



# Guidelines and Quick Orientation for New Workers

Presented by IATSE Local 320

## Who We Are

IATSE Local 320 was chartered in 1914 to represent Savannah and the surrounding areas and is a member of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists, and Allied Crafts of the United States and Canada. We are a non-profit labor organization aiming to negotiate better working conditions, financial compensation, and benefits for all its referrals. These tasks are carried out by the elected officers of Local 320, elected every three years. Our jurisdiction extends over all live performance, corporate, and exposition productions.

## What We Do

We work behind the scenes in every facet of the entertainment world to make the shows happen. If you have ever been to a concert or play, you have seen our work. We set up the lights, sound, video, and set for almost every major production in Savannah.

## Where We Work

### **Concerts**

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These events tend to load in the morning for the show that evening. That means that the show will be delivered in semi-trucks that morning and be installed by the stagehand crew working under the direction of the traveling road crew. This work tends to happen in a 4 – 5 hour period. The load-out or tear-down will follow immediately after the show, usually that night. The load-out usually takes between 2 and 4 hours. These crews tend to be large and fast-paced.

### **Theatrical Productions**

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A theatrical production staffed by us can range from small local productions to large touring Broadway shows. Events can often load-in in the morning, have a show in the evening, and load out that night, but some shows might “sit down” in a theater for a longer period. These shows tend to load in on a Monday or Tuesday, play all week and then load out Sunday night.

### **Corporate / AV**

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These gigs happen at venues like hotel ballrooms, the Savannah Convention Center, or any other facility where an independent production company may book us. These events can be wide-ranging in their schedules and production needs.

## How The Referral Hall Works

As an overhire stagehand with IATSE Local 320, you will start in the general labor pool. Once you have completed orientation, we will add your name to the referral hall list.

The general labor pool is overhired labor. You will receive calls on an as-needed basis. The referral hall will not provide full-time work for you, nor do we claim that we will.

You will receive a call from the local's Business Agent or Dispatcher to start working. This call will probably come in the form of a text message. Please let someone know if you can't receive text messages. The text message for a concert might look like this:

**“Are you available to be a hand at the Johnny Mercer Theater for Zac Brown? Load-in is Wednesday 11/13 at 9:00 am, loads out at 10:30 pm.”**

The text message for a play or theatrical event will look like this:

**“Are you available to be a props hand at the Theater for Cats? Loads in Monday 5/28 at 8:00 am and loads out Wednesday 5/30 at 10:00 pm?”**

To accept the call, respond within 2 hours. If the call is for a venue you have not worked at yet, the Dispatcher will inform you where to enter the building, where to park, who the Job Steward (crew leader) is, and answer any questions about the call. You can find information about our major venues on our website at [www.iatse320.org](http://www.iatse320.org).

## General Expectations of Crew

You are expected to be 15 minutes early, checked in with the Job Steward, sober, well rested, ready for work, dressed in proper attire, carrying all the necessary tools, and ready for instruction.

**Arrive early.** Especially if this is your first time working at a venue, plan to be there half an hour before your allotted call time so that you have time to park and figure out where you are going. If you are late, you risk being replaced for the day and forfeiting any money you may have earned if you had been on time.

**Sign in.** Upon arrival, locate the steward. The steward will have a sign-in sheet. Sign in, and please write NEATLY and CLEARLY. THIS WILL HELP GET YOU PAID.

**Fill out employment forms.** If this is your first time at a venue, the steward will give you a paperwork packet containing:

- **I-9 Form** - You **MUST** provide proper ID to complete this. Proper ID generally consists of a Driver's License (or State ID) **AND** a Social Security Card. Alternatively, you may provide a **VALID PASSPORT** or a **STAMPED** copy of an **OFFICIAL BIRTH CERTIFICATE** to satisfy the ID requirement. **Without these items, you can not work and get paid! Do not forget them!**
- **W-4 and State of Georgia Forms** - federal and state tax forms.

- **4% Assessment Form** – This is an agreement by you to allow the Local to take 4% from your paycheck. THESE ARE NOT UNION DUES. All referral hall workers, members or nonmembers, pay this to cover the cost of running the referral hall.
- **Direct Deposit Application** - Optional. Please provide a blank check.

**Filling out these forms neatly, clearly, and completely will ensure you get paid as quickly as possible!**

## What to Bring With You To A Call

### ***Must-Have Tools and Protective Gear***

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- Proper ID for employment forms as described above;
- A canceled check if you want to set up Direct Deposit of your paycheck (optional, but highly recommended);
- Leather or padded work gloves;
- A 6"- 8" adjustable crescent wrench: Also known as a "C Wrench", this is a standard tool for theatrical work. You may be turned away from a job if you do not bring one. 
- A pocket knife and/or multi-tool: Multitools are like Swiss Army knives on steroids and provide a lot of functionality for a technician. Cheap models are available, but good quality tools of the like produced by Gerber or Leatherman can be had for around \$50. Folding work knives are the most practical style for production work. 
- A headlamp or handheld flashlight.
- Hard hats will be provided by the venue for use when any work occurs overhead of the crew on the ground, but you are welcome to bring your own appropriate head protection.

### ***Clothing***

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- Closed-toed, sturdy shoes or work boots.
  - Steel toes are recommended but not required.
  - No heeled shoes; this includes men's cowboy boots.
- Jeans or Cargo Pants and a clean shirt (theatrical and arena events).
  - Clothing should be clean, whole, and free of offensive images or language. Tank tops are not permitted. Belts are encouraged.
- Collared shirts should be worn for corporate events. "Business casual" is the vibe, not "ripped sleeve roadie".

- “Show Blacks”: If you are offered a “show call,” you will be **required** to have a set of black clothing that includes black pants and a black shirt. As a new worker, it is improbable that you will receive a show call, but it is always good to carry a set in your car or bag, just in case. Black shorts are acceptable for an outdoor venue in the summer.
- A light jacket. Sometimes it’s cooler inside the buildings.
- Warm clothes and thick socks (hockey or ice shows).
- If working outdoors, you may want to have spare clothes and shoes on reserve in case of hot or wet weather.
- Long hair should be kept tied back. Long necklaces, earrings or other potentially hazardous jewelry is not allowed.

## ***Prepare for Any Event***

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You may make your day more comfortable if you bring supplies to endure any conditions, like a hat, sunscreen, snacks, and rain gear or a change of clothes. Although water is **usually** available while working, you are encouraged to bring a water bottle so you don’t get caught thirsty without an available supply.

## **What You Can Expect**

**Chain of Command:** As a new crew member, you will be following the lead of your Department Head and any Road Crew members associated with your assigned department. If you have any questions about equipment, practices, or safety, ask your Department Head or the more experienced amongst your fellow crew mates. If you have a major problem and your Department Head is not available, locate the Crew Chief or Steward.

**Minimums:** One of the hallmarks of our contracts are “Minimums.” A minimum means that you will receive at least four hours of wages for a call. If you work more than four, you will receive appropriate compensation. The minimum guarantees you will make at least 4 hours of pay on the load-in and 3 to 4 hours on the load-out, depending on the venue. (To put it simply, you’ll get paid for at least four hours on a call, even if you end up actually working for less time.)

**Breaks:** Workers are generally entitled to a fifteen-minute break after every 2 to 3 hours of work. Your steward will let you know when your break is. There are times when the production provides Coffee and Donuts for the break. These items are for the crew’s consumption during break time only and are not meant for your breakfast when first arriving at the call.

**Meals:** After 4 or 5 hours of load-in, you will be cut and told when to come back for load out or be sent to lunch. If the client is providing lunch, you will get a 30-minute break. If you provide lunch for yourself, you will be sent away for an hour and expected to return on time. Only the steward can send you to lunch; if the road crew supervisor tells you to break for lunch, check with your steward before leaving.

**Cuts:** When your crew is cut, usually after four or five hours, be sure to find your steward, who will let you know if you are needed after lunch or back that night. Only the steward can cut you. If your road crew

supervisor says they are done with you, check with your steward to see if you will receive another assignment. If you are needed back for the load out, they will provide you a call time to confirm you will be there. If you cannot be available for the load-out, let the Steward know as soon as possible.

## Departments

When you arrive for work, you will be assigned your department position upon check-in, and pointed towards your Department Head. Your Dept Head should be your go-to person for any questions or instruction if the Road Crew is not providing direction. Stay with your department until you are cut or transferred to another department. Your Steward should be apprised of any cuts or transfers you are subjected to. The most common departments and their basic responsibilities are:

- **Hand:** Does just about anything on the job except for rigging. This position jumps in wherever needed. Pipe and drape, screens, lights, sound, etc.
- **Electrics/Lighting:** building truss, hanging lights, and running cable.
- **Audio/Sound:** Setting up microphones and monitors, building speakers, and running cable.
- **Video:** building video walls, hooking up projectors, building projection screens, cameras, and running cable.
- **Carpentry:** building set pieces, decks, and temporary stages, and putting flooring down.
- **Rigging:** setting hang points overhead, working with motors and chains to ensure everything that hangs in the air is done so safely and securely. Up-riggers work in the grid in tandem with down-riggers, who take care of the ground details.
- **Props:** assembling and giving actors props and set pieces.
- **Wardrobe/Dresser:** dressing talent, washing and prepping clothes, and possibly sewing.
- **Backline:** setting up band gear (musical instruments and sometimes microphones).
- **Pusher:** pushing cases and set pieces between the stage and the trucks. You will likely join another department on load-ins once the trucks are unloaded.
- **Truck Loader:** packing and unpacking the trucks.

## What We Expect

### ***Be A Professional***

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- Remain attentive and ready to carry out any direction you receive from the Road Crew or your Department Head. Ask questions where you need to, but if they have to repeat themselves too often, then you should pay closer attention. If you are asked to do something that is outside your

department, clarify what department you are assigned to, but do your best to accommodate if they still request your assistance.

- Keep negative comments about the artistic merit of the show to yourself.
- No-call / no-show on a gig you've agreed to be on is a great way to never get called again.
- Do not ask for free tickets. Do not expect a free meal or t-shirt.
- Do not engage with performers or other "talent" unless they initiate conversation. Do not ask for autographs or take photos of performers.
- Once you are cut, do not hang around backstage. Do not leave the job site until you have checked in with the job steward and confirmed you are free to go.
- Do not use your knowledge of backstage areas to be in an area you do not belong.
- Do not take photographs of productions as they are being built, and do not post to social media photos of productions that you certainly didn't photograph as they were being built.
- Cell phones and smoking are at break time only.
- Personal electronic devices are prohibited on the show floor or while engaged in work.
- Props and Scenery are not for you to play with.
- Do not argue with security personnel if challenged; if you are being denied access to the work area, ask another stagehand to tell the steward. The steward will come and get you.

### ***Quick and Easy Ways to Lose Your Job***

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- Coming to work intoxicated / under the influence of drugs.
- Drinking alcohol / taking drugs on the job / before call time.
- Continued unsafe work practices.
- Stealing.
- Continued insubordination.
- Physical confrontation with coworkers.
- Continued use of phone or personal electronic devices.

## **Safety**

- If any problems arise during the call, such as injuries, accidents, or disputes with another crew member, seek out your Department Head. If your Department Head is not immediately available, find the Crew Chief or Job Steward. Any injury, even if relatively minor, should be reported.

- Be aware of your surroundings at all times. This includes the areas over your head and under your feet. “**Heads**” or “**heads up**” is the most critical warning on the stage. If you hear this call, it means that something is falling from overhead.
- If you see a preventable accident about to occur, yell “**STOP**”. Not “woah”, “hey”, or anything else, yell “**STOP**”.
- Wear a hard hat when people (usually riggers) are working above you. Hard hats are usually provided by the venue, but there’s nothing wrong with bringing your own.
- Lift with your legs and knees, not your back! Stacked cases should be unstacked by two or four people. If something is too heavy or unwieldy to carry safely, ask for help.
- Long items (6 feet or longer) should not be carried by a single worker if the piece is not light enough to be carried with its front end raised over head height. Get a partner to take one end.
- Watch your fingers and toes. Push equipment with a flat hand, don’t wrap your fingers around the load, as loads can shift unexpectedly and crush your fingers. Watch toes and heels, too. Avoid being in front of a crate. Push from behind or the side. If your vision is obstructed, ask for help. Be aware of people and things that may be in your path. If you see someone having difficulty, offer assistance.
- Communicate with those around you, and work together as a team.
- If you aren’t sure of how to complete a task safely, always ask your Department Head for direction or assistance to ensure you get the job done in the safest way possible.
- “Up Riggers” are working over your head. **LEAVE THEIR ROPES ALONE**. If a rope coil on the deck needs to be moved, ask the ground rigger to do it. Never stand on a rigger’s rope, run a crate over it, pull it, or tie it off for any reason. This applies to motor chains as well.
- When loading trucks, ensure that loaders inside the trucks are ready to take control of your box before you push it into the trailer. They need ample room to move and accomplish their job safely and pushing a case onto the truck before they are ready compromises their work area. Make sure the ramp is clear before sending a crate up. The stagehands that pushed up the last container need time to exit the ramp safely. Even if the roadies are screaming, give your coworkers time to perform their tasks safely.
- Remember that a forklift driver’s field of vision is minimal when the forklift has a full load. Be aware and stay out of their way.

# Basic Stage Skills and Terminology

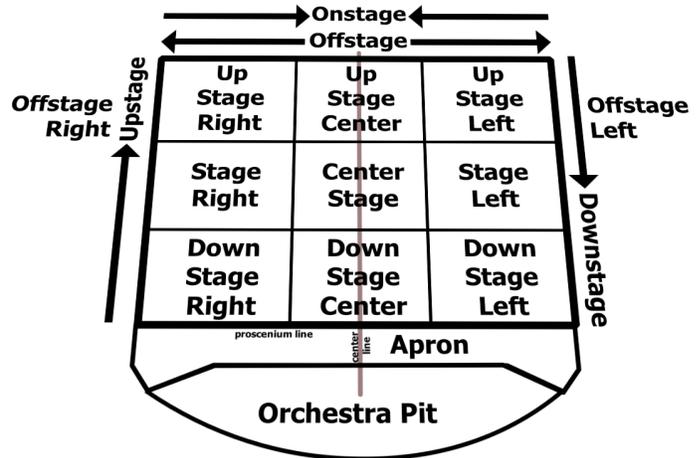
## Stage Direction

Knowing how to talk about location in a venue is an important part of the job, and you will be expected to follow basic instructions from your first minutes on a crew. Whether you're in a proscenium theater (like the Johnny Mercer Theater) or an arena (like the Enmarket), there will be a performance area and an audience area. The performance area is the starting point for the "playing field", and all directions will be with respect to your orientation **while facing the audience**. To start, imagine yourself standing in the middle of the stage.

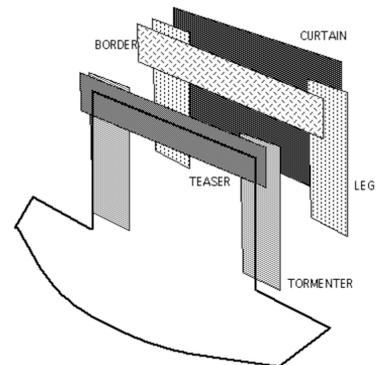
- Stage Left: the area to your left while facing the audience.
- Stage Right: the area to your right while facing the audience.
- Up Stage: the area behind you, towards the rear wall.
- Down Stage: the area in front of you, towards the audience.
- Onstage: Towards the center line of the stage, away from the side edges.
- Offstage: Towards the side edges of the stage, away from the center line.

Instructions may be delivered using a combination of these directions. For example, you may be told to "put that road case up stage left and then meet me down stage right for further instruction".

- The House: The section of the building where the audience is seated. "House Left" and "House Right" are expressed relative to the speaker facing the stage from the audience area, **opposite** to "Stage Left" and "Stage Right".
- Front of House (FOH): Located at the far side of the audience, where the audio and lighting desks are located.
- Grid: The steel "roof" overhead, where riggers secure any hanging pieces. You should be wearing a hard hat when riggers are operating in the grid.
- Pit: Certain venues, like the Johnny Mercer Theater, have a "pit" area in front of the stage that is mounted on hydraulic lifts and can move up and down to be



## Audience Seating



used as additional stage space, additional audience seating, or as orchestra seating. Be aware of a pit that may not be at the height you're expecting, so you don't fall in!

- Rail: Theaters like the Johnny Mercer frequently have a system of pipes (called "battens") that can be lowered to the deck, where lights and scenic pieces may be attached to them so they may "fly" over the stage. The battens are part of the "fly system" and are operated using a series of rope lines along one side of the stage area. This area is called the Rail, and should be avoided by new workers. When the fly operator is bringing a pipe down to the deck, they will shout "pipe coming IN", so watch your head when you hear the warning!
- Wings: The areas behind the fabric "legs" hanging on either side of the stage, used as waiting areas and stage entrances by performers.

## ***Working With Equipment***

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- Coiling Cable: As a stagehand, you will be expected to lay out and clean up electrical cables. A lot of them. You need to know how to do it correctly. Make it a priority, as soon as you can, to have an experienced worker show you how to properly coil a cable. Don't assume you know how to do it. Don't **ever** use your elbow to coil a cable.

## **Payroll**

Local 320 currently works with a couple of payroll companies, depending on venue and event, whose pay cycles are not longer than two weeks. Each payroll company requires its own employment paperwork. To ensure you get paid properly, you must fill out the provided employment forms completely and legibly. If you are doing this while at the job site, allow enough extra time before you start working to complete these forms. (Depending on how familiar you are with them, it might take up to fifteen or twenty minutes.) See the "General Expectations" for a description of the required forms of ID that must accompany your paperwork. You may also be able to complete these forms ahead of the event date, so you don't have to worry about it on the job site. Your ID credentials will still need to be validated by the job steward.

When working under Local 320 contracts, you will have contributions made towards a Health and Welfare account and an Annuity account, as administered by the IATSE National Benefits Fund, where the contributions you earn (on top of your wages) build towards a 401k plan and eligibility for medical insurance and reimbursement. Local 320 can provide details about this to you.

## **Anti-Discrimination & Harassment-Free Workplace Policy**

The Referral Hall of IATSE Local 320 is committed to providing a work environment free of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of any legally protected status. Accordingly, the Referral Hall will not tolerate any form of unlawful harassment by or against any of its officers, staff, members, or employees represented by the Referral Hall. This anti-discrimination / anti-harassment policy applies to all officers, staff, and members of the Referral Hall and employees represented by the Referral Hall, where Local 320 is the bargaining agent.

Behavior prohibited by this policy includes all unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based upon a person's protected status under the law, such as sex, race, ancestry, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status, sexual orientation, or another protected group status. Examples include racial jokes, epithets or slurs or offensive graphic or written material.

Sexual harassment is a problem that deserves special mention. Sexual harassment is a form of employment discrimination illegal under federal, state, and local laws. Such harassment is defined as unwelcome or unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as the harasser and may consist of the following behavior: verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, invitations or comments; visual conduct such as derogatory and/or sexually-oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, or gestures; or physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, blocking normal movement, or interfering with work.

## A Few Final Points

Being a stagehand is not for everybody, and can be part-time work at best, even for many dedicated technicians.

Things happen. If you are ever running late for work or are unable to make it, call the Steward or Crew Chief and let them know. Being a no-call / no-show will cause you to be deemed unsuitable for referral.

When in doubt, ask. Remember, there are no dumb questions, but there are dumb mistakes.

If we put you to work on the show floor in any of our venues, it is an act of good faith that you will act as a good representation of Local 320.

***See you on the Job!***

IATSE Local 320  
Savannah, GA

[www.iatse320.org](http://www.iatse320.org)

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