



VERDE VALLEY SINFONIETTA MUSICIAN HANDBOOK 2018-2019

The Verde Valley Sinfonietta commits itself and its employees to ethical, businesslike, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as employees.

EMPLOYMENT

It is the policy of the Verde Valley Sinfonietta (VVS) to consider all VVS Musicians “employees” and not “independent contractors,” in accordance with IRS guidelines and industry standards. This applies to short-term players as well as full-season musicians. Guest soloists or guest conductors that are not regularly employed by the VVS may be considered “independent contractors.”

A Musician may be employed as an “employee *at will*” under the following categories:

- Concertmaster
- Assistant concertmaster
- Principal
- Section
- Extra
- Substitute (must be approved by the Music Director/Conductor)

The category of employment of an individual VVS Musician may change from concert to concert, dependent on the needs of the VVS, and the decision of the Music Director.

“Employee *at will*” means that the VVS, or the VVS Musician may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause.

An “Extra” is defined as a player required or needed for a specific musical work, and not necessarily for any others during the season. An Extra may, at the discretion of the Music Director, be hired for fewer rehearsals, and at a higher rate of pay or travel stipend than other VVS Musicians.

The VVS strongly discourages use of Extras or Substitutes, but recognizes that in an emergency situation they may be needed. Examples of emergencies are:

- when a regular VVS Musician is unexpectedly unavailable and the music cannot be performed without that part being covered.
- when a regular VVS Musician cannot attend all rehearsals because of previous commitments.
- when a regular VVS Musician cannot perform his/her assigned part.
- when all recruitment mechanisms are exhausted for an essential instrument or part.

It is the responsibility of the Music Director, to the best of his/her ability, to recruit regular VVS Musicians who will attend all rehearsals and concerts. Likewise, the Music Director must determine if an Extra is absolutely necessary in a given situation, after all other means have been used to recruit a qualified regular VVS Musician. When hiring an Extra, the Music Director must

make every attempt to assure that the musicianship of said Extra is at a level equal to or greater than that of other VVS Musicians.

PAY SCALE & TRAVEL STIPEND

The per-service pay scale shall be as follows:

- Concertmaster **\$100.00**
- Assistant concertmaster **\$59.00**
- Principal - **\$59.00**
- Section (Regular) - **\$50.00**
- Extra – as above, depending on seating
- Substitute – as above, depending on seating

A per service travel stipend will be paid at the rate of \$.29/mile one-way from the city of residence to the rehearsal or performance venue. This stipend will be paid to all VVS Musicians, except for those Musicians residing in Sedona proper during typical West Sedona rehearsals and concerts. On concert days when there are typically 1.5 services, the travel stipend is for one service. Rates for typical West Sedona rehearsals and concerts are: VOC - \$2.81; Cottonwood - \$5.51; Clarkdale - \$6.67; Camp Verde - \$8.70; Flagstaff - \$12.47; Prescott - \$19.40; Chino Valley - \$20.12; Phoenix - \$33.61. Travel stipends are not taxable.

Paychecks, including travel stipends, will be sent within 15 days following each concert.

The VVS has attained or exceeded parity with compensation and travel stipends commonly paid to musicians in northern Arizona. VVS Musicians are urged to contribute toward maintaining or increasing these rates by becoming active in audience development or fundraising efforts.

MUSICAL PREPARATION

As paid professionals, each VVS Musician shall arrive *at the first rehearsal* with knowledge of the works to be performed, including adequate individual practice of notes, rhythms, stylistic markings and performance practice techniques. Preparation should be augmented as necessary by study of recordings, scores and background material. (The IMSLP website is a good source for scores in the public domain.) Music will be available for pickup at least six weeks prior to the first rehearsal. VVS Musicians are required to pick up their music no later than three weeks prior to the first rehearsal.

String Section Principals are expected to take an active role in preparing their sections, working with the concertmaster to agree on and annotate bowings and correct dynamics. When called upon by a conductor, they will take charge of sectional rehearsals. String Section Musicians are expected to match bowings of their respective principals, including using the part of the bow the principal is using in a given passage.

The Concertmaster will coordinate with each String Section Principal not later than 6 weeks prior to the first rehearsal to determine initial bowings. Each String Section Principal will finalize their section's bowings not later than 4 weeks prior to the first rehearsal. Bowings will be disseminated via email attachment to each string member. In the case of rental music that arrives later than these time periods, the bowings will be accomplished as soon as possible.

The Music Director will provide all Musicians a detailed rehearsal schedule, and a rough tempo/measure number sheet not later than 6 weeks prior to the first rehearsal.

MEMBERSHIP

The Music Director is required to maintain and improve, whenever possible, the quality of musicianship of the VVS.

Verde Valley Sinfonietta is a chamber orchestra averaging 36 musicians per concert, per season. The VVS Board of Trustees reserves the right to limit, or to make exceptions to this policy.

- The Music Director will, as possible, seek to have the majority of VVS Musicians be residents of Sedona and the Verde Valley.
- If the Music Director has no, or little, prior knowledge of a prospective or current VVS Musician's experience and musical expertise, the Music Director will hold an audition. Auditions will be accomplished with the assistance of an Audition Committee of one or two VVS Principals chosen by the Music Director. Audition procedures and musical requirements shall be determined by the Music Director, and provided to the current VVS Musician or applicant no less than two weeks prior to the scheduled audition date.
- The Music Director and Audition Committee may hold *open* auditions before or during the season to fill openings, temporary or permanent, to add musicians necessary for programming, or to upgrade a section.
- If there is competition for membership in a section, and the musicians are judged to be equal, preference will be given to residents of the Verde Valley or Sedona.
- The Music Director shall forward results of all auditions and the decision for hiring to each Musician within a week following the audition.
- Once accepted into the VVS, Musicians will sign a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) specifying attendance requirements for rehearsals and performances.
- For scheduled auditions, Audition Committee members shall be paid the travel stipend they would normally receive for a service.

SEATING

- The Music Director/Conductor has the right to change or reduce seating for a concert or for given works on a program, or to rotate seating for rehearsals or concerts.
- Seating at one concert or during a concert season does not guarantee similar seating or section assignment for future concerts or seasons.

SERVICE

- A service is defined as attendance and participation by the Musician at any rehearsal or performance of the VVS, or on behalf of the VVS.
- A service shall not exceed two and a half (2.5) hours in length, except as provided below.
- There may be *only one* extended length (up to 30 minutes) rehearsal per concert cycle without extra compensation. This exception is meant to allow for extra time for dress rehearsals with long works, or to accommodate guest artist collaboration when the guest is only available for one rehearsal. This exception will not be used as a remedy for poor time utilization during regular rehearsals. The Music Director/Conductor is required to announce the planned extended rehearsal *not later than* the rehearsal prior to it.
- At approximately the midpoint of the service there shall be a 15 minute break.
- The VVS has scheduled five and a half (5.5) rehearsals prior to each regular season public concert for the 2018-19 season.
- Individual Musicians may be required for fewer services for a specific concert, based on concert instrumentation and the rehearsal schedule.

- All orchestra members shall be seated and ready to tune five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled call-time of the service. Announcements and orchestra business may occur during this five-minute period.
- VVS performances shall be limited to three (3) hours in length as measured from the call time (the time musicians take the stage for the concert - *not* the time the 1/2 rehearsal begins). In the event of a delay caused by emergency, act of God or other circumstances beyond control of the VVS, the VVS reserves the right to:
 - delay the performance for a time not to exceed one (1) hour, without additional compensation to players;
 - shorten the performance by length.
- Musicians must execute and submit completed W-4 and other government-required employee information in a timely manner in order to receive payment for service.

ATTENDANCE

- Absenteeism: Regular attendance at any scheduled service (rehearsal, public concert or special performance) is an essential function of the job as a VVS Musician. Musicians must submit notice of a rehearsal absence in advance to the Personnel Manager for approval by the Music Director/Conductor, unless there are mitigating circumstances. Excessive rehearsal absence, regardless of the circumstances, may be grounds for disciplinary action to be determined by the Music Director/Conductor. Attendance at a public concert is mandatory. Failure to attend a scheduled public concert will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including discharge, unless there is a *documented* reason, acceptable to the Music Director/Conductor, which made attendance impossible.
- Lateness: Musicians are expected to arrive at rehearsals promptly, and to participate when the rehearsal schedule indicates they are expected to play. When individual Musicians arrive late or leave early, without completing their scheduled portion of a rehearsal, the VVS reserves the right to reduce their service pay by a proportionate amount.
- Attendance is expected by the VVS, either implicitly or by acceptance of the MOU, or by acceptance of any agreement issued by the VVS separate and apart from the MOU.
 - Once the Musician has informed the Music Director/Conductor of any necessary absences and received the Music Director/Conductor's consent to them, and the Musician and the VVS President have signed the MOU for a concert season or concert cycle, it is expected that the agreement will be kept.
 - The only valid excuses for an unforeseen absence are illness, emergency or weather precluding safe travel.
 - Accepting other performing opportunities is not a valid excuse for absence, and may result in the VVS exercising the option to cancel the Musician's agreement without pay for future services.

CONCERT PROTOCOL

- If orchestra members are not required for part of a performance, they are expected to wait until the audience is seated, and then if seats are available, sit in the rear of the hall.
- The Musician shall keep instrument cases and other paraphernalia off the stage, either backstage or in the "green room."
- The Musician shall maintain proper decorum during other artist performances, and/or stage announcements.
- The Musician shall dress according to the VVS dress code stated below, unless otherwise instructed by the Music Director/Conductor.

DRESS CODE

- Men – Black suit or tuxedo, white dress shirt, black bow tie, black socks, black shoes.
- Women – All black long dresses with long or 3/4 sleeves, or full-length black dress pants (no cropped, capris, or chino pants) with black long-sleeved or 3/4 length blouse or jacket, black or dark grey nylon hosiery, black closed-toe shoes. No large, glittery or jangling jewelry. No revealing necklines. No fishnet or patterned stockings.
- All – Please do not apply colognes or perfumes. Please do use unscented deodorants.

TICKETS TO CONCERTS

Subject to ticket availability, the VVS shall provide VVS Musicians a single ½-price ticket for each regular season concert. This ½-price ticket will apply to any reserved seat in four tiers of tickets: Adult (\$60, \$45, \$30, \$15) or Child (\$30, \$22.50, \$15, \$7.50). Each musician will be issued (via email) a ½-price coupon code for a one-time usage prior to each concert. ***No tickets may be held at the box office.***

PARKING AT CONCERTS

VVS Musicians will park in the rear of the SPAC, near the loading dock, to allow adequate parking spaces for the audience.

RUNOUTS

A “Runout” is defined as a performance in an area outside of Sedona, Prescott, Flagstaff and the Verde Valley.

- A Runout performance shall be compensated at a time-and-a-half per service rate based on the guaranteed service rate.
- A Runout rehearsal on the same day as a performance shall be compensated at a single service rate.

COMMERCIAL RECORDINGS

Any commercial recording (specific dedicated recording session(s)) shall be compensated as negotiated by the VVS Board of Trustees, which may include two VVS Musician Representatives.

- Recording residuals shall be negotiated by the VVS Board of Trustees and the VVS Musician Representatives for each recording.
- Plans for recording or release of previously recorded performances for commercial purposes shall be presented to the VVS Musician Representatives for consideration and approval.
- Board of Trustee decisions concerning recordings which affect the orchestra shall be supplied to the Musicians in writing.
- Recordings (audio and video) for VVS promotional use (as in use on the VVS website, in grant submissions, advertising, VVS social media or YouTube) do not qualify for compensation.

PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEOS

The VVS reserves the right to take and use photographs or videos of the orchestra and VVS Musicians for promotional purposes; each Musician waives the right to inspect or approve

his/her image or performance. Each Musician waives any claim for royalties or damages arising out of the use of such photographs or videos.

It is the policy of the VVS Board of Trustees to prohibit any recordings of rehearsals or concerts, for any reason, without express written permission of the Board of Trustees, in advance of the rehearsal or concert. This includes recordings requested by VVS Musicians, guest artists and Conductors.

CHANGES TO HANDBOOK

The VVS reserves the right to change information contained in this Handbook from time to time as it may deem necessary and prudent, but only in a document signed by the President of the VVS Board of Trustees. Such amendments are effective only after such changes have been approved by the Board of Trustees and have been communicated to the Musicians either in writing or by email.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

The Verde Valley Sinfonietta does not unlawfully discriminate against employees, volunteers, board members, or the members, clients, or students it serves on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, medical condition, veteran status, marital status, disability, ancestry, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

The Verde Valley Sinfonietta will not tolerate sexual harassment in the workplace. It is every individual's responsibility to maintain a workplace free of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment includes not only unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, but also sexually oriented comments or conduct when (a) submission to such conduct is made, explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or is used as the basis for an employment decision, (b) when such conduct has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Any incident of perceived sexual harassment should be reported to the President of the Board of Trustees, or if that individual is the subject of the complaint, to any other Board Officer. Complaints will be promptly investigated and if confirmed, appropriate corrective/disciplinary action will be taken. No retaliation will be tolerated against any individual who complains about sexual harassment.

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

- It is the responsibility of all employees to comply with the code of conduct, above, and with other policies outlined in this handbook. VVS Musicians may report suspected violation to either the Music Director or the President of the VVS Board of Trustees.
- When a suspected violation is reported, the complainant must be granted anonymity, if requested, and protection from harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequence.
- The complainant must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for complaint. If allegations prove to be unsubstantiated, knowingly false or malicious, disciplinary action may be taken.

- Allegations may be submitted confidentially or anonymously. Reports of allegations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.
- The Music Director or President of the VVS Board of Trustees (or other authorized board member if the president is accused of wrongdoing) will notify the complainant of receipt of the reported allegation within five business days. The Music Director, President, or the board representative will promptly investigate and take corrective action if warranted. If the complaint is submitted to the Music Director, he/she must inform the VVS President even if the Music Director is able to resolve the issue without board intervention.