

The Cleveland Orchestra Youth Chorus

Handbook

2025-2026

Daniel Singer, Director
Devon Steve. Assistant Director
Daniel Overly, Accompanist
Taylor Mills Logan, Manager

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The COYC directors and staff reserve the right to change the policies and procedures of this handbook at any time without prior notice. If any changes are made, the Manager of Youth Choruses shall post the updated policies and procedures on the COYC website and immediately notify COYC members and families about the changes via email.

CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA YOUTH CHORUS

Daniel Singer, *Director*

Devon Steve, *Assistant Director*

Daniel Overly, *Accompanist*

Taylor Mills Logan

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(216) 231-7372

Youth Chorus Website

www.coyc.cochorus.com

PW: COYC2526!

**Musical Arts Association/The Cleveland Orchestra
Severance Music Center (SMC)**

www.clevelandorchestra.com
11001 Euclid Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44106

(216) 231-7300

Severance Music Center Ticket Office

(216) 231-1111 or (800) 686-1141

2025-2026 Rehearsal & Performance Venues

Rehearsal Venue TBD

Severance Music Center (SMC)

11001 Euclid Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44106

(216) 231-7300

**CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA YOUTH CHORUS
2025-2026 SEASON**

As of May 16, 2025

*Note that programs and artists are subject to change.
Note that the times listed are CONCERT times, not call times.*

COYC FALL RETREAT

Laurel Butler Campus

Saturday, August 23 at 10:00 am

WINTER CONCERT

Daniel Singer, *conductor*

Severance Music Center

Sunday, November 16 at 4:00 pm

CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA CHRISTMAS CONCERTS (COYCCE only)

Severance Music Center

December 17, 20-21

JOINT CONCERT WITH COYO

James Feddeck, *conductor*

Severance Music Center

Sunday, February 22 at 7:00pm

HONOR CHOIR CONCERT

Sandra Snow, *conductor*

Severance Music Center

Sunday, April 12 at 7:30pm

Ride the Rainbow Benefit

Daniel Singer, *conductor*

Cleveland Public Auditorium

Saturday, April 25 at 4:00pm

2025-26 Rehearsal & Performance Policies

I. Attendance Policy

The purpose of this attendance policy is to ensure that each member of the chorus is present for enough rehearsals to be prepared for performance, in keeping with the artistic standards of COYC's mission. Attendance is required at all scheduled rehearsals and is mandatory from warm-up to dismissal. Every musician makes a difference and is of equal importance to the artistry of COYC. Prompt attendance at all activities is vital to the philosophy of this chorus; thus, any absence or lateness will be taken seriously.

Failure to comply with these policies will result in dismissal from the Chorus at the discretion of the Director.

Plan Ahead

Professional and personal responsibility is critical to musical excellence. It is the responsibility of each member to look ahead at their schedule(s) for the year and consider whether their schedule allows them to meet COYC's time requirements. By accepting membership in COYC, each member agrees to adhere to these attendance policies and to the full schedule of rehearsals and performances.

Absences

An absence is defined as missing an entire rehearsal or any two instances of arriving late or leaving early from a rehearsal. The number of absences is calculated per semester. Typically, the fall semester runs from September to December, and the spring semester runs from January to early April.

Attendance at all concerts is mandatory. Missing a concert may result in dismissal from the chorus.

You must attend all scheduled rehearsals and be in your assigned seat before warm-up. Please plan to arrive 10 minutes prior to the scheduled rehearsal start time. Late arrivals are disruptive to the rehearsal process and may contribute to your number of accrued absences. If you are not in your seat, you will be marked late when warm-up begins. If you are late for a rehearsal, please wait along the side of the rehearsal room until the Director indicates the appropriate time to take your seat.

There are 3 types of absences:

1. **Excused:** Examples include:

- School performances
- Religious holidays
- Family emergency
- Illness: If you are seriously ill or contagious, please refrain from attending rehearsal.

2. **Unexcused:** Unqualified absences will be unexcused. Members who earn one unexcused absence may be placed on probationary status. Examples include:

- Too much homework
- Studying for an exam
- Any last-minute absence that does not fall under the category of an excused absence.

3. **Last-minute:** Last-minute absences on the day of the rehearsal must be communicated via the Band app. Depending on the nature of the absence, this may be counted as an excused or unexcused absence at the Director's discretion.

Absence Requests

If the nature of the excused absence allows you to inform the chorus office ahead of time, you must submit an absence request through the following procedure:

- Absence request forms may be found on the COYC website in the MEMBERS section under FORMS. They also may be picked up at any COYC rehearsal. Absence request forms also include a space to request early dismissal from or late arrival to a COYC service.
- Forms must be signed by the following people:
 - Student
 - Parent or guardian
 - Chorus Director
- Forms must be submitted in person at rehearsals at least 2 weeks before the requested absence date. The Manager will not accept forms in person without a signature from the Director. Forms submitted via email will be printed for the student to have signed by Mr. Singer at the next rehearsal.
- The Chorus Manager will contact you to inform you if your absence request was denied.

Failure to follow the above absence request procedure will automatically incur an unexcused absence and will result in probationary status (see "Probationary Status" below).

Testing Sessions

If you miss a rehearsal due to an absence – whether excused or unexcused – you are expected to arrive 20 minutes early to the following rehearsal for a testing session. It is your responsibility to attend testing sessions if you miss a rehearsal.

Choristers should spend at least 30-minutes each day practicing in order to make up for one missed COYC rehearsal. During the testing session you will be asked to sing excerpts from some of the most difficult passages covered in your absence, and individuals may be asked to sing some passages by themselves. You should see Mr. Steve's rehearsal notes, accessible via the COYC website in the MEMBERS section, to review the material you missed and prepare accordingly.

Please note that testing sessions are not considered "make up" rehearsals, but a way to make sure that each chorus member is keeping up with his/her colleagues. If the results of the testing session are not satisfactory, you will be placed (or remain) on probation and will be asked to sing the same material the following week. A second unsatisfactory performance may result in dismissal from the Chorus.

If there are unique circumstances that prevent you from arriving early for your testing session, you must communicate that information to the Manager of Youth Choruses via email as soon as the conflict is known.

Probationary Status

If a member is placed on probation, a parent or guardian will be notified of the member's status and the probation must be cleared the following week in a testing session (see "Testing Sessions" above). A member may be placed on probationary status for one of the following reasons:

- One unexcused absence
- More than two excused absences
- One unsatisfactory testing session

Under extraordinary circumstances, the Director may make an exception to the above policies on a case-by-case basis.

School Music Program Conflicts

Please take the time to review your family and school schedules at the start of the season. If there is a foreseen conflict with any of these rehearsals or performances, it is important to notify the Youth Chorus Manager as soon as possible. We ask that you please follow these guidelines when making decisions about potential schedule conflicts:

- School music program performances take precedence over Youth Chorus rehearsals.
- Youth Chorus performances take precedence over school music program rehearsals or other school-related activities.

If a conflict exists between a school music program performance and a Youth Chorus performance, every effort should be made to find a compromise between the two services (arriving late to a warmup, leaving a rehearsal early, etc.). If such a compromise is not possible, the student should prioritize the school performance.

II. Communication & Rehearsal Information

If you wish to contact the Chorus Office, please address all Youth Chorus questions or concerns to Taylor Mills Logan, Youth Chorus Manager at tlogan@clevelandorchestra.com or (216) 231-7374. The Chorus Office communicates ALL rehearsal information such as scheduling and rehearsal changes via email; please make sure to check your email regularly.

Band App

Chorus members and their families are encouraged to sign up for the Band app to receive day-of reminders about rehearsal times and locations, updated release times in the event of an early end to rehearsal (most often during orchestra or conductor rehearsals), and other regular reminders pertaining to the chorus schedule. You can sign up by going to: <https://band.us/n/aca6b1CfY4I7j>. Standard text message rates apply. All emergency updates (such as last-minutes rehearsal cancellations or changes) will also be communicated via email.



III. Concert Attire

The following attire requirements must be met for all performances. Choristers are responsible for ensuring that all elements of their concert uniform are in order prior to a performance. Choristers may wear a uniform black chorus dress or a tuxedo.

Those wearing the Black Chorus Dress, must wear the following:

- Black chorus dress – Must be hemmed to 2 inches from the floor in dress shoes. You are responsible for hemming your dress accordingly. (for purchase instructions, visit our website)
- Black hose
- Plain black closed-toe dress shoes (modest-to-no heel, please)
- No brightly colored lipstick, please.

Those wearing a tuxedo must wear the following:

- Black tuxedo jacket and pants
- Black button-down dress shirt (black buttons preferred)
- Black dress socks
- Black dress shoes

Those students wearing tuxedos are expected to obtain a tuxedo from their school or other extracurricular choral groups. If you do not have access to a tuxedo, contact the Chorus Office to discuss options for borrowing a tuxedo.

All choristers should abide by the following:

- Hair that is long enough must be pulled away from your face. Obtrusive hair pieces or headbands are not permitted.
- The only permissible jewelry is a non-electronic wristwatch and stud earrings. Necklaces are not allowed.
- Perfumes, colognes, and highly scented shaving lotions, deodorants and hair products are not permitted.

IV. Inclement Weather

It is extremely rare to cancel a performance due to inclement weather. In the unlikely event that a performance is cancelled, all messaging systems will be implemented (email, and “Remind” text).

If you leave a message for the Chorus Manager in the middle of a weather emergency, she will likely not have the opportunity to return your call. Please assume that your message has been received even if you do not receive a response.

If a service is NOT cancelled, and you feel it is unsafe to travel to the service location, then you should not do so. Chorus members commute from all over northeast Ohio, and the weather in one area may be more severe than another; you must decide what is in your best interest. If you must miss rehearsal due to the weather, you will be required to test prior to the next rehearsal.

V. Membership & Tuition

The Cleveland Orchestra Youth Chorus is open to students in grades 9-12 and 8th graders with changed tenor/bass voices. Membership is by invitation following competitive auditions. Members of the chorus who become college freshmen and wish to continue in the chorus may be invited to return.

As of the Summer of 2023, COYC will be tuition free.

Student Stage Managers

Each season, the Manager of Youth Choruses will select Student Stage Managers to assist in weekly Chorus operations, occasional office work, and special events handled by the chorus office.

Responsibilities include arriving early (at least 30 min) to rehearsals and performances to assist the manager in room set up, basic administrative duties (take attendance, set up check-in table, etc.) and various tasks throughout the season. Being a stage manager will help you gain experience in leadership skills, administrative skills, and communication skills. In addition, student Stage Managers may request recommendations from the Youth Chorus Manager for college or employment applications.

VI. Music

The scores you receive are part of a greater choral music library, which is an important part of the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus archives. Please take care of your music: do not fold corners, throw away loose covers or write miscellaneous notes or doodles in the scores. If a score is returned damaged, you are financially responsible for the replacement cost of the score. Also, if you are asked to paperclip long passages of music where you do not sing, please remove these paperclips before you return the music. Scores are on loan to you from the Musical Arts Association and must be returned promptly at the end of the season. Scores that are not returned within one week of the final concert will be considered lost, and you will be billed for their current replacement costs, regardless of their age or condition.

You are encouraged to make notes in your music to assist you in remembering musical instructions. However, under no circumstances should you mark your music with anything other than a No. 2 pencil unless you are planning to purchase your score. Pencils are always provided at rehearsals. If a returned score is marked with colored pencils, highlighters, ink, or anything other than pencil, you will be held financially responsible for the replacement cost of the score.

A black chorus folder is provided free of charge to new members; please use this folder to protect your music. If you misplace or damage your folder purchasing the [Standard Black Folder](#) from MUSICFOLDER.com.

If illness or an emergency causes you to miss a concert, please return your music in person to the Manager of Youth Choruses. Music may also be returned by mail to 11001 Euclid Ave, Cleveland, OH 44106, or dropped off at the Severance Music Center Welcome Desk during business hours (please be sure to let them know the music is for the chorus office).

VII. Online Resources

COYC Website

The Cleveland Orchestra Youth Chorus website (<http://coyc.cochorus.com>) is maintained by the Youth Chorus Manager and contains a wealth of information and helpful resources. All pages of the website are accessible to the public, with the exception of pages accessible in the MEMBERS section. These pages are password protected and can only be accessed by chorus members, parents or guardians, directors, and staff.

Chorus members should check the website regularly for the chorus rehearsal and performance schedules, updates, announcements, rehearsal notes, study materials, recommended recordings of current repertoire, messages from the Director, text translations, and other materials.

Google Calendar

All Youth Chorus services are documented on a public Google Calendar. Chorus members and families may sync this calendar with their own Google calendars. [CLICK HERE](#) to create a free Google Account. Syncing the Google calendar is not necessary for general viewing but will allow you to access the listed dates without logging onto the COYC website.

VIII. Rehearsal Preparation

As a member of COYC you are expected to be prepared for each rehearsal. Study materials will be made available as necessary on the Youth Chorus website in the MEMBERS section. Study materials may include audio tracks of vocal parts, audio tracks of foreign language pronunciation, and annotations from the Director. After receiving notification that the materials are available online, each chorus member should complete the following prior to the next rehearsal:

1. Mark your score with all annotations from the Director.
2. Learn the pitches, rhythms, and text.
3. Incorporate dynamics, tempo, and stylistic directions.

Consistent, careful rehearsal preparation is necessary for our goal of making music at the highest level. It is your responsibility to bring all music to every rehearsal. Extra copies of the music are not always available. If you are consistently unprepared you will be asked to leave the Chorus.

IX. Rehearsal & Performance Expectations

Attire

The Youth Chorus often rehearses and performs in the prestigious Severance Music Center and many local places of worship. All members are encouraged to dress in a manner that is appropriate, comfortable, and professional. We ask that you stay away from attire such as crop tops, sweatpants, tank tops, pajamas, flip-flops/ slides, etc.. On occasion, we will wear COYC shirts to a dress rehearsal. We have the honor of working with some incredible musicians (including yourselves), and we encourage you to dress for success!

Rehearsal Decorum

Please be respectful of the people around you and they will treat you with the same respect. With this in mind, please adhere to the following rehearsal guidelines:

- Turn off and/or silence all cell phones, tablets, and any other electronic devices and put them in a place where they will not distract you! The Youth Chorus Manager and/or the Directors reserve the right to confiscate a cell phone if it is out during rehearsal. If confiscated, the cell phone may be picked up at the conclusion of the rehearsal.
- Do not wear perfume, cologne, aftershave, scented deodorant or scented hair products to rehearsals or performances. Many of your fellow choristers are sensitive or allergic to such aromas. Take care with personal hygiene.
- Always have a pencil at rehearsals.
- Allow enough time to find your place on the seating chart and your chair before the start of a rehearsal. Be in your seat before a rehearsal resumes following a break. If you arrive late to a rehearsal, please stand to the side of the room and wait for the Director to indicate that it is an appropriate time to take your seat.
- Do not bring food or drink into any rehearsal space before, during or after rehearsals. Only sports-top water bottles are permitted.
- Leave your coat in the coat room or the designated space on the perimeter of the rehearsal room.

The Director may give the Youth Chorus a break at the mid-point of rehearsals. Please remain in your seat until this break. Use the restroom before rehearsal starts. In the event of an emergency that forces you to leave the rehearsal before a scheduled break, please be as quiet and unobtrusive as possible.

Visitors are allowed in rehearsal only with the permission of the Director. Visitor attendance must be cleared in advance through the Chorus Manager.

Stage Rehearsal Decorum

In addition to all the guidelines outlined above, please note the following for rehearsals held on stage at Severance Music Center:

- Only music, folders, and sports-top water bottles are allowed on stage. Please leave other items (coats and personal belongings) in the Chorus warm-up space.
- If you arrive late for an on-stage orchestra rehearsal, you must check in with the Youth Chorus Manager and she will determine if you should go on stage or wait in the hall until break.
- Talking is NOT permitted once tuning begins.
- Dress rehearsals do not require concert attire, unless specifically noted.
- Guest attendance at Chorus-only stage rehearsals is allowed only with the permission of the Director. All orchestra rehearsals are closed to the public.
- In the event that you cannot sing during a stage rehearsal, please inform the Director and the Chorus Manager. You will be asked to sit in the front section of the hall, house right, and take notes.

Concert Deportment

Choristers should avoid doing anything that can detract from the audience's perception of a concert or your fellow chorus members' performance. On-stage conversation is not only distracting and unprofessional, but also extremely rude to the conductor, chorus members and orchestra members. Talking is NOT permitted once the concertmaster enters the stage.

- While entering and exiting the stage, carry your folder in your upstage hand (the hand not facing the house/audience).
- Stand and sit as quietly as possible and in unison.
- If for any reason you miss the filing-on process, you must sit out that portion of the concert.
- Please do not applaud after a concert.
- Remember: DO NOT TAKE CELL PHONES onto the stage. Electronic wristwatches (which may have alarms) are also not permitted to be worn during a performance.

If a chorister does not adhere to the expectations described above, the Director will first have a private conversation with the student to address the issue and identify solutions. If the infraction continues and is not resolved, the following steps may be taken:

- The Manager of Youth Choruses will contact the members' parent/guardian on behalf of the Director to discuss the situation at hand.
- The Director will meet with the Chorister's parents/guardians in person, and at this time the Chorister may be placed on probationary status.
- The Chorister may be removed from the Chorus.

Depending on the severity of the infraction, the Chorus Directors and Staff reserve the right to immediately act upon any of the steps listed above.

X. Tickets

Complimentary or discounted tickets are usually not available for concerts at Severance Music Center in which the Youth Chorus participates. On occasion, discounted tickets are offered the week of the concert. In these instances, discounts will not be applicable to tickets that have already been purchased.

To purchase tickets for concerts held at Severance Music Center, please call the Severance Music Center ticket office at (216) 231-1111, or visit <https://clevelandorchestra.com>.

XI. Parking

Parking at rehearsal venues is free of charge. When the Youth Chorus is rehearsing or performing at Severance Music Center, dated parking vouchers will be issued to each chorus member for one free entry into the Severance Music Center garage.

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