

Colchester Operatic Society Health & Safety Policy



GENERAL STATEMENT OF INTENT

Colchester Operatic Society believes that excellence in the management of health and safety is an essential element within its theatrical productions – a good health and safety record goes hand in hand with excellence in performance.

People are the most important asset to this society, and therefore we are totally committed to ensuring their health, safety and welfare at all times.

From an economic point of view, the society believes that prevention is not only better, but cheaper than cure. There is no necessary conflict between humanitarian and artistic considerations. Profits and safety are not in competition. On the contrary, safety is good business.

From a legal perspective, the society is committed to ensuring that it complies with all relevant health and safety legislation. Where it is reasonably practicable to do so, the society will strive to go beyond the requirements of legislation.

The society is committed to on-going monitoring and review processes, so that continual improvement in the management of health and safety can be achieved.

Our general intentions are:-

- To provide adequate control of the Health and Safety risks arising from our theatrical, production and artistic activities;
- To consult with our volunteers and society members on matters affecting their Health & Safety;
- To provide and maintain safe systems of work and equipment;
- To ensure safe handling and use of hazardous substances;
- To provide information, instruction and supervision for all society members, volunteers, sub-contractors, and general theatre staff;
- To ensure all society members, sub-contractors, volunteers and general theatre staff are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training as necessary and appropriate;
- To prevent accidents;
- To maintain safe and healthy working conditions;
- To provide a safe environment for audience members and visitors that attend our productions; and
- To review and revise this policy at regular intervals.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Katmae'.

Position: Chair of Colchester Operatic Society

Date: 12/04/2024 Review Date: April 2026

Overall responsibility for health and safety is that of:

➡ The Executive Committee

Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to:

➡ Stage Manager and/or Production Manager (during production runs) and appointed personnel leading/running an event/activity or rehearsal

➡ Duties of Society Members

All society members are required to:

- Co-operate with the Executive Committee on health and safety matters;
- Not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety;
- Take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and others; and
- Report all health and safety concerns to the Stage Manager and/or Production Manager (during production runs) or the appointed person leading/running an event or rehearsal.

Non-compliance with health and safety rules and procedures can result in members being asked to appear before the committee to explain their actions, and where necessary the committee reserves the right to ask them to leave the production and/or society, where deemed appropriate.

▶ Arrangements for Implementation

All society policies and procedures in relation to health and safety are regarded as supplementary to this policy.

➡ Risk Assessment

In accordance with our commitment to the safe running of our theatrical, production and artistic activities, the society will carry out risk assessments of all actions or omissions that present a risk to its members or others persons directly or indirectly involved (for example audience members, volunteers and sub-contractors). These risk assessments will be carried out in line with NODA SAFE guidance, and the procedure for doing so is as follows:

1. Identify the significant hazards involved in our activities.
2. Decide who might be harmed and how.
3. Evaluate the level of risk and decide if existing precautions are sufficient, or if more needs to be done.
4. Record the significant findings of the assessment.
5. Review the assessment when things change, or there is reason to believe that it is no longer valid.

Risk assessments will be undertaken by:

➡ Production Manager, Stage Manager and/or Heads of departments where appropriate (e.g. Wardrobe, Props, Sound, Lighting) for our productions. By the appointed person leading/running an event or rehearsals in liaison with the stage manager, production manager and/or the Executive committee for our rehearsals and activities as appropriate.

Approval for the required action to remove or control risks will be given by the:

➡ The Executive Committee

Risk Assessments will be kept in:

➡ The Production File

➡ Production File

The society operates a documented health and safety production file provided by our health and safety consultants, NODA SAFE, who are our competent advisers on all aspects of health and safety. They can be contacted at any time for advice on 0845 257 6632 or via email at nodasafe@noda.org.uk

- ➔ **The health and safety management system is the responsibility of:**
The Stage Manager, Production Manager and Executive Committee

↻ Consultation with Society Members

The society will consult with its members in accordance with our commitment to the safe running of our theatrical, production and artistic activities

- ➔ **Consultation with Society Members will be provided in:**
Pre-Production Meetings and Rehearsals, Email communications and making this Policy available on our website for easy access to all or hard copy available on request.

↻ Safe Use of Production Equipment & Materials

The society will ensure that all production equipment & materials are suitable and without risks to health and safety, in accordance with the society's commitment to providing the safe running of our theatrical, production and artistic activities

- ➔ **Responsibility for identifying all production equipment & materials needing maintenance is that of:**
Stage Manager in liaison with the Props and Wardrobe co-ordinators as appropriate and during rehearsals, the appointed person leading/running rehearsals.
- ➔ **Any problems with production equipment & materials should be reported to:**
Stage Manager or head of the appropriate department (eg. props, wardrobe, sound etc.), or the production manager who will liaise with these key people, and for during rehearsals, the appointed person leading/running rehearsals.
- ➔ **Responsibility for checking that new production equipment & materials meets health and safety standards before it is purchased is that of:**
The Production Manager and the Executive Committee

↻ Safe Handling and Use of Potentially Hazardous Substances

The society will assess and control health risks from exposure to hazardous substances. Only approved products will be used in our productions.

- ➔ **Responsibility for identifying all hazardous substances that need assessing:**
Stage Manager and/or Production Manager
- ➔ **Hazardous Substance Assessments will be carried out by:**
Stage Manager and/or Production Manager
- ➔ **Approval for the required action to remove or control risks will be given by:**
Production Manager and/or The Executive Committee
- ➔ **Hazardous Substance Assessments will be kept in:**
The Production File

➤ Accidents, First Aid and Work Related Ill-Health

The depth of an accident investigation will depend on the seriousness of the incident and this in turn will indicate the type of approach to be taken. For minor injuries or incidents such as cuts or bruising that do not result in any time lost from the production or a member of the public / society personnel/cast and/or young person being taken to hospital, a brief description of the incident along with the injured parties details will need to be entered into the Accident Book. In the case of a more serious injury or incident a more in-depth investigation will be required.

The procedure for such an accident investigation is as follows:

- Care for injured person(s) including contacting emergency where necessary
- Control hazards/secure accident site, if safe to do so
- Notification of the incident to NODA Safe, who will advise of appropriate action to take.
- Investigate promptly

First aid box(es) is/are kept in:

➡ Designated areas in the hired theatre or venue, clearly labelled – stage manager, production manager and/or appointed personnel will familiarise themselves with their location(s).

The appointed person(s)/ first aider(s) is/are:

➡ During a production, the appointed member of Theatre staff at the hired venue.

This will be determined as necessary and appropriate for rehearsals and other events and all involved will be informed as appropriate.

All accidents and work related ill-health are recorded in the accident book, which is kept in:

➡ Production File

Responsibility for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to NODA Safe is that of:

➡ Stage Manager and/or production manager in liaison with the Executive Committee.

➤ Monitoring

To check our production conditions, and ensure our safe working practices are being followed, we will:

➡ Undertake pre-production and pre-show checks

➤ Emergency Procedures – Fire and Evacuation

Responsibility for ensuring that a fire risk assessment and emergency plan for the venue is in place is that of:

➡ The Production Manager, Stage Manager and/or person hiring the venue on behalf of the society will ensure that the venue has one in place.

Escape routes are checked by/every:

➡ Stage Manager and Theatre Staff daily and prior to audience members being permitted onto the premises. For events and rehearsals these will be checked by the appointed person leading/running the event/rehearsal before it starts and everyone arrives, and at regular intervals throughout as necessary/appropriate.

In the event of an emergency person(s) responsible for roll call and giving any necessary information to the fire officer are:

➡ The Stage Manager and/or production manager (During Production Runs). The person in charge of the register for a rehearsal/event - this could be the secretary, chair, production manager, director, lead chaperone, person leading the session etc. and will be confirmed at the time by a member of the Executive Committee, who will make sure they are aware that they are in charge of the register and therefore responsible for roll call in the event of an emergency.

Should the designated person have to leave the site whilst the activities continue or be unable to maintain charge of the register, they will ensure they appoint someone else to take over responsibility in their absence.

➤ Visitors

The society acknowledges its responsibility to ensure the health and safety of all persons who come into contact - either directly or indirectly - with its theatrical, production and artistic activities - this includes visitors to society productions, rehearsals and events. The society does not own a premises but will make sure that adequate signage and information notices are displayed by venues we hire to ensure that visitors are informed of any particular hazards or emergency arrangements, which they may encounter, and to inform them of any precautions that they should take.