



MPA

MINNESOTA
PERCUSSION
ASSOCIATION

**OFFICIAL
HANDBOOK
2025**

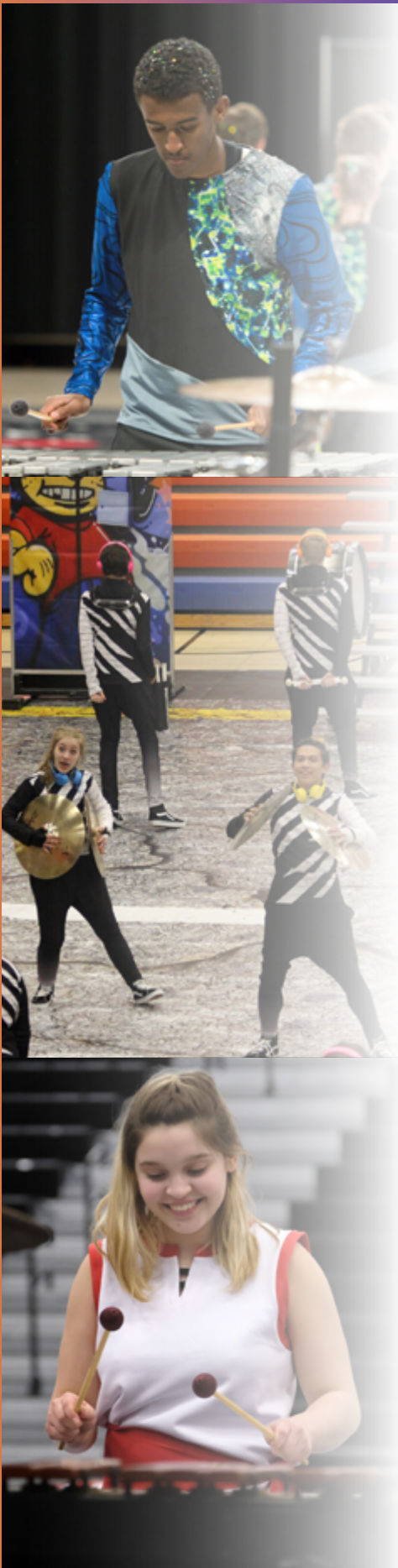


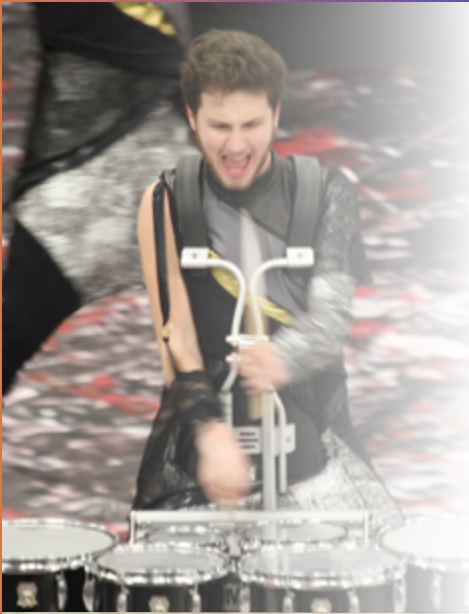
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MISSION STATEMENT

The Minnesota Percussion Association is a nonprofit educational organization that exists to further the development of the marching arts and percussion performance, working with scholastic music programs and independent organizations.

- MPA's operational strategy is the conduct of indoor performance opportunities, educational symposia, percussion ensemble festivals, and other activities deemed fit in keeping with the organization's mission.
- Competition is an inherent part of the MPA mission; however, education is the overriding objective of all MPA activities.
- MPA exists to serve and develop its participants, regardless of their existing levels of experience or skill. MPA will strive to serve all its participants equally and fairly without regard to performance levels, experience, artistic approach, or location.
- While one of MPA's primary operational vehicles is the conduct of marching percussion performance competitions, MPA will strive to present the marching percussion idiom in the context of total percussion skill development. MPA will regularly present educational opportunities outside the boundaries of marching percussion, such as percussion ensemble festivals, symposia, etc.
- MPA's adjudication systems exist to support the educational orientation of the MPA competitive activities. As such, those systems must address the educational needs of the competing groups in addition to providing fair and objective competitive evaluations.
- MPA expects only the highest integrity, sportsmanship, and ethical conduct from all its constituencies, including performers, instructors, directors, adjudicators, administrators, and spectators.
- MPA does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, creed, sexual orientation, origin, intellectual/physical ability, or cultural background.
- MPA must operate on a fiscally sound basis in order to provide a sustained service to its member groups. MPA will operate on a balanced-budget basis each year.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Vlad Boz
mnpercpresident@gmail.com

First Vice President

Paul Connell

Second Vice President

Tiffany Kostuch

Secretary

Ellie Mehr
mnpercsecretary@gmail.com

Treasurer

Ryan Schmidt
mnperctreasurer@gmail.com

Members at Large

Katy Bensen, Elise Borman, Jake Esterberg, Patrick Lyons, Wyatt Martin, Craig Myers, Sabrina Onuma, Sam Peck, Michelle Reigen

HEAD JUDGES

Steve Collins

smcollins.collins22@gmail.com

Matt Ferry

mfpercussion@gmail.com



EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION (EDI)

MPA strives to be an inclusive community in which diversity is celebrated and everyone feels they are safe, valued, and treated with respect while getting equitable opportunities to be successful and enjoy everything MPA offers. MPA as an organization will continuously work toward our goals of equity, diversity, and inclusion in everything we do. And we encourage and expect everyone in the MPA community to do the same. Contact EDI Committee head Wyatt Martin if you'd like to contribute to the committee's work.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

Safeguarding the health and safety of all MPA participants is the highest priority at all times.

It is expected that all MPA ensembles will follow applicable national, state, local, and district guidance to ensure safe participation for all in the event of public health and safety emergencies. This applies to ensembles' activities outside of the performance venue (at rehearsal, on transportation to the venue, etc.) and all activities while at any venue holding an MPA event. Everyone associated with any ensemble involved in an MPA event (performers, instructors, administrative staff, parent volunteers, fans, etc.) will be required to follow all applicable policies and cooperate with MPA and event staff and officials.

Failure to comply with MPA and/or local school district, venue, or government health and safety guidelines/procedures/mandates in place at the time or to cooperate with requests of these entities' representatives may lead to one or more consequences for the individual(s) and/or group in question, at the discretion of MPA and/or the local school district, venue, or government. Possible consequences include, but are not limited to: temporary removal from





the event venue, removal from the show schedule, removal from multiple shows' schedules with or without conditional reinstatement, permanent removal from the event venue, scoring penalty, removal from the scores/rankings for that event, temporary loss of MPA membership with conditional reinstatement, loss of MPA membership for that season, loss of MPA membership for multiple seasons with or without conditional reinstatement, or another consequence determined by MPA or other appropriate entity.

WGI RULES AND THIS HANDBOOK

MPA follows the Winter Guard International (WGI) Percussion and Winds Contest Rules, found at wgi.org when they are ready for the season. These govern aspects of our ensembles' performances and competition, including, but not limited to: member and ensemble eligibility, the competition/performance area, scoring, equipment/instrumentation, timing, penalties, and performance entrance/exit.

In addition, MPA utilizes WGI's scoring sheets and adjudication policies and philosophies.

MPA has one exception to WGI's rules for the 2025 season. MPA's interval times for performances are one minute longer than WGI's:

- Regional A and A classes: 10 minutes
- Open classes: 11 minutes
- World classes: 12 minutes

The rest of this handbook covers important MPA-specific information for ensembles to know to be successful members of the association. Please don't hesitate to contact the MPA Board of Directors at mnpercsecretary@gmail.com with questions!



REQUIREMENTS FOR GROUPS

	MEMBER GROUP	NONMEMBER GROUP
Combined form (liability waiver, student roster, Code of Conduct review confirmation, other agreements, director and administrator signatures)	REQUIRED	REQUIRED
Code of Conduct agreement from every staff member	REQUIRED	REQUIRED
SafeSport certification for all staff members	REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED
Up to date on all fees before performing	REQUIRED	REQUIRED

Please note: Member groups enjoy the membership benefits outlined in the next section, while nonmember groups do not.





MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

In addition to regular-season competitions and MPA Championships, members benefit from the following.

MPA Postseason and Preseason General Membership Meetings

In the spring and fall, MPA holds meetings during which MPA member and nonmember groups, and any other interested parties, gather to discuss rules proposals, MPA procedures, the MPA schedule, and other topics pertinent to our circuit. The MPA Board of Directors is elected by the membership at the postseason meeting. All member groups are required to have a representative (director, instructor, parent lead volunteer, or other representative) in attendance at both general membership meetings. One person can represent only one group at the meeting. Attendance can be in person or through the provided online meeting option, though attendance in person is highly encouraged whenever possible. Because it is imperative to the success of the individual groups and the circuit as a whole that all member groups are aware of updates and changes in the circuit, and that they are able to voice their opinions and vote on proposals and for the Board of Directors membership, if a member group does not have a representative at either the postseason or preseason meeting, it will need to complete a membership review before it will be allowed to register for shows for the upcoming season. The membership review involves a series of questions the director will have to address about the meeting that was missed, using the meeting minutes, slideshow presentation, and other resources that were presented at the meeting.



Day of Percussion and Winds

For this annual MPA event, 75 percent of the members of each member ensemble and at least one staff member are required to attend in order for the group to compete at MPA Championships. The Day of Percussion and Winds is a series of clinics on aspects of marching, world, and concert percussion; indoor winds; and performance. Students can choose clinics to participate in based on their areas of interest and experience level. Clinics are followed by a concert. The Day of Percussion and Winds is an excellent opportunity to interact with members of other ensembles.

Winds groups and groups from more than 200 miles outside of the core of Minneapolis are not required to attend Day of Percussion and Winds but are welcome to.

Solo and Ensemble Contest

This competition is open to MPA member ensembles and their students. At the contest, students have the opportunity to be evaluated in solos or ensembles and to receive personalized commentary from judges. No scores or comments are made public. The individual or ensemble with the highest score in each category receives a medal at MPA Championships. Students may register for the contest by visiting the MPA website and filling out the application under the “Resources” tab, when it is available.





Scholarships and Awards

MPA offers several scholarships and awards each season for students and instructors of ensembles that pay MPA membership dues or are first-year member ensembles. These include the Drum Corps, Jordan Jergenson Memorial Cymbal, Future in Music, Kayla Koranda Memorial Spirit of MPA, and Access to Education scholarships, and the IDEAS Award, all of which have specific criteria. The IDEAS Award is awarded before the start of the competition season, with the rest of the scholarships awarded at the end of the season. Information about applying for the scholarships and awards is provided to everyone through social media and to directors through email.

MPA 1 on 1

This service provides each MPA member ensemble with a virtual consultation session from a top designer in the activity (selected from the available roster).

Dick Rausch Instructor of the Year Award

Each MPA member ensemble is eligible to vote for the recipient of this award. The MPA secretary sends out an e-mail during the last month of the season asking for nominations, and a round of voting selects the Instructor of the Year from the finalists.

Volunteer of the Year Award

Every MPA member group is eligible to nominate a volunteer that has made a great impact on their ensemble or the circuit in general through service and support. Nominations should include descriptive examples of the person being nominated. These nominations can be made year-round and submitted to the MPA secretary.

BADGES, DUES, REGISTRATION, FEES

Season-Long Badges

Each member ensemble will receive 10 season-long badges for its staff and volunteers to gain free entrance into shows in which they are participating.

If a group would like more than 10 season-long staff/volunteer badges, it has to purchase them for \$20 each. This must be done and paid for by the Dec. 15 dues payment deadline.

Generating an MPA Invoice

This will be accomplished through the director login on the MPA website. Please reference the 2025 Important Dates on page 16 for information on paying your group's dues on time. Questions regarding your director login or the MPA website can be directed to Vlad Boz, mnpercpräsident@gmail.com.

MPA Membership Dues

For 2025, membership dues are \$600 (\$200 discount for groups more than 100 miles outside of the core of Minneapolis — board determines eligibility; \$100 discount for groups participating in the local WGI regional). This fee covers the cost of attending four or more





shows, MPA Prelims, MPA Championships, Day of Percussion and Winds, and the Student Leadership Training; allows the member ensemble's students and staff to be eligible for MPA scholarships; pays for the MPA 1 on 1 service; allows the students to compete in the Solo and Ensemble Contest; and grants voting rights for the group. First-year member groups are exempt from MPA membership dues.

Nonmember Fees

For 2025, the per-show fee is \$100, if attending three shows or fewer in a season. Nonmembers do not receive the membership benefits outlined above. Groups attending four shows or more must become members of MPA and pay membership dues (no membership dues for first-year member groups).

Registration for MPA Competitions

This is accomplished through the MPA website director login and must be completed before the minimum performance registration deadline. If a member group has not registered for the number of shows required of it, it will incur a late fee of \$50 per week that this is not completed.



Adding Additional Shows

Late registration for shows beyond a group's minimum is allowed up to four weeks before the date of any show. There is no fee to add additional shows after the minimum performance registration deadline has passed, provided that the group is an MPA member. Nonmember groups performing in fewer than two shows that wish to add shows past the minimum performance registration deadline must still pay the \$100 fee for each additional show. If a nonmember group adds enough shows after the minimum performance registration deadline to bring its show-attendance total to four shows or more, the group will be required to pay full MPA membership dues and will become a member.



After the minimum performance registration deadline, directors will not be able to sign up for shows themselves on the website. Groups adding a show after this date must email Vlad Boz at mnpercpräsident@gmail.com to register for the show.

Withdrawal From Shows

After the minimum performance registration deadline, withdrawal from performances is strongly discouraged, but a group may withdraw up to four weeks before the show with no penalty by emailing mnpercpräsident@gmail.com. If a group withdraws less than four weeks before the show date, it will pay a \$200 fee to MPA before being allowed to participate in any further MPA performances. If a group needs to withdraw due to an emergency situation that is not covered in the official MPA inclement weather/emergency policy and would like to avoid paying this penalty, the director of the group is invited to contact the MPA Board of Directors via email to discuss exemption from this fee.

Late Penalties

There will be a \$50 penalty for each week that dues are late. Late



forms will not incur late fees, but a group will not be scheduled for any show until all of its required forms have been received. In addition, groups must be up to date on all fees, including late fees, in order to be scheduled for any MPA competition.

Scholastic and Independent Division Classification

All groups are classified into either the scholastic or independent division, under which they are further classified into competitive classes.

- Scholastic groups consist of performing members from the same high school or a school that feeds that particular high school. Students from a school that does not have its own drumline or winds group are allowed to join the group of another school in their school district, provided that their district policies and the schools' administrations allow this. Any exceptions to these scholastic eligibility rules must be approved by the MPA Board of Directors every year and will depend on pertinent WGI policies.
- Independent groups consist of members who are not necessarily from the same school/district and can come from anywhere. Following WGI's age rules, independent percussion group members may not be over 22 years of age as of 12:01 a.m. on April 1 to be eligible to participate that season. Independent winds groups have no age limit.



Competitive Class Assignment

Class assignment at the beginning of each season is the choice of the director for each ensemble. When updating the ensemble profile page on the MPA website, directors will indicate which competitive class they would like to be a part of.

Any director-initiated class change needs to be completed at least four weeks before any given show.

The Classification Committee is responsible for midseason class changes. This committee consists of three judges, at least one of which will be a head judge. A WGI reclassification decision will automatically result in the same reclassification in MPA.

WGI REGIONAL, MPA PRELIMS, MPA CHAMPIONSHIPS

Groups that register for the WGI regional will receive an MPA membership fee discount of \$100. Nonmember groups are eligible to register for the WGI regional but will not receive any discount from MPA. Groups that want to take advantage of this discount must register for the regional on www.wgi.org before the deadline to pay dues for the season (December 15). This discount will not be applied retroactively.

MPA Prelims determines the placement order for MPA Championships, except for the exemption policy below. Groups will perform at MPA Championships in reverse order of their Prelims finish. All groups that don't attend Prelims will perform before the lowest placement at Prelims.





The prelims exemptions listed below are only for groups that cannot attend prelims because of school-related events that affect the ensemble, such as a band trip. Directors need to ask the Board of Directors and provide a reason for the exemption. The board will make the final decision on exemptions.

- Classes of 2–5: No change/exemption.
- Classes of 6–8: The class is divided in two halves. If the nonattending group has been competitively in the top half, it will go first in the second half.
Nonattending groups would either go on first or fourth in a class of six.
- Classes of 9–11: The class is divided into three sections. The nonattending group is placed first in the third of the class that it has been competitive with.
Nonattending groups would either go on first, fourth, or seventh in a class of nine.
- Classes of 12+: The class is divided into four sections. The nonattending group is placed first in the quarter of the class that it has been competitive with.
Nonattending groups would either go on first, fourth, seventh, or 10th in a class of 12.



Placements are based on score margins and rankings throughout the season compared to other groups in the class. Secondary consideration is given to total scores. The head judges have the final call on the above, if needed.

To be eligible for MPA Championships, groups must meet their show-attendance minimums of three shows, for which the local WGI regional and MPA Prelims count. For groups outside of 200 miles from the Twin Cities, the show minimums to attend MPA Championships are reduced by one.

SHOW HOSTING

Please see the 2025 MPA Show Co-Hosting Manual for information.

PERFORMANCE ENTRANCE/EXIT

Entering the Performance Area

- Enter the gym as soon as the previous performance finishes.
- Move into position as quickly as possible, filling the void left by the previous group without getting in its way as it exits.
- Be aware of the timing and penalty judge and the signals they are providing. The judge has the authority to direct you across the timing line and start your time before you voluntarily cross.

Leaving the Performance Area

- As soon as possible after your performance, start to move out of the performance area.
- Make sure to carefully follow the posted signs, information in the show info sheet and map, and show volunteer directions for where to put batterie equipment, where to take your tarp and props, etc., to make sure your group's exit is smooth and the next group can enter the performance floor without delay.





Expectations for the timing and penalty judge:

- The judge will give and hold a thumbs up signal to indicate they are ready for the group to cross the timing line. This means the previous group has crossed the timing line *and* the performance/safety zones are clear of all of their equipment.
- The judge may also give a winding signal indicating that the group's timing will start within the next 30 seconds. This may be the case if the previous group took a long time to clear the space, the entering group has taken a long time to set up, and/or if the show is running behind.
- Groups will still have the standard couple minutes to move in and get set. They will not be asked to cross the timing line in an unreasonable time.
- Depending on the order to which groups bring items into the gym, they may be asked to cross the timing line before they have partially unfolded the tarp/floor.
- The judge may start the timing before the group crosses the line after the winding signal has been given for 30 seconds.



General Guidelines

- Groups will never be asked to cross the timing line before their posted performance time — for the sake of proper transition time after warm-up as well as audience considerations.
- If a group has large/oversized/numerous props, it is on the group to consider that as far as it pertains to timing. It will not be given extra time in normal circumstances. If something about the venue is causing a delay in the props entering, the timing and penalty judge will consider that (e.g., the doors to the performance area are smaller than normal and props need to be shifted/altered to be able to enter).
- More urgency will be applied to timing at large events such as Prelims and Championships, where multiple groups taking extra minutes can result in very delayed shows by the end.



UNLOADING/LOADING

- All groups and drivers are expected to be familiar with the available unloading/loading zones before arriving on site, as indicated in the information for that show on the MPA website.
- Parking for buses and trailers/trucks will be chosen and designated to be separate from unloading/loading areas whenever possible and will be clearly explained to bus and trailer/truck drivers upon their arrival.
- All groups and drivers are expected to comply with requests by on-site volunteers from MPA and/or the co-hosting group. It is the volunteers' job to make sure unloading/loading happens in an efficient way to help the show run on time and for the participants to have a great experience.
- All zones are meant *only* for active unloading and loading. Please do not pull up until your ensemble members are ready to unload/load your trailer/truck.
- Be aware of the clear zones and make sure they are always clear.
- There will be multiple zones designated whenever possible. The



priority when creating zones is to create the most possible viable zones, as opposed to having one very convenient zone close to an entrance.

- Groups are encouraged to come earlier to shows to unload (while respecting the earliest-arrival time designated for that show) as well as load as early as possible after their performance (while still leaving space for groups that are present to unload before their performances).
- All unload/loading zones are first come, first served. But priority will always be given to groups that are unloading before their performance. If multiple groups are waiting to unload and it is feasible to do so, groups that are scheduled to perform earlier should be allowed to unload before groups performing later in the show.
- Whenever possible, buses picking up or dropping off students will be directed to stop in such a way that minimizes blocking the unloading/loading of equipment.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/PANDEMIC/ EMERGENCY POLICY

In the event that a portion or all of the state of Minnesota/Upper Midwest is struck by inclement weather on a day of a scheduled MPA competition, it may be necessary to cancel the competition for the safety and ultimate well-being of our membership. Other emergency situations beyond weather may fall under these policies as well, including, but not limited to: terror situations, acts of god, public health concerns/pandemics, and unforeseeable events not listed.

Regular-Season Shows

- The decision to cancel a scheduled MPA competition may be made by the MPA Board of Directors or by the school administration of the co-hosting school. MPA will avoid canceling shows as long as a viable number of groups can still attend and the safety of MPA personnel, audience members, and competing groups is not compromised.
- All performing ensembles must have a “day of contest” emergency cell phone contact number on file with MPA. It is the responsibility of the MPA Board of Directors to communicate the decision to cancel or not cancel to the directors of the performing ensembles via the emergency cell phone number contact.
- In the event an MPA competition must be canceled, every effort will be made to communicate this decision via the official MPA website and other communication channels. These could include the CompetitionSuite texting feature, MPA social media, and email.
- In case of any emergency cancellation of an MPA event, it is essential that MPA and all performing groups share the responsibility of communication and cooperation needed to ensure safety, well-being, and convenience for everyone.
- The director of a group needing to miss a show because of a weather- or other emergency-related reason must notify the MPA Board of Directors as soon as possible the day of or before the show that the group will need to miss and the reason. If the





director does not submit this communication or simply chooses not to attend, the group will be subject to the same penalty as any group that fails to attend a show it is signed up for, which is a \$200 penalty.

- Those ensembles that are scheduled to participate in an MPA competition but are unable to fulfill their performance responsibility due to inclement weather/an emergency will have the opportunity to enroll in any other MPA scheduled competition without any extra fee or penalty. The deadline for entry into the next event is 72 hours after the conclusion of the contest where inclement weather/an emergency was experienced.
- Groups that had to miss a show because of inclement weather/an emergency are not required to sign up for more shows to meet their performance minimums. The canceled show or show they could not attend still counts for them.
- Nonmember groups will be refunded their single-show fee if the show is canceled or the group cannot attend because of inclement weather/an emergency.



MPA Prelims/Championships

- Regular-season rules regarding cancellation are still in effect.
- All policies regarding inclement weather/emergencies for regular-season contests are still applicable for MPA Prelims (i.e., day-of-contest emergency cell phone contact number, etc.).
- In the event that MPA Prelims is canceled, groups will perform in MPA Championships following the guidelines that have been established previously for groups exempted from Prelims for a school function. For more information, see the portion of the handbook that references this guideline.
- In the event that MPA Championships is canceled, the Board of Directors will make every effort to reschedule the event. If this cannot be accomplished, the results from MPA Prelims will act as our final placements for the season.

MPA CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct applies to everyone involved with MPA, including all participants, minor participants, groups, instructional staff, MPA personnel, board members, volunteers, and contractors. Everyone must follow this Code of Conduct to stay in good standing with MPA. The policies in this Code of Conduct aim to ensure safe environments and experiences during all MPA activities.

This Code of Conduct explains what behavior is appropriate or inappropriate. While it cannot cover every possible situation, everyone must follow the letter and spirit of these guidelines to stay in good standing with MPA.

Definitions of Parties

- Adult participant: A person over 18 performing with a group.
- Minor participant: A person under 18 performing with a group.
- Group: The entire organization or an individual participating group.
- Staff: A person engaged by a group in an instructional or ad-





- ministrative role.
- **Volunteer:** A person who freely gives their time to MPA and/or any member groups, and provides support in any capacity.
- **Contractor:** A person who provides occasional services for a fee.
- **MPA personnel:** A person engaged to perform services for or on behalf of MPA.
- **MPA board member:** A person who serves on the MPA Board of Directors.

MPA will not tolerate conduct that violates its policies. Even if an action was not intended to violate this Code of Conduct, MPA prioritizes the actual impact of the action over the person's intentions to prevent negative experiences.

In addition to upholding this Code of Conduct, MPA can review and may take interim action against anyone involved in or accused of unlawful activities related to their participation in MPA or the marching arts.

All parties should consider themselves ambassadors of MPA. They are expected to uphold these policies, remind others of them when necessary, and report alleged violations.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

MPA parties have the right to participate in an environment free of alcohol, drugs, and other substances. Prohibited substances include narcotics, marijuana, products containing THC, inhalant drugs, and over-the-counter medications unless used with a valid medical prescription. Violations include, but are not limited to:

Distributing alcohol and prohibited substances to any participant. Consuming or being under the influence of alcohol or a prohibited substance while under a participating group's supervision or providing services to MPA in connection with any event or activity, including rehearsals.

Possessing or distributing alcohol or a prohibited substance on school grounds or arena facilities where such activities are prohibited.

Exceptions to this policy may be made on a case-by-case basis by MPA to allow alcohol at specifically sanctioned MPA events. At such allowable events, local regulations are expected to be followed. Prohibited substances remain forbidden at all times.

Anti-Retaliation, Whistleblower, and False Reporting Policy

MPA will not tolerate retaliation against any party who makes a good faith report or threatens to make a good faith report. Retaliatory actions include threatening, intimidating, harassing, coercing, or any other action that could dissuade someone from reporting misconduct. Retaliation does not include good-faith actions lawfully pursued in response to a reported violation.





Any participant knowingly making a false allegation will be subject to disciplinary action. A false allegation differs from an unsubstantiated allegation, which means there is insufficient evidence to determine whether an allegation is true or false. An unsubstantiated allegation alone is not grounds for a Code violation.

Bullying Policy

Bullying means severe behavior directed at a participant that is aggressive and likely to hurt, control, or diminish the participant emotionally or physically often centering around a real or perceived power imbalance. Examples of bullying include repeated physical, verbal, or social abuse. Physical abuse may refer to hitting, pushing, beating, biting, or other offensive contact. Verbal abuse may refer to ridiculing, taunting, name-calling, intimidating, or threatening to cause harm. Social abuse may refer to using rumors or false statements to diminish someone's reputation or socially excluding someone and asking others to do the same. Bullying may occur in person or virtually through any social or electronic mediums.



Bullying does not include occasional instances of rude or mean-spirited language, conduct arising from a conflict or struggle between persons with incompatible views or positions, or professionally accepted coaching methods of skill enhancement, physical conditioning, team building, appropriate discipline, or improved participant performance.

Confidential Reporting

Reports are made confidentially to MPA. Confidentiality means MPA will know the reporter's identity but will not share it unless consent is provided or if MPA is legally required to do so. Inaccurate or withheld information will limit MPA's ability to conduct an inquiry and respond.

Fraternization Policy

MPA maintains a strong position on fraternization between all parties. Fraternization means any close personal relationship that goes beyond a professional working relationship and can include romantic or intimate relationships, excessive socializing, and favoritism. Examples include:

Sexual or romantic relationships between staff/volunteers and minor participants are prohibited.

Establishing a new sexual or romantic relationship between staff/volunteers and adult participants while working with the same group is prohibited. Additionally, establishing a new sexual or romantic relationship between any party where there is a real or a perceived power imbalance is strongly discouraged.

Fraternization between adult participants and minor participants is strongly discouraged and may be illegal.

Already existing relationships between staff and participants are





not encouraged but are not forbidden. These relationships must be managed to address potential conflicts or power imbalances. Any relationship that puts any party at risk of harm is prohibited.

General Conduct Policy

The experience of each party and the reputation of MPA depends on the conduct of all parties involved. Good manners, basic decency, and common sense are generally all required to ensure appropriate conduct and behavior. Engaging in conduct or using language that could be perceived as rude, inappropriate, abusive, disorderly, derogatory, immoral, or threatening will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Applying undue and unfair pressure to another party, especially if one party has authority over another.
- Verbally abusing any MPA personnel or board member.
- Inappropriate conduct on the contest floor, rehearsal sites, or event venues.
- Disruptive or rude behavior anywhere, anytime during an MPA activity.
- Affiliates of a group, such as parents or spectators, engaging in inappropriate conduct directed at any party on the contest floor, rehearsal sites, or event venues.



Harassment Policy

All parties must maintain a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment. Harassment means repeated or severe conduct that causes fear, humiliation, or annoyance and reflects discriminatory bias to establish dominance, superiority, or power over an individual or group based on age, race, ethnicity, gender, orientation, culture, religion, national origin, or mental or physical disability. Harassment also refers to conduct that creates a hostile environment. A hostile environment exists when the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to interfere with, limit, or deprive any individual of the opportunity to participate in any program or activity. Harassment may occur in person or virtually through any social or electronic medium.

Harassment does not include occasional instances of rude or mean-spirited language; conduct arising from a conflict or struggle between persons with incompatible views or positions.

Hazing Policy

Hazing means any conduct that subjects another person to anything that may endanger, abuse, humiliate, degrade, or intimidate them as a condition of joining or being socially accepted by a group, team, or organization. Consent by the person subjected to hazing is not a defense, regardless of their perceived willingness to cooperate or participate.



Hostile Rehearsal Environment Policy

The rehearsal space is where groups develop creative routines and foster teamwork. A rehearsal environment is defined as periods when the group is practicing under the direct supervision of an authority figure or coordinator. It is a violation of this Code for any party to engage in severe or pervasive conduct that hampers



a party's ability to participate meaningfully in the rehearsal environment. Rehearsal environments should remain educational both in the planning and commentary provided to any party. When rehearsal techniques and feedback are no longer educational, a hostile rehearsal environment could be created. Conduct prohibited by this Code, such as harassment, hazing, and bullying, is also prohibited in the rehearsal environment. Additionally, violations of this policy include:

- Creating a rehearsal environment intended to make any party excessively afraid, nervous, or anxious regardless of intention.
- Withholding educational information to achieve skills safely.
- Attacking the personal character of participants rather than aspects of their performance.
- Rehearsing for extended timeframes while purposely withholding, recommending against, or denying adequate hydration, nutrition, medical attention, or sleep.

Sexual Misconduct

Sexual misconduct of any kind will not be tolerated. Offenses include sexual or gender-related harassment, nonconsensual sexual contact, exposing a minor to sexual content/imagery, and sexual exploitation.

- **Sexual or Gender-related Harassment:** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, unwanted and continued sexual flirtations, and propositions. It also includes sexually degrading words and other conduct of a sexual nature.
- **Nonconsensual Sexual Contact:** Engaging in sexual contact without consent.
- **Exposing a Minor to Sexual Content/Imagery:** Intentionally exposing a minor to sexually explicit imagery.
- **Sexual Exploitation:** Taking nonconsensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for one's own advantage.

Reporting Instances of Sexual Misconduct

If any party receives information suggesting sexual misconduct has occurred, they must report it to MPA immediately. Groups and Circuit Partners should report allegations of sexual misconduct to law enforcement. They must maintain effective policies and procedures for the protection and safety of all parties, including the ability to report suspected sexual misconduct without retaliation.

If any party learns of or suspects child abuse, including sexual misconduct, they must immediately report it to law enforcement, MPA, and comply with other applicable reporting requirements. Reporting to MPA alone is not sufficient.

Social Networking Policy

MPA values the freedom of expression on social networking sites and does not wish to discourage self-publishing or self-expression. However, we expect all parties involved in any capacity in MPA to follow the applicable guidelines and policies. It is important to understand that any posts made on social media, other than from official MPA accounts, are personal and do not represent MPA. Our policy prohibits the use of social media to post or display com-





ments that are vulgar, obscene, threatening, intimidating, harassing, or hostile on account of any protected characteristic under applicable law on platforms controlled by MPA.

Weapons Policy

To ensure a safe environment for everyone, MPA strictly prohibits the wearing, carrying, storing, or possession of any dangerous weapon that is brought with the intent to intimidate, harm, or otherwise injure individuals or property. Consequences for such violations could include, but are not limited to, removal of the violator from the venue or disqualification of the group from the event or MPA. This is in addition to any weapons-related policies the event venue has.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Disseminating the Code of Conduct

It is the responsibility of directors to disseminate the information within the Code of Conduct to all of their group participants, including staff members and volunteers that will interact with performers throughout the season, parents, and performers.

In addition, MPA will provide a short presentation to each member group that it is required to present to its performing members before the season begins. The director will indicate that this requirement has been fulfilled, and on which date, when turning in the signed combined form for the season (Dec. 15, 2024, for the 2025 season).

Background Checks

All participating groups will need to certify they have obtained a national criminal history background check for those in regular contact with their participants. This includes at least the instructional staff but could also include drivers, chaperones, pit and/or prop crew members, clinicians, and others who have more than a casual contact with performing members.

Such background checks shall be performed at the discretion of the group's director but in no event less than every two years.

For scholastic groups, those requirements may be fulfilled by following the requirements imposed by the school district/educational institution; however, if a school district/educational institution does not have a requirement for such background checks, the group will still have to comply with the background check requirements herein.

The director will indicate compliance with the background check requirements when signing the combined form for the season.

Additional Requirements

All MPA member ensemble directors and staff members for the 2025 season are required to comply with the WGI SafeSport requirement for 2025 (below), regardless of whether their group is participating in a WGI event this season, and send the appropriate course-completion certificate to MPA by Dec. 15, 2024 (group



director uploads all of the certificates to a Google Drive folder they created and made mnpercsecretary@gmail.com an owner of, and puts the link to the folder in the ensemble info form). The WGI requirement is as follows.

Individuals are required to complete one SafeSport™ course each season in the following order:

- SafeSport™ Trained
- Refresher 1: Recognizing and Reporting Misconduct
- Refresher 2: Preventing Misconduct

Individuals who have completed SafeSport™ Refresher 2 are already in compliance for the 2025 season.

Groups that do not furnish proof to MPA by Dec. 15, 2024, that all of their instructors have completed this requirement will not be allowed to participate in 2025 MPA events until their full staff roster has completed the requirement and furnished proof of completion. If a staff member is added to a group's staff past the Dec. 15, 2024, deadline, they have 30 days to get their certificate in to MPA or the group will be considered in noncompliance.

The director of all MPA groups will need to submit a complete list of all instructional and administrative staff working with that group for the season in the ensemble info form (due Dec. 15, 2024). Each staff member will fill out a Google form that indicates they have read and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct.

DISTANCE EXEMPTIONS

MPA Membership Dues

A \$200 discount for groups more than 100 miles outside of the core of Minneapolis exists — board determines eligibility.

Show-Attendance Minimums

Groups outside of 200 miles need to attend only two MPA-sanctioned shows to be eligible for MPA Championships.

2025 IMPORTANT DATES

- **Oct. 13, 2024:** MPA Preseason General Membership Meeting
- **Oct. 13, 2024:** Show registration begins
- **Dec. 1, 2024:** Minimum performance registration deadline — all groups must be signed up for show-attendance minimums
- **Dec. 15, 2024:** Membership dues and show-hosting fees, ensemble info form (with combined form included), show fact sheet form, show-hosting contract, and Wi-Fi form due
- **Jan. 4, 2025:** Day of Percussion and Winds, instructor learning session
- **March 8, 2025:** WGI Minneapolis Regional, MPA Solo and Ensemble Contest
- **March 29, 2025:** MPA Prelims
- **April 5, 2025:** MPA Championships
- **May 4, 2025:** MPA Postseason General Membership Meeting



CHANGE LOG

DATE	PAGE	CHANGE
September 2019	3	Added requirement for member groups to have representation at general membership meetings or have to go through a membership review before being allowed to sign up for shows for the following season.
September 2019	6	Added definitions of the scholastic and independent designations.
September 2019	6	Added that a WGI reclassification automatically results in the same reclassification in MPA.
September 2019	13	Added information about the required MPA Code of Conduct presentation for students.
September 2019	13	Added information about the background check requirement.
November 2020	2	Added a section on equity, diversity, and inclusion.
November 2020	4	Added COVID-19 guidelines.
November 2020	4	Clarified differences between MPA and WGI rules for the 2021 virtual season.
November 2020	5	Updated 2021 membership dues and per-show fees.
November 2020	8–10	Clarified definitions of harassment and added EDI-related language.
November 2020	N/A	Removed distance exemptions.
November 2020	Multiple	Removed all sections dealing with in-person events.
November 2020	Multiple	Changed show-attendance minimum for members to two shows before Championships.
November 2020	Multiple	Edited list of membership benefits for the 2021 season.
September 2021	4	Updated the COVID-19 section.
September 2021	6	Simplified the scholarships section language.
September 2021	7	Updated the 2023 dues amount.
September 2021	8	Updated the ageout definition for 2023.
September 2021	9, 10	Added a note about following the latest guidelines at the time of the show for unloading/loading and performance entry/exit.
September 2021	11	Added COVID-19 and other public health concerns to the emergency policy.
September 2021	17	Updated important dates for 2023.
September 2021	19	Added a table of performance/competition opportunities.
September 2021	Multiple	Deleted references to Day of Percussion for 2023.
October 2023	3	Removed mask requirement.
October 2023	5	Added Day of Percussion back in.
October 2023	5	Updated information about scholarships.
October 2023	6	Added MPA 1 on 1 information.
October 2023	6	Updated 2024 dues amount.
October 2023	6	Added Day of Percussion and MPA 1 on 1 to dues information.
October 2023	8	Updated 2024 independent class ageout rules.
October 2023	9, 10	Deleted COVID-19 statement from performance entry/exit and unloading/loading information.
October 2023	16	Added all staff members of member ensembles to SafeSport requirement and added info about Code of Conduct attestation form.
October 2023	16	Updated list of 2024 important dates.
October 2023	17	Updated dues amounts.
October 2024	Multiple	Updated dates.
October 2024	3	Updated Board of Directors info.

DATE	PAGE	CHANGE
October 2024	4	Removed vocal samples from exceptions to WGI rules.
October 2024	5	Updated information about Day of Percussion and Winds, and the IDEAS Award.
October 2024	7	Updated information about withdrawal from shows (now allowed with no penalty up to four weeks before the show).
October 2024	8	Changed language about the Classification Committee.
October 2024	9	Updated language about exiting the performance area.
October 2024	11	Added options for how groups will be notified of show cancellations/major schedule changes in the case of emergencies.
October 2024	16	Updated the SafeSport requirements for 2024.
October 2024	16	Updated important dates for 2024.
October 2025	Multiple	Updated dates.
October 2025	3	Changed COVID-19 Guidelines section to Public Health and Safety Guidelines.
October 2025	5	Added a Requirements for Groups section.
October 2025	12	Updated MPA Code of Conduct.