

**BRAZOS VALLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (BVSO) ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURES**

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1. PLAYER CONTRACTS

**FULL SEASON CONTRACT PLAYERS:**

Every player who is selected and who agrees to perform in the Orchestra throughout its concert season shall enter into a written contract agreeing to abide by the rules and regulations of the Orchestra as set out in these organizational procedures. Signature indicates agreement to the conditions as set forth in this document.

**INDIVIDUAL CONCERT SERIES PLAYERS:**

Every player who is selected and who agrees to perform in the Orchestra for a single concert or concert series shall enter into a written agreement specifying the services to be performed. Signature indicates agreement to the conditions as set forth in this document.

The Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra is comprised of local volunteer musicians and

contract players who participate on an as-need basis. Local musicians will receive no pay except when services are requested in a solo capacity and regulated by contract by the Brazos Valley Symphony Society.

## **2. REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES**

a. Players are expected to arrive at the hall at least fifteen minutes before the scheduled rehearsal time and must be seated in their chairs five minutes before the rehearsal begins.

b. Rehearsals shall begin with announcements and communications to the orchestra (as needed).

c. A professional attitude is expected from all players and the Music Director throughout all services associated with the Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra. Preparation of musical material is expected of each member of the Orchestra before the first rehearsal of a series.

d. Rehearsal services are 3 hours in duration including dress rehearsals. Regular attendance at rehearsals is required of all regular members. If an orchestra member misses more than two unexcused rehearsals prior to any concert, the Music Director has sole authority to decide if the member will be allowed to perform in that concert. If a member is not able to attend rehearsals on a consistent basis, it may result in a change of seating or dismissal from the orchestra.

## **3. ASSIGNMENT & REASSIGNMENT OF PLAYERS TO SPECIFIC CHAIRS**

a. Assignment of players to specific chairs is up to the Music Director's judgment.

b. The Music Director may change the seating within a section at his discretion in order to achieve the strongest musical balance. First and Second Violins are considered distinct sections.

c. Player vacancies will be filled by auditions.

d. Emergency substitutions of individual players will be made by the Music Director and/or the Orchestra Committee.

e. The conductor responsible for each concert will determine which orchestra members perform.

## **4. PRINCIPAL PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The principal, first-chair, players will be responsible for establishing minimum standards for their respective sections. These players must be available to offer assistance to individuals within their sections. The Concertmaster shall receive the

string parts from the management immediately after the arrival of rented or purchased material for the purpose of establishing bowings. The principal string players are responsible for making sure that bowings have been received from the Concertmaster prior to the first rehearsal of each concert set and for imparting any subsequent bowing changes to their section.

## **5. AUDITION PROCEDURES**

Audition for membership in the orchestra will be held at the discretion of the Music Director in consultation with the section Principal. All vacancies will be announced to the public no later than four weeks prior to the first rehearsal of the season. Such announcements will be in the form of fliers, public service announcements to local media, and newspaper advertisements. Anyone desiring a position with the orchestra, for which there is a vacancy, may schedule an audition. The auditioning committee shall consist of the section Principal, the Music Director, and at least one other musician selected by the Music Director and the section Principal. In the event of an audition for a Principal position, the auditioning committee shall consist of the Music Director and the other Principal players from the appropriate woodwind, brass, string or percussion sections. Orchestra Committee members who are not section principals may attend auditions as observers.

The chairman of the audition committee is responsible for the following: 1) setting the audition time; 2) notifying the appropriate BVSO personnel regarding audition times; 3) seeing that audition forms are filled out properly; 4) notifying auditioners of the results.

## **6. TENURE PROCESS**

a. All musicians accepted for membership in the Orchestra will be considered Probationary for a period of one year.

b. A musician may be granted tenure by notification in writing specifically referring to such a grant of tenure, at the sole and absolute discretion of the Music Director, upon the signing by said musician of an agreement for his second consecutive season with the Orchestra. Any musician who shall sign an agreement for a third consecutive season shall be deemed tenured. Any non-tenured musician may be asked by the Music Director to re-audition at the end of a season. Notification of this re-audition will be given in writing by March 1. All auditions of these presently contracted musicians will take place in the spring. Audition repertoire will be announced and at least one month's notice will be given before these auditions. At such a re-audition, a musician:

1. will be recommended to re-audition for the orchestra in the fall, or
2. will be accepted for the subsequent season, or
3. will be given tenure.

A previously tenured musician will be reinstated with tenure upon successful

completion of an audition, provided an opening exists in the musician's section.

## **7. ORCHESTRA MEMBER VOTING RIGHTS**

Orchestra members may be asked to vote on issues pertaining to orchestra governance from time to time. Each regular member shall have voting rights. The votes shall be counted using a weighted scale with probationary members votes counting as one (1) vote and the votes of tenured musicians counting as two (2) votes.

## **8. DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

Dismissal from the orchestra can occur due to musical incompetence or for other reasons. Dismissal due to incompetence would include inability to meet performance standards and/or inability to meet attendance requirements. Dismissal for reasons other than incompetence would include insubordination and/or inability to work with other orchestra members.

a. **DISMISSAL FOR INCOMPETENCE OF A TENURED MUSICIAN:** The dismissal and appeal procedure for incompetence is in seven (7) steps and shall be conducted as follows:

Step 1. **Verbal Warning.** The Music Director shall give the musician involved a verbal warning which includes specific problems to be corrected. This warning will be given in private. A written notice of the warning, including the specific problems to be corrected, shall be given to the Orchestra Committee by the Music Director or the Management no later than two weeks after the verbal warning was issued to the musician.

Step 2. **Letter of Jeopardy.** If the problems are not resolved, the tenured musician shall then receive a Letter of Jeopardy from the Management stating that his position with the orchestra is in jeopardy, and the specific reason(s) for the impending action. A copy of this letter shall be sent simultaneously to the Orchestra Committee and the Music Director.

Step 3. **Meeting with Music Director.** A tenured musician, having received a letter of jeopardy may request, within five (5) days, a meeting with the Music Director, which shall be granted. One Orchestra Committee member of the musician's choice shall be present at this meeting.

Step 4. **Notification of Dismissal.** Written notification of dismissal shall be given to the tenured musician from the Management no later than thirty (30) days from the date of the meeting with the Music Director. A copy of this notification of dismissal shall be sent simultaneously to the Orchestra Committee, and to the Music Director. If hand-delivery is not feasible, receipt shall be deemed to occur upon the expiration of five (5) days after the mailing by certified mail of such notification of dismissal to the last

known address of the musician with return receipt requested..

Step 5. Written Appeal. Within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the notification of dismissal, a tenured musician may file a written appeal with the Orchestra Committee and the Music Director.

Step 6. Hearing with Music Director and Orchestra Committee. The Music Director and all members of the Orchestra Committee shall grant a meeting to the musician within thirty (30) days of receipt of the written appeal. The Musician may be required, at the request of the Music Director or the Orchestra Committee, or may voluntarily choose to perform a playing demonstration at the hearing. The party requiring or requesting the playing demonstration shall inform the Orchestra Committee or the Music Director, who shall then inform, in writing, the remaining parties. The musician shall be given fourteen (14) days advance written notice of the playing demonstration date by the Orchestra Committee. The notice shall include a list of repertoire selected by the Music Director which shall be limited to five (5) excerpts of orchestral material previously performed by the musician during the current or immediately preceding season. The musician may strike two (2) excerpts from the Music Director's list, and may also perform an additional solo work and/or additional orchestra excerpts of his choosing.

Step 7. Action Following Hearing. The chairman of the Orchestra Committee shall notify the Management immediately of the decision to uphold or oppose the dismissal. The decision shall be arrived at by simple majority secret vote. The Music Director's vote shall count one (1), and each Orchestra Committee member shall have one (1) vote. In case of a tie, the dismissal shall stand. Even if the appeal is unsuccessful, said musician shall be given the privilege of auditioning at the next scheduled auditions.

b. DISMISSAL FOR INCOMPETENCE OF A NON-TENURED MUSICIAN: The dismissal procedure for incompetence is in four (4) steps and shall be conducted as follows:

Step 1. Verbal Warning. The Music Director shall give the musician involved a verbal warning which includes specific problems to be corrected. A written notice of the warning, including the specific problems to be corrected, shall be given to the Orchestra Committee no later than two weeks after the verbal warning was issued to the musician.

Step 2. Letter of Jeopardy. The non-tenured musician shall receive a letter of jeopardy from the Management stating that his continued participation with the orchestra is in jeopardy, and the specific reason(s) for the impending action. A copy of this letter shall be sent simultaneously to the Orchestra Committee and the Music Director.

Step 3. Meeting with Music Director. A non-tenured musician, having received a letter of jeopardy may request, within five (5) days, a meeting with the Music Director, which shall be granted. The musician shall have a member of the Orchestra Committee present at this meeting.

Step 4. Notification of Dismissal. Written notification of dismissal shall be given to the non-tenured musician from the Management no later than thirty (30) days from the date of the meeting with the Music Director. A copy of this notification of dismissal shall be sent simultaneously to the Orchestra Committee and the Music Director. If hand-delivery is not feasible, receipt shall be deemed to occur upon the expiration of five (5) days after the mailing by certified mail of such dismissal to the last known address of the musician. Non-tenured musicians may not appeal the dismissal.

c. DISMISSAL FOR REASONS OTHER THAN INCOMPETENCE OF A NON-TENURED OR A TENURED MUSICIAN: If the management is considering termination of a musician for reasons other than incompetence, the following six (6) step dismissal and appeals procedure will apply:

Step 1. Letter of Jeopardy. A Letter of Jeopardy shall be sent to the musician by the Management stating that his position with the orchestra is in jeopardy and stating the facts which have precipitated the letter.

Step 2. A musician having received a letter of jeopardy may, within five (5) days, request a meeting with the Executive Director or Orchestra Manager, which shall be granted. The musician shall have a representative of the Orchestra Committee present at this meeting.

Step 3. Notification of Dismissal. Written notification of dismissal shall be given to the musician by the Management. A copy of this notification of dismissal shall be sent simultaneously to the Orchestra Committee and to the Music Director. If hand-delivery is not feasible, receipt shall be deemed to occur upon the expiration of five (5) days after the mailing by certified mail of such notification of dismissal to the last known address of the musician.

Step 4. Written Appeal. A tenured musician may file a written appeal with the Orchestra Committee and the Music Director within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the notification of dismissal.

Step 5. Hearing with Executive Director and Orchestra Committee. The Executive Director and all members of the Orchestra Committee shall grant a hearing to the musician within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the letter.

Step 6. Action Following Hearing. The chairman of the Orchestra Committee shall notify the Management immediately of the decision to uphold or oppose the dismissal. The decision shall be arrived at by simple majority secret vote. The Executive Director's vote shall count one (1), and each Orchestra Committee member shall have one (1) vote. In case of a tie, the dismissal shall stand. In lieu of dismissal, the Orchestra Committee and the Executive Director may decide on a lesser punishment; i.e., suspension for no more than two (2) subscription concerts.

d. DISMISSAL THROUGH RESIGNATION: After receiving a letter of jeopardy or

notification of dismissal, a tenured or a non-tenured musician may submit a letter of resignation to the management. The resignation shall become irrevocable if acknowledged in writing by the management within ten (10) calendar days. The musician shall have no further right to appeal.

The Music Director, during his first or last season (once notice has been given), shall not dismiss any tenured musician.

If a dismissal process is initiated against a member of the Orchestra Committee, the first alternate member of the Orchestra Committee shall serve in his place during the remainder of the proceedings.

No member of the Orchestra Committee shall have his position in the orchestra jeopardized or shall suffer harassment for carrying out the duties of his office.

#### **9. PLAYER GRIEVANCES:**

a. An orchestra member who believes he has been treated unfairly by the Conductor, the Manager, the Society, or any of their representatives may submit his complaint in writing to the chairman of the Orchestra Committee. The Orchestra Committee shall meet to evaluate the merits of the complaint. Following such a meeting, the Orchestra Committee has fifteen (15) days to respond to the complaining member.

b. For those complaints which the Orchestra Committee deem to have merit, a written request for information and/or explanation will be sent to the involved person(s), if needed. Such persons will have no less than fifteen (15) days to respond in writing to the Orchestra Committee. The Orchestra Committee may invite the complaining Member to appear before it.

c. The Orchestra Committee shall attempt to reasonably facilitate the resolution of member problems. If a solution cannot be agreed upon, a decision shall be arrived at by simple majority secret vote. Each Orchestra Committee member shall have one (1) vote.

#### **10. SCHEDULES**

Each musician will be provided with a tentative schedule of rehearsals and concerts by August 15 annually. When changes in the rehearsal schedule are necessary, written notice will be mailed to the orchestra members at least two weeks in advance of the modified rehearsal. At any rehearsal, changes to the rehearsal schedule may be made if the change is approved by 75% of the orchestra members. Orchestra members shall not be held accountable for rehearsals missed or for being late to rehearsals that have been changed from the original schedule, provided they notify the Conductor or the Manager at least one week prior to the rehearsal.

Orchestra members shall notify the Conductor or the Manager at least one month in

advance of a scheduled concert if they cannot play or will miss rehearsals for reasons other than illness, family emergency or work emergency. Notification must be in writing.

#### **11. ORCHESTRA REPRESENTATION**

A member of the Orchestra Committee shall attend all meetings of the Board of Directors and Chair of the Orchestra Committee shall attend all meetings of the Executive Committee of the Brazos Valley Symphony Society as voting members.

A member of the Orchestra Committee shall attend all meetings of the Orchestra Conductor Selection Committee of the Brazos Valley Symphony Society as a voting member.

A member of the Orchestra Committee shall attend all meetings of the Artistic Advisory Committee as a voting member.

#### **12. THE BRAZOS VALLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CONDUCTOR**

The Society will be asked to survey the musicians prior to the renewal of an existing contract with the Conductor, or the engaging of a new Conductor. Following the survey, the Society shall discuss in detail the results of the survey with the Orchestra committee. The musicians will be surveyed after the appearance of any guest conductor. This survey will be kept on file for future reference.

#### **13. WORKING CONDITIONS**

a. Leaves of absence A request for a leave of absence by any musician shall be in writing to the Executive Director with a copy sent to the Orchestra Committee Chairman. The management agrees to give a written decision within thirty (30) days.

b. Personal Leave Any personal leaves during the season must be approved by the Music Director/Conductor.

#### **14. DRESS**

A musician's personal appearance is an integral part of their performance and has a substantial impact on the Orchestra's general image and reputation. Members of the Orchestra must therefore be neat, well-groomed and properly attired at all services in conformity with the customary professional style of regional and major orchestras in the United States. The management shall determine the acceptability of the attire.

WOMEN: Formal Concerts: Conservative long black skirt or full black dress pants and black blouse or long black dress, black hose, and black shoes. NOTE: Skirt length must be long enough to cover knees while seated and sleeve length must be elbow length or longer. Skirts with side slit openings that expose the thigh when seated are not

permissible.

**MEN: Formal Concerts:** Black tuxedo pants and coat, white tuxedo shirt with black bow tie. Black dress shoes with black hosiery.

**Informal Concerts:** Dress will be announced prior to concert.

The Management is responsible for enforcing the above dress code.

#### **15. LIBRARY POLICY**

It is the player's responsibility to keep music and folders in good condition and return them at the time and place requested by the Librarian. All music must be left on music stands following the final performance of a concert series. String players should not combine parts from their folder with those of their stand partner. Players are financially responsible for lost music and/or additional fees levied due to late return of rental copies. Fines assessed to the Symphony from publishers will be passed on to the musicians involved. Failure to comply with the above policy may result in dismissal for reasons other than incompetence as stated in Section 8 (c) Step 3. Notification of Dismissal.

#### **16. PERFORMANCE RECORDINGS:**

Performances may be recorded and utilized for concert advertisement and/or Symphony promotion and/or fundraising through electronic media. Any broadcasts of performances shall be of public service or non-profit nature.

#### **17. CHANGE OF ADDRESS:**

Each player shall keep the Management advised at all times of his/her current address and telephone number.