporting to their assignments. Volunteers are not permitted to consume alcoholic beverages or use other drugs (unless prescribed by a physician) while on duty. Volunteers who are under the influence of alcohol or other drugs while working a volunteer shift will be relieved of volunteer duties immediately and asked to leave the venue. In addition, these volunteers will not be permitted to work any other volunteer shifts during the current festival and will not be eligible to volunteer at future Berks Arts events.

What To Wear

- Your official (unaltered) volunteer t-shirt!
- Black slacks/pants (not black jeans).
- Comfortable, closed-toes shoes (you may be walking/standing for periods of time)
- A small crossbody purse or waist pack/belt pack is acceptable for personal possessions.

Comfort/Safety

- If you wear **glasses**, please bring them since you may be required to read tickets, signs or other information.
- If you use a **hearing aid**, it will be important to bring it so that you can interact with patrons and other volunteers.
- **Temperature** varies by season and venue, so feel free to wear your volunteer shirt over other clothing if necessary. If you wear a shirt that is visible under your official t-shirt, please be sure that it is black or white in color, and plain (no text/graphics).
- Some shows may be loud so consider bringing **ear plugs** if loud sounds are uncomfortable. Berks Arts will make ear plugs available to volunteers at no cost, but supplies are limited.
- Where possible, a **storage space** for coats, hats etc. will be identified. This area may not be secure so do not leave any valuable items with your coat etc.
- **Meals** are not provided during your shift, so consider bringing a snack.
- **Water** (water fountain or bottled water) and light snacks will generally be made available at your venue. Please check with your manager for specific information.

When To Arrive

- Be sure to **arrive by the start of your assigned shift**. Please consider traffic and parking when planning your travel. The festival and other local events may increase your travel time.
- When you arrive, **check in** with the 'Greeter' at your venue or your House Captain/Department Manager.
- Your shift/arrival time may be well before that start of any event to allow time for preparation and assignment of duties. Keep in mind that the doors to venues generally open 60 minutes before the scheduled show time.
- If for any reason you are **delayed in arrival**, please notify the Volunteer Coordinator (volunteers@berksarts.org) and your Supervisor as soon as possible.
- If you are **unable to keep a scheduled shift** due to illness or emergency, contact the Volunteer Coordinator and your Supervisor promptly so that staffing adjustments can be made - if possible.

Personal Conduct

- You are the face of Berks Arts, Reading Blues Fest, and Berks County in your role as a volunteer! Our volunteers have earned the deep appreciation of festival patrons and artists for their **helpfulness, friendliness, and commitment** – let's keep the streak alive!

- On rare occasions, you may encounter a difficult patron. You are not alone! Reach out to colleagues, managers, and the leadership team to cope with challenging situations. Stay positive and energized in your volunteer role!
- Music festivals are...festive. However, we ask that you postpone your celebrations and festivities until after your volunteer shift ends. Remember to take off your “uniform” (volunteer t-shirt and name tag) if you decide to go out for a drink after your event. It is important that this uniform is only worn when “on the clock” to support patrons and artists.

Our experiences with volunteers over the years have been overwhelmingly positive. On occasion, a specific volunteer experience may not be a good fit for an individual and we may ask you to consider other options. In the rare event that volunteering at a festival or abiding by the requirements for volunteers is difficult we may remove you from the volunteer schedule for a festival.

Additionally, it is important that volunteers follow through with assigned shifts and commitments; the festival relies on a complex plan involving thousands of moving parts and assignments. Cancellations or no-shows may result in a volunteer not being assigned to future shifts with Berks Arts events.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

If things are slow, may I leave early?

The expectation is that you will stay for the duration of your assigned shift. Activity and requirements vary during a volunteer shift. There may be less to do during a show (so you get to enjoy the show!), but things get busy again when the show ends. If for some reason you are not able to stay for the duration of your shift, please discuss this with your Supervisor prior to the start of the shift.

May I use my volunteer shirt and credentials to attend shows other than the ones I signed up for?

Volunteer credentials do not give you access to performances other than those on your official volunteer schedule. At times, volunteers may attend certain shows with open seats at the special invitation of the Executive Director. Volunteers who use their volunteer attire/credentials to attend shows to which they are not assigned will be asked to leave.

Will I be given food and water during my volunteer shift?

Food is not typically provided for volunteers during a shift. Feel free to bring a small snack that you can keep in your pocket or with your personal items. Be sure to eat prior to your shift. Berks Arts will generally provide bottled water and light snacks for volunteers. If this is concern, please check with your Supervisor prior to your volunteer shift.

What should I do if there is a medical emergency (fire, unruly patron etc.)?

Berks Arts has established safety plans and protocols for these events (see the "Emergency Preparedness Plan" in this manual). Please note that as volunteers your responsibility is to notify senior management of any emergency situation so that the established protocols can be implemented. Please follow the directions of senior management for your safety and that of our patrons.

Remember that you have support and are not expected to deal with emergency situations on your own.

Do I have to pay for parking during my volunteer shift?

Parking varies by venue, but you are not expected to pay for parking. Berks Arts has been able to make arrangements in the past to provide free parking for parking areas associated with each venue. Be sure to validate your vehicle in order to have your parking costs covered. Parking is a significant festival expense. Efforts to carpool are always appreciated.

In the unlikely event that you receive a parking violation or ticket in the mail, please submit the ticket via the online form so that we may address the issue with the Reading Parking Authority on your behalf.

Am I able to meet artists and request autographs at a show?

Volunteers are permitted to seek autographs and photos following the show in the designated area after all patron requests for autographs have been fulfilled. Show patrons are given priority if an artist is signing autographs after a performance

As a volunteer, do I have access to all areas of a venue?

Volunteer credentials provide access only to the areas that are associated with your specific volunteer assignment. By necessity, some volunteer assignments give individuals access to more areas in a venue.

Consider volunteering in other departments to explore your interests!

What should I do if I'm sick or stuck in traffic and will miss or be late for my volunteer shift?

When you sign up for a volunteer shift, the Volunteer Coordinator, House Captain and/or manager of your department counts on your participation to fully staff your area of assignment. Unanticipated things happen, so if there is a change to your availability we ask that you notify the Volunteer Coordinator (volunteers@berksarts.org) and your Supervisor as soon as possible so that a replacement can be found. Please note, there may not be a replacement if you are unable to keep a scheduled shift.

If I am a volunteer, can I also buy tickets to performances?

Please continue to enjoy the concerts at the festival as patrons even if you also volunteer for shows. Sometimes you just want to see a favorite artist without a volunteer obligation!

There are no special discounts for volunteers, but our show tickets are kept at reasonable prices precisely because of the time and talents you donate to the festival.

Are videos and flash photography allowed at concerts?

Unless specifically prohibited by the artist, photos (without flash) are permitted.

Flash photographs are disruptive to the artists and surrounding patrons so they are not allowed. Similarly, continuous video of a performance can block the views of patrons and may violate the copyright protection of the artist's performance without specific consent. If you see flash photography or videotaping, please notify festival security.

What are the different volunteer positions at events?

The primary areas of volunteering are: Front of House, Merchandise, Production, Hospitality, Ticketing, and Transportation. You can find descriptions of these departments on the website and in this manual. Feel free to talk with

managers and other volunteers from these various areas to get more information.

If you have time and talent to share, please consider volunteering in the Berks Arts office and with other events and festivals throughout the year!

Department Information

Front Of House Team

Front of House volunteers are often the first point of contact for patrons attending a show. Volunteers scan tickets at the door, help patrons find their seats and other important areas of the venue (rest rooms, food vendors, merchandise, etc.). There are several possible assignments for Front of House volunteers depending on the venue – Zone Captain, Ticket Scanner, and Usher. As a Front of House volunteer, you are the face of Berks Arts for the festival’s patrons!

Primary Duties

Zone Captain

- Assist the House Captain with supervision of patron seating for a particular area of the concert venue.
- Supervise and assist other volunteers in a designated area as a “player-coach”
- Participate in seating patrons as needed.
- Other duties as assigned by the House Captain

Ticket Scanner

- Scan barcodes on electronic tickets (or paper printouts) at the designated venue entrance(s)
- Direct patrons to ushers to assist with seating
- Answer general questions (e.g., location of restrooms, food)
- Direct patrons with ticket issues (e.g., unable to locate ticket, seating concerns) to the House Captain or the venue ticketing representative for assistance.
- Check tickets/wristbands for readmission to a venue after existing for food/drink purchase, restroom use, etc.

Usher

- Help patrons locate the seat(s) they purchased prior to the show and after the show begins as per venue/artist policy (See Volunteer Resources “Tips on Reading a Ticket” & Venue Descriptions)
- Assist patrons with special needs and accommodations (e.g., mobility problems) and with storage/retrieval of mobility devices (i.e., walkers, wheel chairs)
- Answer general questions about the show (e.g., length of show, intermission, artist autograph session) and the festival (e.g., Where can I get dinner? What other concerts are available? How can I support Berks Arts?) or direct patrons to other team members for answers.

- Assist with keeping exit doors clear for safety reasons and **closed during performances**.
- Direct patrons to doors designated for entrance/exit during shows. Open doors for patrons as a courtesy.
- Share responsibility of monitoring entry/exit doors and check wristbands or tickets when patrons re-enter the venue.
- Open doors to the concert area, when directed, at the completion of a show.
- Stay alert to safety concerns and notify House Captains, venue security or other festival management of any issues or problems.

Requirements

- Wear festival t-shirt and credentials at all times during shifts.
- Arrive on time for all scheduled shifts and remain until dismissed by the House Captain.
- Upon arrival, check in with the “Greeter” or House Captain at the venue to confirm your participation.
- Maintain a ‘customer service’ orientation and be positive and friendly with patrons
- Volunteers must be able to walk or stand for extended periods during shifts.
- Bring a small flashlight to help guide patrons to seats after house lights are off.

Special Considerations

- It is imperative that **doors are never blocked**. Ushers may stand or sit to the side of doors, but never in the direct line of the door opening. Failure to comply with this rule may result in the organization receiving fines from the fire marshal.
- **Remain alert to patrons’ needs** and keep their enjoyment and safety as your top priority as it is easy to be captivated by a performance. If you want to enjoy a show in its entirety, we welcome you as a ticket-holding member of our audience at any time.
- Front of House volunteers (ushers, ticket takers, etc.) are not permitted backstage at any time unless specifically directed by the House Captain to do so.
- Follow all health and safety protocols (see Emergency Preparedness Plan)

FAQs

Will I be able to watch the show during my shift?

Front of House volunteers are typically stationed inside of the venue and immediately outside of the concert area during shows. House Captains and Zone Captains will rotate volunteers through positions so that everyone will be able to watch, at least, a portion of the show.

Are food and beverages provided during my shift?

While Berks Arts generally provides bottled water and light snacks, be sure to bring a snack and drink if you think you will want something during your shift. Some venues also have snack and drink items available for purchase.

Am I allowed to meet the artists and request autographs?

Front of House volunteers are permitted to seek autographs/photos at the designated time and place if an artist agrees to an autograph/photo session. Patrons who purchased tickets for the show are given priority in the autograph line.

Do I receive discount on festival merchandise or shows?

Volunteering with the Front of House team does not provide any additional discount on festival merchandise or shows, as the revenue from these sales (in addition to volunteer support) allows Berks Arts to keep festival ticket prices as low as possible.

Volunteers are welcome to become “Arts Advocates” through a specified level of donation to Berks Arts, which entitles the donor to a discount on the purchase of non-artist merchandise. There are additional benefits for increasing donor levels. Information can be found at berksarts.org.

Do my volunteer shirt and/or Front of House credential get me into any show?

Your volunteer shirt and Front of House credential may only be used at shows for which you are an assigned volunteer. You will be asked to leave shows to which you are not assigned or do not have a paid ticket. However, watch your email etc. because special opportunities to attend other shows for free may arise for volunteers during a festival.

If things are slow once the show begins, am I able to leave early?

Please remain for the duration of your shift unless specifically released by your House Captain. Although, there may be less to do once a show begins, your House Captain may be aware of specific needs at the end or after a show for which your help is required.

Are patrons allowed take photos and/or videos during a performance?

Photographs are typically permitted, but NOT flash photos. Flash photos are disruptive for the artist and the audience. Videos, generally, are not permitted and violate an artist's rights related to his/her product (performance). If you see someone using flash photography or video during a performance, please notify a member of security or your House Captain.

Hospitality Team

Hospitality Team volunteers provide food, beverages, and any specialty items for artists and backstage crew during performances. You will help maintain a private, pleasant area for artists to relax and refuel before and immediately after their show.

Hospitality Volunteers are crucial to the Reading Blues Fest operation, ensuring that artists, Production crew, and other key personnel are well-fed and cared for. Hospitality Team members provide a warm meal, a cool drink, or just a few minutes of quiet relaxation before a performance.

Volunteers who are interested in Hospitality should contact the Hospitality Coordinator for consideration. Hospitality Volunteers are individually selected by the Hospitality Coordinator due to close interactions with artists and backstage access, which require the utmost professionalism and highest standards at all times. Hospitality shifts generally last several hours - and sometimes all day long.

Primary Duties

- Stock and replenish refrigerator with beverages (water, soda, and juice) throughout shift
- Stock and replenish snacks throughout the shift (i.e., chips, candy, etc.)
- Provide specialty items as designated on riders (sheets sent by the artists management with their requests). Items should be labeled and lists of items for each show will be available.
- **Introduce yourself to tour manager** at the band's load-in/arrival. Tell him/her you are the hospitality representative. Ask when he/she would like the green room food to be set (i.e., Sound check, right before show, or after the show) Notify hotel staff, etc., if there are changes from sheets.
- **Monitor the flow of the room-** know the number of people in band and be certain they get to eat. If someone is eating that you have not seen with the band at sound check, please ask politely who they are. If someone decided to eat that is not with the band performing for that day, politely remind them that food is for the BAND that is performing (unless otherwise specified)
- **Communicate needs to hotel/caterer** when applicable such as coffee or food that is needed.
- **Make coffee and put out food** at venues where there is no 'in-house' catering.
- Wrap leftovers, perishables, if applicable, AFTER the show (wait until artist is finished signing autographs). Offer extras to band/crew, or store in the refrigerator and date for later use by crew.

- **Coordinate meals for Berks Arts crew-** give numbers and time to hotel staff or order out at appropriate times.
- Place water NEXT to stage area for crew and artists to grab.
- Keep back stage area clear for Artists (Crew will have a designated area).
- Notify Berks Arts staff in a timely fashion if stock of water, soda, juice, runs low

Requirements

- Wear official shirt with black bottom and closed toe shoes
- Wear lanyard with name badge/credentials
- Arrive on time and check in with your manager upon arrival.
- Depart at designated time unless additional assistance is needed
- Volunteers should be able to walk without assistance
- Should be able to lift at least 20 lbs.
- Give artists their space (the room is theirs for their break time)
- Follow all health and safety protocols (see Emergency Preparedness Plan)

FAQs

Am I allowed to have some of the food and/or beverages?

Yes, to water, coffee, soda, & bagged snacks (if you are there for an extended period of time). No food should be taken from the ARTIST table.

Can I have an alcoholic beverage while working or wearing my festival lanyard?

Alcohol may NOT be consumed by Berks Arts volunteers before or during a shift. Additionally, please be sure to remove all “uniform” (shirt, credential, etc.) if you intend to enjoy a drink after your shift.

Can I watch a show?

If everything is stocked and two people are working a shift, you can take turns watching a show. At least one volunteer needs to monitor the room at all times.

Can I leave and come back?

If you are only working one shift - NO.

If you are working multiple shifts and you have time between shifts or duties - YES.

Can I meet and talk with the Artists?

You may have to speak to some of the artists or their management to assist them. Be friendly and personable, but do not hover over them. Autographs and pictures can be obtained in the autograph line outside the backstage area unless you have established a previous acquaintance with an artist. Although you may be a fan, you need to be a host/hostess for the time that you are backstage. Be mindful of the artist’s space.

Merchandise Team

Merchandise Volunteers are responsible for stocking, displaying, and selling apparel and other merchandise items, including Artist merchandise, to fans at most concerts and venues throughout festivals. Merchandise Volunteers are individually selected by the Merchandise Coordinator, should be comfortable with modern retail technology (tablets, credit card processing, etc.), and should enjoy interacting with our patrons and making their purchases fun and enjoyable.

Volunteers who are interested in the Merchandise Team should contact the Merchandise Coordinator for consideration. Merchandise shifts generally begin 1 hour prior to the concert start time and run well beyond the end of the concert, until the last patrons have completed their purchases.

Primary Duties

- Assist with organizing and loading/unloading (artist or general) merchandise and related supplies at festival venues
- Enter merchandise information into the database to assist with credit card sales and inventory management (optional)
- Stock/arrange merchandise displays at venues
- Interact with patrons and facilitate purchases
- Complete credit card transactions using Square

Requirements

- Should be able to lift 20 pounds
- Be comfortable standing for extended periods of time during a shift
- Enjoy contact with festival patrons
- Learn steps involved in completing credit card transactions using *Square* (see specific instructions on the use of *Square*. Additional training and practice will be provided)
- Follow all health and safety protocols (see Emergency Preparedness Plan)

Department-Specific Information

- Volunteer shifts will start before show times to allow for preparation and pre-concert sales.
- It is important that you arrive promptly for your scheduled shift to assist with stocking/arranging merchandise and other preparation for sales.
- Check in with your manager upon arrival to confirm participation.
- Merchandise volunteers are not permitted backstage or the 'green room' area at any time unless specifically directed.
- Volunteers are helpful and friendly with festival patrons!

FAQs

Are food and drinks provided during my shift?

While Berks Arts generally provides bottled water and light snacks, be sure to bring a snack and drink if you think you will want something during your shift. Some venues also have snack and drink items available for purchase.

When sales are slow can I watch the show?

Depending on the venue, you may be busiest before and immediately after a show. Typically, merchandise displays and sales areas are very close to the concert area so you will be able to listen to the show even after the doors close!

Do I get to meet the artists?

There is no provision to meet artists during your volunteer shift. On occasion, an artist may drop off merchandise, but we ask that you refrain from asking for photos or autographs at that time. Berks Arts volunteers are permitted to seek autographs/photos after patrons at designated times/places if artists agree to autograph sessions.

Do I receive discount on festival merchandise?

Volunteering with the Merchandise Team does not provide any additional discount on festival merchandise, but you will be the first to see the items that are for sale!

Production Team

The Reading Blues Fest Production Team is the core of all Reading Blues Fest productions. Production Volunteers are dedicated individuals supporting the Arts and the festival through their participation in stage production, concert audio, video, and lighting. Production volunteers ensure that everything runs smoothly behind the curtain. Become a member of the Team that “turns the house lights down, the stage lights up and starts ‘The Show’!

Primary Duties

- Assist the Stage Manager and Production Team in the preparation of the stage and venue for the performance
- Set up and position equipment in the venue and on stage prior to, during and after the performance
- Operate in an ‘active environment’ with many changes in equipment and stage floor plan during a shift.

Requirements

- Must be available to participate for a minimum of four (4) continuous hours during a scheduled shift
- Arrive promptly for your scheduled shift and check in with your manager to confirm participation.
- Should be able to lift 50 (Fifty) pounds
- Must wear closed-toe, non-slip footwear.
- Bring the following items for your work shift: work gloves, small personal flashlight (min 400 lumens), and multi-tool appliance.
- Production Volunteers must be active members of the Production Team and must be aware of the changing environment and situations on stage and in the venue (see Safety Guidelines below).
- Follow all health and safety protocols.

Department-Specific Information

Safety Guidelines

Working as a Production Crew volunteer can be one of the most rewarding Festival positions, as it exposes you to the world of sound, lighting and video. Inherent in the work are also certain potential dangers to you and your co-workers. This section is intended to guide you through some of the hazards you may encounter and provide simple means to avoid them.

The most important safety guideline to remember is **BE AN ALERT AND ENGAGED CREW MEMBER**. This includes putting away any distractions such

as cell phones and keeping your eyes and ears open with regard to what is happening around you.

Clothing/PPE

- Wear **sturdy shoes**, preferably with ankle support - especially for load-ins and load-outs. Under no circumstances should Production Crew wear sandals or open-toed footwear.
- Wear appropriate **gloves** to protect your hands from cuts, splinters and pinches. Crushed hands or fingers are common injuries for stagehands. Mechanics-style gloves, which offer leather palms and fingers, are the best choice. Harbor Freight is a good and inexpensive source for this type of gloves.
- Dress in **layers**. With a November Festival, the outside temperatures could be cold. Indoors will obviously be appreciably warmer.
- **Hearing Protection** is always prudent around amplified music. Anything over 80db can cause hearing damage over time.

Loading In or Loading Out from a Truck

- Ramps can be exceedingly dangerous, especially when wet. Test your traction and add additional people to your tasks, as necessary.
- Heavy loads like to move on their own. As a piece of equipment is coming down or going up the ramp, ensure that there are adequate people to keep it under control. Don't let your fellow crew members struggle with a difficult item while you stand by and watch. Immediately move in to help.
- Should a heavy piece of equipment start to run away on the ramp while going downhill, the easiest thing you can do is turn a caster/wheel sharply into the side rail of the ramp. This will allow you to get the piece of equipment stopped while you regain control.
- Certain pieces of equipment can be narrow and tall. This is particularly true of sound and lighting consoles. Make sure that you keep hands on the equipment to ensure that it doesn't topple over.
- When unloading/loading from a box truck with lift gate, ensure that the equipment is being held from all directions as the lift is moving. As the lift gate gets closer to the ground, pay attention to where your feet are to prevent any crushing injuries.

Safe Lifting and Moving of Equipment.

- Make sure that you have a clear path before moving a piece of equipment.
- Use a dolly or cart whenever possible
- Ask for assistance when the size, shape, or weight of the object is beyond your lifting capability.
- Push rather than pull the load whenever possible.
- Never carry or push a load that obstructs your full field of vision
- Squat down to lift the load. Bend at your knees and not at your waist.

Dangers from overhead items

- “**Heads up**” called out on the floor means that something is either moving overhead or falling at a high rate of speed.
 - In either instance it means immediately **Look Out**.
- Never stand under a moving load, either as it is going out or coming in.

Final Thoughts

- If, in the course of working, you are instructed to do something that is either unsafe or beyond your capability to manage, you have the right to politely decline the task.
- If you are injured in any manner, report this to the Production Manager or other Executive Staff as soon as possible.
- Much of what we do is learned by example. If for any reason you are not sure what is being asked of you, **do not be afraid to ask a question**.
- Enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow crew members and the sense of accomplishment that goes with successfully helping to provide services to the arena in which artists creates their magic.

FAQs

Are food and water provided during my shift?

Drinks will be provided during your scheduled shift. Meals may be provided for active volunteers that are committed for longer shifts throughout the day.

After I finish setting up for a performance, can I watch the show?

Production Volunteers committed and assigned to the “Load-In” (pre-performance) and or committed and assigned for the “Load-out”(post-performance) may be able to view some parts of the performance.

Do I get to meet the artists?

There is not a backstage “meet and greet” for the Production Volunteers.

Transportation Team

Transportation Volunteers are crucial to the Berks Arts operations, ensuring that artists and other key personnel are at the right location at the right time, transported safely and pleasantly. Whether this means airport pickups or local shuttles from hotels to concert venues, the Transportation Team performs a significant behind-the-scenes effort, managing a complex and ever-changing set of itineraries while delivering an efficient, friendly transportation service.

Volunteers who are interested in Transportation should contact the Transportation Coordinator for consideration (transportation@berksarts.org). Transportation Volunteers are individually selected by the Transportation Coordinator to ensure comfort and professionalism given the close interaction with Artists.

Primary Duties

- Transport artists and associated belongings from area airports and hotels to festival venues.
- Assist artists, with their permission, with loading personal luggage/instruments (artists may prefer to manage their own bags and/or equipment)
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of artists during transport

Requirements

- Be comfortable operating a small passenger van
- Operate festival vehicles responsibly and abide by all traffic laws
- Be able to lift and load personal luggage, instruments etc. as requested.
- Be familiar with navigating area roads and routes from area hotels to/from festival venues.

Special Department Considerations

- Transport shifts may involve extended wait times if there are flight delays or other schedule complications
- Transportation shuttles/shifts may occur at all times of day or night, and generally last several hours at a time.
- Drivers are not permitted to accept tips for transportation services

Reading Blues Fest Venue Profile

Double Tree by Hilton Hotel

Location

701 Penn Street, Reading, PA 19601

Parking

A parking garage is attached to the hotel and entered from Penn Street at the front of the hotel. Additional parking is available at city parking garages within walking distance of the hotel.

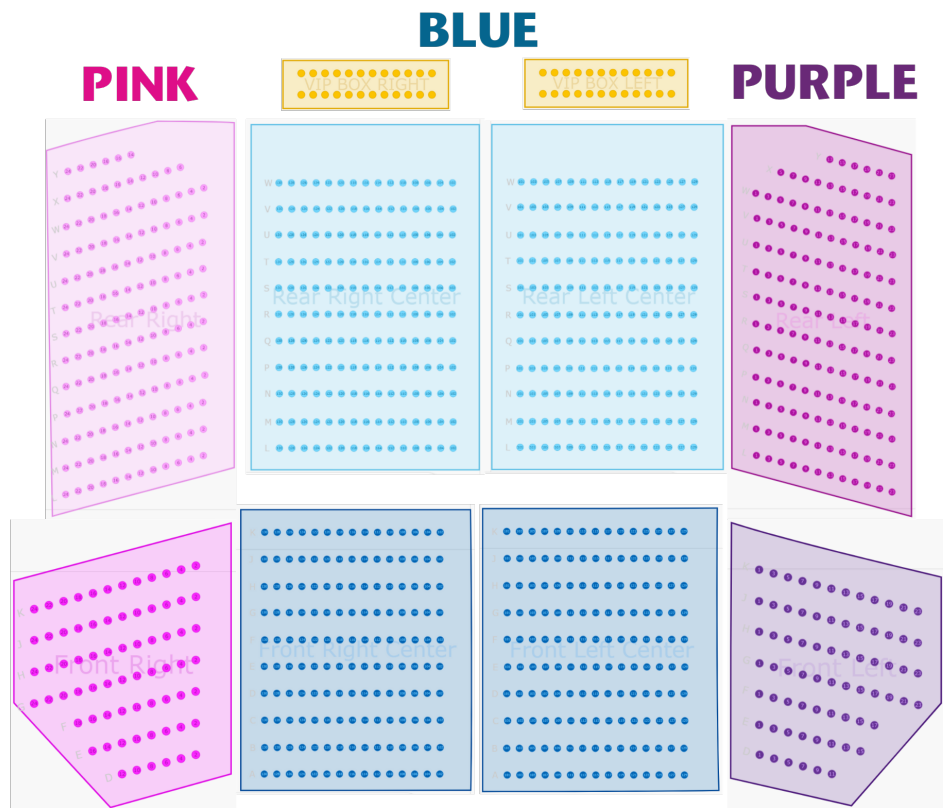
Reading Parking Authority utilizes a gateless entry system. In order to have your parking costs validated as a volunteer for Berks Arts, please be sure to submit the Parking Information Form so that your vehicle may be registered with Berks Arts. If you have any questions, please contact the Volunteer Coordinators.

Seating

Within the Double Tree, there are two main venues – The Grand Ballroom (used for performances during Reading Blues Fest) and Small Ballroom (used for VIP dinners during Reading Blues Fest). Additionally, the Cheers Lounge (the bar/restaurant at the front of the hotel) may be utilized as a non-ticketed performance venue.

Grand Ballroom (up to 1,000+ seats – divided between VIP and General)
Seating is typically arranged in 8 sections

- Front Left & Rear Left
- Front Left Center & Rear Left Center
- Front Right Center & Rear Right Center
- Front Right & Rear Right



Amenities

This is a full-service hotel with several restrooms and water fountains on the main level where the venues are found. The hotel also operates a restaurant on the main level where food can be purchased.

A cloakroom or volunteer ‘lounge’ may be available on the main level, however, this room is not locked during shifts and there may be periods of time when it is unoccupied/unsupervised.

VOLUNTEER RESOURCES

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Staff Hierarchy

Executive Staff:
Justin Heimbecker, Executive Director
John Ernesto, Artistic Director
Tish Davis, Event Operations Director
Gary Spencer, Production Manager
Amanda Ehst, Community Programs & Office Manager
Head of Security
EMT
Venue Liaison
Stage Manager: TBD per venue/event
House Captains: TBD per venue/event
Zone Captains: TBD per venue/event

Note: It is presumed that the aforementioned individuals will have access to two-way radios with which to communicate, thereby ensuring that Venue Liaisons also share in any emergency information as it develops.

Medical Emergency Response Protocol

- Volunteer or General Public identifies problem to either House Captain or Zone Captain on floor.
- Call goes out on radio to all parties with location and nature of incident.
- EMT responds and determines if 911 should be called.
- If deemed necessary, House Captain calls 911 and reads prepared text. (See below)
- Zone Captain goes to appropriate entrance to await emergency responders and direct to incident via the shortest route.
- House Captain determines if *show stop* or *show pause* should be implemented. If so determined, then a call is made over radio to alert all parties.
- The Stage Manager will bring up the house lights and then read a prepared text (see appendix) over the backstage mic used by the show MC.
- The Executive Staff or House Captain will make the determination when the show can resume.

- The Stage Manager will then make the artist and Production Staff aware of the resumption of the show.

Fire Emergency Response Protocol

- In the event a venue's fire alarm system was to sound, the Stage Mgr. is to immediately bring up the house lights and institute a *show stop*. There will also be a prepared text (see appendix) to be read at backstage MC microphone instructing patrons to immediately exit the building.
- Any Festival Staff within proximity to exit doors are to ensure that they are held open by whatever means available and then exit themselves.
- Festival Security should monitor situation and assist patrons to exit in an orderly fashion.
- Stage Mgr. should direct artists and Production Staff to the closest emergency exit to stage.
- Hospitality is to close immediately, and all patrons are to be directed to the closest emergency exit.
- The Executive Staff or House Captain, in consultation with Venue Liaison, will determine when show can resume.

Unruly or Drunk Guest

- Volunteer or General Public identifies problem to House Captain or Zone Captain.
- Radio call is made to Festival Head of Security and Venue Liaison to respond to situation.
- Festival Head of Security will ideally diffuse the situation; but in the event it was to escalate, they could put a call out for a 911 response.
- The Head of Security or House Captain would then call 911 and read prepared text (see appendix) requesting a police presence.
- Should it be necessary, the House Captain could go to a show pause (if the patron was truly disruptive to the performance taking place).
- The Executive Staff or House Captain, in consultation with Head of Security, will determine when the show could resume.

Text to be read to 911 dispatch for medical emergency:

“My name is _____, I am the _____ with the Berks Jazz Festival currently held at _____ (include address and location in building). We have a patron who is experiencing a medical emergency. They are currently being attended to by an EMT with the Festival. We are requesting an ambulance be dispatched to this location.”

Text to be read to 911 for Unruly or Drunk patron.

“My name is _____, I am the _____ with the Berks Jazz Festival currently held at _____ (include address and location in building). We have a patron who is presenting a public safety problem due to disruptive behavior and our Director of Security and Venue Management is asking for Police to be dispatched.”

Text to be read by Stage Mgr. for Show stop/show pause medical emergency

“Ladies and Gentlemen, we have an emergency taking place with a member of the audience and must temporarily pause the show to allow EMT responders to attend to this person. Please remain calm and in your seats. We will resume the show as soon as possible, and we ask for your patience in the interim.”

Text to be read by Stage Mgr. in Event of Fire

“Ladies and Gentlemen, there is a fire emergency somewhere in the building. Please exit in an orderly fashion by all available exits. This is not a drill. We will inform you as soon as it becomes possible to re-enter the building and for the show to resume.”

Tips On Reading An Event Ticket

Beginning in 2023, Berks Arts has moved to the Vivenu ticketing platform for all events. However, for the 2022 Reading Blues Fest, Eventbrite is the ticketing service/platform. Ticket takers/scanners may check-in patrons on their personal cell phone, or an a Berks arts iPad.

eventbrite

Order #5109364519

2022 Reading Blues Fest



Tab Benoit plus The Dirty Dozen Brass Band \$64.23

DoubleTree by Hilton Reading, 701 Penn Street, Reading, PA 19601

Thursday, November 17, 2022 at 5:00 PM - Sunday, November 20, 2022 at 5:00 PM (EST)

Eventbrite Completed

Order Information

Order #5109364519. Ordered by **Bryce Harper** on November 8, 2022 2:43 PM



51093645198272575149001

There are a few steps to take when reading a patron's ticket that may help when assisting with seating. It is important to become familiar with the seating arrangement at your venue before the doors open. See the 'venue' section in this manual for descriptions and consider visiting the venue websites to look at seating chart. You should have time to walk around the venue seating prior to starting your shift. Learning the venue will make seating patrons easier!! Remember that sometimes you may seat patrons after the main lights are out.

Tickets may be presented on paper, or on a patron's phone. The experience is the same, regardless how the ticket is being presented.

1. Confirm that the patron is presenting the **correct ticket** for the event (check the area highlighted in GREEN in the graphic above).

2. Scan the barcode with your mobile device or tablet to “Check In” the patron (the area highlighted in BLUE in the graphic above). The device will make a sound and also visually indicate that the ticket is valid. If you have any problem scanning, contact your Zone Captain for assistance.

3. Place the appropriate wristband on the patron for the event, and then hand them off to an usher to be escorted to the appropriate seat/section.

PARKING (Volunteer & Patron)

Parking is validated for Reading Blues Fest Volunteers in the Convention Center (DoubleTree) or Reed & Court Garages. Parking is only validated for volunteers who have submitted vehicle information through the online form by the submission deadline.

The following information is for patrons to use for street parking

Park Mobile – A Resource for Street Parking

Park Mobile is a **mobile phone app** used by the Reading Parking Authority. In this app you are able to pay for parking from your phone, instead of walking back to your parking meter. Also, you can monitor the time remaining on your meter directly from your phone!

To Use Park Mobile

1. Download the Park Mobile App to your mobile phone
2. Enter the Zone Number listed on your parking meter
3. Add your vehicle's license plate number^[1]_{SEP}
4. Enter payment information for your debit/credit card^[1]_{SEP}
5. Monitor your notification to be sure you extend time if needed

About Berks Arts

About Berks Arts

Through the creation and support of varying art events, community collaborations and grants, the Berks Arts positively impacts our community's cultural and economic well-being. **The mission of the Berks Arts is to inspire, engage and unite our community through arts education, collaboration and presentation.** We seek to support community and economic growth, promote positive change and create a more connected community. Today, in everything the Berks Arts does and supports, we seek to make Berks County, PA a more creative, more desirable, and a more resilient community.

Programs of Berks Arts

Berks Jazz Fest

Begun in 1991, the Berks Jazz Fest has grown into one of the largest and most diverse jazz festivals in the country, attracting an estimated 30,000 attendees – from 32 states and 6 countries. This 10-day festival, held annually in Spring, includes over 100 performances at venues across the county. Moreover, this event has a significant, positive impact on our local economy. The festival is responsible for an estimated \$10 million economic impact in Berks County; the impact is predominantly for the restaurant, hospitality and retail industries. In addition, Jazz Fest helps nurture artists with educational and instructional opportunities for youth, artist jams, and unique concert experiences.

Art of Jazz

Since its inception in 2005, *The Frank Scott Memorial Art Show: The Art of Jazz* has highlighted works of art of all media — from quilts to stone to pastels. What these works of art have in common is the surprising ability to interpret the experience of listening to music into visual art. This juried exhibit is open to all fine artists and craft artists with work focusing on the theme of "Celebrate Jazz." This exhibition is a prelude to and runs in conjunction with Jazz Fest.

Bandshell Concert Series

Begun in 1991 as an initiative among the City of Reading, Berks Arts and downtown merchants, the Bandshell concerts were an effort to showcase the city by bringing different styles of music and cultural diversity to the citizens of Berks County. This series of free-to-the-public concerts are underwritten through sponsors. Concerts are held Friday nights in July.

Reading Blues Fest

Begun in 2017, the Reading Blues Fest is a complement to the Berks Jazz Fest. Featuring the best in contemporary and traditional Blues, the Reading Blues Fest is a 3-day celebration of music and includes concerts, seminars, films and speakers.

Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts

As a Regional Partner with the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Berks Arts re-grants funds to support a wide variety of local and community arts activities in a three-county region including Berks, Lancaster and Schuylkill counties. The impact of this program has resulted in countless new arts programs as well as supplementing many longstanding arts programs. The allocation of funds is determined by a process developed by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.

Fast Lane Art

Fast Lane Art is a juried competition featuring high school students. Selected artwork is featured in an annual exhibition along with public art installations. In 2021, selected winners will have their artwork displayed on public street banners in the City of Reading and West Reading. In addition, an Art Walk will be created in Reading featuring each piece of art displayed in storefront and business windows.

Music Educators of Berks County

The purpose of Music Educators of Berks County is to further the development of music education in the public schools of Berks County through mutual helpfulness to teachers and students and utilizing all possible resources.

Through a strategic and supportive partnership, Berks Arts is proud to deliver on its mission to support scholastic arts programs in meaningful and impactful ways. Berks Arts supports MEBC as the presenting organization for several music festivals throughout the academic year, including:

Weekly “Arts Blast” Newsletter

A weekly email is sent to all current friends and supporters of the arts, highlighting local arts events in the area. Berks Arts also manages the “Arts in Berks” website, highlighting all the work of arts organizations and artists in the region with event calendars, press releases, and social media marketing support.

Arts Roundtable

On a quarterly basis, a roundtable discussion is held with over 30 arts organizations and partners throughout Berks, Schuylkill and Lancaster Counties to discuss current initiatives, trends, collaborative projects, and community development. The roundtable is open to all artists and organizations of any genre to attend.

Berks Arts on BCTV

Berks Arts hosts a monthly television show on BCTV sharing what is happening in the arts within our community. ■

2022-23 Berks Arts Board of Directors

Executive Committee

Mike Kuczala, President^{[[SEP]]}

Lucille DiGiamberardino, Vice President - Administration

Brian Bubnis, Vice President – Programs

Ann Marie Hayes-Hawkinson, Secretary^{[[SEP]]}

Kay Haring, Treasurer^{[[SEP]]}

Keith Mooney, Past President

Board of Directors

Kevin Barnhardt,^{{L}{SEP}} Frank Buttarò, Jr., Thomas Dareneau, Daniel Egusquiza, Bill Nelson, Lee Olsen,^{{L}{SEP}} Jayme Rhoads, Deborah Waters, Ann Woodward

Berks Arts Office Staff

Justin Heimbecker, Executive Director^{{L}{SEP}}
Tish Davis, Event Operations Director
Gary Spencer, Production Manager^{{L}{SEP}}
Amanda Ehst, Community Programs & Office Manager

Reading Blues Fest Leadership Team

John Ernesto, *Artistic Director*^{{L}{SEP}}
Stan Danner, *Assistant Production Manager*^{{L}{SEP}}
Marvanne Kouvarous, *Hospitality Manager*^{{L}{SEP}}
Megan Schappell, *Box Office Manager*
Carlyn D'Amico, *Box Office Administrator*
Robin Myers-Ojea, *Volunteer Coordinator*^{{L}{SEP}}
Cindy Wlazelek, *Volunteer Administrator*
Neal Swarmer, *Marketplace Coordinator*
Darren Delaney, *Marketplace Coordinator*
Ginny Swarmer, *Berks Arts Merchandise Coordinator*
Brian Wlazelek, *Orientation Coordinator*

House Captains:

Keith Simon, Doug Tothero

Stage Managers:

Stan Danner, Matt Cullen