



## **IN-PERSON ADJUDICATION COVID-19 SAFETY REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**As of March 10, 2022**

The Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards issues the following requirements and recommendations for schools and adjudicators participating in the in-person adjudication process. Requirements will continue to evolve in response to CDC and local health guidelines.

### **BACKGROUND**

We recognize that each school and geographic location face unique circumstances when it comes to their virus mitigation response. The IHSMTA-issued COVID-19 Safety Requirements and Recommendations are meant to give schools flexibility, while also giving adjudicators a minimum amount of assurance of the precautions that will be taken in front-of-house spaces when adjudicating in-person.

### **REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IN-PERSON ADJUDICATION**

For IHSMTA in-person adjudication purposes, the required and recommended mitigation efforts are separated into categories: Minimum Requirements for Schools, Additional Recommendations for Schools, and Minimum Requirements for Adjudicators and Adjudicator Guests.

#### **Minimum Requirements for Schools**

- Provide adjudicator seating at least six feet from other audience members. See note below\*
- If staging includes performers in the aisles of the theater for any duration longer than an entrance or exit, ensure adjudicator seating is at least six feet away from the performers

#### *\*Releasing Held Seats for Sale*

IHSMTA continues to ask that schools provide adjudicator seating six feet from other audience members. This is out of respect of the varying levels of comfort different adjudicators have when it comes to resuming in-person adjudication, along with the pragmatic need to maximize the number of qualified adjudicators available to successfully review all participating productions.

That said, IHSMTA recognizes that physically distanced seating can cause a financial hardship for schools due to the impact on the number of sellable tickets.

Moving forward, IHSMTA encourages adjudicators who do not require their seats to be distanced from other audience members to alert the school when they pick up their tickets at Will Call. At that time, the school may elect to release some of the additionally held seats for sale to walk-up buyers.

(Due to the possibility of last-minute adjudicator substitutions, IHSMTA will not communicate adjudicator seating preferences to schools in advance. Any release of seats for sale will happen between the adjudicators' arrival and the top of the show.

#### **Additional Recommendations for Schools**

- If in a county of "[High Covid-19 Community Level](#)" encourage all audience members, students and personnel ages 2 and above regardless of vaccination status to wear face coverings
- Educate all audience members on health recommendations through various channels, such as school or program website, social media channels, online ticket purchasing, emails, and signage leading to and at the event site.

Note: schools are asked to share their audience expectations on the Adjudication Form in order to also inform adjudicators of any additional school-specific expectations.

### **Minimum Requirements for Adjudicators and Adjudicator Guests**

*The Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards strongly encourages all adjudicators and adjudicator guests to be vaccinated for COVID-19 before attending in-person productions.*

Adjudicator and guest requirements for in-person adjudication:

- Exhibit no signs of illness
- Wear a mask or face covering from arrival to departure if traveling to a county with “[High COVID-19 Community Level](#)”
- Wear a mask or face covering from arrival to departure if you have had a direct exposure to COVID-19 within the previous 10 days\*\*
- Adhere to all audience requirements issued by the school, as communicated in the school’s adjudication Form and any directions given on-site whether verbally, through signage, etc.
- If you feel comfortable sitting less than six feet from other audience members, alert Will Call personnel upon arrival that you only need a single pair of adjudicator tickets. With your permission, the school may release any additionally held seats for sale.

\*\*See CDC guidance on quarantine, isolation and direct exposure [HERE](#).

### **JUDGEMENT CALLS AND FLEXIBILITY**

The 2021-2022 program incorporates the following points of flexibility for schools, adjudicators, and the program as a whole:

#### **Virtual Adjudication**

Schools unable to meet the minimum safety requirements are invited to have their production reviewed virtually assuming appropriate rights are attained for digital viewership.

#### **Advance Changes or Cancellation**

If an assigned adjudicator becomes ill, must quarantine after direct exposure (based on [current CDC guidance on when to stay home](#)), or wishes to recuse themselves due to new information (such as changing community level where the adjudicator or school resides), they are to alert program staff as soon as possible that they are no longer able to adjudicate in-person. IHSMTA staff will honor this request and make best efforts to arrange for an alternative adjudicator.

Similarly, if a school has to switch its format from in-person audience to virtual audience (or virtual audience only), change production dates, etc. the director should alert program staff as soon as possible.

The Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards also reserves the right to cancel in-person adjudication based on current conditions in the school’s area. All efforts will be made to discuss concerns and any mitigating factors with the director before a final decision is made.

#### **On-Site Judgment**

The cooperation of audience members, students, and staff/volunteers is essential for safety precaution implementation. In the event an adjudicator arrives on-site and judges their personal safety compromised, the adjudicator is under no obligation to stay.

Adjudicators should alert program staff as soon as possible in this unfortunate situation. Staff will alert the school contact of this development as soon as possible, but schools should note that it is unlikely that program staff will be able to arrange for an alternative adjudicator on such short notice. The school will still be eligible for awards and honors, with calculations adjusted for the total number of completed adjudications.

Note: Des Moines Performing Arts does not assume responsibility for ensuring that individual schools or adjudicators comply with the stated requirements and recommendations.