

# Livermore-Amador Symphony Musicians Handbook

## **Livermore-Amador Symphony mission statement**

Our mission is to present musical programs of cultural and educational value for the benefit of the community and to encourage, stimulate, and support community interest in the musical arts.

## **What it means to be part of the LAS**

The Livermore-Amador Symphony is a big musical family with a long and rich history in the community, supported over many decades by a dedicated group of leaders, musicians, community members, and civic leaders. We are a resident company of the Bankhead Theater and enjoy a close relationship with our audiences. Musicians choose to play in the orchestra for sheer love of the music and the joy of collaborating with others who feel the same way. Individually and collectively, the orchestra musicians continually strive to improve as an ensemble, working positively together to engage the music, express the intent of the composer, and share this expression with audiences. The goal is to enrich ourselves and our community through the unique process of making all kinds of symphonic music together as beautifully and expressively as we can. It is fun, challenging, and rewarding.

The Livermore-Amador Symphony is a member of the Livermore Cultural Arts Council as well as the Livermore, Pleasanton, and Dublin Chambers of Commerce.

*What follows are basic guidelines, policies, and protocols for LAS musicians/members:*

## **Communication**

*Please regularly check the website* ([livermoreamadorsymphony.org](http://livermoreamadorsymphony.org)) for detailed rehearsal schedules and concert information as well as symphony news and related events. It is particularly important to check the site prior to each rehearsal in case there is a venue or time change. The orchestra also maintains a roster with complete contact information for communication via e-mail and telephone. The orchestra has a Facebook page and Twitter and Instagram accounts, and of course we communicate telepathically in rehearsals.

Please be alert to any e-mail communication from the orchestra.

If musicians will be absent, they must communicate this information to the personnel manager, their section leader, and the conductor as far in advance as possible. A separate contact sheet is provided, and all current contact information is available on the website.

## **Attendance**

*\*\*Please always sign in on the attendance sheet when you arrive at the rehearsal and the concert hall.\*\**

Musicians are asked to commit to all weekly rehearsals during a given concert period. The LAS asks that musicians limit absences to no more than two per concert set. When illness or personal or work-related conflicts occur that prevent a musician from attending a particular rehearsal, please contact the personnel manager and section leader as far in advance as possible so the conductor can prepare the rehearsal time effectively. Dress rehearsals are mandatory. (Exceptions are made only in highly unusual or emergency circumstances and are made by the conductor in consultation with section leaders and orchestra managers). Consistent attendance is critical to the success of the orchestra and the quality of the experience for all musicians.

Musicians are also asked to commit to the full symphony season. This is not mandatory but is appreciated and strongly encouraged to develop the orchestra as a whole and serve the community well, both inside and outside the LAS. If a full-season commitment is not possible, musicians are encouraged to play at least three of the four classical concert sets. All musicians must give advance notice (three weeks prior to first rehearsal of a given set or at the earliest possible time) if they must miss a concert set, so that substitutes can be lined up. **Orchestra management assumes that all members will play the entire season unless notified otherwise.**

Musicians are expected to arrive at each rehearsal with time to unpack, settle in, warm up, and be ready for tuning. Please remember to silence your cell phone. Tuning occurs at 7:15 sharp. Please allow time for traffic circumstances and parking. Of course unforeseen and emergency circumstances occur, and occasionally a musician must arrive late.

Musicians are asked to contact the personnel manager and section leader as soon as possible to let them know when a late arrival cannot be prevented.

### **Rehearsal preparation and etiquette**

Musicians should come to rehearsal prepared to work effectively with their colleagues and engage and enjoy the creative rehearsal process. Individual practice is required, but perfection is not expected. Preparation makes the experience more rewarding for all. Pencils are required at rehearsals, and musicians must mark their music with essential details shared in rehearsal, such as dynamics, articulation, and tempo changes. **\*\*String players must mark all provided bowings into their parts prior to the first rehearsal of every concert set.\*\*** During the rehearsal, musicians are asked to be attentive and respectful of the rehearsal process and keep talking to a minimum. (Please refrain from wearing heavy scents such as perfumes and lotions.)

### **Performance etiquette**

All musicians performing with the LAS must conduct themselves professionally at all times on stage. The dress code must be observed, and personal effects must be left backstage prior to the performance.

### **Performance dress code**

Men: Tuxedo or black suit, black shoes, socks, and bow tie. Women: Black long dress/skirt or pants, black shoes, and black socks or stockings.

### **Music**

Music is provided to musicians as far in advance as possible and must be returned following the performance in the condition in which it was received. Musical markings, bowings, and the like must be made in pencil only. Some of the music is the property of LAS, and other music is rented from a publisher or borrowed from another institution. In all cases, musicians are entrusted with the music they receive and must handle it with care and return it to the symphony librarian on time.

As previously stated, string players must mark provided bowings into their individual parts prior to the first rehearsal of a concert set. Bowing changes may occur during the rehearsal process, but only in consultation with the conductor, concertmaster, and section leader. String players are asked not to make any bowing changes without first consulting their section leader. Section leaders and the concertmaster may need to coordinate bowing changes with the conductor.

### **Seating and part assignments**

Seating and part assignments are generally made by the section leader in consultation with the conductor. The conductor has the final say over seating and part assignments. String sections typically rotate for each

concert set, with the exception of a handful of fixed positions (principal players, assistant principal players, and so on).

### **Substitutes**

Generally speaking, players with individual part assignments (woodwind and brass players, harpists, string players with substantial solo passages) who must be absent from a particular rehearsal are asked to make every effort to provide a substitute to cover their part. The musician must arrange to get the solo part to any substitute in advance. Circumstances may vary, depending on the repertoire being played. Any question about whether it is necessary to engage a sub for a particular piece should be brought to the section leader, personnel manager, and conductor.



All of the above guidelines follow standard practices for community-based volunteer orchestras. If a musician consistently or significantly violates any of the above guidelines and policies, the orchestra manager, in consultation with the conductor, will first address the situation with the musician directly. If the problem continues, it is possible that the musician may be asked to withdraw from the orchestra for a concert set or indefinitely.

### **Joining the LAS**

Musicians interested in joining the LAS must first contact the personnel manager and fill out an application. If no opening is available, applicants may be added to a substitute and/or waiting list. The music director may request that a musician audition for proper placement within the orchestra.



**Do you have skills in addition to playing music that you might consider sharing at some point with LAS?**

**Joining the board**

The Livermore-Amador Symphony Association is the governing body of the LAS and charts its course for the future. If you or someone you know is interested in serving in a leadership role as part of the Livermore-Amador Symphony Association, please contact our board president.

**Joining a committee**

The LAS needs more than just your musical talents. If you or someone you know has interests and skills in anything from grant writing to education to community development or financial review, there are many committees on which to serve. Board membership is not required to serve on a committee. There are other ways to help that don't involve committee membership, including proofreading copy, graphics design, fundraising, audience development, other performing arts, etc. Please contact the board president if you would like to serve on a committee or assist in other ways.

**Joining the LAS Guild**

The Symphony Guild forms a foundation of support and fund-raising and has been the backbone of the LAS for decades. If you or someone you know has an interest in joining the Guild, please contact the Guild president.

**Other possible ways to support LAS**

Some employers match employee contributions (financial or volunteer time) to non-profit 501(c)(3) groups such as LAS. Some employers also provide grants and donations to non-profit 501(c)(3) groups such as LAS.

