



1214 Columbus Ave. Bay City, Michigan 48708

989.893.5555 | info@baycityplayers.com

## COVID-19 Production Procedures

WELCOME! And thank you for agreeing to direct a production at Players during these challenging times. Our region is currently in Phase 4 of the MI Safe Start Plan ([https://www.michigan.gov/documents/whitmer/MI\\_SAFE\\_START\\_PLAN\\_689875\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/whitmer/MI_SAFE_START_PLAN_689875_7.pdf)).

Phase 4 dictates are cause for a lot of adjustments from directing a show under normal conditions. We will be adhering to Phase 4 regulations to be ready with the most restricting conditions. Should Phase 5 come into the picture, it will be easier to expand a production.

At first glance, Production Procedures may seem restricting and perhaps difficult to observe. But many people have worked on the easiest, most sensible ways to manage under Phase 4. If you have any questions or concerns, please discuss them with your producer for seeking help.

### I. ACTING AREAS

#### A. Basics

1. Permissible acting area on the stage: the width of the proscenium opening, curtain line to beginning of orchestra pit covering, from curtain line approximately 16 feet up stage until the apex of sight lines.
2. Two feet above the curtain line an 8" platform will run across the stage. Above that will be a 16" platform, and above that, a 24" platform. Actors on the apron will block actors above the curtain line. Platforms will help keep upstage actors more visible.
3. Actor placement in the acting area is determined by social distancing. On stage social distancing will be about 8'. Six feet is sufficient if the actors don't move from their spots. Standing and/or moving out from a chair moves the actor closer to others. We have calculated a 3' privacy bubble in which the actor may move with closing the distance.
4. Observing distancing within the acting area will accommodate four actors on the apron, one center on the 8" platform, two on the 16", and one center on the 24". The two on the 16" will be one each at the extreme left and right sight lines. This requires careful placement, but eight actors can be accommodated.

#### B. Details

1. There is space for actors to move outside their bubbles when they are not moving toward another actor, e.g. actors far right and far left can move



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further away on the apron. If this happens, it is necessary for the director to contact the lighting chair to see if that space can be lit. The same is true for actors on the 16" platform.

2. To make off-stage areas safer, actors should not leave the stage during performance. Small prop tables can be placed by each actor. They may be shielded if props are to be unseen until used. A shield added to the prop table can be decorated to enhance the location of character.

## **II. MAKE-UP**

### **A. Basics**

1. Makeup will be as simple as possible. People will use their own make-up when needed. Actors come to the theatre already in make-up. The make-up room will not be used.
2. Our recent production test video had men without make-up and women with street make-up. The warmth of the gels and the proximity of the cameras compensated for what might be lost to distance in an occupied theatre.
3. Wigs will not be available.

## **III. COSTUMES**

- A. Actors will provide their own clothes. If this is not possible, the director will contact the costume chair three weeks before performance.
- B. Actors should arrive at the theatre dressed in costume. We have four dressing rooms. They need to be cleaned after each use.
- C. Actors may take personal clothes to Clayton Cleaners, Henry Street, Bay City, for cleaning after the production. There is no charge to the actors.

## **IV. LIGHTING**

- A. The entire acting area will have general illumination, once to suggest daytime and once to suggest evening.
- B. The six designated privacy bubbles will be set with individual spotlights.
- C. Gels will be set and are not open to changes.
- D. Additions to basic lighting will be agreed to by the lighting chair three weeks in advance of production.

## **V. PROPERTIES**

### **A. Basic**

1. A list of necessary hand props should be shared with properties chairs immediately.
2. Props will be gathered, cleaned, and placed on stage on the “prop table” at acting bubbles for individual actors to use.
3. Properties will be placed in advance of rehearsal/performance. Workers will not be present for the rehearsal/performance.
4. Actors will see their props are returned to the same place every night. No one else is to touch them.
5. Consumable props are to be avoided. Absolutely necessary consumable props will be prepared by prop workers only and brought to the theatre. No outside food/drink is to be brought into the theatre with the exception of individual’s water bottles which will come and go with the actor.

**B. Details**

1. Scenic and trim props will be kept to a minimum and shared with the chairs along with a list of hand props.
2. Items may be added once rehearsal begins, if there is agreement of the chairs and ample time to provide them.
3. Props will be serving as basic “scenery” in many respects. Characters’ properties can reveal a great deal about them, so careful thought should be given to each actor’s props: their seats, each actor’s “prop” table, possible shields for tables, individual hand props.

**VI. SOUND**

**A. Basics**

1. Streaming/recording all shows makes it necessary for each performer to be microphoned.
2. Director will meet with the chair three weeks before opening to establish procedure for attaching, removing, and cleaning microphones.
3. Necessary sound effects/music will be shared with Chair three weeks before performance.

**VII. SCENERY**

**A. Basics**

1. Scenery desires need to be discussed with Chair at least 5 weeks before production. Hopefully, scenic desires can be satisfied with projections: realistic, abstract, colorful. Using flats in the acting area will likely block



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actors locked in their areas unless the flats are placed up stage behind the actors, in which case the screen for projections will be blocked.

2. The stage will be set by stage crew before actors arrive. Unless imperative, no stage crew will work the show.

#### **B. Details**

1. Working without customary scenery will take some careful thought, but it is a totally common practice, even in a realistic play. This is where projections and wise selection of scenic props come into play. Changes from general to spot lighting on some characters can prove effective in this way as well. Lighting changes can make a person appear to exit/enter a space without leaving the stage.
2. Set Decoration Chair and artists in Players can work with directors to create an effective and meaningful atmosphere, even within these limitations.

COVID19, Phase 4 has made this the season of LESS IS MORE. But in some ways, it is a challenge to our creative spirits and the exploration of styles of theatre production often forgotten in the whirl of a full season at full production levels at full speed ahead.

Something like non-verbal communication takes on an even greater influence: a strong turn away becomes an exit, crossed legs/arms become steps away from the other actor, opened legs/arms become a step toward another actor. An actor removing a suit coat, a woman adding a shawl, standing abruptly or sitting in disgust—all are non-verbal actions that speak loudly in these circumstances.

Players are pleased you will become a part of what-will-become our historic Season 103. Thank you. And if we do a successful job of getting through this, we can get through anything, especially with people like you on our team.