

Minors Policy

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Originally approved summer 1996

Reconfirmed August 1997

The Sudbury Savoyards has a long tradition of admitting to our chorus any adult who agrees to abide by the attendance policy and do their best. We also sometimes welcome selected minors (those under 18 years old) into our chorus. Allowing minors in our show has several benefits but also raises some special concerns. The following policy establishes standards for when and how to accept minors as chorus members:

A minor (anyone under 18 years of age) is allowed in the chorus of the Sudbury Savoyards March production only under the following conditions:

- 1) The cast manager and both directors must agree to allow this specific minor to be a member of the chorus.
- 2) A parent or legal guardian of the minor must sign a form that grants permission for the minor to take part in our show and that summarizes this policy and our attendance policy.
- 3) A parent or legal guardian of the minor must either attend all of our activities at which the minor is present or else must designate in writing one or more other adults who will be present and will be responsible for the minor at all of our activities.
- 4) The minor must agree to abide by all of the standards of behavior that apply to the adult members of the chorus.

The following is a brief summary of the reasons behind each of these conditions.

Rule #1 is provided for three reasons. First, not all shows may easily admit roles for children. For example, in "Patience", the chorus are all either soldiers or women in love. Second, not all directors may be prepared to cope with the special problems that minors can cause. This depends on the maturity of the individual minor, which is why the decision needs to be made on a case-by-case basis. Finally, this rule ensures that the directors and cast manager know which cast members are minors.

Rule #2 provides us some legal protection in case of problems. It will hopefully also help parents understand that *they* are also making a commitment when they sign up their child for our production. For example, they must make it possible for their child to attend rehearsals.

Rule #3 ensures that there is someone on hand who can act on behalf of the parents in case of problems. Examples include inappropriate behavior (either by or toward the minor), transportation to and from rehearsals, or the presence of alcohol at parties. These days, any blocking that involves touching a minor is also something to be careful about. Finally, rule #4 is common sense. In an ideal world, rule #4 would be all that is necessary. Unfortunately, the world is far from ideal. Both law and custom define 18 at the age at which people are considered to be pretty much responsible for themselves. Below that age, both law and common sense require that we be careful. As much as possible, however, we should treat minors as being fully responsible for their own behavior.