



ALASKA YOUTH
ORCHESTRAS

Musician Handbook

ABOUT AYO

Alaska Youth Orchestras (AYO) is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation that is governed by a volunteer board of directors according to state and federal law. The organization's tax ID# is 92-0082750.

AYO's mission is to build musicianship, inspire youth to love music, offer enriching opportunities for music performance, and create a musical legacy that will sustain arts throughout the lives of our members and our communities.

AYO Operates three programs: the Anchorage Youth Symphony, Symphony School, and After School Music. For more information about AYO and its programs, please visit the AYO website at <https://www.alaskayouthorchestras.org>

AYO STAFF

The best way to reach us AYO staff is via email. You may also call the AYO Office at 907-538-6406.

- ◆ **Executive Director :** Pierre Derycz ED@alaskayouthorchestras.org
- ◆ **Operations Manager :** Zach Akins OC@alaskayouthorchestras.org
- ◆ **AYS Principal Conductor :** David Hagen dhagen@alaskayouthorchestras.org

COMMUNICATION

The AYO Weekly Email newsletter arrives every Friday at 6pm. It is the primary way we communicate with musicians and families. Youth musicians and at least one parent must sign up to receive the email. Please read the email every week, as it contains vital information about upcoming events. If you do not receive the AYO Weekly Email, please check your junk/promotions folder!

AYO Staff may also communicate directly with musicians and families via email. All communications to youth musicians will be copied to the primary parent/guardian responsible for said child.

OFFICE

AYO operates out of an office at 1505 W 32nd Ave. Anchorage, AK 99503. The office does not keep regular business hours due to the nature of our work. Please contact AYO staff to ensure someone will be present if you plan to visit the office.

Emergency Response

In the event of an emergency, AYO staff will direct AYO musicians on how to respond.

Evacuation Response: In the event of an emergency requiring building evacuation, musicians will be asked to leave the building via the nearest emergency exit and gather (if appropriate) in the designated area.

Parents/Guardians will be contacted and asked to pick up their musician as soon as possible or grant permission to another parent/guardian to pick up their musician. Any musician who is not picked up will remain with an AYO staff until parents/guardians can arrive or make other arrangements for their musician's transportation. Musicians who drive will be excused if their vehicle is safely accessible.

Non-Evacuation Response: In the event of an emergency that doesn't result in evacuation, musicians will shelter in place. If rehearsal cannot continue, parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their musician as soon as possible.

If, at any time, a musician feels unsafe to remain, parents will be contacted and asked to pick them up as soon as possible. If the AYO musician has their own car, parents will be contacted and will determine if they are comfortable with the AYO musician driving.

AYO Emergency Contact Numbers:

Executive Director	Pierre Derycz	310-795-0810
Operations Manager	Zach Akins	907-240-3505
AYS Principal Conductor	David Hagen	907-440-8814

*The numbers above are the personal cell numbers of AYO staff.
Please use discretion when calling.*

ANCHORAGE YOUTH SYMPHONY (AYS)

Rehearsals

Rehearsals take place Mondays 5:30 to 8:00pm at The Nave (3502 Spenard Rd) unless otherwise noted. While the AYS Season Calendar is generally set at the start of the season, updates to the calendar are sometimes required. The most updated AYS Season Calendar is always posted on the AYS website.

Concerts

AYS performs quarterly concerts (Fall, Winter, Spring) at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts (621 W 6th Ave). Performances are generally preceded by a “Dress Rehearsal” the day before. (Note: Musicians do not need to be in Concert Black attire for the “Dress Rehearsal” unless instructed otherwise.)

Concert Black

Concert Black is required dress for all concert performances and includes two **gender-neutral options**.

1. Black suit or tuxedo, white shirt, black bow tie, black socks and black shoes (either open or closed toe are acceptable).
2. Long black pants, dress, or skirt (at least lower-calf length) with a solid color black shirt with long sleeves (at least $\frac{3}{4}$ length). The shirt must cover your shoulders and should not have a low neckline. Plain black socks or stockings are to be worn with black shoes (either open or closed toe are acceptable).

ACCESSORIES: No reflective jewelry/accessories and no fragrances, please.

If you have any questions regarding CONCERT BLACK, or need any assistance obtaining any needed items, please contact AYO staff.

Concert Tickets

All AYO concerts are ticketed events through [CenterTix.com](https://www.CenterTix.com) as required by the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. AYO musicians do not need a concert ticket for themselves. Families of musicians can purchase season tickets at a reduced rate. Concert ticket sales support AYO and serve as a fundraiser for the organization. We encourage AYO musicians and their families to promote the concerts and bring along family and friends.

AYS Coaches

AYS Coaches are professional musicians and educators who provide focused guidance to their specific instrument group in the orchestra. Among other activities, coaches lead Sectional rehearsals and assist in determining musician seating in collaboration with the AYS Principal Conductor.

Attendance

The Anchorage Youth Symphony is dedicated to professional-level performance. If you fail to comply with the Attendance Policy, you may be asked to resign from AYS.

Musicians must check in at each rehearsal. Musicians may not check in for someone else. Absence notifications must be made by email at the earliest possible time to:

OC@alaskayouthorchestras.org.

- ◆ **Rehearsals:** Rehearsal attendance is critical to the success of the Anchorage Youth Symphony. Absences, when they occur, are counted during each rehearsal/concert cycle. A maximum of **once absence** is allowed per concert cycle.
 - **Note:** Arriving late or leaving before the end of a rehearsal is considered an absence that counts as one-half (1/2) toward the musician's absence count.
- ◆ **Concerts:** Musicians are expected to attend all regularly scheduled concerts and special events added after the start of the season. Two month's advance notice is required for an expected absence from a concert.
- ◆ **Dress Rehearsals:** A Dress Rehearsal is scheduled the day before each concert at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. Attendance at Dress Rehearsals is required. Musicians not present may be asked not to perform in the concert. Any conflicts should be made known to the AYO Music Director as soon as you are aware.

Leave of absence for extraordinary circumstances: Musicians in good standing who will miss rehearsals or concerts for an extended time should request a leave of absence. Musicians must send a written request for a leave of absence to the AYO Music Director.

Consequences: Absences outside the attendance policy may result in a musician not being allowed to participate in a concert, being re-seated for a concert, and/or being asked to withdraw from the Anchorage Youth Symphony. The music director reserves the right to re-seat members who are absent for a concert, including those members whose absence is excused.

Liability

Musicians are solely responsible for their instruments. Lost, stolen, or damaged instruments (or instrument accessories) are not the responsibility of the Anchorage Youth Symphony program or its leadership. The following entities, including their employees, contractors, and volunteers will also not be held responsible for loss or damage to instruments or other valuables: Alaska Youth Orchestras, Cook Inlet Housing Authority/The Nave, Alaska Center for the Performing Arts, or any other venue where AYO performs or rehearses. AYO strongly suggests that instruments be adequately insured, and that care be taken to safeguard instruments at all times.

CODE OF CONDUCT

General: AYO is committed to providing a safe environment for all participants, staff, students and families alike, involved in AYO programs. To be able to successfully make music together it is important to respect the rights and property of others. All members of any AYO group and the adults who work with them must be respectful and supportive of one another. We count on all participants to use common sense in avoiding situations and behavior that would put themselves or anyone else at risk, cause problems for the group, or adversely affect the safety, performance and enjoyment of all.

All incidents relating to this Code of Conduct will be referred to the AYO administration for resolution involving meeting with the parents/guardians of all students involved. Consequences may include, but are not limited to: financial responsibility for misconduct resulting in damage, immediate removal from a rehearsal or other event, ineligibility to perform in a concert, reseating within the section, expulsion from the organization and/or inability to re-audition for the organization in the future. If necessary, the proper authorities will be contacted.

Any form of harassment, including sexual harassment and bullying, will not be tolerated. These behaviors may include actions or statements that are designed to disturb or upset others, may or may not be repetitive, and are often distinguished by issues of power and control. Use of negative, degrading, intolerant or prejudicial speech or actions against a person or group of people based on race, gender, gender identity, age, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language ability, moral or political views, socioeconomic status, occupation or physical appearance (such as height or weight) will not be tolerated. Any participant in AYO experiencing or observing such behaviors should report it to an AYO staff member immediately.

Musicians: AYO musicians are representatives of the organization. The behavior of each musician reflects on the entire group. Musicians are expected to use good manners, display common courtesy, and show consideration for others. It is essential to respect the rights and property of others. AYO strictly enforces a zero-tolerance policy with regards to the use of drugs and alcohol, smoking, any other illegal activities, and any form of harassment towards other musicians and AYO staff. AYO musicians are expected to meet the following expectations:

1. Your first priority is to learn. Avoid distractions that interfere with or are counterintuitive to that mission.
2. Come musically prepared to every rehearsal. Rehearsal is not the time to learn your parts. Be ready to work at the designated time that rehearsal begins.

3. Use appropriate language and behavior at all times. Musicians will not engage in “rough-housing”, malicious pranks, or other activities that endanger their own safety or that of their fellow musicians.
4. Be polite and conduct yourself in a respectful manner towards everyone including conductors, section coaches, AYO representatives, designated chaperones, fellow musicians and visitors.
5. Do not be a bully. If you see someone being bullied, intervene by telling them to stop or immediately report it to an AYO representative
6. Encourage your fellow musicians. Never tear them down.

Parents/Guardians: In addition to providing a high-quality musical experience, AYO strives to teach musicians about professionalism, responsibility, and personal integrity. We are committed to providing an open and encouraging environment where every person is valued. Parents/Guardians are asked to conduct themselves in keeping with this standard by supporting their musicians in fulfilling their responsibilities, encouraging open communication, supporting 100% attendance, facilitating prompt arrival at rehearsals and concerts, providing private lessons on their instrument (if possible), and encouraging at-home practice and preparation.

Should parents/guardians need to express concern or disagreement with AYO staff, we request it be done in an appropriate manner. Damaging or demeaning language will not be tolerated in any setting. Please contact the AYO Executive Director or AYO Music Director directly. All issues will be handled with professionalism, confidentiality, and respect.