

Usher/Line Facilitator 2016

Ushers ensure that our guests move comfortably in and out of the venue. As a bonus, they get to enjoy the events—even those that are sold out! (*Some restrictions may apply; see details below.) Ushers are well-informed about their events, about the program, and about Kingston since they will have the most contact with the audience and guests. Being able to answer questions increases audience satisfaction — and you'll have more fun, too. The usher reports to the event Captain for each event, and is under the supervision of the Volunteer Coordinator. Your main responsibilities are:

- To direct the flow of traffic in the corridor
- To assist with orderly line formation
- To take tickets and head counts
- To monitor the hallway and the event space during events

Step-by-Step

Please arrive at least 30 minutes before the event (unless otherwise indicated) to meet with the Captain of the event and other ushers for the event, in the Volunteer Lounge (this is already added in your schedule). Enjoy a cup of tea or coffee before you go on duty. Put on your orange festival scarf, and move with your group to the event venue. Follow the Captain's instructions to prepare the space and manage the line-up. The Captain will take a moment to familiarize your team with fire exits and emergency procedures.

Be prepared to direct the audience to form orderly lines. You may be asked questions about events other than your own. Captains will have complete schedules, but keep a program on hand and know it well. Always transmit enthusiasm and excitement about the festival in general and your event in particular.

You may be asked to do a little light lifting, if chairs need to be re-arranged or rows straightened, or bending, if items need to be picked up off the floor.

*The Captain may send you on a short errand, or you may be asked to stay outside the venue for a portion of the event. Captains try to rotate these assignments fairly so that ushers can enjoy the events. One team member must be in the hallway for the first 10 minutes as well as the last to monitor noise levels. One usher must stay near the doors to open/close quietly for any late arrivals. If people begins a conversation outside the venue doors, politely ask them to continue their conversation in the bookstore or elsewhere.

Remember to remain positive if the attendance at an event is low. This may be a golden opportunity for book lovers to spend quality time with a favorite writer! Small, intimate events can be very rewarding for author and guest alike.

Remember to remain calm if attendance at an event is high; people may be anxious about getting in, so it will be your job to keep the atmosphere pleasant and calm. If a situation threatens to get out of control, talk to your Captain.

At the door, hand out programs and take tickets. Ticket stubs are the best way of knowing how many people attended each event. This is critical to our funding so please be diligent about collecting stubs.

After the event, facilitate the exit of all audience members, and monitor the signing lineup. Remember, you are the face of the festival, as soon as you put on the orange scarf be prepared to answer questions as best as you can, as well as maintaining professionalism and curtesy at all times. Any issues that come up, please bring the Volunteer Managers attention as soon as your shift is over. When the Captain releases you from duty, enjoy the festival hospitality in the Volunteer Lounge or check out an event!