

Federal Way Chorale Policies & Expectations

Introduction

Whether you are a new or returning member, welcome to the Federal Way Chorale. Our mission is to provide musical performance excellence in the community through diverse repertoire and educate our audience by cultivating a genuine appreciation for choral arts. The vision of the Federal Way Chorale is to always produce musical excellence in our performances. We wish to be recognized as one of the premier regional choirs in the Pacific Northwest.

Concert Year

The Chorale concert year currently consists of two seasons, or concert cycles, i.e., Fall and Spring. Typically, the fall season's concert is a Christmas concert held in early December, and other seasonal opportunities as they arise. The Chorale collaborates with the Federal Way Symphony in late November or early December to perform Handel's Messiah. There may be additional events during the fall season.

Typically the spring semester will involve a concert and or choral festival in March or April, and a spring concert in late May or early June. Rehearsal and concert schedules will be provided to members on our website, and updated as necessary.

Auditions

The dates of auditions are posted on the Chorale's website. To schedule an audition, one must complete and submit the audition form. Once the form is submitted, the audition chair will contact the prospective member to set up a time for the audition.

Members who do not complete two consecutive seasons will be required to re-audition following the same procedures as new auditioning members. A season is considered complete when the member has met attendance requirements and successfully performed in the Federal Way Chorale seasonal concert.

Expectations

All members are expected to:

- Pay dues at the beginning of each season
- Treat music scores with care and respect
- Purchase required concert attire
- Attend sectionals
- Participate actively and respectfully in rehearsals
- Behave professionally in rehearsal and in public
- Be prepared and practice outside of rehearsals
- Contact your section leader if you will miss a rehearsal
- Promote performances through media and other available resources
- Participate in fundraising
- Attend all required performances

Rehearsal Dates & Times

- · Federal Way Chorale's regular seasons are from September - May.
- · Rehearsals are held in the choir room at TJ on Monday evenings
- · Sectionals are from 6:00 - 6:45.
- · Warm ups and rehearsals are from 6:50 - 9:30.
- · At the end of rehearsal, please help to tidy the room before leaving.
- · Check the website for the most current information

Membership Dues

- Dues must be paid in two installments and are set by the board each concert year (September through June).

Student dues are set at one-half of regular dues.

- Dues must be paid before receiving music and no later than the second rehearsal of a semester (unless by arrangement with the Chorale president).

- In the case of financial hardship, a discretionary hardship reduction is available to a maximum of 50% of applicable dues (hardship reduction doesn't apply to student dues), and any reduction must be approved by the Chorale president.
- Dues can be paid in cash, check or credit card (there will be a nominal charge for using a credit card)
- If you leave the Chorale for any reason within the year, dues are not refundable, unless the Chorale president approves an exception for extreme hardship.

Music

- Members will receive their music upon full payment of dues.
- Keep music protected and in good condition. For music purchased by the Chorale, members may use highlighters to highlight words, notes and dynamic markings. All other markings must be in light pencil. For music rented or borrowed by the Chorale, only light pencil markings are permitted, and then erased after the concert. Do not punch holes in any music.
- All music handed out (whether purchased, borrowed or rented) must be returned in the condition in which it was received directly after the last concert of the season.
- Members who do not return their music will be charged a non-refundable fee.

Additional Costs

Binders

The Chorale purchases a specific style of black binders for use during our concerts and expects members to obtain one of these binders and reimburse the Chorale for the binder cost. If the member does not plan to return to the Chorale for the next concert series, the Chorale will refund the amount of the binder if it is turned in promptly and in reusable condition. To retain uniformity in presentation throughout the Chorale, only binders identical to the standard Chorale binders can be used if members choose to use their own.

Concert Attire

Members are responsible for purchasing their own concert attire. The concert attire coordinator will size and order women's dresses and jewelry.

MEN: Black tuxedo, white wing-tip or standard collar tux shirt, black bow tie, black cummerbund, black shoes/socks

WOMEN: Full length, three-piece dress ensemble consisting of black skirt, reversible glittery cobalt blue and black camisole, glittery cobalt blue jacket and silk black jacket.

- Skirts should be hemmed so that length is 1 to 2 inches from the floor with concert shoes on.
- Shoes – black closed toe for performance (no patent leather)
- Nylons – black
- Hair – no visible adornments
- Earrings and necklace – uniform silver and rhinestone necklace and earring set.
- Bracelets or watches – okay if not too flashy or noisy
- Makeup – “evening out on the town” suggested. A little darker lip color and eye shadow are appropriate. Remember, your faces are all that the audience can really see. Let's look BEAUTIFUL!

For Community events, all members will need to order a blue Federal Way Chorale Polo shirt to be worn with black pants unless otherwise directed.

Concert Promotion and Ticket sales

A link to purchase tickets for our concerts is on our website. Tickets may also be purchased at the PAEC box office or on the website. The Chorale advertises our concerts on our website, Facebook and other media. Members are expected to support these means of sales and advertisement by actively promoting the sale of tickets through email, social networking, and personal contact.

Participation

We encourage members to participate in other necessary organizational and non-musical supportive activities such as committees and fundraising events. All should actively recruit new members to the Chorale. The Chorale will remain strong and healthy only by the pride we show in the choir and the effort we put forth in enhancing its image.

Rehearsal Attendance

Sign in on the attendance roster when you arrive and be in your seat and ready to sing at the designated rehearsal start time. Section leaders will track attendance and follow up on any absence related concerns. Always have a soft lead pencil available for music notes. Bottled water only is permitted in the rehearsal room and concert rooms.

Members need to be prepared for rehearsal. Please invest the time needed to learn the music outside of rehearsal time.

Absences

You may not be allowed to sing in a concert cycle if you miss:

- Three (3) or more rehearsals in that concert cycle
- The final dress rehearsal, or
- Any of the performances for the concert cycle (unless previously arranged)

When a person has missed their third rehearsal, they will be notified that they will be required to sing a concert preparedness audition two weeks before the performance. At that point, the conductor will listen to the member or members to determine if they know the music well enough to perform.

Notify your section leader in advance of planned absences.

It is important that you get any director's markings or notes from a rehearsal you missed from someone in your section. Your section leader will have accurate markings from all rehearsals.

Requests for a Leave of Absence

If you know in advance that you will need to request a leave of absence for a particular concert please notify your section leader and/or the director as soon as possible.

Musicianship and Preparation

The Chorale seeks to maintain a high level of musicianship. Chorale members are expected to assume responsibility for mastering their music. Rehearsal music will be provided by the chorale via Drop Box and members are encouraged to attend sectionals. Your section leader will help review aspects of the music; however, the artistic director expects each member to work on learning the music at home continually. During rehearsals, always keep a pencil handy. It is important that every singer mark crescendos, accents, and other directions from the director as requested.

Rehearsal Etiquette

The Chorale meets only once per week and it is important to maximize the use of the rehearsal time. Please observe a professional attitude and attention to all requests from the director, including the following:

- Be respectful and pay attention to anyone speaking, whether it is a director or someone making announcements.
- While the director is rehearsing another section, follow along so that you are ready when he wishes to add your section.
- Refrain from chatting or humming your own or other section's parts while the director is rehearsing another section.
- Questions about your music should be taken to your section leader. Your section leader will answer the question at the appropriate time. If your section leader isn't sure, she/her will get clarification from the director and get back to you. If you have more questions, take notes and send an email to your section leader.
- If you're a toe-tapper, make sure that your toe tapping is perfectly silent.
- If you are late to rehearsal, move quickly and quietly to your section.
- If you are ill and contagious, please stay home to avoid spreading illnesses to the rest of the Chorale.

- If you are not feeling well, but are not contagious, come to rehearsal and sit at the back of the room. This counts as attendance, and you will find that by just following the music, you learn nearly as much as if you'd been able to sing.
- Please do not wear perfumes or after-shaves to rehearsals or concerts. Some singers have allergies or asthma that can be triggered or exacerbated by these scents.

Performance Etiquette

- Before entering the stage, one member will be assigned by the president to organize the lineup order. Members are expected to listen and follow the directions of that person.
- While backstage, members are to remain quiet and professional.
- When entering or leaving the stage, Chorale members are to carry their music in their “downstage” hand, i.e., towards the audience. Music is to be at one’s side until the director cues that it be raised, or else as previously arranged.
- Walk briskly to your assigned place.
- When exiting, continue to walk quickly once off the stage to clear room for the remainder of the Chorale.
- Prior to concerts, please have music arranged in folder and marked for easy access. Do not follow along in the score while the orchestra or soloists are performing. Open music to the next choral entrance and wait for the cue from the director. Use small tabs or paper clips to mark the next entrance so you will not fumble with turning pages in the score.
- When singing memorized music, hold your folder on your left side unless otherwise directed.
- Always look at the conductor or soloist. Your face should appear alert, interested, and in an appropriate mood for music. Smile!
- Talking is unacceptable under any circumstances. Applauding soloists and orchestra is generally not acceptable concert etiquette.
- Soloist and Chorale bows will be cued by the director.
- Remember that unnecessary movement on stage distracts the audience from full enjoyment of the concert. Please use common sense regarding anything that will cause a distraction or interruption.
- Cell Phones and smart watches are never allowed on stage during performances.

Communications / Announcements

- The Chorale communicates with members through announcements at rehearsals and through emails, which are also posted on the Announcements page of the website.
- The Chorale maintains an address and email roster of all its members. This is a confidential list and will only be made available to board members and will only be used for Chorale matters. Email is a quick and efficient way of communicating with members. If your email address changes, please note the new address on the sign-in roster.
- The artistic director will send rehearsal information by email. This usually includes instructions and specific lists of music to prepare for the next rehearsal.
- The Board president and/or email administrator will send emails with reminders, specific instructions, urgent requests or announcements that may require a response from the membership. These will commonly include additional dates and times of fundraising activities, volunteer opportunities, ticket sales, rehearsal changes, and other impending activities.
- A time may be set aside for urgent announcements during the rehearsal. These announcements may also include additional dates and times of fundraising activities, volunteer opportunities, ticket sales, rehearsal changes, and other impending activities.
- An up-to-date telephone list is maintained in the event of emergency announcements. Please include a current phone number on the sign-in roster.
- NOTE: Please treat the Chorale roster and email list as confidential information and only use it for Chorale related business.
- Updated information is also available on the Chorale's website
- Members who leave the chorale will be removed from the email roster. If a member desires to come back to chorale, it is the member's responsibility to contact the chorale and opt back in. It is also the member's responsibility to watch the website to see when rehearsals begin if they are no longer on the email list. If a member misses 2 seasons, the member must arrange to re audition and cannot simply "show up" to rehearsal on the first night back.

Grievance Policy

Chorale members who have a grievance are to privately contact their section leader who will handle the grievance or take it to the Board President. The Board President will be responsible to document, investigate and address issues personally. If the situation continues to be unresolved, the Board President may meet with the Director and Assistant Director to determine an appropriate course of action. If the section leader is the Board President, then the issue should be taken to the Vice President.

Interactions with Outside Organizations

It is the policy of the Chorale that members should not represent the Chorale to outside organizations without the express sanction of the board president. This includes, but is not limited to news outlets or other organizations.

Opportunities to Serve

Members are encouraged to participate on committees or in one of the elected positions. Volunteer positions are made available from time to time that are open to both Chorale members and outside members (friends and/or family). If you know someone who might be interested in serving in a volunteer role, but who does not sing in the Chorale, contact the Board President.

Officers and board members are elected by the membership at the annual meeting. The annual meeting is the first Monday evening after the May concert. There are several standing committees where volunteers can serve, and temporary committees arise from time to time. Members should consider areas that may interest them and discuss their interests with a board member. See the Federal Way Chorale Board of Directors Handbook for more details.

Closing

We hope that you enjoy your experience with the Federal Way Chorale. If you have any questions or concerns, contact the current Board of Directors President.

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